

23 of the principal Act which makes reference to section 19. The correct reference is to section 21 and the Bill rectifies the error.

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

House adjourned at 4.21 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 8th October, 1970.

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

QUESTIONS (36): ON NOTICE

1. WOOROLOO TRAINING CENTRE

Resident Employees

Mr. MAY, to the Chief Secretary:

How many Prisons Department employees reside at the Wooroloo Training Centre, previously known as the Wooroloo Hospital?

Mr. CRAIG replied:
Twenty-four.

2. WATER SUPPLIES

Treatment Plant: Gnangara Area

Mr. MAY, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

Will he advise the exact location of the proposed water treatment plant being established in the Gnangara area?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Gnangara water treatment plant is situated at the north-western corner of the junction of Beach Road and Uganda Road, Mirrabooka, within Lots 86 and 87, in the Shire of Wanneroo.

3. TRAFFIC PATROLS

Effect

Mr. GRAHAM, to the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) Has he any knowledge of the joint survey carried out recently in England by scientists and police, which has concluded that "the presence of patrolling police on a busy road has no apparent effect on the behaviour of motorists" and that "incidents of bad driving continued in spite of increased patrols"?

- (2) Is he aware that Dr. Margaret Greig of Durham University mathematics department, one of the leaders of the survey team,

expressed herself in these terms—"It certainly surprised us, but it was a fact of our study. We had expected people to drive more carefully"?

- (3) What is the official conclusion here in respect of traffic patrols, and what evidence is there in support?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) It is considered that heavy concentration of police does reduce accidents and induce better driver behaviour. This is borne out by reports by other overseas bodies which have been studied.

4. CARNARVON HOSPITAL

Extensions

Mr. NORTON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) When will the temporary extensions to the Carnarvon Hospital be completed and in use?
- (2) What is the cost of these buildings?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The units will arrive on site next week and should be ready for occupation in December, 1970.
- (2) \$70,891, including estimated cost of furniture and equipment.

5. EDUCATION

Carnarvon High School

Mr. NORTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What are the extensions which are to be made to the Carnarvon High School this year?
- (2) When will tenders be called for this work?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) 1 prevocational centre.
1 art room.
1 staff room, staff toilets.
- (2) It is anticipated that tenders will be called during November.

6. LIQUOR ACT

Amendments

Mr. GRAHAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Has a decision yet been made as to whether legislation will be introduced this session to amend the Liquor Act, at least to correct obvious errors, contradictions, and anomalies discovered since the passage of the measure through Parliament earlier this year?
- (2) If not, when will such a decision be made?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Minister for Justice is submitting proposals for Cabinet consideration on certain matters.

7. EDUCATION

*Tuart Hill Senior High School:
Hall-Gymnasium*

Mr. GRAHAM, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What high schools are planned to be provided with a hall/gymnasium during the current financial year?
(2) Will he give details of each of the grounds respectively on which preference was given these schools as against Tuart Hill Senior High School?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Owing to the pressing need for further new schools it will not be possible to provide halls/gymnasiums in any existing schools in the current financial year.
(2) Answered by (1).

8. BERNARD KENNETH GOULDHAM

Compensation: Cost of Inquiry

Mr. DAVIES, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What was the cost to the Government of conducting the recent inquiry into the case of Bernard Kenneth Gouldham?
(2) In what manner were the costs incurred?

Mr. NALDER (for Sir David Brand) replied:

- (1) and (2) \$750 paid to Sir Marcus Gibson.

9. SEWERAGE

*Lynwood-Langford: Proportions of
Expenditure*

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

How much money was provided by the development companies, H. G. Seymour & Co. Pty. Ltd., Plunkett Development Pty. Ltd., Realty Development Corporation Pty. Ltd., and the State Housing Commission, individually, for the installation of the sewerage scheme in the Lynwood-Langford area during the 1969-70 financial year?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Money received by the Metropolitan Water Board during the financial year 1969-70—

	\$
H. G. Seymour and Co. Pty. Ltd.	14,982.23
Plunkett Development Pty. Ltd.	56,998.88

	\$
Realty Development Corporation Pty. Ltd.	178,122.49
State Housing Commission	109,700.53

10. *This question was postponed.*

11. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Two Rocks, Yanchep

Mr. TONKIN, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Is it proposed to extend electricity supply to a location known as Two Rocks near Yanchep?
(2) If "Yes" is the cost of the extension being borne by the State Electricity Commission or Mr. Alan Bond?
(3) If and when the extension is completed, how will the price of power compare with that charged at Lancelin?
(4) Ordinarily are there not other districts not yet supplied by the State Electricity Commission which would have a much higher priority?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No arrangements have been made to extend electricity to Two Rocks but an offer has been made to extend electricity to a caravan park on Two Rocks road near Yanchep Beach.
(2) The cost will be shared by the commission and Taylor Woodrow Bond Pty. Ltd.
(3) The price charged will be the commission's standard tariff which is lower than the charge at Lancelin.
(4) No. This extension is being carried out on the same basis as all other extensions from the commission's established supply system.

12. HOLLYWOOD MEDICAL CENTRE

Delay: Effect on Intake of Medical Students

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) What was the Medical School intake of students for each of the academic years 1969 and 1970?
(2) What intake figures are contemplated for each of the next five years?
(3) If the Hollywood Medical Centre building programme is at present retarded to what extent will this adversely affect the intake of medical students?

(4) Has the alleged controversy between the Public Health Department and the Pathology Department of the University as to who should run the laboratory services of the complex been resolved?

(5) If so, has this been resolved in favour of the University?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) 1969—130.
1970—170.

(2) 1971—190.
1972—190.
1973—190.
1974—190.
1975—190.

(3) No effect if present programme maintained.

(4) and (5) The University will be responsible to the hospital board for the hospital laboratory services. The precise method is still under discussion.

The Public Health Department will be responsible for the State Health Laboratories and the services they provide.

13. *This question was postponed.*

14. WATER SUPPLIES

Pemberton

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

(1) Is any provision made in the 1970-71 Estimates or through any other source to upgrade the Pemberton town water supply?

(2) If not, will there be any action taken to improve the above supply for the forthcoming summer?

(3) If "Yes" to (2), what would be the nature of any such contemplated action?

(4) Is it anticipated that the water supplies to the Pemberton trout hatchery will be improved before next summer?

(5) If so, will he give details of such improvements?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) No.

(2) Present indications are that the water position for Pemberton will be satisfactory for the coming summer. In the event of an emergency, supplementary supplies will be available from the Manjimup system.

(3) Answered by (2).

(4) No; but supplementary supplies will be available as for (2).

(5) Answered by (4).

15. EDUCATION

Denmark Junior High School

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Will any alterations or renovations be carried out at the Denmark Junior High School in the current financial year?

(2) If so, what works will be undertaken?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) and (2) No additions will be made under the loan fund programme. Normal renovations will be carried out as required.

16. ABATTOIRS

Allocation of Stock Killed

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What is the method of allocating killing space or numbers of stock killed each day at Midland and Robb Jetty in respect of—

(a) local operators;

(b) exporters;

(c) growers direct?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(a) At both works, preference is given to registered operators who are required to advise the management by 2.15 p.m. each day their requirements for the following day.

(b) The balance of the kill is divided amongst the registered operators on a percentage basis.

(c) There are no growers consignments handled direct at Midland but at Robb Jetty these are accepted according to the schedule of rates and conditions laid down under the section dealing with growers' direct consignments.

17. ABATTOIRS

Butchers

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Referring to question 22 of Tuesday, the 6th October, parts 2(a) and 2(b), how many of those operators listed in (a) and (b) purchase their meat requirements direct from Midland stock markets and how many are dependent on agents to purchase their requirements?

Mr. NALDER replied:

This is a matter for the individual operators and the information is not known by either the Midland Junction Abattoir Board or the West Australian Meat Export Works.

18. CHILDREN'S DAY ATTENDANCE CENTRE

Bentley

Mr. MAY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Government to establish a day attendance centre at Bentley?
- (2) If so, what is the location of the proposed centre?
- (3) When will work commence on this centre?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) In the Collier Pine Plantation Location 2044, Allen Court.
- (3) An amount of \$25,000 has been allocated to commence this project this financial year. The precise date of commencement cannot be specified at this stage.

19. VEHICLE CHECKING CENTRE

Bentley

Mr. MAY, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Police Department to establish a vehicle inspection branch at Bentley?
- (2) If so, will he advise the location of the proposed site?
- (3) When is it anticipated that work will commence on this project?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Mills Street, Bentley.
- (3) Plans are at present being prepared, and it is anticipated work will commence in 1971.

20. PORT DEVELOPMENT

Conference, 1971

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Works:

In connection with the conference on port development to be held in Western Australia early next year will he advise—

- (a) the scope of and the subjects to be dealt with at this conference;
- (b) the names and/or positions of persons attending the conference;
- (c) whether or not outports, such as Albany, will be represented?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (a) The co-ordination of port development throughout Australia.

(b) and (c) Invitations have been forwarded to—

Hon. D. Hughes, M.L.A.,
Minister for Public Works,
N.S.W.

Hon. N. T. E. Hewitt, M.L.A.,
Minister for Conservation,
Marine and Aboriginal
Affairs, Queensland.

Hon. J. D. Corcoran, M.L.A.,
Minister for Works, South
Australia.

Hon. L. H. Bessell, M.L.A.,
Minister for Transport,
Tasmania.

Hon. M. Byrne, M.L.C.,
Minister for Public Works,
Victoria.

Hon. I. McC. Sinclair, M.P.,
Commonwealth Minister
of State for Shipping.

It is possible that other Commonwealth Government Ministers will attend.

I will represent Western Australia.

21. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Rented Accommodation: Albany

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the department renting a building in the Vine Street area of Albany for the use of the Senior High School?
- (2) If so, for what period has it been rented and for what period is it proposed to rent it?
- (3) What is the rent per week?
- (4) Have any renovations and/or alterations been made to the building and, if so, what was the cost?
- (5) If (4) is "No" has the department any proposals to alter or renovate the building, and what is the estimated cost?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) From the 12th February, 1969, until it is possible to provide facilities at the school.
- (3) \$23 per week.
- (4) Toilet facilities, ventilation and lighting have been improved at the expense of the owner.
- (5) Answered by (4).

22.

SEWERAGE

Lockyer

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has he seen an article in the *Albany Advertiser* dated the 18th September, 1970, in which the

chairwoman of the Health, Traffic, Parks and Reserves Committee of the Albany Town Council states she was "absolutely appalled" at the lack of suitable sewerage facilities in the suburb of Lockyer?

- (2) In view of this statement, and in view of the number of years that the Public Works Department has been aware of the problem, and in view of the continuing representations of the Albany Town Council, will he give an undertaking to regard the provision of sewerage to Lockyer as urgent?
- (3) If (2) is "Yes" will he give an undertaking that works on a sewerage system for Lockyer will commence in the 1970-71 financial year?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes. Additionally, both the Albany Town Council and the Public Health Department have approached the Public Works Department to commence a sewerage scheme in Lockyer.
- (2) Yes, it is considered one of the high priority areas in Albany.
- (3) \$15,000 has been provided on the 1970-71 loan programme to commence the work.

23 and 24. *These questions were postponed.*

25. WAYWARD CHILDREN

Detention and Release: Notification of School Principals

Mr. JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:

- (1) When children are taken into custody and later released, why can not notification be given to the principal of the school a child may be attending at the time?
- (2) Is he aware that such school principals usually have to rely on information from other students on the reason for absence of pupils who have been taken into custody of the department?
- (3) Is he also aware that school principals have no information as to when children are released and should again be attending school?
- (4) If any legal bar exists in giving this information, will he give urgent consideration to legislative amendments to allow this information to be made available in the interests of better supervision of wayward children?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) It is customary to give this notification wherever possible. On some occasions, however, this may

not be done because of limited time, because the child was previously unknown to the Department or other special reasons.

- (2) If this happens the school principals would be better advised to telephone the nearest Child Welfare Divisional Office to obtain the necessary information.
- (3) Answered in answer to question (1).
- (4) No legal bar exists to the giving of this information to persons concerned with the welfare of the children involved. Any information supplied should, however, be treated as confidential by the recipients.

26. RAILWAY CROSSINGS

Flashing Lights and Boom Gates

Mr. CASH, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) How many railway crossings in Western Australia have been equipped with flashing red warning lights?
- (2) How many have been equipped with boom gates?
- (3) Does the railway crossing protection committee review safety needs regularly?
- (4) What is the composition of the committee?
- (5) What is the installation programme for 1970-71?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) 239 crossings on the W.A.G.R. system.
- (2) 34 crossings.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) A representative of the Main Roads Department (Chairman), Railways Department, Police Department, and Country Shire Councils' Association.
- (5) As per statement which I request permission to table.

The statement was tabled.

27. WATER SUPPLIES

Plastic Piping

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

Now that plastic piping, in accordance with Australian Standard Specifications, is being used in ever-increasing quantities by farmers, why is it considered necessary to restrict the installation of pressure control valves which have been used by many to guard against bursting pipes and water wastage?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Prevailing supply pressures and temperatures in many country areas exceed the limits permissible under the Australian Standard Specifications for plastic pipes. The use of plastic pipes and pressure reducing valves in such circumstances can in the event of faulty valve operation result in burst pipes with consequent undetected and excessive water wastage in isolated paddocks.

28.

MILK

Licenses

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many licenses are current to milk vendors serving metropolitan residential areas?
- (2) How many vendors have licenses for one area only?
- (3) How many vendors have licenses for two or more areas, and for how many areas respectively?
- (4) What companies or treatment plants hold multiple licenses and what number is held in each case?
- (5) If licenses are held by companies are these sublet to vendors?
- (6) If so, are licenses sublet on the same basis as that demanded by the board?
- (7) Do those who sublet gain any economic advantage from so doing?
- (8) If so, is this at the expense of—
 - (a) the vendor; or
 - (b) the consumer?
- (9) If multiple licenses are held and sublet, is not the board abrogating its authority in letting persons other than the board decide who shall deliver in what zone for which a license is held?
- (10) Where zone licenses are held by companies and relet, what is the charge imposed by companies on the vendor who so acquires the right to deliver in a certain zone?
- (11) If a zone is sold, is the purchase price based on gallons or customers?
- (12) If so, or in any case, what is the method of valuation?
- (13) Is the purchase price of a zone from the board on the same basis as from a company which may desire to dispose of a zone?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) A milk vendor's (milkman's) license entitles the licensee to sell milk in a specified district. At the 30th June, 1970, 203 licensees held 554 milk vendor (milkman's) licenses.

- (2) 79 licensees hold one milk vendor (milkman's) license.

- (3) 50 licensees hold two milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for two districts.

37 licensees hold three milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for three districts.

13 licensees hold four milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for four districts.

8 licensees hold five milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for five districts.

12 licensees hold six milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for six districts.

2 licensees hold seven milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for seven districts.

1 licensee holds 29 milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for 29 districts.

1 licensee holds 57 milk vendor (milkman's) licenses for 57 districts.

- (4) Brownes Dairy Pty. Ltd. hold four milk vendors (milkman's) licenses for four districts.

Masters Dairy Limited hold 29 milk vendors (milkman's) licenses for 29 districts.

Sunny West Co-operative Dairies Ltd. hold 57 licenses for 57 districts.

- (5) and (6) Treatment companies and individual persons are required to hold a milk vendor (milkman's) license for each district in which they own milk rounds.

They operate these rounds personally, by wages employees, under lease arrangement or contract agreement, but the licensee is the person held responsible by the board for the conduct of the business in accordance with the Milk Act. The board requests licensees to provide the names and addresses of their lessees.

- (7) and (8) The financial arrangements are not known to the board but the cost of delivery is met from the milk vendor (milkman's) margin.

- (9) No; answered by (5) and (6).

- (10) Answered by (7) and (8).

- (11) Milk rounds are sold on a gallonage basis.

- (12) The price per gallon is a matter for negotiation between buyer and seller.

- (13) The board does not buy or sell milk rounds.

29. HOUSING

Withers Development: Bunbury

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Who were the successful tenderers for the latest groups of houses in Withers development, and what is the tender price in each case?
- (2) When are these due for completion?
- (3) Are any penalty and/or incentive provisions included in the contracts?
- (4) What number of units, in the various categories, are to be built in Withers this financial year?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Jaxon Construction Pty. Ltd. was awarded the following contracts—
Group 6, \$45,517, 6 brick-veneer houses.
Group 7, \$45,987, 6 brick-veneer houses.
Group 8, \$45,251, 6 brick-veneer houses.
Group 9, \$88,646, 8 brick-veneer houses—2 duplex.
(2) Six months after the signing of contracts, which should take place this week.
(3) Liquidated damages form part of the building agreement, but there are no incentive provisions.
(4) The building programme for 1970-71 provides for the erection of—
Single residential dwellings—26.
Duplex units—4.
Walk-up flats—118 (approx.).
In addition, 29 cottages and 58 duplex units are under construction as a carryover of the 1969-70 programme.

30. LOCAL AUTHORITIES

South-West: Rates and Loan Commitments

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) What is the total amount of rates collected by the shire councils of the south-west in each of the last two years?
- (2) How many shire councils does this figure include?
- (3) What is the total loan commitment of these shire councils in each of the last two years?
- (4) What was the total interest payment necessary to service the loans referred to above?
- (5) What is the anticipated amount which shire councils of the south-west will borrow in the 1970-71 financial year?

- (6) What is the amount expected to be paid by the above shire councils to service loans made in 1970-71?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1), (3), (4) and (6) Figures requested are not available.
- (2) 16—being those municipalities comprised in the South-West Division of the Statistical Register—Part XI Local Government.
- (5) \$2,790,000.

31 and 32. *These questions were postponed.*

33. NORTH-WEST ROAD TRANSPORT

Easing of Regulations: Effect on Railways

Mr. MAY, to the Minister for Transport:

In connection with the Government's intention to relax restrictions on road transport to points north of the 26th parallel, under a new northern transport policy, will he advise—

- (1) Does the Commissioner of Railways agree to the policy of easing transport regulations to the north-west?
- (2) On what basis and for what reasons were the regulations eased?
- (3) In view of the railway deficit being in excess of \$10,000,000 how can the diversion of this traffic from rail to road be justified?
- (4) What is the anticipated loss of revenue to the Railways Department resulting from this decision?
- (5) What are the equivalent operational savings?
- (6) Will the services to and from and between the metropolitan area and the rail heads at Meekatharra and Geraldton be adversely affected by the loss of traffic?
- (7) What are the savings to the users in employing road transport?
- (8) What is the proportion of tonnage hauled to the north-west by land transport to and for—
(a) the mining companies;
(b) the public sector of the community?
- (9) What is the reason for the possible inclusion of the Murchison area under the same

conditions as applicable to traffic for north of the 26th parallel?

- (10) What is the annual revenue derived from the Mullewa to Meekatharra railway?
- (11) What is the cost to the user for the various freight classifications on traffic from Kewdale to Yalgoo, Mt. Magnet, Cue, and Meekatharra when compared with that to Mullewa?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

In view of the length of the answer I ask leave to hand it in.

The SPEAKER: How many pages does the answer run into?

Mr. O'CONNOR: About one and a half foolscap pages.

The SPEAKER: For the benefit of the House I would point out that the other day an answer of about eight pages which was handed in had to be included in the *Votes and Proceedings*. That resulted in a holdup in the production of the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The answer is—

- (1) The Commissioner of Railways concurred with the recommendation of the Transport Advisory Council, with some reservations.
- (2) (i) The need to ensure that our proposed very large investment in new ships reflects the actual as opposed to artificial demand for sea services.
- (ii) Having in mind the diverse nature of cargoes going north the need to eliminate the mandatory transshipment requirement at rail heads.
- (iii) The desirability of exploiting the large investment in bitumen on the northern highways.
- (iv) The need to provide the area with a range of cost-time-quality alternatives.
- (v) The desirability of allowing the pastoral industry to benefit from backloading road rates.
- (vi) The need to further reduce or at least maintain inland mode user costs.
- (3) It will be obvious that there was need to consider more than the rail deficit in isolation. The final decision emerged from assessing which course of action produced the greatest total benefit for Western Australia as a whole.

- (4) This will depend on the railways own ability to compete for the traffic offering both now and in the future. If, for example, the railways lose half the quantity of north-west traffic carried during the 12 months to June, 1970, the reduction in revenue will be approximately \$268,000.
- (5) Estimates indicate a saving of \$105,000 per annum related to the revenue loss in (4). In the long term, based on the fact that almost all costs are variable, saving should nearly equate loss of revenue.
- (6) There is no reason why they should be.
- (7) Savings result from—
 - (i) Reduced exposure of cargo to transshipment damage.
 - (ii) A reduction in transit time, particularly on the inland route, with consequent effects on inventory costs, which are significant in the north.
 - (iii) A reduction in delay time in the event that operations of any kind have stopped pending the arrival of material.
 - (iv) The saving that accrues from being able to precisely suit the cargo to the mode.
 - (v) The reduction in or maintenance of present freight rates that we expect to take place from the introduction of further competition.

The total benefit estimated to accrue exceeds \$1,200,000 annually and this amount is expected to rise. The total disbenefits should not exceed \$163,000.
- (8) We do not have this information but forecasts that have just been completed suggest that after 1975 the total tonnage generated by the mining companies for mining purposes will be substantially exceeded by the tonnage generated by the population. We would expect this situation to apply to each of the individual modes.
- (9) To enable Murchison pastoralists to benefit from road backloading rates.
- (10) \$878,454 for the year ended June, 1970.

(11) Rate per ton—

	Freight Classification								Mileage from Perth
	M	A	B	C	1	2	2 + 25%		
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		
Mullewa	7.30	10.30	12.70	17.20	21.95	28.55	35.70		331
Yalgoo	7.80	11.15	13.75	18.90	23.90	31.00	38.75		405
Difference .....	.50	.85	1.05	1.70	1.95	2.45	3.05		....
Mt. Magnet	8.40	12.10	15.00	20.80	25.95	33.60	42.00		482
Difference	1.10	1.80	2.30	3.60	4.00	5.05	6.30		....
Cue	8.70	12.65	15.70	21.85	27.05	35.05	43.80		528
Difference	1.40	2.35	3.00	4.65	5.10	6.50	8.10		....
Meekatharra	9.25	13.45	16.80	23.55	28.85	37.30	46.65		600
Difference	1.95	3.15	4.10	6.35	6.90	8.75	10.95		....

If the honourable member desires an elaboration of this answer I will arrange for him to have a discussion with the Director-General of Transport.

34. *This question was postponed.*

35. FARMERS

Commonwealth Bank, Wagin: Terms of Financial Assistance

Mr. JONES, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that it is the policy of the Commonwealth Bank, Wagin branch, to provide financial assistance to farmers during the current rural crisis provided they sign a statement agreeing to the forced sale of the property?
- (2) Is he aware that farmers are being charged 8½ per cent. interest by this bank?
- (3) Will he place these facts before the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry and ask for his interpretation in relation to this state of affairs?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) to (3) I am aware of arrangements between a farmer and his bank which I believe have prompted these questions. However, it would not be ethical to reveal all the circumstances of this arrangement.

36. *This question was postponed.*

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF

Farmers: Number Eligible

Mr. YOUNG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Could the Minister advise the House how many farmers have been declared to be eligible for the \$450 emergency drought relief in necessitous cases, to be paid in 15 weekly instalments?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The latest information available is that 22 farmers have qualified for this assistance.

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Tourist Act Amendment Bill.
2. Western Australian Marine Act Amendment Bill.

Bills introduced on motions by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and read a first time.

STOCK (BRANDS AND MOVEMENT) BILL

Recommittal

Bill recommitted, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), for the further consideration of clause 53.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 53: Brands not to be altered—

Mr. NALDER: I move an amendment—

Page 27, line 23—Insert after the word "delivery" the passage " , but nothing in this subsection shall be construed as preventing a person from removing a registered brand in the form of a woolbrand from sheep in the ordinary course of shearing the sheep".

On Tuesday evening when this Bill was dealt with in Committee the member for Stirling pointed out what he regarded to be a difficulty in interpreting what this clause meant. At the time I promised to have the matter investigated.

On reconsideration of the clause it was thought advisable to clarify what it meant. So as to make the position quite clear to those who are involved with the provision it was felt that the insertion of additional words were necessary. The point raised was whether the provision in the clause should remain as it was and be applied to a farmer who purchased a flock of unshorn sheep, who had the sheep delivered to him, and who subsequently found it necessary to have the sheep shorn. In those circumstances the farmer would have to leave the woolbrand on the sheep; but this would be an impossible situation.

The proposed amendment will make the position clear to a farmer who takes delivery of sheep in full wool and finds it is necessary to shear them within six months because of an infection or a disease.

The clause, as printed, appeared to have little value but on further inquiry it was found it was designed to stop a person clipping a brand from the wool and putting on another brand. The present amendment will allow a farmer to shear sheep which he has purchased and put his own brand on them. An inspector can be informed of the reason for the stock having to be shorn. On the other hand, if a purchaser does not intend to shear, then it is illegal for him to interfere with the brand. The proposed amendment will make the intention of the particular clause quite clear.

Mr. Davies: What is the extent of sheep stealing in this State; is it a problem?

Mr. NALDER: It is considered to be a problem, as the Minister for Police has indicated. The Minister would be fully informed of complaints.

Mr. Craig: A special squad is required to deal with the problem.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: The Minister puts forward this amendment in the interests of clarity, and there can be no objection to it. When the Minister introduced this Bill he pointed out that the working of the measure would depend, to a large extent, upon the spirit in which it was accepted. Indeed, to facilitate its proper operation common sense will have to be relied on to a large degree.

The proposed amendment will obviate a certain ambiguity, and it is based on commendable wisdom. If a buyer of stock finds it necessary to shear sheep for any reason he will not find himself in conflict with the Act. For that reason I have no hesitation in supporting the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Bill again reported, with an amendment.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Traffic) (2.46 p.m.): I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to amend the Traffic Act in the following matters:—

adoption of staggered licensing of motor vehicles for country licensing authorities;

compulsory wearing of safety helmets by motor cycle riders and passengers

production of interstate drivers' licenses to traffic inspectors; and increased penalties for overloading offences.

The first amendment concerns section 9 of the Act and was sought by the Country Shire Councils' Association to enable country licensing authorities to issue licenses for staggered periods.

The power requested by the association is identical with that granted to the Commissioner of Police in the metropolitan area in that a license is issued for a period of either six or 12 months from the date of application and not for periods ending the quarter dates of March, June, September, or December, as is applicable at present in the country.

It is claimed that the inception of staggered licensing by country authorities will enable the administrative work of licensing to be spread over a period of 12 months, thereby reducing the staffing problem created under the present system, particularly at the end of June and December.

To cater for persons who previously licensed their vehicles for a period of less than three months for seasonal work, a further amendment to the Act will be necessary in order to continue this arrangement, but this will be at the discretion of the licensing authority.

The second amendment provides for the compulsory wearing, securely on the head of motorcycle riders and their passengers, of an approved type of protective helmet. At present the wearing of helmets is compulsory in South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory, and is also under consideration in the Australian Capital Territory.

The effect of the Victorian legislation, which was introduced in 1961, was subsequently studied by members of the Australian Road Research Board and the conclusions reached at the end of their investigations were as follows:—

Legislation for the compulsory wearing of helmets by motor cyclists in Victoria has been highly successful.

The law is self-enforcing and the rate of wearing has been close to 100 per cent.

Motor cyclist fatalities for the years 1961 and 1962 have been reduced by half, and this reduction appears to be directly attributable to the compulsory use of helmets.

The risk of fatality to a motor cyclist in an accident is reduced by wearing a helmet to about one-third of the risk without a helmet.

These results have been achieved at a modest total cost and an extremely low cost for life saved.

Those are the conclusions reached by the Australian Road Research Board. In Western Australia during 1969 there were 377 accidents involving motorcyclists in which 18 persons were killed and 325 persons were injured. Of 96 accidents reported to Perth Traffic Office during the months of January to May, 1970, inclusive, it was found on investigation that 23 persons received head injuries of which three proved fatal. In view of these statistics, there is little doubt that similar benefit could be expected in Western Australia if the proposed legislation were adopted. The amendment also includes a proviso that a person can be exempted from wearing a protective helmet on medical grounds.

The use of motorcycles as a mode of transport is becoming increasingly popular throughout the State, and registrations have increased from 8,857 in 1966 to 10,998 in 1970. The number would be over 11,000 now, which suggests that the number of registrations has increased by one-third in a matter of three years.

In the past we have adopted a policy of persuasion to motorcyclists to wear safety helmets. The response has been fairly good over the years but with the increasing popularity of the motorcycle I am convinced that some attention must be given to this particular feature by way of legislation because, from my own personal observation, it is quite obvious that many motorcyclists do not use this protective measure.

Mr. Jamieson: Are these helmets to receive a Police Department stamp of approval on them?

Mr. CRAIG: The type of helmet will be covered by regulation. The helmet will have to conform to the requirements of the Standards Association of Australia, in the same way as standards apply to seat belts in motorcars. Many types of helmets which are virtually useless are worn by motorcyclists. They might look like protective helmets, but they are not.

Mr. Jamieson: They should be stamped.

Mr. CRAIG: I agree. These would be approved by the Standards Association.

The third amendment, which is to section 36(3)(b), is solely a measure to correct an anomaly in the Act. Under the existing provisions a member of the Police Force or a traffic inspector can request the production of a driver's license or a permit in regard to a person from overseas. Similar powers exist in regard to local residents but, apparently, through an oversight, the power to request production of a driver's license or permit in respect of a person from another State of Australia is limited to members of the Police Force. The words "Traffic Inspector" have now been included to provide this necessary power.

The final amendment, which is the most important one, has been made to protect the State's multi-million dollar investment in the road system, particularly roads in the north of the State.

It has recently been recommended that larger road trains be permitted to operate over approved routes throughout Western Australia and, to assist with the economics of these and other haulage operations, increases in the permissible gross loads for rigid and articulated vehicles were recently granted. As it is feared that loadings in excess of those permitted could have a disastrous effect on road surfaces and bridge structures, it is considered imperative that penalties for overloading be provided which will act as a definite deterrent.

Existing penalties provided under the Traffic Act for overloading are a maximum of \$100 for a first offence and up to \$200 for any subsequent offence. Penalties are not related to the amount of overload and are subject to mitigation by the court.

An analysis of overloading offences for an 11-month period in 1969-70 reveals that 82 per cent. of offences were repeat offences, which does suggest that the existing level of fines imposed is having little deterrent effect. In this period, there were 1,472 offences and the average fine imposed was \$21 for a first offence and \$38 for subsequent breaches.

It is obvious that if our roads are to be protected more realistic penalties will require to be provided and these should be particularly aimed at regular offenders. Consequently, consideration has been shown to first offenders by making an alteration to the existing provisions which apply a maximum fine of \$100 for a first offence, reducible in mitigation.

The proposed amendment has been framed to provide in the regulations mandatory penalties for a second or subsequent offence involving overloading on axles or tandem axle groups, but not in individual axles within tandem axle group or offences for exceeding the permitted gross vehicle weight. I hope I can make this quite clear as I proceed.

The penalties proposed are as follows according to the degree of overload:—

	Mini-	Maxi-
	imum	imum
	\$	\$
Up to 20 cwt.	20	80
21 cwt. to 30 cwt.	40	150
31 cwt. to 40 cwt.	60	200
41 cwt. to 50 cwt.	100	300
51 cwt. to 60 cwt.	150	400
Over 60 cwt.	200	500

As the major cause of road damage results from excessive weight transmitted to the road by the wheels of a vehicle, the application of mandatory penalties is concentrated on those offences which relate to overloading single axles or tandem axle groups.

The reason for excluding from the mandatory provisions the offence of overloading one individual axle of a tandem axle group is that the overload may have been caused by—

a fault in the tandem axle assembly causing an unequal distribution of what would have been a legal load; faulty loading of a legal tandem axle load causing an excess of weight on one axle of the tandem axle group; or

the shifting of what was a legal axle load whilst the vehicle is in transit causing more weight to be thrown on one axle of the tandem axle group.

It is not considered that persons who may unwittingly contravene the regulations in these circumstances should be unduly penalised.

With mandatory penalties being applied to offences relating to the overloading of single axles or tandem axle groups, prosecutions for exceeding the permitted gross vehicle weight will be restricted to those instances where the excess of more than one axle of a vehicle may not warrant action being taken for exceeding axle loading, but the combined overload on all axles would justify a charge for exceeding the gross vehicle weight. It is not intended to amend the existing scale of penalties where gross vehicle weights are exceeded. In other words, the penalties provided in the Act will be retained.

It should perhaps be explained that action against persons for the offence of overloading a vehicle in any manner is not taken unless the overload exceeds 10 cwt. That is the given tolerance. I might also explain that in the use of the loadometer for carrying out test loads of vehicles on the road there is a tolerance of 5 per cent.; so, roughly speaking, there would be a tolerance allowed of just over 14 per cent.

It is also proposed to include in the regulations a provision that an offence shall not be considered a subsequent offence unless a conviction for overloading occurred within the preceding 12 months.

I trust I have clearly explained what is proposed in this Bill. There is no need for me to emphasise the necessity for harsher penalties for subsequent offences of overloading, because it has been proved in the past that apparently sufficient deterrent has not been provided against the consistent offender in relation to this offence. Bearing in mind the vast sums that are being spent on our roads, it is

only right that the roads should be protected in this way. I therefore commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Graham (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE AND LAND REVESTMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 24th September.

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Dundas) [3.00 p.m.]: This Bill is not very well received as far as I am concerned because the people I represent in the eastern goldfields will be seriously inconvenienced. It appears that the Government is anticipating the passage of the Bill through this House because it has already put into operation some of the measures arising out of it. I refer to the routing of the Kalgoorlie express over the Wyalkatchem line, which has already taken place.

As I stated, this will cause considerable inconvenience to the people who patronise that service—the people of the eastern goldfields of this State. It appears that during the period this stopgap service operates we will revert to the length of trip, so far as time is concerned, which applied in the days of the steam trains. The journey will be considerably prolonged.

I am a little concerned at the information given to this House at times in regard to these affairs. When one tries to obtain information for the benefit of the public, the information that is received is often confusing. I refer to the answers given to a question I asked in this House on the 20th August concerning this proposal. Part of my question was as follows:—

What will be the extra time involved in the journey over this route?

The answer was—

Perth to Kalgoorlie—2 hours 25 minutes.

Kalgoorlie to Perth—1 hour 55 minutes.

We now find that the schedule which has been laid down indicates that the extra time from Perth to Kalgoorlie is 1 hour 55 minutes, and from Kalgoorlie to Perth it is 1 hour 32 minutes. I do not want the Minister to think I am quarrelling about the shorter time—far from it.

What I am criticising is that the answer given to me indicated that the time would be considerably longer, and I would say that on that date, the 20th August, the railways officials should have known exactly what the extra time would be.

Mr. O'Connor: What was the length of time you quoted?

Mr. MOIR: The answer supplied to me in the House was 2 hours 25 minutes for the trip from Perth to Kalgoorlie, and 1 hour 55 minutes for the trip from Kalgoorlie to Perth. I am pointing out that the schedule provides for a lesser time.

I think the Minister for Industrial Development, when introducing the Bill on behalf of the Minister for Railways, stated that the extra time involved in the Perth-Kalgoorlie trip would be 1 hour 55 minutes, and 1 hour 32 minutes for the Kalgoorlie-Perth trip. I have already stated that I have no quarrel with the fact that the time involved will be less; however, I do quarrel with the fact that in such a short period of time two different answers were supplied. Surely I could have been given the correct times on the 20th August.

I doubt very much whether the Railways Department will be able to keep to the schedule, bearing in mind that the journey involved is longer. I really do not believe the department will be able to keep to the times and that the saving in time will actually be made.

Several other aspects must be considered. I am well aware that with the introduction of the standard gauge service from Kalgoorlie to Perth the narrow gauge line between Northam and Merredin will no longer be required. It is understandable that the department wishes to make use of the rails on that line because they are superior to those used on other lines. So it is proposed to take up those rails and transport them to Kalgoorlie for use in re-laying the line from Kalgoorlie to Esperance so that it may cater for heavy traffic such as nickel concentrates and large tonnages of salt going to the Port of Esperance.

My criticism concerns the premature putting into operation of this procedure before the standard gauge railcar is operating on the Perth-Kalgoorlie line. Indeed, I must take exception to the answers which have been given and statements which have been made concerning that service. When the standard gauge railway came into operation and the interstate trains commenced to use it, we were told that a service would be commenced from Kalgoorlie using an entirely new train—a dieselcar type—which would cut the journey by several hours. We were told the journey would be made in a rather rapid time and that the passengers would enjoy much comfort.

When this service was first mooted it was stated that the commencement date would be approximately July, 1970. Subsequently, on the 25th March, 1969, the member for Kalgoorlie asked, among other things, when the service would come into operation and the answer given by the Minister for Railways was as follows:—

From current information available, and provided prompt approval is received from the

Commonwealth Government for the acquisition of the rail cars—late 1970.

Subsequently, I asked a similar question on the 12th August this year as follows:—

On what date is it proposed to inaugurate the standard gauge train service between Kalgoorlie and Perth?

The Minister for Works, on behalf of the Minister for Railways, replied:—

Contingent on delivery of rail cars and trailers by the manufacturers, introduction of the new service is planned for late February, 1971.

So, we have gone from July of 1970 to the latter end of 1970 after which we reach late February, 1971. When the Minister for Industrial Development introduced the Bill he had something else to say about the date of commencement of the standard gauge service. On the 16th September, 1970, the Minister said at page 802 of *Hansard*—

It was anticipated that delivery of the railcars would be effected between July and early October, 1970. However, delays have occurred in the construction programme and the latest advice received from the company concerned is that delivery of the railcars ex its works in Granville, New South Wales, will be from the 9th March, 1971, to the 20th April, 1971.

In view of the varying dates we have been given, and taking a purely gloomy view of the matter, it could well be that this service will not be in operation this time next year.

I am, of course, concerned with the fact that the stopgap service will be in operation during this entire period and the passengers using this service will continue to be inconvenienced; because we were given nothing definite when the Bill was introduced, and there is no guarantee that the railcars will be in operation next March or April.

We have been given one date after another. Surely this is not good business; surely when these services are planned and the orders are placed for equipment and so on we can be told something more definite; surely we can be told to within a few months as to when the services are likely to commence.

Mr. O'Connor: We would not know whether there were likely to be strikes which would set us back further at this stage.

Mr. MOIR: The Minister talks about the likelihood of strikes. We could, of course, have earthquakes, floods, and similar calamities.

Mr. O'Connor: But they do set us back.

Mr. MOIR: Can the Minister tell me any particular event that has held up the delivery of these cars?

Mr. O'Connor: The Minister quoted some of these instances.

Mr. MOIR: I think I followed the Minister very closely when he introduced the measure and I am sure he gave no definite reason at all for the delay. He merely said that delays had occurred in the provision of equipment from overseas but he did not say how the delays were caused.

Mr. O'Connor: At page 803 the Minister for Industrial Development quoted the additional travelling time from Perth to Kalgoorlie as 2 hours 25 minutes, and on the westbound journey as 1 hour 54 minutes. You appear to quote 2 hours in both cases. Was that, perhaps, a mistake?

Mr. MOIR: I merely quoted the time from that advertised in connection with the travelling time of the train.

Mr. O'Connor: You are quite happy about it?

Mr. MOIR: Yes. Another matter that concerns me in connection with the service from Kalgoorlie to Perth is that we have been told—and this is a fact—that passengers can travel on the interstate train from Kalgoorlie to Perth and from Perth to Kalgoorlie.

I know this to be a fact, because I have travelled on this train myself from Perth to Kalgoorlie. But in an answer given to the member for Kalgoorlie the Minister said in relation to this question—

Provided ample notice is received of bookings required and provided berths are available passengers will be permitted to travel on the interstate train.

I would like to inform the Minister that while there is very little difficulty in securing a berth on the train from Perth to Kalgoorlie, there is considerable difficulty in getting a booking on that train from Kalgoorlie to Perth, for reasons which I will explain. I certainly do not think they are valid reasons.

I have been unable to secure a berth on this train on only one occasion while travelling from Perth to Kalgoorlie and, of course, I accept that position. If no berths are available nothing can be done about it. But the people in Kalgoorlie—those who wish to use this train—suffer considerable inconvenience, because the staff at Kalgoorlie can give them no definite information as to the availability of berths until the train arrives at Kalgoorlie. As the train arrives at Kalgoorlie at 7.45 p.m. and the Kalgoorlie express has already departed at 7 p.m., the people concerned do not wait to see whether they can get a berth or not.

They just take any berth that is available, even though it may be on a slower train. I have discussed this matter with Commonwealth railwaymen and they say there is no valid reason why this should be the case. They inform me that when the train leaves Port Augusta it is well known what berths will become available at Kalgoorlie; they know the berths that were not occupied on the journey and they know the passengers they are likely to pick up along the trans.-line.

I am told this information is available, and the people concerned should not be put to any inconvenience by having to wait until the last hour, or perhaps the last minute, before knowing whether they can secure a berth on the train.

I give that information for the benefit of the Minister, because I know that he is as concerned as the passengers themselves; I know he would like them to be accommodated on that train, because there is no sense in running a train with vacant berths between Kalgoorlie and Perth, particularly when people would like to occupy those berths. On the journey from Perth to Kalgoorlie one generally knows the day before, or certainly on the morning one is due to travel, whether or not a berth is available; but it is quite a different matter on the journey from Kalgoorlie to Perth.

Another question that has caused me some concern is that when the standard gauge railway is operating the fares will be considerably higher than they are at present. At the moment a buffet car is available on the Kalgoorlie express and it is possible for people to be supplied with food which is tastefully presented. The cost of this food is very modest indeed and this is greatly appreciated by the people who travel on the train, especially the family man.

It is quite a costly business for a man to travel by train with his wife and children. I see, however, that the previous system is to be superseded and it is now proposed to provide meals on the train in question. For the adult travelling one way the meals will cost \$2.35. No mention is made of what the charge will be for children. For a double ticket the price of the meals will be \$3.30. Irrespective of whether the people concerned require meals, this amount will be included in the price of the fare.

We could have the situation of a small family travelling on the train being supplied with a basket of sandwiches and other food to tide them over the journey, which takes approximately seven hours. They will have no option. I know quite a number of people would willingly pay the money for a meal served to them and I have no doubt it would be a good meal. On the other hand, anyone who does not require a meal would still be required to pay for it, and I do not believe that is right.

The same situation applies at the present time on the trans.-train between Kalgoorlie and Perth, on which passengers are charged an extra 25c for a cup of tea. If a man is travelling with his wife he is charged an extra 50c for the tea; and he must pay this whether or not the cup of tea is required. For the Minister's information I would point out that even members of Parliament must pay this whether or not they want the cup of tea. This is only a small matter, but I believe a principle is involved. Passengers should not be forced to pay for something they do not require.

I am critical of the whole situation. I am critical of the fact that a longer journey has been introduced, that the fares have not been managed better, and that the particular line under discussion has had to be removed.

Mr. O'Connor: Can you suggest how the situation could have been improved?

Mr. MOIR: I do not know. I am not aware of the state of the Esperance line. I take it that it is being done urgently because the line is not capable of carrying the heavy loads.

Mr. O'Connor: But it needs upgrading.

Mr. MOIR: But might I remind the Minister that it seems to be an unnecessary expense when negotiations are under way for the establishment of a standard gauge line from Kalgoorlie to Esperance.

Mr. O'Connor: We have made some provision for wider sleepers, whereas the—

Mr. MOIR: Be that as it may, it seems that a certain amount of costly work will be carried out, and if the standard gauge line is established, then that will be a completely new railway which will be built, or partly built anyhow, on this route. I would hate to think that someone in the department decided that this work must be done at any cost and that the goldfields people will put up with anything in connection with travel.

I want to impress on the Minister here and now that the Railways Department will lose considerable revenue as a result of this move because people will use alternative means of transport. In case the Minister does not know it, there is a very good air service in operation between Kalgoorlie and Perth and it does not take very much to persuade people to change from one mode of travel to another even if the alternative is more expensive, as it is attractive because of the short time involved.

As I have indicated I am not very happy with this Bill at all and, in fact, I am opposed to it.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [3.24 p.m.]: I rise to speak on this Bill in a rather different vein from that of the previous speaker. It will be more or less along the lines adopted by the member for Northam a couple of evenings ago.

The discontinuance of the present line and the establishment of the new standard gauge line, which will be the only link, heralds the end of a period in history, but too few of us are aware of the events which have taken place and which have been responsible for the present situation.

So far great credit has been attributed to the Railways Department for its foresight, and for the savings that this line has afforded many. However, this would not have been possible had it not been for the co-operation of the Railways Department and Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. I think the Minister will readily agree that years of planning have taken place with regard to this line and it would not have been established, or had such a happy ending, if the farmers of Western Australia, through their company—Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd.—had not been willing to co-operate.

It is interesting to note that between Grass Valley and Southern Cross, there were, prior to the establishment of the standard gauge line, 21 sidings operating for the receipt of wheat. At that time, something like 2,226,000-odd bushels of wheat was being handled at those 21 sidings. In addition, there was a flour mill at Kellerberrin and another at Northam.

With the advent of the standard gauge line the company was able to upgrade the facilities at 15 points along that line. The farmers have been provided with modern facilities for some 9,000,000 bushels at these 15 upgraded points constructed in lieu of the original 21. The farmers now have six less sidings, but in return for having to travel the few extra miles, they have been provided with upgraded facilities, quick unloading, and quicker turnaround. In all the farmers are quite happy.

At the terminal at Avon an immense structure has been erected and this was able to handle all the wheat on the narrow gauge line from the north and south running into Avon, and reload it onto the standard gauge line. In the first instance the facilities provided catered for 672,000 bushels, but recently an emergency storage has been established there for another 7,500,000 bushels. At Merredin the facilities are capable of handling 336,000 bushels and there is another emergency storage for 8,000,000 bushels.

These two turnaround points at Avon and Merredin are to be carefully watched. Because of the quick turnaround by the railways, wheat can be stored in the

country areas as against the more expensive storage which would be involved were the wheat stored closer to the metropolitan area.

The cost of establishing the 15 sidings on the standard gauge line was in the vicinity of \$5,000,000. All of this will be paid for by the farmers.

The two transfer points cost \$2,750,000 and, although they will remain the property of Co-operative Bulk Handling, they are to be amortised by the West Australian Government Railways over a 10-year period. Again, this is a true example of co-operation. Co-operative Bulk Handling has been allowed to continue to run its own organisation and to handle its own construction but it will be recompensed by the West Australian Government Railways at these two places; namely, Avon and Merredin.

The quick turn around of railway trucks has meant an immense saving to the Railways Department. The time from Northam is now eight hours compared with the much longer time which applied previously. In turn this has meant there have been no increases in freight costs in the transfer of grain to farmers who are along those lines. It was originally foreseen that one of the advantages of a broad gauge railway line would be to stop rail costs to the farmers from rising. I sincerely hope this will continue for some years to come.

The saving to C.B.H., in itself, has been interesting. Under the new system of handling wheat 27,000,000 bushels were handled at a cost of 4.63c per bushel. The cost of handling 88,000,000 bushels under the old system was 7.34c per bushel. This means that a saving of nearly 50 per cent. has been effected with the new system of handling.

It is also interesting to note that the amount of 27,000,000 bushels handled under the new system at 4.63c per bushel is only one-quarter of the 88,000,000 bushels handled under the old system at 7.34c per bushel. In reality, had the amount handled under the old system been closer to 27,000,000 bushels the cost per bushel would have been much higher than the 7.34c I have mentioned.

Originally, 30 men were employed by C.B.H. at the Fremantle terminal on the narrow gauge line and they worked 125 unloading hours per week. The cost per ton of sending the wheat was worked out at 19.793c. Only 10 men are employed on the standard gauge line receivals and they work an average of 71 hours in total per week. The cost per ton of sending wheat is 2.984c. This means that there is a difference in cost of 16.809c per ton. In other words, this season's throughput of 1,543,000 tons, with a saving in labour costs of 16.809c per ton, will amount to a total saving of \$259,000. This will be a direct saving to the farmers.

This broad gauge railway line will be a guideline for future standard gauge lines to be constructed in the State. Some time ago plans were printed showing broad gauge lines which might be constructed. It is a possibility that lines will swing away from Northam to the south and to the north with Northam as the central point. Although the cost to the State over a number of years might be considerable, the benefits which flow to farmers as a result of standard gauge operations have been proved to be immense. I sincerely hope that these projects will be commenced as soon as finance becomes available and we will see more standard gauge lines constructed through the agricultural areas enabling farmers to transport their produce at considerably cheaper rates.

As I have said, the exercise was completed in a spirit of co-operation. Facts and figures compiled by both the Railways Department and Co-operative Bulk Handling are of immense value, not only to the company but also to the State. I know the Minister will agree that had it not been for this spirit of co-operation between the farmers, their company, and the Government, none of the happy endings—namely, the standard gauge railway line—would have been possible.

The narrow gauge section is to be lifted and a great deal of the 10,000 tons of iron which will be retrieved will be used on another railway line. Again, this is a line in which Co-operative Bulk Handling and the farmers have a particular interest. We only hope that it will be possible to have the same turn around of traffic and of grain to the ports, and that the savings so far effected by farmers in handling costs at the port will be further enhanced by the proposed upgrading of this railway line.

In all, this is the closing of an era, as the member for Northam said, but in my opinion it is the start of an era of expansion from which we will never look back once we see the whole State covered by a similar network.

MR. MAY (Clontarf) [3.37 p.m.]: Like the member for Boulder-Dundas, I have a great deal of reservation in connection with the measure being debated this afternoon. The Bill before us is—

An Act to Authorize the Discontinuance of Certain Railways and portion of a Certain Railway and to Revest in Her Majesty Certain Lands comprised therein, and for incidental and other purposes.

It is fully appreciated that the closure of this railway line is an economic requirement in the overall planning of the railway system, having regard for the fact that it is urgently required to rehabilitate the Esperance line.

This afternoon I intend to deal with a number of aspects. I was extremely pleased that a member of the Country Party had something to say on this measure, because I feel that the problem requires careful thought so far as farmers are concerned.

During the debate on the Kwinana loop line last year I commended the Minister on a report submitted to the House with the Bill. The report was from the Director-General of Transport, who indicated the necessity for the line, pointed out the ramifications of it, and, in general, gave members a great deal of information. I am afraid I cannot throw any bouquets to the Director-General of Transport for the one-page submission which he has given in connection with the closure of this line. I sincerely trust that the Minister has personally given the matter a great deal of thought before introducing the measure into Parliament. I certainly hope he did not rely on this one-page submission from the Director-General of Transport. To my mind much more information should have been given to members before debate on this measure took place.

The Director-General of Transport has given an assurance that alternative transport arrangements will be made between Southern Cross and Coolgardie and that these arrangements will be suitable to those people who will be without railway transport as the result of the closure of this section. However, no mention has been made of the level of charges which will be debited against people living in this area—people who, in effect, went on the land there with the sole intention of using rail transport. I consider that Parliament should give an assurance to these people that they will not be prejudiced in any way through the discontinuance of the line because of the standard gauge. That is only one point about the proposition that requires clarification.

It was interesting to listen to the member for Avon and his comments regarding the primary producers and their contribution and that of C.B.H. so far as the line is concerned. Both he and my colleague, the member for Northam, indicated the tremendous impact the line has had on the economy of Western Australia since its inception in the year 1897, I think. I am sure members realise the railways have served a very useful purpose during this period.

I should like to read portion of a paper entitled "User Choice of Transport in Western Australia" delivered to the Institute of Transport last year. This relates to the railways, and the portion I wish to quote deals with the financial picture. It states—

Fixed assets at cost less depreciation approximate \$225m. here in W.A., a figure boosted by standard gauge ac-

tivity and the annual interest bill is nearly \$10m. This is as a result of Government decisions dating back to almost 100 years ago and community services are still being provided as a result of these decisions. Should these continue—the servicing of more than a thousand places, some with only a handful of people, the operation of branch lines only a few miles apart built in the horse and cart days—to mention but two? To illustrate—the loss incurred on the adjacent Narrogin-Corrigin-Merredin and Narrogin-Kondinin-Merredin branch lines is about \$750,000 a year, yet if one line were closed and all traffic dealt with on the other, the loss would be very substantially reduced.

If 1,000 sidings were closed and services concentrated to 150 towns 25-30 miles apart there also would be very substantial savings.

But this would be a reduction in service which has been available over the years and there has been no indication that any Government has been prepared to take the plunge in this respect. One might only look at the Leonora Branch to see how difficult it is to reduce services no matter how unprofitable they may be.

I would like Country Party members to look at one particular point. While the member for Avon put up a good case for C.B.H. he did not mention that the large wagons that transport wheat from the cereal growing districts to the metropolitan area are constructed only for the carriage of grain, and they have to be returned empty to their place of loading. Therefore, the Railways Department does incur a substantial loss in the back-loading of these wagons.

Mr. Gayfer: But these losses must be put against other savings.

Mr. MAY: May be, but I am referring to something the honourable member did not mention, and I would like it put on record.

Another point that has arisen because of the proposed discontinuance of the line is that many primary producers will be prejudiced as a result of the increased costs in the transport of goods. The Railways Department has engaged in considerable publicity in the areas around the lines from Nungarin to Merredin, from Corrigin to Merredin, and from Naremburn to Merredin regarding the carriage of goods. However, goods from the points to which I have just referred have to be taken to Merredin and are then transhipped, forwarded to Kewdale, and unloaded.

In point of fact, if a person were to load a wagon with oats at one of the sidings on the lines I have mentioned, and the consignee has a private siding in the

metropolitan area, say at Fremantle, Bayswater, or Cannington, the goods have to go to Kewdale and the consignee even though, as I said, he has a private siding, has to take the goods from Kewdale to his yard by road. Even if a company in the metropolitan area has a 3 ft. 6 in. siding at its yard it cannot be used. Yet a person who is south of Bruce Rock or Corrigin can load goods onto a wagon on the 3 ft. 6 in. line and have those goods taken to the metropolitan area and delivered direct to private sidings.

The cost involved in delivering goods to Kewdale instead of private sidings has never been disclosed, but it would be interesting to find out what effect it has on the market value of those goods.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.04 p.m.

Mr. MAY: I was endeavouring to indicate to the House some of the problems which I feel will arise from the transshipment of goods at Merredin. Obviously, Merredin is the centre from which the transshipment of goods must take place, but in my opinion some way must be found by which farmers and people in country towns can be compensated for having to have their goods carted to Merredin for transshipment to Kewdale on the standard gauge line, and then picked up by road transport for delivery to their destination. For example, if a farmer has wool to be transported between Nungarin and Merredin, or on the other branch line between Bruce Rock and Merredin, the wool has to be taken to Merredin and placed on standard gauge wagons and, in effect, it will be forwarded to Kewdale for agents in Fremantle who have sidings on the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line. This is in accordance with a direction which has been publicly announced by the Railways Department.

In regard to those farmers who have available to them a 3 ft. 6 in. line, I cannot see why they cannot consign wagonloads of wool from the point of origin to the agent's siding in the metropolitan area, which is also on a 3 ft. 6 in. line. In fact, in my opinion, there is no reason why this should not be done. Obviously, the department has studied the situation. I raise this point in the hope that the Minister may be able to enlighten us as to why at centres south of Nungarin, such as Yelbeni and Wyalkatchem, any person is able to send his goods on the 3 ft. 6 in. line to Elder Smith, Goldsbrough Mort or anybody else who has a 3 ft. 6 in. siding in the metropolitan area. This is the existing position.

If someone at Nungarin wants to send a wagonload of goods to Bunbury, he has the goods carted to Merredin and then transhipped and carried by the standard gauge line to Kewdale. They are then transhipped once again to a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line to Bunbury, at no extra cost

to the consignor. Let us take the firm of Massey-Ferguson as an example. It may wish to consign a scarifier, or a tractor. It has a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge siding at Maylands, or in close proximity to its works, but it is now obliged to go to Kewdale to consign its products to the north.

In view of the fact that the firm has a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge siding in the metropolitan area, its goods could be consigned direct to Merredin or Nungarin for transport to the north. I am raising these points so that the Minister may be able to clarify them. I thought members of the Country Party would raise this issue, because they are affected more than anybody else, and obviously it is a matter that should receive careful consideration by the Minister. It may have been considered already, but I can only go on the report that has been submitted by the Director-General of Transport and by what is set out in the notes used by the Minister to introduce the second reading of the Bill.

I would like to deal briefly with another matter. In his speech the Minister went to a great deal of trouble to indicate the savings that will be effected by the discontinuance of this line, and I have no quarrel with that argument. The Minister stated—

As members are aware, the railways have up to now been operating both the standard gauge line and the 3 ft. 6 in. line between East Northam and Kalgoorlie and closure of the 3 ft. 6 in. line between East Northam and Coolgardie will bring about a considerable financial benefit.

The benefits fall broadly into three categories; the savings respectively from depreciation and interest charges, truck maintenance and staff redundancy.

That is fair enough, but in the submission made by the Minister he went to great pains to indicate what the savings will be. Let us review the situation relating to the rerouting of the passenger trains through Wyalkatchem. In his speech the Minister stated that delivery of the railcars would be effected in July of this year. That was according to the original programme. We have now been told that there is a possibility that they may be available by April 1971, but I have very serious doubts about that. However, let us look at the situation that exists now.

The travelling time of east-bound passenger trains is 2 hours 25 minutes, and 1 hour 54 minutes for the west-bound trains. That is approximately 4 hours and 20 minutes for the journey in both directions. If we total the cost to the Railways Department to reroute this train due to the delay in the delivery of the new railcars and coaches, I think we will find

the amount that will be revealed will be fantastic. For instance, the normal hourly rate for engine drivers is about \$2.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Mitchell): There is too much loud whispering in the Chamber.

Mr. MAY: The average hourly rate for an engine driver is about \$2. I am sure the member for Northam will confirm that. However, that is only the rate for the engine driver. The guard, the conductors, and the hostesses have to be considered also. I believe there has been a considerable degree of change in the interlocking system to provide for passenger trains to go around the loop. If all these extra charges were totalled, I am sure the amount would be considerable.

What I would like to ascertain from the Minister is whether any penalty clause has been included in the contract for the delivery of these rail coaches, because no mention has been made of it. I feel there should be a penalty clause in the contract, as it is obvious that the longer the delivery of these coaches is delayed the greater the cost will be to the Railways Department. Therefore, I would like the Minister to outline what savings were effected; and I would like to know what the cost will be to the Railways Department between now and July of next year.

Mr. O'Connor: I think the Minister indicated what the savings would be on the Esperance line.

Mr. MAY: The Minister mentioned staff redundancy, and there would not be any staff redundancy on the Esperance line.

Mr. O'Connor: I think he gave other figures apart from the savings on the Esperance line.

Mr. MAY: The Minister's notes show the following:—

As members are aware the railways have up to now been operating both the standard gauge line and the 3 ft. 6 in. line between East Northam and Kalgoorlie and closure of the 3 ft. 6 in. line between East Northam and Coolgardie will bring about a considerable financial benefit.

That has nothing to do with the Esperance line. This relates, purely and simply, to what the Railways Department will gain by the discontinuance of the line.

Mr. O'Connor: Did not the Minister quote any figures?

Mr. MAY: No. Oh, yes he does. I apologise to the House. The following appears a little further down in the Minister's notes:—

In the year ended the 30th June, 1969, depreciation and interest were respectively \$208,000 and \$385,000, truck maintenance cost, including resleepering—both materials and labour—is roundly \$1,400,000 per

annum and redundant traffic staff—who will be transferred to fill vacancies in other areas—will on current rates of pay effect a saving of approximately \$30,000 per annum.

That saving of \$30,000 was shown on the following page of the Minister's notes and that is how I missed the figure. However, in view of the fact that these costs have been outlined so specifically in the Minister's speech, I fail to see why the costs relating to the diversion of the route around the Wyalkatchem loop could not have been listed.

I understand that the diversion of the train around Wyalkatchem commenced on Monday. Even during this week there were occasions when the train broke down, and delays occurred. As the member for Boulder-Dundas pointed out, once a transport service loses passengers it is difficult for it to regain them. The fact that passengers from Kalgoorlie to Perth, or Perth to Kalgoorlie, have to travel on the train for 16 hours on a journey of about 400 miles creates problems for them. The sooner the new coaches are put into operation the better for all concerned, because in these days air transport and the bitumen roads have deprived the railways of a portion of their revenue.

At the present time it is difficult for the Railways Department to compete with road transport. Time and time again I have pointed out that the department is like a cow which everybody wants to milk, but which nobody wants to feed. This is borne out by a number of instances where farmers have used road transport. In my view the farming community has a great deal to answer for when they use road transport to cart their produce and to backload with the requirements of their farms. It seems that some farmers are quite happy to transport their produce to the metropolitan area by road, and to backload with fuel, farm machinery, and the like.

Instances have occurred where farmers have brought a couple of bags of produce on their trucks to the metropolitan area for the purpose of backloading eight tons of fuel oil. What is worse, a farmer doing this might only need four tons of fuel oil for his own purpose, and he carts the other four tons for his neighbour. What does the farmer do with the empty drums? Generally he deposits them at the railway siding; and he expects the Railways Department to transport the empty drums to the metropolitan area at concession rates.

Whilst I support the farmers in their protest against the method under which this particular line is to be discontinued, and against the alternative arrangements, I feel that the farmers themselves should make greater use of the railways for the

transport of their produce and requisites. We are all aware that railway freights are telescoped so that they benefit the goods which are transported over long distances. The railways are utilised for transportation of goods like cornflakes and road materials, but when it comes to tobacco and similar high-priced but small-bulk goods, road transport seems to win this freight. I suggest that when the Minister is looking into the question of easing the restrictions on road transport in the north this aspect should be taken into consideration. I do not want to delay this legislation; I merely ask the Minister to look into the matter.

No doubt, a number of railways discontinuance Bills will be introduced in the future. On such occasions more information should be given to the House than has been given in respect of the measure before us, to enable members to consider the matters fully. When a railway line which has been in operation since 1897 is to be discontinued, then I suggest we should look into the question very closely.

Some of the people who are living along this line want to know what will be the transport position when the railway service is discontinued. The Director-General of Transport has indicated that an alternative service will be provided, but we would like to know what extra charges will be involved in transporting the produce of the people concerned. A farmer living two miles south of Nungarin might benefit, but another farmer, on the east side of Nungarin, might suffer. No clear explanation has been given, but probably the Railways Department has some plan in mind. A farmer south of Nungarin is able to have his produce transported to the metropolitan area on the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line, but another farmer 10 miles away might have to cart his produce to Merredin to be transported over the standard gauge line to Kewdale from where road transport will be required to take the produce to its destination.

Whilst in principle I support the need for bringing this railways discontinuance Bill before Parliament, and the need to rehabilitate the Esperance line, I cannot support the Bill itself because we have not been given sufficient information. I would request that the Minister, on future occasions when similar Bills are brought before the House, supply us with more information.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Railways) [4.21 p.m.]: I thank members for their general support of the Bill, although at some stage of the debate it seemed that a major catastrophe would occur in the State by its introduction. We should realise that this "major catastrophe" is virtually the start of standardisation of the railway lines in the State, which will mean a great deal to the people.

I can understand the views of some members who have raised difficulties in connection with the pulling up of this 3 ft. 6 in. line. The discontinuance of the line will inconvenience some people, but I do not think there are many of them. However, the benefits to the State from the standardisation of railway lines will be tremendous. Firstly, by pulling up this section of the 3 ft. 6 in. line we will avoid a duplication of service between Perth and Kalgoorlie. When the equipment is available, we will be putting into operation a faster and more efficient service.

This is the first step in the standardisation programme of the railways which this Government—and I hope future Governments—will try to implement throughout the State. Just as it is important to have a standard gauge line from Perth to the Eastern States, it is equally important to have standardisation of the railway lines within Western Australia, so that some of the problems which have been pointed out can be eliminated as soon as possible.

The member for Northam and the member for Avon gave some historical details in connection with the train service on the line that is to be discontinued. I was extremely interested in the comments of the member for Northam. I join with him and with other members in extending our gratitude to those who were responsible for initiating this 3 ft. 6 in. line, and to those who have operated the service since its inception. This line has been of tremendous benefit to Western Australia, and it is a pity to see it discontinued; but as the State progresses we must implement what will be of benefit to the people in the future.

The member for Northam also made reference to the railway crossing at Northam, near the hospital and where Brady's factory is established. Arrangements have been made to eliminate this line, and the existing line will be pulled up in the near future. I hope this will ease the problem.

The member for Boulder-Dundas brought up the time factor in the service through Wyalkatchem over the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line. It is unfortunate that the equipment to provide a faster service over the standard gauge line is not ready at the moment. Acting on my behalf, the Minister for Industrial Development did explain some of the reasons for the delay in supplying this equipment. We had some initial problems, and we have been trying to get the Commonwealth to agree to provide Western Australia with some of the equipment for this line.

As most members will know, last year we were endeavouring to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government and other Governments in the Eastern States to

borrow equipment to run people from Kalgoorlie to Perth on the standard gauge line as quickly as possible. However, when it appeared we would get this equipment, the *Aurora* was involved in a crash in the Eastern States and the equipment was required there and thus eliminated the possibility of our getting some of it, as we had hoped.

I do appreciate the point raised: that the equipment may not be ready by April. I sincerely hope it will be. The commissioner has been in touch with those concerned in the Eastern States in an endeavour to expedite the delivery, and he has expressed our concern at the delay. As I pointed out, the Minister for Industrial Development indicated some of the reasons for the holdup. There was a delay in the delivery of some equipment from overseas, and also the Eastern States companies were inconvenienced as a result of some strike action.

The saving in finance is, I think, an extremely important point and is one of the reasons why I endeavoured to bring all the equipment onto the standard gauge line last year. We realised that by transferring the particular track from Kalgoorlie to Northam over to the Esperance line we could save \$1,000,000. This is not a small sum, but a considerable one, and it must be taken into account when we are considering the action necessary.

By pulling up the narrow gauge line alongside the standard gauge line we save another \$2,000,000 or more, and I am quite sure members will appreciate that this is something any Government must take into account.

I did consider the various ways to overcome the problem. I wanted to save the \$2,000,000, as would every railwayman. I contemplated transporting the passengers temporarily from Kalgoorlie to Perth by railway buses, but, because of some problems and the capital outlay, this was considered unsatisfactory. Finally it was decided that it was best to take them on the Wyalkatchem line, and while I am not happy with the extra time involved, it will be only a few months before we receive the equipment and we will then be able to provide a much more satisfactory run on a better line with more favourable equipment.

Mr. May: It will be at least seven or eight months.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I realise this, but I think it is well worth saving the department the \$2,500,000 or \$3,000,000 which is involved. I am well aware that a number of people in that area will be inconvenienced during this time, but to outlay that extra money would be a tremendous burden on the whole State. We took all this into account and, although the action we have

taken is certainly not desirable in every way, it is the most favourable in all the circumstances.

The member for Northam also referred to some of the transportation problems confronting those firms in the metropolitan area which have a narrow gauge spur line into their properties. This again is a problem, but we must bear in mind that these firms established these lines at their own cost. Some of them have already established a standard gauge line as well, as have the superphosphate companies, for instance. A Commonwealth standard gauge contribution was made towards this. If any other firms are interested in establishing a standard gauge line as well, we would be more than happy to discuss the question with them. As a matter of fact, such discussions are at present in progress with several firms.

I do appreciate the points raised by various members and also the fact that some people will be inconvenienced as the result of the extra time involved and the additional problems to be faced. However, this is only for a period and we must look ahead. While we have at the moment a standard gauge line only from Kalgoorlie to Perth and to the Kwinana area, this is merely a start. We are at present endeavouring to make arrangements for the standardisation of the Esperance-Kalgoorlie line, which is approximately 260 to 270 miles long. We have had some inquiries regarding this and Western Mining will contribute \$9,000,000 towards the cost, and \$3,400,000 is being contributed by Lake Lefroy salt company, and this leaves only \$2,500,000 to be found to standardise this particular line.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Has any consideration been given to the standardisation of the line from Laverton to Kalgoorlie?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I will deal with that when I have concluded what I want to say about the Esperance line. We have approached the Commonwealth in an effort to obtain money for rolling stock on the Esperance line, but unfortunately there has been a delay in replying. Once we receive this correspondence we will be in a better position to know whether we can go ahead with the Esperance line. Eventually, of course, we hope to have one gauge right throughout Western Australia, and I am sure this is the desire of everyone in the State.

In connection with the point raised by the member for Kalgoorlie, we have had discussions with certain groups in connection with the standardisation of the line to Laverton, but these discussions are only in the early stages and I cannot at the moment give very much information about the matter. We have also had discussions with groups in the Geraldton area in connection with the standardisation of the line from Meekatharra to Geraldton.

This is worth something in the vicinity of \$30,000,000 and we hope the company concerned will pay the lot. It can be seen, therefore, that a lot of work has been carried out in connection with the possible standardisation. While the conversion might take some time, I think it is very desirable.

Mr. May: Was there any penalty attached to the contract for the supply of railcars?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Offhand, I cannot say. However, I will check and pass the information on to the honourable member.

Mr. Brady: Was a feasibility study made in regard to the existing standard gauge line?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes.

Mr. Brady: How did it work out?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Quite well. One of the main reasons put forward for the present section was the iron ore operations. The iron ore freight has increased from 1,100,000 tons to 1,800,000 tons, and that freight will increase to 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 tons in the very near future. The carting of the iron ore has been the main reason for the line proving to be economically successful.

Those are the points I wished to raise at this stage, and I thank members for their co-operation in connection with this Bill. I commend the second reading.

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.

STATE FORESTS

Revocation of Dedication: Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had concurred in the Assembly's resolution.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Appointment of The Hon. W. F. Wilesee: Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that following the resignation of The Hon. H. C. Strickland from the Standing Orders Committee, The Hon. W. F. Wilesee had been elected to serve on this Committee.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 24th September.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [4.35 p.m.]: This Bill has three main provisions. It provides, firstly, for the awarding of degrees by the Western Australian Institute of Technology; secondly, for student representation on the council or the governing body of the Institute; and, thirdly, for an alteration of the Council of the Institute by deleting from the representation the Under-Treasurer or his representative.

I think I might deal with the three provisions in reverse. There is not a great deal to say, but some comments should be made. The Government deserves to be congratulated—and I offer congratulations on this occasion—regarding the Institute of Technology. However, I do not know that the Government can take all the credit, because the Institute has a council which has certainly worked very hard to bring the new Institute to the standard it has reached today. However, I do congratulate the Government and I also hope the Institute will go from strength to strength. I cannot see it doing anything else but that.

There is the proposal to alter the Council of the Institute by deleting from that body the Under-Treasurer of the State, or a person nominated in writing by him, which has been in the Act since the measure first came before the House in 1966. There has been provision on both the interim council and the permanent council for the Under-Treasurer or his representative to be a member. One might wonder whether or not there is any need for such a person to be on the council, but I say there most certainly is a need.

A considerable sum of money has been advanced to the Institute by the Government, and where large amounts of money are involved then some person from the Treasury should keep a watch on the spending of that money. Item 139 on page 48 of the Revenue Estimates provides for an amount of \$3,708,000 to go to the Institute of Technology during the current year. That is a sizeable proportion of the State's finances, and is an increase of something like \$800,000 on the amount actually spent last year. The amount spent last year was something in excess of \$300,000 more than the actual vote.

If the State is to grant to the Institute a sum of something like \$4,000,000, I think the State needs to have fairly direct representation to look after the interests of the Government. The position is that if the Government representative is removed from the council there will be no direct representation of the Government and the only information the Minister will receive in regard to the finances of the Institute will be that sent to him each year. A suggested estimate of expenditure will be sent to the Minister for his approval. I do not know whether the Minister will

send that estimate to the Treasury and ask whether it is a fair estimation of the Institute's requirements, or whether he will just initial it and the Institute will receive the money. I do not know what the procedure will be.

The fact is that we should have someone watching the position throughout the whole of the year. Whilst I do not like to make a comparison between the Western Australian Institute of Technology and the Western Australian University, I increasingly find that in this type of debate we have to draw a parallel between the two bodies. We have already debated the essential differences between them, and I am not going to repeat them here today. However, having observed the long-established practices at the University, I think we must see where such practices are desirable so far as the Institute of Technology is concerned.

On the same page of the Revenue Estimates, page 48, we find provision under items 128 to 132 for the expenditure of just under \$5,000,000 by the University. The Government has a representative on the Senate of the University. That person is a Treasury official and, indeed, the present Under-Treasurer (Mr. Townsing) is the Pro-Chancellor of the University. The University is to receive something short of \$5,000,000, and the Institute of Technology almost \$4,000,000. Therefore, if there is a necessity for a representative of the Treasury to be on the University Senate, surely there is a necessity for a representative of the Treasury to be on the Council of the Institute of Technology. The Minister gave only one reason for making this alteration. I should like to quote from his speech. He said—

The Under-Treasurer is concerned that he and his senior officers have become increasingly involved in the administration of tertiary education establishments to the detriment of their prime function as Treasury officials and has therefore asked that he be relieved of this obligation.

I do not know what the prime function of Treasury officials is, if it is not to watch the State's finances. Surely to goodness their duty is to do just that! The amounts involved are the justification for putting them on the Council of the Institute. I note that the Minister used the word "he"; in other words, the Under-Treasurer asked to be relieved of this obligation, because he was becoming increasingly involved in education. The fact remains, the Under-Treasurer need not be the person concerned. Section 9 (1) (e) reads—

the person for the time being holding the office of Under Treasurer of the State or a person nominated in writing by him to the Minister;

This means that the Under-Treasurer can select a suitable person to help him and nominate that person to the Minister. Doubtless the Minister would accept the nomination and the person selected would be on the Council of the Institute of Technology.

When such an amount of money is involved I repeat that it is absolutely essential for the Government to have a full-time representative on the Council of the Institute. I also repeat that the prime function of Treasury officials is to watch State expenditure. I do not begrudge the Institute of Technology 1c of the \$4,000,000 it is to receive but, if that amount of money does not need watching, I do not know what does. I also repeat the analogy I made; namely, if it is necessary for a Treasury representative to be on the Senate of the University, surely it is just as necessary for a Treasury official to be on the Council of the Institute of Technology. I cannot accept the rather bland reason given by the Minister for taking the Under-Treasurer from the council. I do not think it is sufficient reason and I oppose this proposal.

Clause 3 of the Bill will make provision for student representation on the council. It is rather interesting to note the changes which have occurred in the four years since the legislation was first debated in the House in 1966. The principal Act was subsequently amended in 1968 and 1969, as it is being amended again this year. This is the first time that student representation on the council has been considered. Indeed, as far as I can ascertain this is the first time that the need for student representation has even been suggested or mentioned.

This certainly does not mean it is not an extremely necessary step or a highly commendable one. I consider the Government has correctly sensed the feelings of students in regard to student representation. We are not anxious to see in this State some of the performances that have been evident in other States and, more so, overseas. I believe that student participation at Government body level—that is, on the Council of the Institute—will bring about closer liaison between the governing authorities and the students. It will provide an avenue for expression of opinion and possibly will overcome some of the difficulties which might be the cause of some of the problems overseas.

However, I have a complaint in this regard also. Clause 3 proposes to amend section 9 of the principal Act, and it carries the marginal note, "Constitution of Council." It is proposed to add a paragraph (ga) which reads as follows:—

(ga) two persons who are members of the Student Guild, one at least being a voting member of its Council,

and who are elected by the voting members of that Council after nomination by such members of that Guild as are prescribed by Statute, the provisions of which may differ in respect of each person to be so elected;

I believe that the election of student representation to the council is too narrow. I am informed that the student guild comprises 13 members. Of this number three representatives are from the applied sciences section, six from the commerce and general studies section, and four from the engineering and architectural section. This makes a total of 13. Of course there is a president, and the guild has an executive officer, too.

Members will note from what I have read that it is proposed that one of the persons on the Council of the Institute shall be one of the voting members of the guild; in other words, the person must be one of the 13 voting members of the guild. The other person is apparently to be selected by the guild council. Students will be nominated by the student body but elected by the 13 voting members of the student guild. This is far too narrow a field of election. If there is to be an adequate and representative representation—if I may use that phrase—at least one of the persons must be elected by the whole of the student body.

I believe it is quite ridiculous for the 13 persons who comprise the guild to elect this person. In saying that I bear in mind that the guild council is elected on an open franchise of students. I agree that one person should be a voting member of the guild, but I must insist that the other representative on the council shall be elected by the whole of the student body. I do not want to demand that every student must vote; that is, I do not want a compulsory franchise. However, I do want the election to be made by all students who belong to the guild. Do not let us forget that the guild of the Institute of Technology, like the guild at the University, is a compulsory body. Students have to belong to it. When they pay their fees, part of the fees goes direct to the guild.

Because guild membership is compulsory, surely students should have some rights including the right to cast a vote to elect at least one of the student representatives to the Council of the Institute. I believe that all the members of the Guild of Undergraduates at the University have a hand in electing the representative to the Senate of the University. Once again, I draw a parallel between the University of Western Australia and the Institute of Technology. I suggest that what has become established practice and has proved highly acceptable at the University should also be acceptable to the students of the Institute of Technology.

As I say, the field of election is far too narrow. I can imagine that in an open vote a popular figure like a football hero, an athlete, or a star performer in some other direction, may drag more votes than someone who is more academically minded and more serious in his approach to council duties. However, this does not matter. Whoever is elected will be elected by the student body, and this is the important thing.

I do not object to the proposal that one of the representatives should be one of the voting members of the guild. To put democracy in practice, however, the other person should be elected by all members of the guild.

I have no complaints whatever with the last provision to extend authority to the Council of the Institute to grant degrees. Members who have followed debates closely since the Institute was first established and the measure first came before the Parliament in 1966, will doubtless recall the main bone of contention was connected with the form of acknowledgment which the University would confer in regard to the successful completion of study courses by students at the Institute of Technology.

If members care to refer to debates they will find that I made quite lengthy representations on behalf of the staff association at that time. I suggested that section 7, which is the main section and one to which this measure proposes amendment, should be amended to include the words, "Associateships, degrees, or certificates." There was argument back and forth across the Chamber and the present Minister for Education said that if I agreed to cut out the word "degrees" he would be right with me. I agreed with him and this word was dropped.

This House amended the provision to include the words "associateships or certificates" and we thought we had covered the situation fairly well. I was not terribly happy over omitting the word "degrees" but in the spirit of co-operation which is always evident in my approach to matters in this House I thought the difficulties would probably be overcome by the use of the word "associateships."

That amendment probably had the shortest life of any amendment to a clause, because the Legislative Council completely cut it out. The Council's amendment was sent back to this House and the provision was subsequently amended to the present wording which refers to "appropriate diplomas or certificates."

I hasten to say that what we did on that occasion was desirable. This is now to be brought about in the Minister's own amendments, inasmuch as he now intends

to include the word "degrees" where the words "diplomas or certificates" appear throughout the Act.

I cannot take any credit for what has been achieved here because the matter has long been taken out of my hands and, as the Minister explained to us, a committee was set up to inquire into the nomenclature of awards. That committee was known as the Wiltshire committee and it brought down recommendations in about 1968. Since then, as the Minister said, conferences have been held between the various States because the matter has been a bone of contention in each of the States which has an institute of advanced technology, or a similar institution. I think Victoria awarded degrees as far back as 1968—

Mr. Lewis: It was South Australia.

Mr. DAVIES: Well, South Australia; and this was recommended in the Martin committee report on tertiary education. The attitude of the Commonwealth Government at that time was that it did not wish degrees to be awarded at institutes of advanced education, and the word seemed to get around that if the institutes awarded degrees they might find the Commonwealth would not be very happy about providing finance. I do not know what truth there was in that, but there was certainly plenty of evidence of it at the time.

The Institute has been able to award diplomas or certificates, as I have already said, but now, following on the investigation of the Wiltshire committee, the Minister was able to tell us that by inserting the word "degrees" in the appropriate provisions in the Act we will meet the requirements of the Institute of Technology and fall into line with what is happening in the other States.

In his second reading speech the Minister said that some courses are apparently of degree standard, "although students are being awarded diplomas or associateships." However, of course, that is not right because students are not being awarded associateships; or, if they are being awarded associateships, it is being done incorrectly because, as I have already mentioned, that provision was cut out of the legislation by the Legislative Council after it had been inserted by me in this Chamber by way of an amendment.

However, the Minister said that conferences had been held between the various States concerning the awarding of degrees in each State and a working party was appointed. He also said the consensus of opinion is that each State should set up its own accrediting agency for colleges of advanced education awards and that a national body be appointed for the registration of these awards. I should imagine the State body in this instance

would be the Institute of Technology and, of course, the registration of awards would be handled by the national body.

From my reading of the Wiltshire report it seems that the national body would also concern itself with the maintenance and establishment of standards. I think that is highly desirable. We would like to be able to say that any degree, diploma, or associateship which is awarded by the Western Australian Institute of Technology is in no way inferior to those awarded by similar institutions in other States. So I am pleased to see that a national body is to be appointed and I certainly hope it will concern itself with maintaining standards.

Briefly, of the three matters contained in the Bill, I agree with the first concerning the awarding of degrees. I can see this matter has been considered over a long period and that a workable system is to be adopted. In regard to the second matter in the Bill—that of student representation on the council—I do not believe that the method of appointing the student members is the most democratic one. I agree that one student should be appointed from the voting members of the student guild council, but I feel that the second student representative on the W.A.I.T. Council should be elected from the student body as a whole.

Of course, the third provision in the Bill is that which alters the composition of the council by deleting the reference to the Under-Treasurer or a person nominated by him, and that provision is wholly unacceptable to me. I believe the Government must have some direct association with the council because of the amount of money which is being spent. I point out that there is no need for the Under-Treasurer to suggest that he is spending too much time on matters such as this. That is why he is there: to watch the finances of the State. I also point out that it is not necessary that the Under-Treasurer himself sit on the council because under the Act as it exists at present he has the right to appoint a person to represent him, and to advise the Minister accordingly.

I am quite certain the Minister, being what he is, would be prepared to accept the recommendation of the Under-Treasurer. I point out that we have already altered the constitution of the council by removing the representative from the University Senate.

I do not believe that was really a very good move. I did not oppose it wholeheartedly but I would have preferred that that representative remain. Of course, this situation was somewhat overcome by the appointment of the committee on standards of tertiary education, of which Professor Sanders is the full-time chairman. I do not suppose that any objection

I would have to removing a representative of the Senate of the University from the council would hold very much water.

In order to balance the numbers on the Institute Council, at that time we increased the number of persons co-opted or appointed to the council from two to three. I suggested then that it might be a good idea if the third person to be appointed or co-opted were a woman. I feel there is a great deal of scope for a woman on the Council of the Institute. I shall not enlarge on my reasons for that—I think they are self-evident. I have not heard whether or not anyone was appointed or, indeed, who the third person was.

In the 1969 amendments we kept the balance on the Institute Council by deleting one member and appointing another member in another place. We now propose to delete one and appoint another two, thus increasing the membership of the council by one. I do not think that is top-heavy but we could easily appoint the two representatives of student bodies without removing the representative of the Treasury.

I am pleased to know what is being achieved by the Institute at Bentley. I think it is something about which we can all be proud. I congratulate those in authority who have moved ahead so fast to get so much done in such a short time. A tremendous amount still needs to be done, but there is not the slightest doubt that a very real Institute community feeling is being established, and I think that is to be applauded. I have said before that in my opinion the Institute could ultimately have better standing than the University. It may take a few years yet, but the way things are going my forecast might be right.

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [5.02 p.m.]: I wish to thank the member for Victoria Park for his general support of the Bill, although I regret that he had some reservations in the congratulations he offered to the Government on its development of this legislation concerning the Institute of Technology.

As the honourable member pointed out, the Bill has three purposes. The first is to enable the Institute to award degrees. When this legislation first came before this Parliament in 1966, one of the powers conferred upon the council was the power to award appropriate diplomas or certificates. I will admit, quite frankly, that there was considerable discussion in this Chamber at that time as to whether that included degrees. I think that I, as the Minister at the time, stated that it was not the intention to award degrees, but that, after consultation with the Crown Law Department, it was felt that the term, "the awarding of appropriate diplomas or

certificates," could mean degrees if at some subsequent stage the council desired to award degrees.

Since that time, this matter has been investigated more closely by the Crown Law Department, and in conformity with the general trend in institutes of this kind throughout Australia it is now desired to give the Institute the power to award degrees if the council so desires.

Associated with the awarding of degrees is the prime question of uniformity of degrees and other awards throughout Australia. This matter is of considerable concern to the Commonwealth. The purpose in setting up the Wiltshire committee was to consider these degrees and what they meant, so that there could be some uniformity throughout Australia. At this moment no unanimity has been reached between the States of Australia and the Commonwealth as to the overriding authority to be set up and the powers that should be conferred on that authority to ensure that there is uniformity of quality in the various awards and degrees that might be issued; but we are making progress.

The position is made somewhat difficult because in Victoria there is an association of the several institutes of technology in that State which has an accrediting body to ensure that there is uniformity in those institutes. In New South Wales there is an overriding authority. The working committee that was set up to investigate the Wiltshire committee's report recommended that there should be a national accrediting body composed of an equal number of representatives from each State and the Commonwealth. I think the committee recommended that there should be three representatives from each State and three from the Commonwealth, but that was considered to be too large and it has been agreed that the national body should consist of two representatives from each State and two from the Commonwealth. The powers of that body have not yet been unanimously agreed upon by the Ministers of the various States, but we are making progress and I believe that agreement will be reached before very long.

There has been a certain amount of compromise and I believe that as a result of the negotiations we will have an accrediting body in each State and a national body to register the various awards. I think that will be reasonably satisfactory to the Commonwealth, which is, of course, called upon to find the money.

The honourable member has quite readily accepted student representation but he has some reservations about the way in which this will be effected. The method that is set out in the Bill is the direct result of the recommendations

made to me by the Institute Council. I will quote from a letter dated the 23rd July, 1970, which was sent to me by the council. In part, this letter reads—

The Council at its meeting on the 15th July instructed me to recommend to you that—

- (i) there should be two representatives on Council;
- (ii) the student representation should comprise—
 - (a) one Student Guild Councillor whose nomination is supported by not less than two Councillors;
 - (b) one member of the Student Guild whose nomination is supported by three Student Guild members, no two of whom will be from the same Division or Branch.

In both cases, the members to be elected by secret ballot by voting members of the Student Guild Council.

The decision to support the above form of student representation was only made after the matter was discussed by the Legal and General Purposes Committee with the President and Vice-President of the Student Guild and a careful examination of the nature of student representation at other Institutes and the University of Western Australia.

For your information, at the other Institutes, students either have or moves are being made for their representation on Council.

It is then pointed out that this is done after consultation with the student guild council itself.

Mr. Davies: Would you read (b) again, please?

Mr. LEWIS: Yes. It reads as follows:—

The Council at its meeting on the 15th July instructed me to recommend to you that—

- (i) there should be two representatives on Council;
- (ii) the student representation should comprise—
 - (a) one Student Guild Councillor whose nomination is supported by not less than two Councillors;
 - (b) one member of the Student Guild whose nomination is supported by three Student Guild members, no two of whom will be from the same Division or Branch.

In both cases, the members to be elected by secret ballot by voting members of the Student Guild Council.

They were the recommendations made to me and they have been incorporated in the Bill.

The third purpose of the Bill, which was also the subject of some comment from the honourable member, concerns the deletion of the Under-Treasurer from the council, or the name of the person nominated by him. It is true that both the University of Western Australia Act and the Western Australian Institute of Technology Act provide for the appointment of the Under-Treasurer or his representative, but for reasons which I set out in my second reading speech, the Under-Treasurer considers that his officers are occupied on other matters far more important—still granting that these matters are important—and it is considered desirable that they should relinquish membership of these councils.

When that information was conveyed to me I was just as concerned—perhaps more so—as the member for Victoria Park, because I appreciate the value of having a representative of the Treasury on these two institutions on which is spent a great deal of the taxpayers' money. I had to rely on the Treasury representatives to apply some brake on the expenditure that was incurred. However, I am sure the Premier proposes, during this session, to bring forward a Bill to set up a tertiary education commission which will have, as one of its members, the Under-Treasurer or his representative.

Mr. Jamieson: Will the funds go to both the University and to W.A.I.T. through this proposed tertiary education commission?

Mr. LEWIS: The proposed tertiary education commission will act as an advisory body with respect to both the University and the W.A. Institute of Technology. It will have an overriding supervisory role, particularly in regard to financial matters. I may have misinterpreted the interjection of the honourable member. A recommendation will be made by the tertiary education commission which will go through the Minister for Education to the Federal body.

Mr. Jamieson: This is on financial matters?

Mr. LEWIS: Yes, on financial matters; but the programme for the ensuing triennium, and so on, will be—

Mr. Jamieson: The University Senate will not like that.

Mr. LEWIS: That is what is proposed. The legislation has not been introduced and therefore I cannot anticipate the nature of it at this stage. However, I can assure the House that we will not have a

situation without a Treasury representative taking a hand somewhere along the line. We believe that this is the better way to supervise the expenditure and to maintain a proper balance of spending by the University and the Institute of Technology.

The same principle is followed in New South Wales and in other States. When the proposal is adopted in this State we will not be without some Treasury supervision on the financial proposals in particular which emanate from the University or the Institute of Technology.

In brief, that deals with the comments made by the member for Victoria Park, and I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Amendment to section 9—

Mr. DAVIES: I would like to pass comment on several matters in this clause, following the reply given by the Minister during the debate on the second reading. I will deal firstly with paragraph (a) which seeks to delete paragraph (e) of section 9. This relates to the Under-Treasurer no longer acting on the council.

I am delighted to hear from the Minister that we are to have a measure introduced to provide for the appointment of a tertiary education commission, but, of course, we already have one. I do not know whether the Bill that is to be introduced will give the members of the proposed commission some particular standing, but I would remind the Committee that on the 4th September last year we were dealing with a measure similar to this one and the Minister for Education was good enough to tell me that he had been informed that the full-time chairman of the Tertiary Education Commission is Professor Sanders. The Minister's words, in replying to the second reading debate on a similar measure on the 4th September, 1969, were as follows:—

I am informed that the full-time chairman of the commission is Professor Sanders. Those on the commission on a part-time basis are Sir Stanley Prescott, the Director-General of Education (Mr. H. W. Dettman), the Director of the Institute (Dr. H. S. Williams), Dr. K. J. Tregonning, and Mr. C. C. Adams.

They are the six members of the Tertiary Education Commission. Apparently this commission has been operating without any legal standing, and so I assume that the Bill to be introduced by the Premier will correct this anomaly. From what the

Minister has said it would appear that the present commission will be disbanded and some of the existing members will be reappointed, or additional members appointed to it. I do not know what is proposed, and of course the Minister is unable to tell us because the matter has not been finalised.

However, the Minister did say, "Here is the link between the Treasury and the Tertiary Education Commission in this State." The member for Belmont then interjected and said that the proposed commission would also have overriding authority with the University Senate. If such is the case, I can imagine that the representative of the Treasury will be removed from the University Senate in the same way as he will be removed from the council, as is proposed by this Bill. This will be some disappointment, no doubt, to Mr. Townsing who is at present Pro-Chancellor of the University. I think he will find that his moments of glory will be over so far as his position on the University Senate is concerned, unless he is appointed in some other capacity.

Mr. Lewis: I would not be too quick to weep for him if I were you.

Mr. DAVIES: I was just wondering how we will reconcile all the movements that are proposed. If the Minister is quite happy with the Treasury liaison that will be effected with the proposed tertiary education commission, I am quite happy to withdraw my objection to the removal of the Under-Treasurer from his position. I am quite happy for the clause to be passed, and I am delighted that it is proposed to appoint a tertiary education commission with some legal backing and some standing in the community.

The other matter on which I wish to speak relates to the election of students from the student guild to the council. The point made by the Minister is the one about which they are complaining. I do not believe the method of election is democratic enough. I hate to repeat this, because I am sure the Minister understood me before.

In reading out the recommendations from the Council of the Institute which probably came to him over the signature of Mr. Henderson—who I believe is now the chairman of the council—the Minister pointed out that what is proposed is acceptable to the council and to the student voting body of the guild council.

Of course it would be acceptable, because this council will have the say as to how people will be elected and certainly it will keep the matter as narrow as it can. The complaint I have is that the method of election is not democratic enough, although I admit there is a non-restrictive franchise in regard to the election of voting members of the student guild council.

However, this does not, I believe, give that body the authority to express completely the feelings of the whole of the student guild in regard to student representation on the Council of the Institute. Of course the Council of the Institute will be happy about this method of election, because it will be able to keep some control over the appointee, in view of the narrow field in which lobbying would need to be done by any of the parties concerned in the election of the student representation.

I believe it would not be unjust; indeed it is what we expect and it is what is done at the University. If there is to be a representative of the students on the council—on the highest body of the Institute—then the only way to have that person elected—or at least one of those persons elected—is to have the person elected by a vote of all the students. That is the only democratic way for this to be done.

The Minister read out that any person nominated for such appointments is to be nominated by three persons, each of whom must be from different sections of the Institute. This is a good safeguard. It will probably mean that the persons nominated will have some standing within the student body.

Even with that safeguard, the method of election is so restrictive that it will limit true student expression on the Council of the Institute. I would like the Minister to have another look at this, because I feel he has taken in good faith, and perhaps without having had much time to really look at the matter, the suggestions of the Council of the Institute. I repeat that the council would naturally be delighted to have this method of election; and the 13 members who comprise the student guild will also be proud to have the power to select two representatives even though it is by secret ballot.

I do not believe, however, that it is representative enough and although I agree to one being a voting member of the guild council. I believe the other should be elected by the whole of the student body, and nothing will change my mind on this.

Mr. LEWIS: I repeat that this recommendation is made after consultation with the president and vice-president of the guild council. These are not high school students, but responsible young men and women and I think we might accept their ideas. It is a new development to have students on the council, and the council has always conferred with the student body. I will quote further from the letter from the council. It states—

In recommending that the members of the Guild Council exercise the final selection by ballot from amongst the nominations sent in by the general

student body, it must be remembered that the Guild Councillors themselves are broadly elected by the students. It was also considered that the Guild Councillors with the knowledge gained as members of the Guild Council would have a better idea of the demands that would be placed on a student representative on the Institute Council. In addition, it is important to take into account that voting is not compulsory, and therefore the possibility of obtaining a real consensus of student opinion on the candidates, especially from the large body of part-time students, is unlikely.

In both cases, it is proposed that the term of office for student representatives on Institute Council be one year with the option of standing for election for a further year only, a limit of two years in all.

In all the circumstances I think we should accept the views of the Institute Council on the assurance that I have been given, which I see no reason to doubt, that they have conferred with the student body whose desire it is that it be done in this manner.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 6 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

EASTERN GOLDFIELDS TRANSPORT BOARD ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 27th August.

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [5.28 p.m.]: This is a small Bill of a machinery nature which purports to deal with the operation of the constitution of the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board.

The present legislation is geared, as far as the local authorities on the goldfields are concerned, to a situation that no longer exists. The constitution of the board at the moment is such that reference is made in it to the Town of Boulder, to the Shire of Kalgoorlie, and to the Town of Kalgoorlie.

Two of the three local authorities mentioned no longer exist and a new local authority—the Shire of Boulder—has taken the place of the two which have disappeared.

The purpose of the Bill, therefore, is to make the necessary adjustment to provide that two representatives from each of the two local authorities concerned—the Town of Kalgoorlie and the Shire of Boulder—will now sit on the board, together with an elected representative who

will represent the ratepayers from each of these local authorities. The body so constituted will be presided over by a Government appointee—he will be the chairman of the board.

The Bill before us has been on the notice paper for several weeks, but I feel I would be safe in predicting now that its passage through this House will be prompt and successful.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [5.30 p.m.]: I thank the member for Kalgoorlie for his support of the legislation and 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.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Order of the day read for the resumption of the debate from the 8th September.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

Bill passed through Committee without debate, and reported without amendment.

As to Adoption of Report

The **SPEAKER**: I do not propose to put the question that the report be adopted, because there is an amendment on the notice paper in the name of the Minister and he might want to recommit the Bill.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I have been caught up with the truck drivers and road maintenance tax problems. I would like to recommit the Bill.

The **SPEAKER**: I suggest that at this stage the Minister move that consideration of the Committee's report be made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Railways) [5.34 p.m.]: I move—

That the consideration of the Committee's report be made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House.

Question put and passed.

FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 24th September.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [5.35 p.m.]: I seek your guidance, Mr. Speaker. If I do not complete my speech today, will I be allowed to continue it at a subsequent sitting?

The **SPEAKER**: If the honourable member has not completed his contribution at the conclusion of this sitting he can ask for leave of the House to continue his speech on another occasion; and the question will be put to the House.

Mr. NORTON: Like other members of the House I am interested in fauna conservation, and I support it to the best of my ability. When we deal with the matter of conservation we virtually cannot cover it in a blanket form, because conservation can be effected in different ways, such as total conservation, partial conservation, and so on. Certain marsupials, birds, and one particular species of tortoise require total protection. Then there are certain other marsupials which are indigenous to islands in the north-west, such as Barrow Island, Bernier Island, and Dorre Island. For that reason the Fauna Conservation Board has conferred full protection on these creatures on those islands. In fact, one island in my electorate is a prohibited area.

However, I do not think the best method to apply is total conservation, because we find—particularly on Barrow Island—that with human habitation increasing and water being available the marsupials have increased considerably in numbers.

The biggest controversy on the question of conservation is in respect of two species of kangaroo—the grey, which is found in the southern parts of the State; and the red, which is found over a very large area of the more or less drier regions of the State. Both the grey and the red kangaroo can cause considerable damage to crops, pastures, and grazing areas; and in these regions they are found in large numbers. The Minister has readily agreed that such damage is caused by the kangaroo.

Whilst I am not so *au fait* with the grey kangaroo, I am very *au fait* with the red kangaroo. The Minister for Fisheries and Fauna has estimated that the red kangaroo population is between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000; but I do not know how he has arrived at this estimate. From my own knowledge I would say there are far more than that number.

If we take into account the statistical divisions under the Local Government Act in which the kangaroo abounds we find there are four such divisions. The first is the north-west statistical division, which

embraces the shires of Ashburton, Carnarvon, Exmouth, Shark Bay, and Upper Gascoyne. The next is the Pilbara statistical division, which embraces the shires of Marble Bar, Nullagine, Port Hedland, and Tablelands. Then we have the central ward in which the red kangaroo can probably be found in its greatest numbers. That division covers the Shires of Cue, Meekatharra, Mt. Magnet, Murchison, Sandstone, Wiluna, and Yalgoo.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What is your estimate, then?

Mr. NORTON: I will deal with that as I go on. Finally, of course, we have the eastern goldfields in which is situated Kalgoorlie, Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, and so on.

The total area involved is 457,133,000 acres, which is very sizeable. This figure I have extracted from the local government statistics. If we analysed the ratio of kangaroos to acres, we would find it is one kangaroo to 229 acres—that is, if we take the 2,000,000 figure, which is the highest. This would mean that if we were to drive through the areas I have mentioned we would not, in some places, see many kangaroos, but in others we would see hundreds. Therefore the distribution could work out far greater than the Minister has suggested.

If we look at it in another light and consider an average sheep station of 500,000 acres over which the pastoralist is expected to run at least 15,000 sheep, we find that there should be only 2,183 kangaroos on that particular property. However, if we talked to the pastoralists we would hear quite a different story. Only last year the manager of Mt. Narryer Station in the Murchison told me he had employed two roo shooters on his property for a period of 12 months during which time they shot 40,000 roos. The property runs approximately 22,000 sheep, and so the number of roos shot represented almost double the sheep population.

On another station out from Carnarvon two shooters, who were brothers, were engaged for four years during which each year they shot more roos than there were sheep on the property each year. Therefore it can be seen that the roo population is considerably higher in many places than it is estimated to be. It is very difficult to establish an exact figure.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I agree.

Mr. NORTON: The kangaroo itself has a habit of moving very quickly from place to place. However, I believe that someone, probably from the University, who has worked on the theoretical angle has established a figure on a population-per-acre basis without having any actual practical knowledge of the situation. A person without practical experience of the out-back country would work on what was

known as the normal habitat; that is, using rainfall as a guide as this controls its breeding.

These days, however, the red kangaroos are not living in their natural habitat. This is because pastoralists and others living and working in the country have established a considerable number of wells, dams, bores, and so on to provide water for themselves. This, of course, has in turn provided the kangaroos with far more opportunities to obtain water so they do not now have to remain only in those areas which have a regular rainfall.

The reproduction of the kangaroo depends almost entirely on the availability of water. If a dry season is experienced and there is no water available, the kangaroos will virtually cease to breed, but while water is available, they breed at quite a fast rate.

It is my belief—and it is also the belief of others, as I will indicate later on—that the fauna protection board should appoint one or two of its top men, or men who are well versed in fauna, to accompany members of the Vermin Control Board who are occupied with the control of dingoes. If such a person from the fauna protection board were to accompany one of the doggers for a week and then transfer to another dogger the next week, and so on, it would not take him long to cover a very wide area and thus undertake a thorough study of the habits and numbers of the kangaroos over a vast area. Such a survey would give an entirely different picture from that which is available today.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Would you mind telling me what is the point of your indicating that you think there is a greater number of roos?

Mr. NORTON: I indicated earlier that on Mt. Narryer Station, which runs about 22,000 sheep, 40,000 kangaroos were shot in one year. This still did not eliminate them all from the area. Therefore there is a far greater number of roos in existence than the one per 230 acres to which I have already referred.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What is the point in that?

Mr. NORTON: There is a far greater number than the number estimated.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I know difficulties are experienced in estimating the number, but are you raising this point because you wish to refer to it in connection with something else?

Mr. NORTON: Yes.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You have not done that yet.

Mr. NORTON: No. I brought out the fact that on two stations more roos were shot than there were sheep on the properties.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Go ahead. I am sorry.

Mr. NORTON: Since the reference to the control of the red kangaroo was made in Parliament, I have received a number of letters from those in pastoral areas. I received the first one on the 31st October, last year, when a considerable number of amendments were under discussion. It was sent by the Murchison Vermin Board attached to the Murchison Shire Council area, which is north of Mullewa. The Mt. Narryer Station, to which I have referred, is situated in this shire. The letter reads—

re Levy on Kangaroo Hunters.

A proposal by the Government to levy a tax on kangaroo hunters in respect to kangaroos shot for the marketing of kangaroo meat received strong opposition by members in attendance at a meeting of this Vermin Board on Saturday the 25th instant.

A motion opposing any such levy reads as follows:—

'Kangaroo Levy' The Government proposal to collect a tax or levy on kangaroos killed by hunters is strongly opposed by this Vermin Board.

Members agree that kangaroos in this district cannot (as is feared in some areas) be exterminated by shooting alone.

However hunters do assist in the control of excessive numbers and, for that reason they should be subsidised or most certainly not hindered by taxes or levies on their work.

Excessive numbers of kangaroos in these areas do considerable damage to fences and consequent loss of pastures seriously reduces potential income in the Pastoral Industry."

Members of this board being all engaged in the pastoral industry would deeply appreciate your making representations with the Government in this behalf.

Yours faithfully,
J. PROCTER,
Secretary.

I did make representations to the Minister in respect of this at the time the Bill was under discussion. The contents of that letter indicate the concern felt by these people. They have referred to the pastures which the kangaroos eat. The roo is known to be a selective feeder and is very fond of the lush young growth which is the food on which the sheep live.

In the areas where there is a large number of kangaroos, combined with the normal stocking of sheep, it has been found that the selected herbage has been practically eaten out. One station has a paddock which contains a terrific amount of

poison weed. An officer from the Department of Agriculture inspected the area and he found a large amount of other types of herbage in the area not being grazed. The kangaroo does compete with the sheep, and when an area has been eaten out the kangaroo naturally moves on. The kangaroo can move from place to place quite quickly, and while he is moving he damages fences. It is well known that a kangaroo can quite seriously damage a ringlock fence.

Recently I received a letter from Mr. D. P. Steadman, Secretary of the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association, Upper Gascoyne District Committee. The letter reads as follows:—

The pastoralists throughout the areas of the Northwest are extremely concerned about the view that the red kangaroo is being shot out.

I do not think they have explained themselves very well; I think they are well aware that the red kangaroo is not being shot out. To continue—

We feel that those people less associated with these animals should be made more aware of the situation that would arise if these severe restrictions were enforced.

Here again, the pastoralists are afraid that if the restrictions are enforced the number of kangaroos will increase seriously. The letter goes on—

To begin with, his predominant habitat is not a natural environment, for, by the establishment of numerous watering points, e.g. bores and wells, landholders have contributed to the survival rate of these animals.

That is what I said earlier; by the establishment of bores the survival rate and breeding rate has become far greater. The letter continues—

This allows him greater utilization of pasture. It is well known that kangaroos are selective feeders and because of this, conflict with sheep and cattle grazed on these properties. The stocking capacities are thus lowered. On many properties it is estimated, if not exceeding the numbers of sheep carried, kangaroos are present in as high a proportion.

That, again, supports what I said earlier. To continue—

Because of their migratory movements, they can utilize entire areas without being restricted by fences, as our stock are. Following regional rains, e.g. thunderstorms, great droves of kangaroos move to these areas and eat out the green pastures. Pasture damage is far reaching, but so is damage to improvements, e.g. fences, and in some cases contribute to partial depletion of low watering point supplies.

Kangaroos have a near infallible reproductive system which enables them to breed up quickly where most other animals cannot. This aspect is very important and must not be under-estimated. Without the assistance of shooters, drives would have to be carried out by pastoralists to keep numbers down.

Because of the economics of his livelihood, a shooter can only shoot kangaroos over a given size, and when low kangaroo numbers exist he has to move to other areas.

We are strongly opposed to these severe restrictions and would suggest that effective means of protection could be brought about by:

- (1) Licenses being granted only to those shooters who have been operating. No more licenses to be granted for the present anyway.

I think we all agree with that and I would go further and say that no interstate shooter should be granted a license. As far as I remember that provision is contained in the Act. A person who has lived in Western Australia for a period of less than two years cannot obtain a license for hunting. The letter continues—

- (2) Restrictions placed on the commercial shooting of undersized kangaroos, i.e. below a given poundage.

Here, again, I am in total agreement, and this type of action is taken in respect of fish. If fish are taken under a certain size the fisherman is liable to prosecution. The same regulations could be applied to control and allow breeding stock to survive. By placing a restriction on the size and the weight of the kangaroos to be taken, the shooting will be controlled. To continue—

- (3) That if more Flora and Fauna revenue were necessary then freezers be covered by a sufficient registering fee.

I think the Minister already has that in mind. The letter continues—

- (4) An intensive survey of kangaroo numbers in the North-west be jointly undertaken by a party consisting of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna and the Agricultural Protection Board.

NOTE: Surely this is the only fair means by which to decide a future policy on our red kangaroos.

As is suggested, there should be an intensive survey by a joint body. The letter I have just quoted was written by a person who was born and reared in the area. His father was in the same pastoral area

before him. The person who wrote the letter has a very good knowledge of what goes on, and he is a good judge of kangaroos. As a matter of fact, the area in which he has his pastoral holding is quite productive as far as kangaroos are concerned.

The Minister, in answering the letter from Mr. Steadman, practically repeated answers to a question which was asked by the member for Canning only a week or two before. The Minister used identical words in both replies, and wrote to Mr. Steadman as follows:—

As you are aware, with the build-up of commercial exploitation of the kangaroo, pastoralists become worried at the number of shooters on their properties and the existing kangaroo industry was concerned about the future stability of the industry.

The pastoralists in my area had not become concerned at all about the shooters, because they have the right to say who can shoot on their properties. It has been the policy of the pastoralists in the district, and also the policy of the shooters in the area, to form a group of stations over which the kangaroos can be shot by any one shooter or group of shooters.

The shooters operate with the concurrence of property owners or managers. Consequently, the pastoralists were in no way worried over shooters. The shooters accepted it if a property owner or manager said they could not shoot in certain paddocks where sheep were in lamb, or in other paddocks where he did not want the stock disturbed. On the other hand pastoralists would advise shooters the best places to go to shoot kangaroos. As far as I know the arrangement worked extremely amicably in the Gascoyne area.

Naturally processors were becoming a little worried over the industry because they thought the number of animals might drop off and their business might decrease. I will not read all the Minister's letter because it is a long one. However, he said—

Discussions have been held with a sub-committee of the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association and there has been general agreement that—

- (1) Property holders shall retain the right under all circumstances to select which licensed shooter can operate on his property.

This has taken place in the past and it has worked very well. The letter continues—

- (2) In the initial licensing, licensed shooters will be those who have been fully involved in the industry for some

years and who have taken substantial numbers of animals annually. This type of shooter must be licensed if numbers of kangaroos are to be reduced to the range carrying capacity.

No-one disagrees with that statement. After all, if kangaroos are to be harvested, this course of action is desirable. What the pastoralists are worried about is that there will be insufficient shooters to keep the numbers of kangaroos down to the range-carrying capacity.

I have received letters, too, from the Kangaroo Industries Association of W.A. I cannot say that I support the suggestions; in fact, I do not like them at all. The association wants its members to be the people responsible for allocating tags to the various shooters. In other words, they want to control the shooters.

They do not want the shooters to be able to say, "You are not giving enough for my carcasses. I will go elsewhere." Instead, they want to be able to say to the shooters, "You are employed by me and will shoot in the areas where I say, irrespective of whether or not you are acceptable to the pastoralists."

How could big companies in the city know whether a pastoralist would accept a shooter who was sent to a certain area? I consider that tags and licenses should be issued to the shooters by the Minister and, to some extent, on the recommendation or approval of pastoralists or the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association. In that way there would be harmony in pastoral areas and, also, the kangaroo population would be more efficiently farmed.

The Kangaroo Industries Association of W.A. seemed to think that if shooters were given tags and allowed to shoot where they liked, they would shoot on weekends, use up all the tags, and the industry would find that it had a "plush" of carcasses which it could not handle.

In the past the position has been that kangaroo carcasses are sent to Perth in bulk after being frozen in the country. In the interim they are stored in Carnarvon, Onslow, Meekatharra, or wherever the freezers happen to be. Carcasses have never been sent on a day-to-day basis to pet food manufacturers in the suburban area. It does not matter what the industry says, because it has accepted a plush—as it is called—in the past. The carcasses come down to Perth spasmodically in the association's own vehicles. The trip is not made until the vehicles have a full load.

There is a freezing works at Carnarvon and the proprietor purchases kangaroos from different shooters. He holds the carcasses until such time as he has a full

vehicle load before sending them to Perth. The intervening time might be a fortnight or three weeks, depending on the weather. It could even be longer than that in the wet weather when shooters cannot go out and when, too, the kangaroos are spread over a greater distance. In the summer-time the kangaroos congregate to feed and to drink at the watering points and it is then that the shooter has a chance of obtaining a regular supply. It would be quite impossible for shooters to comply with the regular supply suggested by the industry.

Shooters should be licensed and issued with tags by the Minister. In this way there would be some supervision over the type of shooter to ensure that he would suit the pastoralists in the areas where he is working.

Another organisation is concerned in respect of restrictions on kangaroos; namely, The West Australian Field and Game Association. The organisation considers it should be given some consideration, and I think the recommendation it made to the Department of Fisheries and Fauna was quite reasonable.

The letter containing the recommendations of The West Australian Field and Game Association is dated the 24th July, 1970. The association suggested that a permit should be issued to sportsmen on the following conditions:—

- (1) The person to hunt on state forest other than parks or catchment areas as well as private property with the owner's consent.
- (2) That a season be closed when the kangaroo numbers drop below a determined level.
- (3) That only a certain size and sex may be shot at certain times during the year.
- (4) That a maximum of one kangaroo only be shot per week by any one licensed person.

That would take some policing. The last condition is—

- (5) All game shot in forest or otherwise must be brought out and put to some good use.

Those are the recommendations of The West Australian Field and Game Association.

Leave granted to the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Norton) to continue his speech on a future occasion.

House adjourned at 6.09 p.m.