of human endeavour as against the effectiveness and very great speed of modern machinery available today for clearing. Therefore that remnant of the past disappears with the deletion of the term under this clause.

I cannot obtain a clear interpretation of what is required under the amendments in clause 7. Under section 143, the Minister has power to approve transfers upon the sale of conditional purchase land; and the amendment—very minor in itself—seems to alter the present situation very little. The Minister remarked as follows:—

> The first of the amendments to section 143 (2a) (a), arises from the necessity to maintain jurisdiction where a lessee or licensee intends to sell land held under the provision of the Land Act, 1933-65.

He then went on to say—

> While adequate provision exists for the Minister to authorise the actual sale, assignment, or disposal of such land, it also becomes necessary to make provision that the Minister must approve where the lessee or licensee desires to offer his lease or license for sale and wishes to invite inquiries from prospective purchasers with the ultimate objective of sale.

I cannot understand the purpose behind those two paragraphs. The fact that the purchaser is mentioned seems to me to imply that some submission is required by the purchaser to the Minister; whereas I understand the section to mean that the seller must satisfy the Minister that he has carried out all the conditions applicable to the land and as written into his lease. The purchaser would be able to purchase from a seller only upon the approval of the Minister who would make a decision after having investigated the situation to ascertain whether or not the seller had fulfilled his obligations under the lease up to the time he desired to sell.

I think the explanation is ambiguous when we consider the principle which has been adopted under this section up to now. If the purpose of the amendment is to stop trafficking in these leases—and it well might be—that would be a reasonable implication. However, I fail to see how the two amendments will alter the situation to any material degree, for they merely delete the word "or" in one portion and add it to another. Therefore I would be interested if the Minister could clarify the point.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: From just a quick look at it I would say that one is agreeing to sell and the other is offering to sell; but I will get an explanation for you.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Yes, but the Minister has the overriding say on whether a person can offer or agree to sell. I fail to see how the purchaser has any obligation at all except to honour the new agreement. However, the point has been noted by the Minister so I will not discuss it further.

The only other amendment is to section 143 and this changes the word "expended" in two places to the word "effected." This, we are told, will provide for a percentage of area development instead of a monetary value being applied in regard to the improvements of a conditional purchase lease. There would be merit in this amendment, because from my experience of conditional purchase leases, and the very lenient terms they offer by way of the monetary value of development, I would say that very little need be done under the Act at the moment to bring the development within the provisions of this section. However, if a percentage of development must be carried out, this could have a very different effect upon the amount of money being spent and would be a far better yardstick, having regard for the drop in money values and the fact that land today under conditional purchase lease must be developed, because that is the purpose for which it is leased.

Those are my comments on the Bill, which is not a very big one. However, it has been sufficient to occupy the mind of the Government which now sees fit to make these amendments in order that the provisions of the Act will be applied more efficiently.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. V. J. Ferry.

House adjourned at 5.43 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 24th October, 1967

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

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE

1. *This question was postponed.*

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

Foreman of Construction Section: Appointment

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Electricity:

> Adverting to subquestion (5) of question 1 on the notice paper of the 18th instant—
>
> (a) Will he please answer the question and give reasons for no appointment having been made from the 18 applications

received for the position of foreman of the construction section of the State Electricity Commission?

(b) Have the 18 applicants been advised of the decision and, is so, when?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(a) None of the applicants were considered entirely suitable.

(b) No; but applicants will be advised when public applications have been considered.

STATE FARMS

Denmark and Mt. Barker

3. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it the intention of the Government to sell or transfer the State farm at Denmark?

(2) Does the Government intend to set up a State farm at Mt. Barker?

(3) Did he recently carry out an inspection of the State farm at Denmark?

(4) What were his determinations as to its future?

(5) If it is intended to sell or transfer the State farm at Denmark, will the personnel be re-employed with the department?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) Consideration is being given to the best use of the area at present occupied by the Denmark Research Station.

(2) The Government is interested in conducting a research station somewhere in the lower great southern area if a suitable property can be obtained.

(3) Yes.

(4) and (5) Answered by (1).

WATER SUPPLIES

Gascoyne Catchment Area: Cloud Seeding

4. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it intended to carry out cloud seeding experiments over the Gascoyne catchment area this summer?

(2) If "Yes," over what period will this be carried out?

(3) What will be the exact area over which the clouds will be seeded?

(4) Has an assessment been made of the experiment carried out over the Perth catchment area; if so, what was the finding?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) Yes; but it should be understood that such experiments are for the purpose of assessing the occurrence of cloud formations which are suitable for seeding, together with other meteorological information.

(2) During the months of December, January, and February.

(3) The target area to be investigated is approximately 14,000 square miles. It extends approximately 140 miles southwards from the Gascoyne River and is approximately 100 miles wide. The eastern boundary is some 30 miles to the east of Meekatharra.

(4) The results of the south-west operation are being assessed. The operation is planned for two years and it is too early to draw any conclusions from the results at this stage.

MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Slaughtering: Causes of Holdup

5. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) If there was no withdrawal of license as an export works, what was the cause of the recent holdup of slaughtering for export purposes at the Midland Abattoir?

(2) What has been the cause of the cessation or disruption of activities at the Midland Abattoir on any occasion during the years 1965-66 and 1966-67?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) Work was suspended during the afternoon of the 20th September, 1967, mainly to allow treatment of rooms into which some flies had gained entrance. Difficulties of this type may occur with the onset of warm weather.

The following day difficulties arose from the allocation of inspectors, and only the local killing chain operated.

(2) The cause of stoppages during 1965-66 and 1966-67, other than that in (1) above, were—

(a) The 30th August, 1965. Time—1¾ hours. Labour dispute concerning operation of mutton chain.

(b) The 13th December, 1965. Time—4 days. Unsatisfactory analysis of water supply.

(c) The 14th March, 1966. Time—6¾ hours. Labour complaint of excessive steam on mutton viscera table.

(d) The 9th January, 1967. Time—4 hours. Industrial dispute.

(e) The 2nd February, 1967. Time—8 hours. Industrial dispute.

(f) The 29th March, 1967. Time—14 hours over 3 days. Industrial dispute.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Thursday Nights

MR. BRAND (Greenough — Premier) [4.39 p.m.]: With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would advise the House that it is proposed as from Thursday, the 9th November, to sit after tea. I would also remind members that if we are required to sit on Fridays we will do so from and including the 24th November. I would accordingly ask members to keep that day clear of commitments.

ACTS (14): ASSENT

Messages from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Acts:—

1. Shipping and Pilotage Act.
2. Prevention of Pollution of Waters by Oil Act Amendment Act.
3. Bulk Handling Act.
4. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Act.
5. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act Amendment Act.
6. Education Act Amendment Act.
7. Dentists Act Amendment Act.
8. Clean Air Act Amendment Act.
9. Iron Ore (Nimingarra) Agreement Act.
10. Marketable Securities Transfer Act Amendment Act.
11. Iron Ore (Hanwright) Agreement Act.
12. Dog Act Amendment Act.
13. Legal Practitioners Act Amendment Act.
14. Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act Amendment Act.

EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Durack, and read a first time.

FAUNA PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Although there are a number of amendments in this Bill, they can in fact be reduced to seven major categories. The first one is the change of name from the "Fauna Protection Act" to the "Fauna Conservation Act."

Originally the whole concept of looking after the natural animals of a country was that of protection. Whilst this will always be an absolute need in itself, it is considered in the modern concept that conservation is the proper word. Rational exploitation is part of conservation in the modern sense; but there is also the aspect which is receiving more and more consideration—the general public enjoyment of seeing fauna in natural conditions.

The second major point is the deletion of section 5, which has always given precedence to other Acts over the Fauna Protection Act. In the early developmental days of this country, protection of fauna, as I have said, was of minor importance. The great need was the development of agricultural areas and the protection of those areas from the depredations of other animals. Times have changed and the great need now is to protect fauna in its own right—if we are, in fact, going to save it at all.

Inconsistencies between the various matters which might arise from time to time can be dealt with satisfactorily at departmental level, but it is considered that the need no longer exists for one Act to have automatic precedence over another in this field. Particular circumstances can best dictate which consideration should receive priority.

The Chief Vermin Control Officer, the executive officer under the Vermin Act, is a member of the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee and is to be a member of the wild life authority. Co-operation between the various departments administering the Acts has always been good and no doubt this relationship will continue. From time to time the criticism is raised that Western Australia regards its fauna as something to be conserved only after all other interests have been satisfied. This amendment will remove the cause of this criticism, at least in part.

Thirdly, the existing Fauna Protection Advisory Committee is to be renamed: "The Western Australian Wild Life Authority" and its membership is to be enlarged. It is felt that the name "The Western Australian Wild Life Authority" is a more suitable title for such a body. It is not proposed to increase the powers of the authority. Currently the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee consists of six members, each with a deputy. The six include three *ex officio* members; namely, the Chief Warden of Fauna, the Chief Inspector of Vermin, and the Conservator of Forests. One of the three appointed members will be a person other than a civil servant and must have a wide knowledge of the fauna of Western Australia.

The proposed extra *ex officio* member —namely, the Director of Fisheries—will be chairman of the authority. The Chief Warden of Fauna will be the executive officer. The appointed members will be increased from three to six; these will include a botanist, two zoologists, and three persons who are not State public servants. The provision allowing for deputies will be repealed.

Fourthly, the next several amendments are designed to empower the authority to undertake a system of classification of sanctuaries and the preparation of working plans for those sanctuaries. The proposed section 12A in the Bill will give this power. The amendment is framed on the basis of "multiple use" of reserves. Whilst in the case of fauna sanctuaries the well-being of fauna must always be of prime concern, there are of course other aspects which must be taken into consideration. Facilities for public interest and the like must be included. There will, of course, be some reserves set aside specifically for duck hunting, for example, in which the overriding purpose will be the management and conservation of the duck population; but the facilities will have to be there for the hunters to enjoy their specific recreation.

The fifth category concerns two additional licensing provisions which are to be introduced—firstly, a game or duck shooter's license; and, secondly, a license for the processing of fauna such as the handling of kangaroo meat.

With regard to the duck, geese, and quail shooter's license, this has been requested by the sportsmen and gun clubs of the State, and members will notice that the legislation will empower the establishment of a conservation trust fund. License fees from this source will be paid into this fund and the moneys will be used, under the control of the Minister, for the conservation of game birds.

The processor's license fee is paid for the taking and handling of kangaroos for their meat. This exploitation commenced in the 1950s, originally for the gourmet trade. Subsequently local pet food has consumed an ever-increasing amount of this product. The net weight of kangaroo meat processed is about 3,000,000 lb. a year. This is not a large industry, but it is of value to the State and the individuals engaged in it. The need for a study of the grey kangaroo to ascertain the effects of this exploitation has been appreciated and is being pursued.

Kangaroos are not vermin in all parts of the State. From time to time persons are apprehended with quantities of kangaroo meat and claim that they have taken it from an area in which shooting is legal—this, despite the fact that they are found in areas in which the kangaroo is protected. Where the kangaroos have been declared vermin, no license is necessary to take them and sell them for their meat or skins. If this industry is to continue and prosper, it is necessary that the cropping should be done on a regular and, to some extent, controlled basis. It is believed that this licensing provision will make it possible for this to be accomplished.

Sixthly, penalties have been increased generally. The maximum penalty to be provided under this Bill is $400. There will, of course, be circumstances when nothing like this amount will be imposed. However, in the case of rare fauna—and it is well known that some of our fauna is very rare indeed—there ought to be provision for quite severe penalties to be imposed.

Members will note that there is only one case in this Bill where a minimum penalty is imposed. This is where a processor has not taken out the requisite license and continues to process after the Minister has served notice of the offence on him. In this case there will be a daily penalty of not less than $5 nor more than $20 for each day the offence continues.

Seventhly, there is an amendment to give more specific regulatory powers in relation to the control of sanctuaries. In Western Australia the wild life authority will have under its control a considerable area of land; and in this connection, quite apart from the fauna living on it, there is a grave responsibility. This land varies in nature from the far north of the State to the extreme south and from inland areas to islands. The fauna inhabiting this land varies from such extremely rare species as the short-necked tortoise and the noisy scrub-bird to the comparatively common kangaroo. It will therefore be appreciated that fairly wide powers to make regulations will be essential. There is, however, nothing in the new regulation-making powers that one would not expect to find in the by-laws controlling city gardens or national parks. I am quite sure that a study of this aspect will convince members of the need to have adequate authority to cover such diverse problems.

There is a very serious need to view the problem of fauna conservation with concern. There are scientific, educational, recreational, and aesthetic conditions, all of which must be taken into consideration. In our own State a great deal of scientific work of worldwide interest has been undertaken on the Rottnest Island quokka. It is quite likely that arising from this research a cure for muscular dystrophy will be found.

Members interested in this matter will notice that it is proposed to add a botanist to the wild life authority. The need for this is, of course, quite obvious when one considers that most of the indigenous fauna of Western Australia lives on, and certainly all of it lives amongst, the flora. To a very large extent the one is dependent upon the other. It therefore follows

that scientific advice with regard to flora must be readily available to the board; hence the inclusion of the botanist.

It is intended ultimately that booklets on each of the reserves will be published for the general information of the public. Such booklets will set out the size and the location of the particular reserve, the fauna and flora which it contains, and other natural history details of general interest. They will also specify what public use would be made of the area and where it may take place. This will be particularly important as far as wetland sanctuaries are concerned in respect of aquatic sports, and also game shooting. Over the years as the surveys of the various reserves are completed and plans are formulated for their general control and development, these booklets will assume an ever-increasing importance.

The diverse matters arising from the Bill, and the questions on specific sections, may be better answered and explained during the Committee stage. I therefore commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Norton.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the 19th October. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair; Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after clause 3 had been agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 6 put and passed.

Clause 7: Section 114 amended—

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister will recall that during the second reading debate on this measure, I mentioned the protection which is afforded by including the date on an absent vote certificate. I wonder if the Minister has any comment in this connection. I consider that protection in connection with postal votes covers a diverse field. In company with other members, I have had many complaints at various levels in regard to local government postal voting activities. These complaints date back to the by-election for the Perth City Council several years ago. Quite a furore was made at the time by the candidates through the medium of the Press. I suggest that any protection which can be written into the legislation to ensure correctness is far better than the removal of protection.

When I was speaking during the second reading debate, I mentioned that if the certificate were dated when it was witnessed, this would be some protection. If it were suddenly discovered that the vote had not reached the poll in the required time, although, in fact, some days before the vote had actually been cast and handed to the responsible person, there would be some justification for complaint because the vote had not been included in the poll. If there is no date, it is not possible to know when the vote was dealt with. It could be void, lost in transit, or anything. I suggest it would be far more desirable for the legislation to specify that the certificate should be dated, and that the date should be inserted when the individual signs the certificate.

Mr. NALDER: As I promised, I mentioned these matters to the Minister for Local Government, who is concerned with the administration of this legislation. He is of the opinion that the situation is well covered and that it is not necessary to stipulate that the date should be included. I gave the reasons why this was not necessary when I introduced the Bill. These are as follows:—

> In section 114 (1) (c) it is required that a witness to an absent vote certificate shall write the date on which he signs the certificate. However, the form prescribed in the twelfth schedule makes no provision for the date and no reference is made in section 117 (1) (d) to this requirement. There is, therefore, no apparent advantage in having included the date on which a signature is witnessed.

I appreciate the position that the member for Beeloo has mentioned, but the Minister is of the opinion that it is well covered and he does not see any reason for the inclusion of the date. Therefore, I accept the situation as the Minister for Local Government has stated it. No doubt, local government authorities would be quick to appreciate a situation such as this. I think we all agree that if there were any doubt about a voter being qualified to vote, this situation would not have been suggested and supported in this way. Therefore, I assume that the Minister has satisfied himself on this point. I am pleased to pass this information on to the Chamber.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8: Section 117 amended—

Mr. NALDER: I said I would have the matter of the words "inner" and "outer" investigated. Section 117 appears on page 120 of the *Local Government Act No. 84* of 1960, and the word "outer" relating to envelopes appears in paragraph (b) of that section. It indicates that the returning officer shall produce and open the outer envelopes bearing the absent vote certificates received by him up to the close of the poll. There was doubt whether the word "outer" should read "inner," but the meaning is quite clear in that paragraph, and therefore I would say the amendment is quite in order, so there is no cause for concern. The member for Bayswater and the member for Beeloo raised this matter.

Mr. JAMIESON: That is all right as long as it is understood that this is what is required. Even though the Minister indicated it is clear in his mind, we must be quite satisfied in our own minds that the inner envelope is the one which contains the ballot paper. The inner envelope does not have anything on it except the words "ballot paper." It is only waste paper and is of no use for statistics. The returning officer does not want to be running around for months with a heap of those in his possession. If the Minister is satisfied he has clarified the point, we will have to accept that.

Mr. NALDER: I would also mention that when the votes are taken out of the inner envelopes and put in a receptacle for counting, the returning officer, in order to ensure the total number of votes is correct, records, on the outside of the envelopes, the number of votes that come out of the inner envelopes. According to the Minister this information is absolutely necessary, and that is one of the reasons why it is important to retain the inner envelopes as well.

Mr. Toms: But he does not have to retain them after the count.

Mr. NALDER: No.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9: Section 135 amended—

Mr. JAMIESON: This deals with the payment of returning officers in a local government election. The Minister was to have a look at this clause to ensure that the returning officer would not be placed in the position of receiving less remuneration than some of the officers employed under him. As the returning officer is the one who is the most responsible for the conduct of the election, it would seem wrong if he did not, in fact, receive the greatest payment on that day.

Mr. NALDER: Here again the Minister is of the opinion that such a situation is not likely to occur, because when a returning officer is engaged the fee for his services will be well above any fee paid to his officers for overtime worked. I appreciate the concern of members in this Chamber. In most local government elections, however, it does not take very long for all the votes to be counted. Members will recall that even in a Perth City Council election the whole count is generally completed by about 11 p.m., or even before. The Minister is of the opinion that in the light of experience of local government elections over the years this situation is not likely to occur.

Mr. Toms: An election could drag out a little now because of the distribution of the preferences.

Mr. NALDER: Even on that basis it does not, in the experience of the Minister's officers, take very long for the count to be concluded. It would appear, therefore, that this point has been considered and is believed to be well covered by the amendment.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10: Section 193 amended—

Mr. NALDER: I promised to obtain some information on the seizure of surfboards, which is dealt with by this clause. In the areas where the by-laws relating to safety, decency, convenience, and comfort of persons bathing are applied, it has been the practice to extend their application for a distance of 200 yards seaward from low water mark at ordinary spring tides.

The member for Bayswater commented on the authority of any beach inspector taking possession of surfboards in the water, and I think the explanation I have made will satisfy him. It is proposed that before any by-laws are promulgated the views of the surfriders association will be considered, and there has been a suggestion from the association that it would undertake the registration of boards. I think this is probably a very good move.

Mr. Jamieson: There is a bit of compulsory unionism about it, though.

Mr. NALDER: It is a matter for them to decide between themselves. I think it is a good move. I was immediately concerned when the matter was raised as to how the by-law would be policed, but the Minister's statement indicates that the surfriders association is interested and concerned and is prepared to take some action to control its members. I presume the association would also be prepared to approach other surfboard riders who are not members of the association in an endeavour to control the situation. I therefore consider the position is well and truly covered, and I hope this explanation will satisfy the members who spoke during the second reading.

Mr. TOMS: The Minister has given some explanation on this matter, but I still have my doubts as to how far the jurisdiction of any local authority extends. It is very doubtful whether, at law, a local authority would have power to control for a distance of 200 yards out to sea.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister still does not seem to have answered the criticism that was raised on this point; namely, that the Local Government Act did not apply 200 yards out from the delineated high-water mark. The point that the member for Bayswater and I tried to make at the time was that no by-law would be worth anything if the local authority did not have this power.

Mr. Nalder: You mean to a point 200 yards out from the beach?

Mr. JAMIESON: A local authority would not be able to police the by-law. It might gazette it, but whether it could be applied would be an entirely different matter. For instance, the Perth City

Council could not make a by-law relating to anything that occurred 200 yards inside the South Perth City Council boundary. It is a physical limitation imposed by the boundary. In this situation the physical limitation is the high water mark.

Mr. NALDER: This would be a matter for co-operation between the two local authorities concerned. I thought the honourable member was speaking about adjoining local authorities on the beach.

Mr. Toms: I was talking about 200 yards out to sea.

Mr. NALDER: I understand that an inspector on the beach can control his area as far as 200 yards into the water.

Mr. Toms: The Fremantle City Council does not control Port Beach; that is controlled by the Fremantle Port Authority.

Mr. NALDER: The by-law mentioned here gives an inspector authority to control the water 200 yards from the beach. If control is needed further out than that, it would be a matter for the local authority to amend the by-law. Apparently the local authority has power to make the by-law, and if we agree to it that is the end of it. If the authority has been given—and up to the present nobody has challenged it—we must agree to it.

Mr. Toms: Only the approval can be challenged.

Mr. NALDER: This happens in other Acts. Until a by-law is disproved by court of law, it is the authority, and that applies under any Act passed by this Chamber. I cannot see any difference with this legislation.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 11: Section 221 amended—

Mr. DURACK: As I indicated in my second reading speech, I move an amendment—

> Page 5, line 20—Delete the passage "the member of the Police Force or the clerk of the council is satisfied, from the information furnished by the owner, that".

This section gives a police officer or an officer of a council power to determine whether an owner shall be deemed the driver of a vehicle which is the subject of an offence against a by-law made under this clause. There is no need for me to add to what I said during my second reading speech as to the serious implication these words have in regard to the administration of justice.

Mr. NALDER: The Minister in another place is satisfied with the amendment, so I have no objection to it.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 12 to 16 put and passed.

Clause 17: Section 329 amended—

Mr. JAMIESON: This allows a number of local authorities to become county or regional councils. This seems rather strange, because I doubt whether we have anything like this under the Act. We have a voluntary system, and any one of these authorities can opt to join another. I oppose the principle of the Country Shire Councils Association putting forward this suggestion to the Minister for Local Government and his having to accept it when, in effect, it has no practical application to a section of the Act It is ludicrous that we should seek to amend sections of the Act for no reason. The objection that most shires have to joining a county system must first be overcome; and we must also establish the headquarters or the capital of the county. We must have a central authority. Perhaps we could have something in the form of a debating society which could be given power to have its voice heard on certain aspects. I doubt the wisdom of altering sections of the Act for no practical purpose.

Mr. NALDER: There is a reason for this. In illustrating the point I would say that a number of shires could form themselves into a regional council area.

Mr. Jamieson: But they would not.

Mr. NALDER: They do. This does operate among certain local authorities in Western Australia.

Mr. Jamieson: Not pursuant to the Act. That is only on a voluntary basis.

Mr. NALDER: Under the present provisions if a local authority wishes to leave one group and join another the whole group must resign. There is no authority which permits one local authority to agree to the resignation of another from a particular group when it wishes to join some other group. The amendment in the Bill permits this, and I see no reason why it should not be done. There is no harm in it if it is considered advisable in the interests of all concerned.

The Minister in another place has advised me that the amendment in the Bill has been included because of the situation I have explained. In the country areas we have various divisions of local authority, such as the great southern, and so on, and if one local authority finds that it could operate better in another area, because of its geography, why should it not be permitted to do so?

Mr. Toms: There is nothing to prohibit it now.

Mr. NALDER: I understand agreement must be reached by all concerned before this can occur.

Mr. JAMIESON: If the position were as provided for in the Act in connection with a county council or regional council, it might be all right, but this is not so.

Under the Act it is purely voluntary, and any authority can leave and join another. I can see danger in this if the county system comes into being, though I cannot see how it can. It will be like saying to the ward of a shire, "If you do not agree with the decision of the shire you can opt out." That would create chaos administratively.

Mr. Nalder: I think you are exaggerating the position.

Mr. JAMIESON: The position has not yet manifested itself. When people get elected to do a job, they are not likely to pass that authority over to somebody else. This provision would require them to do so. Until the shires can form what is tantamount to a county government, we should not fool around with the Act and give them these powers. It is true that there are co-operatives on a voluntary basis which can make their views heard in concert, but they do not, in fact, exist, as provided for here; they can opt out if they wish.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 18 and 19 put and passed.

Clause 20: Heading and section 401A added—

Mr. TOMS: This deals with unlawful work that is carried out, and states that before a council can serve notice to stop the work it must get in touch with the Secretary of the Local Government Department and wait for his reply. We feel the Secretary for Local Government is not the person who should give this authority. Ever since this type of legislation has been in force the local building surveyor, in consultation with the shire clerk, has been the person responsible for ordering a stoppage of work which is being carried out either unlawfully or not according to specification. During the second reading debate I interjected to say that an officer is being appointed to make these on-the-spot inspections. But this is only in the metropolitan area. It cannot apply to Halls Creek, and places like that. By the time word was received from the Secretary of the Local Government Department, the person in question could have completed the work and left. On whom would the order be served?

Mr. NALDER: This amendment has been agreed to by all the local authorities. The Minister in another place feels that the recommendation of the local authorities is satisfactory. No doubt the country people would have had an opportunity to oppose this or suggest an alternative. I understand the Secretary of the Local Government Department can delegate his authority, but I do not know whether it would apply in this case. All the local authorities in the metropolitan area and in the country support these amendments. Surely they would not do so if the Bill contained anything detrimental to their areas.

Mr. TOMS: Why should there be this departure from old established practice? The member for Beeloo queried the right of appeal to the Minister; but under the Local Government Act ratepayers have the right of appeal to the Minister. Why should local authorities give this power away? It does not seem right to me despite what the Minister has said. I cannot support the clause until we are given a classic example as to why this amendment is necessary. Why should we depart from old established practice?

We find that perhaps someone from a local authority whispers in the Minister's ear, or talks to the member, and the next thing the Act is being amended.

Mr. Nalder: That is an exaggerated statement.

Mr. TOMS: Not at all. When an amendment comes before the Chamber, it usually affects only one shire.

Mr. Nalder: These amendments were agreed to by the Local Government Association.

Mr. TOMS: I do not know how it came to agree to them.

Mr. Nalder: This is a strong point. According to the information that has been given to me, this amendment is designed to simplify the procedure. I have not been out to question local authorities on this point.

Mr. TOMS: I have been given no reason for this change of policy that will cause me to alter my attitude. I do not think it is the prerogative of the Secretary of the Local Government Department to stop work on a building. In the past this has been done by a building inspector or the shire clerk, but now this responsibility is to be thrust on to the Secretary of the Local Government Department. No particular case has been quoted in support of this amendment; and I desire to know the reason for it.

Mr. JAMIESON: I propose to move an amendment in order to test the feeling of the Committee. Having to deal direct with the Secretary of the Local Government Department before a local authority can make a move is very bad in principle. Since we have a Local Government Act, surely it is the responsibility of local government, and not the Secretary of the Local Government Department to administer that Act. The Secretary of the Local Government Department can draw the attention of the Minister to any contravention of the Act by a local authority. Are we going to require that the approval of the Secretary of the Local Government Department be required in connection with all sections of the Act? This seems to be a cumbersome way of doing things when the need is for something to be done right away. I move an amendment—

> Page 8, lines 9 and 10—Delete the words "with the approval of the Secretary".

The Minister has said the amendment as presented to us has the approval of the Local Government Association. Quite often, on reflection, local governing bodies and organisations associated with them change their ideas. I remember one thing that was unanimously adopted by the local government organisations of Australia at the South Perth convention which was held last year; but it was not ratified by the Local Government Association in this State, despite the fact it accepted it in principle.

It is wrong to put into an Act something which virtually provides for ministerial approval, when this approval is not necessary for a local authority to put through a drain and other things that are specified in the Act. It is the right of a local governing body to determine what action shall be taken when its by-laws are being contravened by a builder.

Mr. TOMS: I support the amendment. As I said in my second reading speech, I saw the fate of this move in another place; and no doubt the amendment will meet with the same fate in this Chamber. If this amendment is passed it will not ruin the Act, and the Minister would be well advised to accept it.

Mr. NALDER: I do not propose to accept the amendment. I base my reasons on the points I made when I introduced the Bill. I said—

> This clause has been introduced to ensure that a builder does not continue with a building or alterations after his attention has been drawn to a contravention of the Act or by-laws.
>
> It provides that a council or a building surveyor with the approval of the Secretary for Local Government may serve a written notice on the builder.

It is quite clear how this procedure will be carried out, and there is no problem whatsoever.

If a council is concerned about a situation, it can get in touch with the Secretary of the Local Government Department either by telephone or by telegram. The whole thing can be done in a few minutes. I see no reason for departing from the clause as printed.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister is on weak ground; and he did not give any reply during the second reading debate to the points raised by the member for Bayswater and the member for Beeloo other than to say that the Local Government Association wanted this provision. If we agree to the provision, a council or a building surveyor will have to get the approval of the Secretary of the Local Government Department before work can be stopped on a building. Why is this approval necessary when a council, in its own right, can at the present time stop work if its building by-laws are being contravened? It is completely beyond me; and particularly so when I read further on in the clause that any person affected has the right of appeal to the Minister for Local Government. The person concerned can do this right away.

The Minister said that the Secretary of the Local Government Department could be contacted within a few minutes; but he was exaggerating because, as pointed out by the member for Bayswater, if a north-west shire were involved it would take a considerable time for even a telegram or a telephone call to reach the Secretary of the Local Government Department, let alone for the facts to be considered, and a reply to be given. It is not easy to make an immediate decision, particularly if the Secretary of the Local Government Department is 1,200 or 1,500 miles from where the work is being carried out.

The Council or the building surveyor should be in a position to issue an order that work must be stopped if building by-laws are being contravened in any way. Surely we can rely on these people being fair and reasonable in their assessments before they issue such an order! If by-laws are being contravened I should imagine a straightforward decision would be arrived at; and if the decision subsequently proved to be unfair or unjust, the aggrieved person, if he so desired, could appeal to the Minister for Local Government.

Surely it is within the jurisdiction of local authorities to police by-laws and regulations made under the Act! Therefore it should not be necessary for time to be wasted in getting the approval of the Secretary of the Local Government Department before an order is issued.

Mr. DUNN: I think members on the other side of the Chamber have completely overlooked the whole purpose of the amendment, which was specifically designed to save time and do away with what has always been regarded as a cumbersome and slow procedure. No doubt the provision was designed to protect the interests of everybody and to ensure a terrific amount of power was not left in the hands of some public servant.

I have often heard members opposite decry the fact that far too much power is placed in the hands of public servants. Here we have an example of an honest and sincere attempt to overcome this problem.

Mr. Jamieson: This provision gives power to the Secretary of the Local Government Department.

Mr. DUNN: On page 1211 of *Hansard*, in relation to clause 20, the report of the debate states that the clause is designed to simplify the procedure, as previously the order had to be published in the *Government Gazette* and in a newspaper circulating in the district.

Mr. Davies: You are on the wrong clause.

Mr. Jamieson: The clause in *Hansard* is incorrectly numbered.

Mr. DUNN: If that is the case my argument is astray. I was reading the situation as I saw it in the *Hansard* before me.

Mr. Davies: What we are debating is reported under clause 19.

Mr. DUNN: I withdraw my remarks and will study the corrected form of *Hansard*.

Mr. JAMIESON: The fact that this situation exists does not mean that we should supplant it with an equally cumbersome situation. The immediate issuing of an order might be vital from the point of view of cost to the builder and to the local governing body. If an order to cease work could not be issued, and if regulations were being transgressed and concrete was being poured, it would be pretty costly for somebody to undo the damage if it was subsequently determined that the structure had to be removed. The Secretary of the Local Government Department could have been investigating some other problem and could possibly not have been reached by telephone.

If I were in shire administration I certainly would not take much notice of a vital thing like this when, in fact, the Secretary of the Local Government Department takes from the shoulders of local government the responsibility of issuing stop-work orders. It is no good the Minister saying that a stop-work order could be obtained over the telephone in five minutes. I would not like an authority such as this to be issued over the phone; I would want to see it in black and white. That is the principal objection. We are making the procedure less cumbersome than it was, but we are still making it unnecessarily cumbersome for the shires to administer. I think it is unnecessary for us to apply such restrictions.

Members say what a wonderful job local government is doing, but when we have a chance to give it an opportunity to do the job, a rope is put around its neck. I do not know how sincere those members are. They seem to be afraid, but I see nothing to be afraid of. Local government has a job to do and it should be allowed to do that job without the approval of the Secretary of the Local Government Department. Surely the secretary is a busy man without having this additional authority.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—19.

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brady	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Davies	Mr. Moir
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Graham	Mr. Toms
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. May
Mr. W. Hegney	*(Teller)*

Noes—23

Mr. Brand	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Burt	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Elliott	Mr. O'Neil
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Rushton
Dr. Henn	Mr. Williams
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Young
Mr. Lewis	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. McPharlin	*(Teller)*

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Curran	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Court
Mr. Hall	Mr. W. A. Manning

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. JAMIESON: Having dealt with that aspect of the Bill, I now turn to the right of appeal after the order has been issued. I objected very strongly to this during the second reading stage of the Bill, because I felt the Minister was loading himself unnecessarily. Surely, if an appeal was made after all aspects of the matter had been considered, such appeal would be from Caesar to Caesar. The Minister's senior servant is granted the right to issue an order, and the person affected can appeal to the Minister to have the order set aside. How absurd can it get! The Minister should get out once his departmental head has issued an order. Surely the Minister has to stand by the decision of his senior officer. It becomes rather stupid if a senior man issues an order and the Minister has to sit in judgment on whether the order shall be allowed or not.

If there is to be an appeal, surely it should be to a court with jurisdiction to handle such matters. The decision should not be left to the Minister, who is the immediate superior of the person who originally signed the order. This is getting beyond a joke and to me the position seems to be getting even worse than the situation which prevailed in the first place.

I strongly object to that sort of legislation. The Minister seems determined to proceed with the Bill as it is, but I am sure that on reflection this will be flung back at us at a later stage, and one or the other of the stipulations is going to be removed. It is not possible to have an appeal from one person in a department to a senior person in the department without the department becoming completely unbalanced.

Mr. NALDER: I am certainly not going to agree to this proposition. A number of requests have come to me on behalf of local authorities, or people in local authorities, to appeal to the Minister. To my knowledge, on a number of occasions the Minister has come down in support of the person who appealed to him.

Mr. Jamieson: That was not under the Local Government Act, but under the Town Planning Act.

Mr. NALDER: No, it was under the Local Government Act.

Mr. Jamieson: Can the Minister give an instance?

Mr. NALDER: This situation has existed. I know this only too well because of a case that came to me fairly recently. A person concerned in a country local authority came to me and requested that a matter be taken up with the Minister. I know the Minister gave consideration to it and subsequently came down on the side of the ratepayer.

This situation is fair and reasonable. If a person is aggrieved, he goes to the Minister, who looks at the case and makes a decision. I know of another case which concerned a ratepayer of a local authority in the metropolitan area. The local authority concerned is on the north side of the railway line. The ratepayer made representations to me and, on his behalf, I took the matter to the Minister.

Mr. Jamieson: In what respect was the appeal made?

Mr. NALDER: The Minister gave consideration to the position and came down on the side of the ratepayer.

Mr. Jamieson: In what respect was the appeal made?

Mr. NALDER: I have mentioned two cases that came to me on behalf of ratepayers. The first appeal I mentioned came from a person living in the country and the second from a person living in the metropolitan area. As I have said, in both instances the Minister for Local Government came down on the side of the ratepayers.

No doubt quite a number of members in the Chamber know that this situation exists. I think it is reasonable to allow a person either in the country or in the city to take his case to the Minister so that he can give consideration to it. I know the Minister has gone into the area and made inspections in respect of this kind of situation. I hope that the Committee is satisfied on this point, and will agree that any further proposals are unnecessary.

Mr. JAMIESON: The statement by the Minister who is handling the legislation in this Chamber really amazes me, because the Local Government Act expressly excludes the Minister from having a voice in respect of things done by local authorities, except in the one case in law; that is, when they transgress the jurisdiction of the Local Government Act. I ask the Minister to make sure that he is not confused with the right which the Minister has in respect of the Town Planning Act. In some matters associated with that Act, a local authority often become entangled in an argument with a ratepayer.

Mr. Nalder: Aren't we talking about a building?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes, we are talking about a building.

Mr. Nalder: That is correct.

Mr. JAMIESON: That is what I want to know. The only occasion in connection with a building that a person could possibly appeal to the Minister would be when the authority of the Act or of the by-laws had been exceeded. Except in that instance, the Minister is explicitly excluded by the Local Government Act from interfering.

Mr. Nalder: This is the case to which we are referring.

Mr. JAMIESON: As I have said, the Minister is excluded from interfering, except through the express provision that an appeal can be made by local government officers when they are dismissed. They have the right of appeal to the Minister. However, apart from this, the right of appeal to the Minister under the Local Government Act is very restricted and an appeal can be made only in respect of matters associated with a breach of a law or of a by-law.

I know of many ratepayers who have requested the Minister to do something because of the action of a local authority, but the Minister has written back to say he has no jurisdiction. This is quite true and applies irrespective of the action taken. Very often the Minister agreed that the action taken was unwise and unjust, but he pointed out he had no jurisdiction. Now the Minister who is handling the legislation tells us there should be no right of appeal.

Mr. Nalder: We are talking about this particular provision.

Mr. JAMIESON: In connection with this particular provision, if a stop-work order is issued, the legal ramifications envisaged by the member for Darling Range must be followed. Legal complications take months and months, and we should forget about that aspect because it is hopeless.

Probably when sorting out all the orders which are issued under the present section of the Act, the Minister might have been involved in some transaction, but it is not expressed that way in the Act. Finally, I would like to see everything subject to appeal to the Minister for Local Government. Such a provision would be more along my line of thinking. However, if we only pick out specific sections which will enable an appeal to be made to the Minister, then we are adopting something in principle in respect of one aspect, and, in respect of other aspects, we are saying, "The principle does not exist."

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 21 to 24 put and passed.

Clause 25: Section 665A added—

Mr. JAMIESON: This is the provision which gives power to deal with what we might term certain kinds of litterbugs.

Certainly some power is needed under the Local Government Act. When speaking on the Bill, I mentioned that I considered the provision does not go far enough. Some further inducement must be provided because although a maximum fine of $200 can be imposed, the offenders are indeed hard to apprehend. A great many of them are motorists who discard litter as they proceed on their journey. Whilst the amendment might have some degree of merit, I cannot see that it will achieve the objective unless some inducement other than the imposition of a penalty is made so that people will overcome their normal litterbug tendencies.

My main objection is the provision to appoint honorary inspectors. As I said during the second reading debate, one usually finds that honorary inspectors are either over-zealous or, alternatively, are busybodies; otherwise they would not take on the job of an honorary inspector. They become involved in all sorts of problems with the public in general, and the local authority will probably have to finish up fighting battles on their behalf. Even in connection with paid officers, the local authorities have enough problems: but if the appointment of honorary inspectors is allowed, then it is necessary to stand up to their various whims and desires. These might be more than it is worth while for any local authority to take on. I doubt the wisdom of making a provision for honorary inspectors. If they are appointed by the local authority there could be embarrassments; and, if not, the Act will not be policed.

Mr. NALDER: I appreciate the point that has been made, but local authorities appoint honorary inspectors under other Acts, and I am certain they will ensure that the inspectors who are appointed will have some knowledge of the legislation and experience of dealing with the public generally. It will be noted that the provision states that the person appointed shall be an officer of the council, so I presume he will have some authority, and no doubt he will be chosen for the position on account of his ability to police this section of the Act.

This provision could prove to be an added advantage to local authorities in the metropolitan area and in the country, because if the legislation is to be properly administered it will be necessary for more than one person to have authority to ensure that the travelling public know exactly what is required of them. I take this opportunity to point out that the Minister has indicated he will make every endeavour to ensure the Bill will be reprinted as early as possible.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 26 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with an amendment.

RAILWAY (COLLIE-GRIFFIN MINE RAILWAY) DISCONTINUANCE BILL

Second Reading

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Railways) [6.11 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill is to close portion of the Collie-Griffin mine railway to enable recovery of materials which could be used to advantage elsewhere on the railway system. It is estimated that the value of recoverable materials exceeds $10,000.

This section of railway originally served three sidings—

(1) Worsley Timber Co. Pty. Ltd. at 57 chains;

(2) Department of Industrial Development (grain distillery) at approximately 2 miles 10 chains;

(3) Griffin mine at the extremity of the railway—2 miles 55 chains.

The grain distillery siding has not been used for approximately 15 years, and the Griffin mine closed in 1955.

The Worsley Timber Company siding is still in use and it is proposed to allow this section to remain. The Department of Industrial Development has closely examined the possible use of this line for any future establishment of industry at Collie and has agreed that formal closure should proceed.

In addition, the Director-General of Transport has examined the position from the aspect of possible developments in Collie which might give rise to a need for the railway at some time in the future. He is satisfied that there is little probability of the line, which is less than two miles in length, being required to play a part in the transport task in the Collie area and has accordingly recommended that it be closed.

The land on which the railway to be discontinued is constructed, being former Crown land, will be surrendered to the Lands Department.

In accordance with the requirements of section 26 of the State Transport Co-ordination Act, 1966, I have tabled the report submitted by the Director-General of Transport.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. May.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Labour) [7.33 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

While the administration of weights and measures legislation is a function of each individual State of the Commonwealth of

Australia, there have been many problems common to all and the States have agreed that substantial benefits would accrue to industry, commerce, consumers, and administrations from a uniform approach in relation to weights and measures.

In more recent years the States have passed uniform legislation with respect to units and standards of measurement whilst all have accepted a central laboratory, which is now fully operative, for the examination of patterns of weighing and measuring instruments used in trade to determine their suitability for the purpose.

Agreement has now been reached in a further area dealing with the marking and standardisation of packaged goods. For many years the various States have had legislation, which differed in many respects, dealing with this matter and this has posed a problem to manufacturers and packers, and also to importers, throughout Australia. Due to differing requirements, packaged goods in certain sizes could be marketed in some States and not in others and, similarly, the marking of contents in certain print dimensions was permissible in some States and not in others. This resulted in considerable confusion and marketing difficulties and became an embarrassment to all concerned, and it was recognised that it would greatly benefit trade and simplify control if all States had the same requirements.

At the 1961 formal conference of weights and measures administrations, strong representations were made for uniform laws to be prepared to meet this situation and the conference agreed that a technical inquiry by persons suitably qualified should be made into the packaging difficulties. This matter was then put before the conference of Ministers of weights and measures held in Canberra on the 30th May, 1962. The Ministers agreed that uniformity was desirable and an offer by Mr. Rylah, the Victorian Minister, to undertake an inquiry on behalf of all States was accepted.

On the 12th June, 1962, the Executive Council of the State of Victoria appointed Mr. W. J. Cuthill, stipendiary magistrate, as a board of inquiry to obtain factual information on the standardisation and marking of packaged goods in terms of weight or measure.

Over a period of 18 months the board made inquiries from overseas and local organisations and received submissions from manufacturers, packers, agents, consumer organisations, weights and measures authorities and other interested parties.

This resulted in a report compiled in six volumes containing 2,322 pages, dated the 26th February, 1964. The report was examined by the State weights and measures administrations with the result that a proposed uniform code was prepared and submitted to a conference of Ministers of weights and measures in December, 1964.

The Ministers' conference decided that the proposed code should be circulated to manufacturers, etc., with an invitation to comment before the 28th February, 1965. This date was subsequently extended to the 1st April, 1965. The comments received were examined by weights and measures officers, who agreed to recommend to the Ministers certain amendments to the proposed code.

The next conference of Ministers of weights and measures was held in Canberra on the 23rd June, 1965. At this conference the draft code and proposed amendments were considered by the Ministers who agreed that this code as amended, with the exception of the clause dealing with the marking of certain packages "net weight when packed," be passed to the draftsmen to prepare for legislation. Thus the agreed code was born. I understand that the original code was tabled by the Chief Secretary during the last session of Parliament, when an amendment was made to the Act.

A committee of parliamentary draftsmen was formed to prepare legislation in accordance with the approved code. Subsequently experiments were carried out in the various States on articles which suffered diminution in weight due to climatic conditions and at the weights and measures officers' conference in October, 1965, it was agreed that a list of certain articles be submitted to the Ministers for weights and measures for their consideration as being articles which may be marked "net weight when packed." The Ministers, by correspondence, agreed in principle to the recommendations, and the draftsmen were advised accordingly.

Further conferences of weights and measures officers occurred before the draft legislation and relevant regulations were submitted to the fourth conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers at Canberra, on the 26th May, 1967. The Ministers agreed to the legislation, subject to some minor changes.

The final draft legislation of the code prepared by the committee of parliamentary draftsmen has been acted upon by the parliamentary draftsman in Western Australia and produced as a Bill to amend the Weights and Measures Act.

The code is mainly covered in a new part—part IIIA—and there are a small number of consequential amendments to other parts of the Act.

Because the general penalties in the existing Weights and Measures Act and regulations of Western Australia make an offender on conviction liable to a penalty not exceeding $200, it has been thought desirable to retain this penalty rather than

accept the general penalty of $100 suggested in the draft code. The higher figure was used in the draft code where specific penalties were provided.

Although Western Australia is one of the first States to introduce amending legislation to provide for the uniform code, other States have agreed to bring it before their particular parliamentary sessions in 1967. However, a clause in the Bill provides for the commencing date by proclamation; and not until all States have passed the measure will the date be decided to bring the code into effect uniformly throughout the Commonwealth, probably by the 1st July, 1968.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brady.

CHILD WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 19th October.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [7.39 p.m.]: This Bill certainly seems desirable. It had a very smooth passage through another place, and I anticipate for it an equally smooth passage through this House.

The measure deals with Western Australia's greatest asset—the children of the State. I sincerely hope that when it becomes law the inspections which are made possible of child care establishments will be carried out. I am wondering whether they will be carried out by the Child Welfare Department only, or whether they will also be carried out by the Public Health Department and the Education Department; because it seems to me all three departments are allied to our youth; and in a matter which affects them it would be in their interests if they are able to help in policing the Act.

We have seen day centres for the care of children being established in homes, in backyards, and in other places. As the Minister pointed out, the growth in these day centres has resulted from the economic circumstances of the people of the State, in that a large percentage of the female population, including mothers, go out to work.

A certain lady councillor of Fremantle recently visited all Eastern States capitals to investigate this problem on behalf of the City of Fremantle. She saw the child care centres in various States, and she learned that legislation and regulations exist in Victoria to govern the standards which are expected of those who provide day facilities for the care of children. She was told that if the provisions of the Victorian legislation were properly policed and strictly enforced many of the day centres would have to close down, because they did not meet the standards laid down. If the day centres have to be closed down then repercussions will be felt throughout industry, because many wives and mothers —including perhaps unmarried mothers— send their children to these places in order that they themselves may go to work. The same applies to widows and widowers who have to maintain children, and who are in employment. Many of these people would not have an opportunity to send their children to day centres in Victoria if those centres were strictly policed.

I would not like to see a similar situation arise in Western Australia. Quite close to my own home there is a lady who looks after several children, and it concerns me deeply that these children are not being cared for properly. I hope that with the passing of this measure there will be a sufficient number of inspectors appointed, so that they can be alerted in cases like the one I have mentioned. Similar cases exist not only in my electorate, but throughout the metropolitan area, although not to the same extent in country centres.

The Bill provides that various sections of the legislation may be proclaimed at various dates. One provision specifies more clearly as to what constitutes a neglected child, and it seeks to include the words "is found in such circumstances or is behaving in such a manner" in section 4 of the Act. A child coming within this category will be covered by the legislation.

Another provision in the Bill will ensure the attendance of neglected children at school, and I think this is very desirable. Clause 6 seeks to delete the word "convicted" appearing in section 26 of the Act, because of the stigma associated with it.

Another provision seeks to delete the word "may" from section 27. This will have the effect of preventing a rehearing of a case except on substantial grounds. We are all aware that often it is difficult to convince parents that their children have transgressed, and out of a misguided sense of loyalty they attempt to defend their children.

The provision in clause 8 seeks to amend the section of the Act which permits the granting of bail in cases involving children. The Child Welfare Department, the clerk of the children's court, or the superintendents of Government detention institutions may claim a child for a month in order, I assume, to assess his mental and psychological state.

The provision in clause 9 permits children who have committed offences to be held in their own homes, subject to their parents entering bonds to produce the children when directed. I submit it is much better that such a child should be cared for in his own home, subject to the provisions of this legislation, than in a gaol or remand home.

I could go on enumerating the other provisions contained in the Bill, because I have given it considerable study. I have

a wealth of data relating to the situation which exists in the establishments in the Eastern States, but I see little purpose in reading out to the House what takes place over there. I do not intend to oppose the Bill in any respect, and generally it has the approval of members on this side of the House.

I hope that when the measure becomes law all transgressions of the law, particularly those relating to day care of little children, will be watched carefully, to ensure that the State's greatest asset—its children—is adequately cared for. I can imagine the psychological damage which could be done to a child as a consequence of the improper policing of this legislation. I support the Bill.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [7.49 p.m.]: As the member for Fremantle indicated, this Bill is mainly a modernisation of the provisions which appear in the Child Welfare Act. To comment on several features of it, firstly, it would appear to modernise such ideas as the remanding of children to reception centres. We know the good work which has been done at the Longmore reception centre and other centres.

In regard to child minding centres, one can recall the tragedy which occurred in, I think, Victoria some years ago.

The death of a number of young children was caused when fire swept through a centre in that State; and it makes us realise the necessity for licensing so there will be some degree of Government control over such centres. This of course, could apply only to those child minding centres that are set up specifically for business purposes. The principle of these centres is well established; and, as far as kindergartens and other organisations are concerned, their standards are well up to what is required. Therefore I imagine the provisions of this legislation will affect only those people who set up child minding centres as businesses. I feel it is a good move for us to have legislation in order to prevent the occurrence here of tragedies similar to those that have happened in other parts of the world.

Reciprocity between States in so far as the care of wards is concerned is a good move. If a ward commits an offence in this State and it is necessary for the betterment of that ward for him or her to go to another State where the parents reside, there should be reciprocity. At the present time, if a person is put on a bond and then goes interstate, the body that places that person on the bond has little or no jurisdiction once the person crosses the border. It seems as though this provision will allow for such a person to be supervised until he is deemed to be reformed to the extent necessary.

The proposal to limit the activities of any person who would try to take children out of the State when it is undesirable for this to happen is a modern line of thinking, particularly in view of the rapid movement of air, road, and rail transport. Because of modern transport facilities there seems to be a need for such instances to be covered by law, particularly as they occur fairly regularly.

The fact that the Director of Child Welfare will now be able to assist the children of absent parents is a rather good move. Some children, because of the irresponsibility or neglect of their parents, are forced to fend for themselves, and find that they could well be thrown on to the Child Welfare Department for their own good. Possibly some of these children will be sensible enough to apply to the department for help and supervision so they will know they are legally covered in case there is any doubt as to who is supervising them, and so they will not be regarded as uncontrolled children.

Sensible young people with no parents to fall back on will be able to fall back on the State for, as it were, a shoulder to cry on in any case of necessity; and this is a good move. That is about all I have to say on the measure, which is a good one. It modernises the Act in accordance with present-day thinking.

Irrespective of the side of the House on which we sit, we all do our best for those children in the community who, for some reason or other, come within the scope of the Child Welfare Department and the Act under which it works. As a consequence, we welcome this modern approach to the various aspects dealt with by this department. This measure is an attempt to keep abreast of changing times, and it should receive the approval of the House. The member for Fremantle indicated that he could find nothing particularly objectionable in it; and if he cannot, I think members will agree it is a pretty good measure.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [7.56 p.m.]: I thank the member for Fremantle and the member for Beeloo for their support of this Bill, and the other members of the House for their anticipated support. I think the member for Beeloo summed up the position when he said we are endeavouring to keep abreast of the times in the treatment of juveniles, particularly the offenders.

There is no need for me to go over what has already been said, but there is one rather interesting feature to which I did not refer when I introduced the Bill. It is related to this measure in so far as juvenile offenders are concerned. I refer to what we call the treatment of juvenile first offenders. A panel comprising members of the Child Welfare Department and the Police Department was set up in August, 1964, covering only the metropolitan area, to deal with first

offenders in order to avoid having to take them to the court.

Might I quote here that during the first year of the operation of this panel it was restricted to first offenders under the age of 13 years. After this, the age limit was raised so the panel could deal with first offenders under 14 years of age, with discretion to deal with some children aged 14 years who had been involved in offences with others under that age. Consideration is being given to further increasing the age of offenders to be dealt with; and only yesterday I received a communication. from the Minister for Child Welfare, seeking my support, as Minister for Police, of a further recommendation to increase the age to 15 years.

It is interesting to note that during the year 1966-67 there were no fewer than 143 first offenders in the metropolitan area dealt with by this panel; and the most interesting feature is the fact that of these 143, only nine came up for a second offence. So it shows the effectiveness of this panel in dealing with first offenders.

I must pay a tribute both to the members of the Child Welfare Department and the Police Department for the work they are doing in this regard. It is most valuable and I feel sure the parents of these first offenders—most of the offences are of a minor nature—are indeed most grateful for the attitude of the department.

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.

POISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 19th October.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [8.4 p.m.]: I find nothing greatly exciting about this Bill. It is one of those measures it is necessary to submit in order to bring legislation up to modern standards. It gives the Act greater coverage and allows certain paints, which have rather nasty poisons in their make-up, to be brought under the uniform regulations of the various States. This is rather important because paints manufactured in one State are sold in all States and, as a result, if the provisions were not uniform, many headaches could be encountered. Therefore this amendment is quite a good move.

According to the Minister the draft regulations have been prepared and undoubtedly as soon as this Bill is passed they will be expedited and further coverage will be provided in that respect.

I have one query concerning an exemption which is to be granted to substances controlled under other laws. These substances will be exempt from the provisions of this Act. This may be a good idea in respect of some substances, but many agricultural products contain some sophisticated poisons and I hope that although we are exempting them from control under this Act, the departments concerned will not fail to give them the attention they require. This applies particularly with regard to some of the weedicides, herbicides, and other substances used which are very prone to affect human beings if the necessary precautions are not taken. All these substances must be clearly marked.

Unfortunately up to date some poisons which would not have very harmful effects, except possibly to make one rather sick, are unavailable because of the restrictions under this Act; but other poisons used in agricultural products, which can have a fatal effect if a great quantity is ingested, are readily available. We know the situation in which one of the crop-dusting pilots at Kununurra found himself several years ago. He went very close to meeting his Maker. This has also been the fate of others who have not taken sufficient precautions. This situation could be worsened if we now take the control away under this Act and allow other departments to look after poisons under the provisions of other Acts. Those concerned in these other departments must accept full responsibility and ensure substances are fully and accurately labelled in order that the public is protected. Up to date this has not been the case.

I have already indicated to the House how certain hormone sprays, such as 2, 4-D, have been used to the detriment of the gardens of nearby residents. These sprays have poisoned plants and the atmosphere, and consequently they should be severely controlled. No useful purpose will be served if, on the one hand, we control the sale of poisons in chemists' shops, while, on the other hand, we allow the local florist or nurseryman to sell gallons of chemicals which can be dangerous to the life and limb of members of the community.

Because of this, I hope that if these substances are to be under the control of other authorities, the Minister will assure us that those authorities will be acting in the good interests of the public at large. A clear warning should be shown on the containers of these agricultural substances to indicate that they are extremely dangerous to children. If this is done the substances will not be left in the can in a shed, as is usually done with agricultural substances—more so than with products containing chemical poisons which have been prescribed for medical treatment. These latter poisons are usually placed in the medicine box where they are safe to a certain extent. We know they are not always safe because children are prone to climb on objects to gain access to them.

However, the main purpose of the Bill is to give the department control over certain substances it has not been able to control up to date. To this extent it will provide a greater protection for the public and, as a consequence, the measure is to be commended. Nevertheless, I do hope that other departments which have the supervision of certain substances will be made aware of their responsibility in regard to taking every precaution to guard against fatal accidents by the inadvertent use of substances under their control.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [8.10 p.m.]: The support for this legislation is appreciated. As has been stated, the Bill deals with virtually only two amendments. The first amendment enables the Act to be more flexible in so far as the schedules are concerned. A greater degree of flexibility will now be given to the parent legislation when the amendment is incorporated in it. At the present time only specific drugs are named. The department should be enabled to make modifications to the list of drugs and say how they might be used, how they should be marked, and so on.

The other purpose of the amending legislation is to allow exemptions from the Poisons Act of poisons that are adequately controlled under other legislation. This point was raised by the member for Beeloo and I agree that there must be a great degree of responsibility in this matter. An exemption will be authorised only if there is adequate control under other legislation. A close liaison is maintained between the Health Department and the Department of Agriculture in regard to the large number and great quantity of agricultural poisons used in agriculture. So I think this is a useful Bill, which will improve the Act, and for that reason I commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1967-68

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 17th October, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair.

Vote: Legislative Council, $56,500—

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [8.16 p.m.]: Mr. Deputy Chairman, this being my maiden speech may I first of all take the opportunity to express my appreciation and my thanks to members on the Government side of the House and to members of the Opposition, and to the staff of Parliament House for the sincere congratulations and best wishes which I received for my success in winning the by-election for the seat of Mt. Marshall. I also express my appreciation of the wishes extended for my future as a member of this Parliament.

I can assure members and the staff that those sincere good wishes make a new member feel confident when he enters a different and wider field of responsibility, and those wishes are, indeed, greatly appreciated.

I would be remiss if I did not record my regret at the reason—well known to members—for the by-election in the electorate of Mt. Marshall. The late Mr. George Cornell was highly respected throughout his electorate and he gave many years of satisfactory service to the electors. This offers a challenge to me, as I think it would offer a challenge to any successful candidate who followed him.

During the first few weeks of sitting in this Chamber I have found that a great deal of one's time is taken up in listening, and learning the procedures of Parliament. I am told that after a period of time the procedures become automatic, and I hope that this is so. I have also been advised that when a member makes his maiden speech it is traditional not to be too provocative because this speech is the only one he will be allowed to make without interjection. I hope I can honour that tradition.

I am also advised that speaking to the Estimates gives one a wide field in which to discuss matters. I would like to refer to the Estimates and to one feature for which I think the Government deserves commendation. I am speaking of the increased amount allocated for education. I understand there is an overall increase of 12.6 per cent. and I think this illustrates quite clearly that the Government is fully aware of, and realises the importance of, the need to improve all aspects of education in Western Australia. We are all aware of the need for more classrooms, more teacher-housing, and better facilities in the schools throughout the State. This applies particularly in country areas, and the electorate of Mt. Marshall is no exception.

I might also mention water supplies in my electorate, which are a vital necessity. Extensions to the comprehensive scheme are being carried out, and this is answering an urgent need. It is interesting to note in the Estimates that there is an anticipated increase of revenue from country water supplies amounting to $97,000. In the near future, I hope to be able to have a look at the returns under the new rating system from the comprehensive water scheme for the year ended the 30th June, 1967. I understand that these are available but, as yet, I do not think they have been perused.

I noted with some interest the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition when he was speaking on the Estimates last week, and the suggestion he made that, by taking the right-angled bends out of the pipelines of the country water supply scheme, a marked saving in the cost of pumping water would be made. This is a point about which I thought the engineers perhaps would have done something, and I do consider it is worth giving some thought to.

The Government is also to be commended inasmuch as it has thought better of the stamp duty position and will reduce the rate of stamp duty from 3c to a flat rate of 1c. No doubt this action will be received by many business organisations with delight. This action is due obviously to the fact that the income from stamp duty was more than anticipated.

I would like respectfully to suggest to the Government that some consideration be given to the establishment of an expert committee of economic advisers to make some preliminary research into the economic consequences of proposed taxes and charges in industry. These advisers could assess in detail the revenue likely to be derived and could estimate the impact on costs of production. Had it been in existence this expert committee could have been usefully employed, I consider, before the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act came into being. There is no doubt in my mind that not enough thought was given to that legislation before it became law. I believe that there are anomalies in the Act as it exists which are penalising settlers in outback areas.

I would suggest that some thought be given to a revision of the system of raising revenue to attract the maximum matching money. I appreciate the difficulties that face our Premier when he goes before the Grants Commission. If he does not have sufficient finance to attract the maximum amount of matching money he is in a very unenviable position. However, I suggest that thought be given to an alternative method to raise this revenue, and my own thoughts are that a better method would be for the fuel tax to be increased to cover the amount needed to attract the money.

I realise this would have to be on an Australia-wide basis. However, if this were done, the money would be derived from the people who use the roads the most and we would not be penalising so much those who are situated in such a position that they are forced to use heavy transport as the only means of carting their produce. We have seen that interstate hauliers have not been paying the amount of money at first anticipated and, indeed, a number of prosecutions are pending. I consider that if an increased fuel tax were substituted, this would even it out and make it a fairer method of raising the necessary revenue.

I would like to refer to a section of the subsidies shown in the Estimates upon which I would like some clarification. Doubtless, this clarification will be forthcoming. I refer to item No. 103, in the Miscellaneous Services Section, "Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust —Recoup of Losses." It shows an estimate recoup of losses for the year of $774,765, which represents an increase of $156,765. As a layman, I would like more information on this item. It seems odd to me, because with an increasing population one would assume there would be a greater number of passengers using the transport. Nevertheless, we see that there is to be an estimated recoup of losses of more than $750,000.

Almost every day I receive letters from people in my electorate asking me if I can do something towards securing more houses for the electorate. I know this is a problem with which all country members are faced, and my own electorate is no exception. I know, too, that the Government is well aware of the necessity for more houses. However, it is a problem which causes quite a number of my electors to be on my back, and it is one which I hope to be able to take more action on in the future.

The State is bursting at the seams and there is tremendous development going on in Western Australia. I mention the expansion into new areas through land being thrown open for selection. Here I would like to make a suggestion that, prior to the allocations of new land being made, from the time the applications are submitted to the time the land board sits, some investigation should be made in respect of the qualifications of the applicants. I am sure this is the time when quite a lot of sorting out could be done in order to make a fairer allocation. In my opinion the land board has a most unenviable job—in fact it is a hopeless job to satisfy the greater majority of those who apply. However, if an investigation were carried out, it would have the effect of reducing the number of applicants and should provide for a fairer allocation of land.

With the tremendous discoveries that are taking place in the State, and the development of iron ore, minerals, and oil, I think this is a most exciting time for us to be in Western Australia and, indeed, an honour—perhaps a greater honour than before—to be a member of the Western Australian Parliament and a supporter of the Government.

I hope that with more experience and knowledge I will be able to take a more active part in, and make some useful contributions in debates to, the government of Western Australia.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [8.29 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity, which is the earliest I have had, to extend

a welcome to the two new members of this Chamber, one of whom has just resumed his seat. I congratulate them on winning their respective by-elections and I sincerely trust that their stay in the Parliament of Western Australia will be of distinct advantage and benefit to the people of their electorates, and to the State generally, and that their services will be rewarding to themselves.

I was very interested to hear the opening remarks of the member who has just spoken when he touched upon the question of education. He has shown an acute knowledge of the problems confronting Western Australia today. The honourable member actually commended the Government for being aware of the educational problems and referred to some of them, including the one of which I wish to speak; namely, housing for teachers.

If the Government is to be commended on being aware of this problem, I only hope that the measures it has in mind to remedy the situation will soon become evident. The problem is definitely shown to exist by a letter I recently received from the secretary of the goldfields branch of the State School Teachers' Union, and I know the member for Murchison has received a similar letter. The problem was highlighted by the questions I asked in the House. The answers to the questions showed that in Kalgoorlie and Boulder a total of 16 homes are owned by the Government Employees' Housing Authority, but not one has been allocated to a married assistant teacher. Obviously these are old homes, previously belonging to the Education Department, which had been provided for headmasters, and they are still occupied by principals, deputy principals, and headmasters. The answers clearly show that no homes are available in either Kalgoorlie or Boulder for married assistant teachers.

In answer to another question I asked on the same day the Minister for Education replied that the total number of married assistant teachers, lecturers, and instructors in employment in Kalgoorlie and Boulder is 37. The number of homes provided by the Government Employees' Housing Authority is inadequate for an area which has a large population, when it is considered teachers have to compete with others who are seeking homes; homes which generally are years old and substandard compared with those provided in other centres of the State.

At present the problem is aggravated by increased mineral activity on the goldfields. The problem has not been created by this increased activity, because it has always existed. The demand for housing has now definitely increased and teachers are finding the position to be intolerable. The secretary of the goldfields branch of the teachers' union has this to say—

For some time, the members of the Goldfields Branch of the Teachers' Union have been concerned at the deterioration of the housing position generally—and on the Goldfields particularly. At our last meeting it was decided that another approach be made through our Union to the Education Department, the Government Employees' Housing Authority, and, we hope, finally to the Minister—a copy of this letter is enclosed.

We have conducted housing surveys and forwarded the findings to the Union. Nevertheless, we are aware that the growing prosperity of this district and the efforts of the Mining Companies to increase their work forces will cause the housing position to become even more acute. As long as the towns of Kalgoorlie/Boulder are in existence there will be schools here and these schools will have to be staffed. Married teachers will continue to be appointed to the schools but there can be little stability and we can hardly expect maximum interest and effort if the teacher's aim is to leave the district as soon as possible because of lack of accommodation.

The following motion, forwarded for consideration by the executive of the State School Teachers' Union, is a summary of the letter from the Goldfields branch:—

The following motion is forwarded for consideration by the Executive:—

> That the Union complain to the Department and/or the G.E.H.A. concerning the parlous situation of housing in the Eastern Goldfields, with a request for urgent alleviation.

It is pointed out that:—

> One technical instructor has been given notice to quit his present accommodation, and prospective buyers are already inspecting the dwelling. The teacher has a wife and four children with no prospects whatsoever of suitable alternative accommodation—other than hotels.
>
> Two additional technical teachers have been advised that their present houses will not be available after the end of this year.
>
> The major estate agent in Kalgoorlie stated today, Oct. 11th, that he has no rental accommodation of any description on his books, and has had none for some weeks.
>
> The increase in mining activity in and around Kalgoorlie has thrown an impossible demand on the housing situation, with the

mining companies actively competing for accommodation as it becomes available.

To bring home to the Government the impact of this problem on members of the teaching profession on the goldfields, I cannot emphasise it enough. Surely the children of that community must be experiencing the repercussions of the problem. As the teachers' union points out, a teacher can only give his best effort and show the utmost interest in his work when he is contented with the accommodation provided for him in the district in which he is teaching. If it is his lot to be appointed to a district where his accommodation is inadequate and unsuitable, obviously his only aim is to quit the district as soon as possible; and as a result his interest in his work must wane and the children he is teaching must suffer.

Whilst speaking of education, I regret the Minister for Education is not present in the Chamber this evening. However, I have taken the opportunity to draft some questions which will appear on the notice paper tomorrow. Those questions relate to the matter I am now about to raise. I understand that when a school finds it is out of stock of a consumable article it must forward a requisition for further supplies to head office. If this article is not stocked by the Government Stores I am informed the Education Department forwards the requisition, together with an order, to a Perth trader who then forwards the order direct to the school that has made the requisition.

To me it would seem more convenient and more expeditious if a country school sent a requisition for such an article to a local trader in those instances where the Government Stores do not hold any in stock. This would result in a great saving of time for the local school and greater patronage would be enjoyed by the local traders. It would certainly be a better arrangement than that of the order being filled by a Perth trader and forwarded to the school concerned. I am told that such a practice is not followed at present, but it would seem to have great merit and is certainly worthy of close examination.

I gave teacher housing early priority in my speech in the hope that it would have a great impact on the Government, but housing problems in my electorate are not faced by teachers alone.

The member for Mt. Marshall congratulated the Government on being aware of the problem associated with housing generally. All I can say is that if the Government is aware of the problem, it must stand indicted as being incapable of even beginning to solve the problem of housing, because everywhere one goes the question of housing is of paramount importance, to the extent of being an irritation in the community generally.

My electorate of Kalgoorlie is no exception. The problem of housing in this area is somewhat unique, and it is something of which I have been speaking for years. Very few new homes have been built on the goldfields over the last 20 years. It is only recently, and then only after much agitation, that the State Housing Commission succumbed to the pressure being brought to bear upon it, and accordingly it built a few homes in the Laverton area. This has been followed by a project, instituted by one of the mining companies, of homes being built in other parts for the benefit of its employees. Apart from this the new homes built in Kalgoorlie and Boulder over the last 30 years can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The housing problem has existed for many years but it has only recently been highlighted by the increased activity on the eastern goldfields due to minerals.

My speech will follow the tradition of speeches on the Estimates, and it will probably give the impression of being a collection of bits and pieces; something of a potpourri.

I would now like to pass to the tourist project recently put into operation at Kalgoorlie. I congratulate the Tourist Development Authority in this matter. The day this project was launched at Coolgardie was, I feel, successful beyond the hopes and aspirations of the authority concerned; indeed, it surprised quite a few people.

This was an attempt to commemorate the men of the early days who by their actions were able to make a dynamic impact upon the economy of the State and, indeed, upon its history. These were men about whom it can now be said that they moved with grit in their veins and gold in their vision. The move to commemorate them traditionally is indeed a worthy one. We hope that as time goes on further and greater steps will be taken to rekindle the memory of gold.

Last week I asked the Premier certain questions in connection with the gold display, about which there seems to be an aura of mystery. I understand this gold display was for many years on exhibition in Coolgardie. The Premier did not seem to be able to tell me, or perhaps he was not game to tell me, or did not like to tell me, what the value of the exhibition was. He hedged a little on this matter. Last weekend, however, I discovered that the value was shown on one of the plaques at Coolgardie, and it was said to be about £40,000, or $80,000.

Here we had a display which for many years was on public exhibition at Coolgardie, but now it has been hidden from sight and placed in the vaults of the Royal Mint. If this is not a case of hiding one's light under a bushel, I do not know what is. It seems to me that we missed an admirable opportunity to bring this gold exhibition out, dust away the cobwebs,

and let its golden gleam shine forth in Coolgardie. This could have been done in September of this year during the recent commemoration ceremony.

If it is felt that the gold exhibition is so valuable that it cannot be left unguarded while on public display, then surely it could be brought out of its wraps on appropriate occasions, such as the Royal Show at Perth, at the meetings held by the Kalgoorlie Racing Club, and during the festive occasions held on the goldfields in March of each year. It is something which would greatly capture the interest and imagination. There is nothing that captures one's imagination more than the gleam of gold; yet here we have this wonderful exhibition gathering cobwebs in the vault of the Mint.

Mr. Burt: Would you have put it in the bookmaker's ring at the racecourse?

Mr. EVANS: I do not think there would be room for it there. For years now the people on the goldfields have been conscious of a commodity that is said to be more precious than gold. I refer, of course, to water.

When speaking of the increased mineralisation in the eastern goldfields, I would stress the need, which has become much more apparent in recent times, for greater supplies of water to be made available to meet the demands of the district. The Government should make it known to the public generally that it is aware of the district's need for further supplies of water. The Government should also make this known to the mining companies, and it should further make known what plans it has to solve the problem.

Even though the Minister concerned, in answer to certain questions asked by myself, and subsequently by the member for Murchison, did give some information in the matter, I am afraid he made very little impact on the public generally. Not a day passes without my being asked by interested people what the Government intends to do about the impending water shortage on the eastern goldfields.

It would be as well if the Minister looked at this question again, even if only from the point of view of public relations. He should hammer home the points; firstly, that the Government is aware of the problem; and, secondly, that it has plans which it is willing to put into operation to overcome the problem.

With the license I can now enjoy in this debate, my speech would not be complete if I did not again stress the urgent need for assistance which is felt by the goldmining industry. I have asked some questions here about the Government being aware of its limitations to do something concrete for that industry. I have appealed to this Government in the past and have said that while it is aware of its limitations in this direction, if it ever does take action which may result in monetary assistance being made available, it should first ascertain the detrimental effects such a policy is likely to have on the goldfields generally.

While we cannot expect very much from the State Government, I have said that at least it should not do anything to harm us. I make that appeal once again. I ask more than this of the State Government: I ask that it make greater and more frequent demands upon the Commonwealth Government for it to become more fully aware of the problems facing the goldmining industry, and to be more original and more dynamic in devising means for assisting the industry. The answer given by the Premier that the Government is always aware of the problems does very little to solve them. Again I make an urgent appeal that this Government should press the Commonwealth Government to take action to show that it is really aware of the problems; that it will come to the party; and that it will do something about solving them in the immediate future.

MR. BURT (Murchison) [8.51 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to make a few comments, mainly in relation to water supplies—a subject which was referred to this evening in the very lucid speech of the newly-elected member for Mt. Marshall, and by the member for Kalgoorlie. I take this opportunity to apologise to the member for Kalgoorlie in that I asked a question almost identical to the one he asked of the Minister for Water Supplies some weeks ago. I was away during the week that he asked his question. To my embarrassment I found on reading *Hansard* subsequently that I had asked an almost identical question to that which he posed to the Minister for Water Supplies the previous week. This shows that although the member for Kalgoorlie and I do not agree on all matters politically, we do have at heart the future of the mining industry in the districts we represent.

During my time in this House there has been much discussion on the comprehensive water scheme. This emanated from the original goldfields water supply scheme, but it now serves many other valuable districts as well as the goldfields. In his answers to our questions the Minister for Water Supplies stated that additional reservoir space was being built at Mundaring, that the pumping stations which were not electrically driven would be electrified, and that the size of the conduits would be enlarged where necessary.

Whilst these improvements are very satisfactory, we all realise that it is not only the goldfields area which requires additional water as a result of the recent mineral discoveries, but that with the opening up of large areas of agricultural land, more and more water from the com-

prehensive scheme will be required. I feel it is time steps were taken to look for water in other than catchment areas of the coastal strip.

In saying this I would draw the attention of the Minister and of the Chamber to the fact that very large and valuable underground water supplies exist in some areas of the goldfields, particularly in the north-eastern goldfields and the Murchison. It would be by no means an impossible job to pipe some of this water to Kalgoorlie and to other districts where the problem of supplying adequate water will become acute if the increased mineral development takes place. That would be preferable to relying on the weirs in the Darling Range for water, because this has to be pumped at very great cost to the goldfields.

Recently my attention was drawn to an article that appeared in the *Western Argus*, which was a weekly publication in Kalgoorlie during the heydey of the goldfields. This article appeared in the publication of the 18th June, 1896. It was headed "Water Supply for the Goldfields a Feasible Scheme." It went on to describe how an engineer, named S. R. Wilson, intended to pump water from a creek—no doubt named after him—known as Wilson's Creek, 60 miles north of Menzies, to Menzies, Kalgoorlie, and Coolgardie. Different engineers apparently gave the scheme their blessing. The article pointed out that Mr. Wilson, who had been responsible for the Broken Hill water reticulation scheme, was to go ahead and launch this project to bring the water over a distance of roughly 187 miles from the creek, which is approximately where Leonora is now situated, to Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie. The production from this particular source was estimated at 1,000,000 gallons a day.

I think I know the creek referred to in the article as Wilson's Creek. It is in the Malcolm area, where several mining companies tried to unwater their shafts, without success. The 1,000,000 gallons a day is equal to approximately one-quarter of the quantity which the Kalgoorlie-Boulder area now uses. As this source of water is a comparatively short distance away, I think serious consideration should be given to exploiting it. The newspaper article I mentioned referred to what took place some years before the Mundaring scheme was put into operation, but why it was not proceeded with I do not know.

During last weekend I was at Cue, in my electorate, and I was taken to a spot about eight miles from that town by a hydrogeologist who is in Western Australia studying under the Colombo Plan. He is of Indian nationality. This person has discovered a tremendous underground reservoir of water only eight miles from Cue in an area about which hitherto nothing was known. A pump capable of delivering 25,000 gallons an hour has failed to lower the water level at all. I understand the department is sending up a much larger pump, and it is estimated by this hydrogeologist that about 50,000 gallons an hour can be pumped from the bore which has been put down. The water is as pure as any that can be found. In fact, it has only a little over half the mineral content of the Cue water supply. I was amazed to hear of this discovery, because this particular survey has been going on for only a comparatively short time.

If it is possible to discover such a vast quantity of underground water—in this case at least 1,000,000 gallons per day—near Cue then there must be dozens of other sites which could supply this very valuable commodity.

Mr. Brand: Are you referring to fresh water?

Mr. BURT: Yes, it is fresh water. I think the mineral content is 1,400 parts per million, as against the 2,100 parts per million of the Cue water supply. This leads us to the possibility of using the water for irrigation purposes—for the growing of fruit, vegetables, or anything else in this very good soil. The water contains nitrate, which is an admirable fertiliser. A combined effort should be made by the Mines Department in looking for the water sources, by the Public Works Department in pumping it, and by the Department of Agriculture in sizing up the situation to determine whether some use could be made of such valuable supplies. In this way we could bring people to this sparsely populated area.

At various times in this Chamber I have extolled the water potential of Wiluna. It is a fact that during the life of the Wiluna mine, which operated for some 23 or 24 years, 2,000,000 gallons of water per day were pumped from each side of Wiluna to keep the plant operating and to keep the 8,000-odd people in that town supplied with water—quite large quantities of water were required, too, judging by the beautiful gardens that existed there.

I have, therefore, in regard to this so-called desert area, given three illustrations of water supplies, which, together, would provide more water than is now pumped to Kalgoorlie through the Mundaring scheme. So surely it is worth while that technical men should have a good look to see what can be done in the more remote areas of the Murchison and the north-eastern goldfields, because with water we can populate the area and overcome the situation which allows for about only one-tenth of this State to be settled from an agricultural point of view.

The main reason that I brought up the subject of water was, as was mentioned by the member for Kalgoorlie, the fact that there is a possibility of the establishment

of a treatment plant for nickel in the goldfields area. We are all aware of the accent placed on this valuable mineral in the last few days; and it seems that, as well as the Western Mining Corporation, whose future in this respect is now assured, the Greater Boulder Company and others will be producing nickel.

Even though at the present time concentrates are shipped away from the scene of operations, and from the State, surely there is a prospect of establishing a smelter in Kalgoorlie, or nearby, which not only could treat the ore from the mines that are established now, but could increase the possibilities of new nickel areas being opened up. Other mineral areas should not be overlooked; and I think it is of paramount importance that a smelter should be established in the goldfields area and not at Esperance, where some want it; and not at Kwinana, which would be the easy way out because labour could be more easily procured as conditions are better.

This smelter could be based in or around Kalgoorlie. I think the main problem in regard to its establishment would be the procurement of water. I have been told that a smelter on its own would take about 750,000 gallons of water per day; and it would require something like 1,000,000 gallons per day additional to what is now being used in Kalgoorlie to operate the process of concentrating, refining, and smelting this valuable ore.

On many occasions I have spoken about the decline of the goldmining industry. It is something which at present is quite unavoidable. People are inclined to be carried away with talk of nickel, but they are liable to forget that the existence of Kalgoorlie today still depends almost wholly and solely on the goldmining industry. By far the majority of the men employed at Kalgoorlie rely on gold. If the sad day does come when goldmining becomes unprofitable, even with the subsidy, then the existence of a smelter in the goldfields area will, to a large extent, make up for the unemployment that would follow and go a long way towards keeping the mining industry in a balanced state.

I believe the time will come when the price of gold must rise. I think America must do what many countries have done over many years and revalue the dollar in terms of gold. However, in the meantime, the provision of a smelting plant for nickel and other minerals, which I am sure exist in the goldfields area, would relieve the situation and help to mark time until the goldmining industry rehabilitates itself.

I conclude by asking the Government to give every consideration to persuading the companies that are considering building a smelter to establish it at Kalgoorlie; and, in addition, I ask the Government to make every possible effort to exploit the water resources which I feel certain exist within an economic distance of such a plant.

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [9.6 p.m.]: Perhaps it is rather appropriate that I should follow the member for Murchison who has been speaking about the necessity for the conservation of water in his area, the establishment of a smelter, and the need to assist the mining industry generally.

Over the years in this Chamber I have advocated that the State Government, irrespective of its political colour, should make more emphatic requests to the Commonwealth Government for additional loan moneys for water supplies in this great State of ours. It is beyond my comprehension why more emphasis has not been placed on the provision of better water supplies throughout the State.

We find that the seasons in this State run in cycles; we get two or three wet winters and two or three dry ones. Recently we have been through a fairly dry winter and there is a shortage of water in our farming areas. We know what has happened in the Eastern States and particularly in Melbourne, where only one-third of the usual winter rainfall has been experienced.

I think the State Government should make very strongly-worded requests to the Federal Government in an endeavour to get that Government to make more loan moneys available for water supplies in this State. It appears that Geraldton is going to be better served as far as its water supply is concerned, because I understand that in December the Premier and one of his Ministers will be opening an additional supply that comes from Allanooka.

I would remind members that the present Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber was the Minister, in the Hawke Government, who had the Allanooka supply tested with a pumona pump. It has been proved there is sufficient water in that area to keep Geraldton from having to impose restrictions in the summer months for at least the next 10 years. Anybody who lives in a town where the water supply is restricted knows just what a hardship that can be, particularly when the amount on the rate notice goes up quite a bit each year.

I now wish to refer to another matter which is embarrassing the people in Geraldton at the present time. This matter has been mentioned in the Chamber before by both the Minister for Education and myself and it refers to the provision of a hostel for boys at Geraldton. The boys' hostels in that town have been privately run by the Church of England, which has told the public that through sheer necessity it will be necessary to close one hostel at the end of this year, and the

other one next year. The reason for this is lack of finance and the fact that the buildings are not suitable and are costing too much to maintain.

Recently we passed an amendment to the Country High School Hostels Authority Act under which the borrowing powers of the authority will be increased by $100,000 per annum. We are now waiting to see whether that increased borrowing power will enable the authority to establish a boys' hostel in the Geraldton area. At present the girls' hostel under the control of the authority is very well run and maintained and has been established for three years or a little more. However, as I have said, Crown land in the area is available for the establishment of a boys' hostel, and I cannot see any reason at all —provided the money is made available, of course—why that hostel could not be provided in 1968 so that in 1969 accommodation would be available to board boys from the distant country districts. After all, we know that we depend on the people in those districts to keep this State ticking and the least we can do is to ensure that provision is made for their boys and girls to get a decent high school education in towns such as Geraldton.

Another current topic on which I wish to touch is the provision of a university college. Much has been written and said on this subject and recently there was an announcement in the Press that the committee set up by the Government to study all aspects of tertiary education in this State had presented its report. I, for one—and I know many people in Geraldton agree with me—was very disappointed that Geraldton did not even get a mention as far as the college was concerned.

Some people seem to think that no other suitable place exists for a college than the metropolitan area. This, to put it mildly, is a completely idiotic idea. We hear so much talk about decentralisation and the dangers we face in centralising everything, and yet when a committee has a chance to promote decentralisation, it recommends that an institution such as this be placed in the metropolitan area. I am sure this recommendation is in keeping with the situation of at least 30 years ago. People seem to forget that with present-day transport the 300 miles between the metropolitan area and Geraldton is not any distance at all. They are still living in the horse and sulky era when it took a week to get anywhere; but the situation is far different today.

Geraldton is the nearest town of any importance to the fast expanding north, and to the islands of the north, and because of its climatic conditions—and, I repeat, the availability of Crown land—I think the town would lend itself admirably to the establishment of a university college.

The next subject I wish to discuss is the deepening of the Geraldton Harbour. Under the Loan Estimates the Treasurer has made available a certain sum for blasting work and the extension of the wharf. This, of course, is all to the good; but it is not enough. Something will have to be done in the very near future to make Geraldton a port which can cater for the larger ships which are being built every year. With our increasing wheat and iron ore exports it is most necessary that the approaches to the harbour and the anchorages be deepened.

The extension of electric power in the area is also very important. Recently the local council was able to announce a reduction in the price to consumers of electricity, and I think that price is now somewhere equivalent to the charge in the metropolitan area. This, of course is a feather in the cap of the local authority and it is a credit to the engineers and staff of the power station. That station is now supplying power to the State Electricity Commission section in the district.

We know progress is being made, but it seems to me that it is rather slow. We know that Northampton has been linked with the Geraldton power station by the State Electricity Commission, and that gradually power is being extended to Moonyoonooka and Narngulu, and also to the Glenfield area. However, I expect the Treasurer and the Minister for Electricity will inform us that a shortage of loan funds is responsible for the progress not being greater. The people in the areas concerned are looking forward to the time when they will be linked with the electric power station in Geraldton.

The fishing industry is a very lucrative one for the State. I think that unfortunately sometimes the State and the Commonwealth get more out of the industry than those who do the hard work in connection with it. Over the years stringent regulations have been enforced in regard to the crayfishing industry, and these regulations have been mainly promulgated as a result of the recommendations of the fishermen themselves. This gives an indication of the sensible type of man in that industry.

We have always been afraid that, because of over-fishing, our crayfishing industry will peter out as has been the case in other parts of the world. Fortunately, however, because of the regulations made and the stand taken by the department, the industry has been preserved and placed on a fairly safe footing. During the past year a few of the fishermen who were in the area have left and have gone further north to engage in the prawning industry. That industry is proving very beneficial not only to the coastal towns, such as Carnarvon, Port Hedland, and Roebourne, but also to the State itself.

Mr. Norton: Don't forget Onslow!

Mr. SEWELL: It seems to me that the potential of the fishing industry on the western seaboard of Australia has only been tapped and that there is a very great future for it, generally, provided we do not allow people from overseas to come in and take the cream of the market and, by indiscriminate fishing, denude our fishing grounds. That has been done in other parts of the world, but we certainly do not want it to occur in Western Australia.

The last season was a good one in the Geraldton area and there does not seem to be any reason why the town and the district generally should not make the desired progress. There is a great deal more to be done and it is necessary for more loan money to be spent on substantial works in the area. It is essential that a modern security gaol be erected on the selected site. I hope the Minister for Police has not forgotten his promise in that connection. That action, of course, involves the matter of finance.

I have mentioned the hostel for boys who are attending the high school, and I have mentioned the university college. At the present time those matters are most active in the minds of people at Geraldton, and we would be very grateful to any Government which could supply finance to overcome the problems in the next year.

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [9.21 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to add some comments to the debate. When speaking to the Estimates members are afforded an opportunity to bring to the notice of the Government matters of particular interest to their own electorates. I have a number to which I would like to draw the attention of the Government. The first one is very important in an electorate such as the one I represent, and it deals with the question of drainage.

We have experienced an unusual season this year with a very wet winter and a dry spring. However, the wet winter brought many problems as far as drainage is concerned, and the most important problem at the moment—and it is one which is causing a great deal of concern—is the quantity of water in Lake Preston. As many members would know, Lake Preston extends north-west for about 19 miles from a point west of Harvey. I think the fringe of the lake would extend to something like 40 miles. The lake has built up over the last several years—and particularly during the last two winters—until the salt water has encroached extensively onto the pasture land surrounding it. This has caused a great deal of concern to the landholders in the area.

There is an urgent need for something to be done about this problem because a great deal of development is being carried out in the area surrounding Lake Preston, and in the district which we know as the old coast road area. This development is causing an additional run-off of winter water into the lake, and has caused the waters of the lake to encroach on to the pasture land. Making a calculated guess, I would think that over 2,000 acres of agricultural land are affected by the water from the lake.

Last year the Public Works Department gave some thought to draining the lake, and considered putting a cutting from the lake through the sandhills to the ocean. This was ruled out as being unfeasible because of the inability to keep the cutting open. We all know from experience at Mandurah and other places that a cutting causes a bar which, in turn, closes up the cutting. So that scheme was ruled out.

I made a suggestion to the Public Works Department that a pumping system be installed to lift the water from the lake into the Harvey River diversion, and so send it on its way to the sea. I am sure this would be a feasible proposition and I think it would be a cheaper scheme than any other which the department has investigated up to date. Pumping allows a good measure of control over water of this nature, and it is a system of drainage which could be added to, to cope with increasing quantities of water and increasing areas which have to be drained. We have had some experience of draining by pumping at the Myalup Swamp. This has been successful. Although Lake Preston is a much larger lake, with a tremendous quantity of water to be dealt with, it is still a feasible proposition and, in my view, the pumping of that water could be successfully undertaken.

The problem will be magnified in the future because each winter the difficulties of the landholders surrounding the lake are increased. If there is any possibility of an early start on the scheme to counter the buildup of water, then I suggest the Government give serious consideration to it.

In the Harvey west area, which is more or less in the same district, there is also an urgent need for a drainage scheme. A good deal of land which lies between the irrigated area and the coastal strip has, in the past, been regarded as poor agricultural land. However, that land is now coming into its own because of new and better farming techniques, and because of new and better types of clovers and pastures. This is bringing much of the poorer type of country into production and a great deal of it is proving to be very useful agricultural land. To farm this land successfully the winter water has to be drained off. The area which is known as the Harvey west district is very large, and the farmers there have been seeking a drainage scheme for a long time; they

are stepping up their requests for that scheme. I believe there is no reason why a scheme could not be put into effect at a reasonable cost.

I suggest to the Government that here are two opportunities for it to make a considerable contribution to agriculture in the Harvey district by the provision of drainage schemes. The two I have mentioned are of an urgent nature. Several smaller schemes also are required which, if undertaken by the department, would make a considerable contribution to agriculture in the Harvey district. However, the lowering of the level of water in Lake Preston, and the Harvey west drainage scheme are important and I hope the Government will see its way clear to undertake some work in the area in the very near future.

I also wish to comment on education. At Harvey we have an agricultural wing of the high school which is playing a very important part in education in the south-west of the State. It is bringing agricultural education into a district where, I believe, it is needed. Recently, additional land was acquired for this school through the officers of the Education Department and I think this will, in itself, fill a very great need.

Agricultural education is becoming quite a skilled field and I believe it does fulfil a very great need and, indeed, makes a considerable contribution to education generally. I know many farmers whose sons have attended these agricultural schools and they have been loud in their praise about the subjects in which the young people have been trained. This is not only in agriculture as we know it—that is, farming techniques and stock husbandry—but also in other matters such as carpentering, welding, metal work, and the like, which is very useful on a farm. It is very useful knowledge for young men on a farm to have. This, in itself, is a very valuable contribution to education.

There is, too, that all-important question of housing for teachers upon which I would like to make some comment. I know that to some extent this is a controversial issue, but I would like to make the comment that in my travels throughout the length and breadth of the country districts of this State, I have found many instances where, if teacher accommodation were provided by the department, it would fulfil a pressing need of these people. I am thinking of the instance where a school teacher, who is perhaps a young lady fresh out of college, is sent away to some of these outback districts. It is quite a problem to find accommodation for these people.

Perhaps if the department were prepared to sponsor the building of accommodation, it could send a married teacher who would occupy a house with his family. This would overcome what I consider is quite a problem on two counts. If instead of sending a young teacher fresh from college to these outback places the department sent a married man who would have a home and accommodation for his family, this would make a contribution towards education generally. Everyone would be happier about it. The teacher would have the proper accommodation and there would not be the problem of seeking accommodation for a school teacher and of people having to board a teacher when it may not be convenient.

I have had a lot to do with school teachers and, generally, I hold them in very high regard. Many of the ones I have met have, I believe, been prepared to go the extra mile in the interests of their profession, and in the interests of the young people whom they are teaching. I have seen many instances of this. I suggest that if it is at all possible for the department to extend some additional facilities of this nature for teachers it would be in the interests of education generally.

I know that we now have the Government Employees' Housing Authority, which is largely responsible for the accommodation for Government employees, including school teachers, throughout the State. I know, too, that it has tried to do the job necessary to meet this need. I also know that additional finance is being made available in this Budget for the Government Employees' Housing Authority. For that reason, I think we could expect additional assistance for these people, but I believe we could well adopt the attitude of doing all we can to improve teacher accommodation in country districts.

There is not any doubt in my mind that it is a real problem for school teachers in many of the country centres to find reasonable accommodation. I know there are odd instances of teachers who are prepared to accept inferior accommodation if the rent is so much less. Generally, I think teachers could well afford to pay a good rent and I am sure that most of them would be happy to pay a reasonable rent for good accommodation. This is one angle which I think we should watch very closely.

I have one or two other comments I wish to make, but I propose to reserve them until we reach the discussion under the various departmental headings.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Young.

House adjourned at 9.38 p.m.