

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: In view of that there is absolutely no justification for the latter part of the motion calling upon this House to censure the Prime Minister and the Commonwealth Government. If it were justified it is a strange thing that no similar type of motion has been under discussion in any other State Parliament.

Mr. Grayden: You have just said that Western Australia was the worst affected of any of the States.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: They are not all in the same position. I feel it is quite right that I should have the support of the Assembly in the protest which I made. The Leader of the Opposition has already indicated that he supports the stand I took. I think it strengthens our case.

Mr. Grayden: It did not go far enough.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is not necessary or desirable, in the opinion of the Government, that we should ask the Assembly to pass the latter portion of the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Gayfer.

House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 3rd May, 1973

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (6): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Days and Hours

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

In view of the fact that the Premier has made certain statements in the Legislative Assembly in relation to the sitting times in that Chamber, and bearing in mind the Premier has indicated that Parliament will go into recess for a period of time from Thursday, the 24th May, will he kindly give this House some indication of what the sitting days and hours between now and the 24th May will be?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

I have not received any advice relating to any statements made by the Premier in another place.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It was reported in yesterday's newspaper. The Leader of the Opposition asked a question as to when the

Assembly would go into recess, and the Premier said it would be on the 24th May.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I can confirm that, but that is as far as I can go. I give an undertaking that I will make a statement next Tuesday in the House, and that should clarify the position. I am unable to do so now because I am not sufficiently informed.

2. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

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

The attendant has just given the Leader of the House a copy of the publication *The New Deal*. I understand this is the official organ of the Trades and Labor Council. Would he look at the last page of that publication and tell me his immediate reaction to propaganda of that nature?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

I must admit this is the first time I have seen it. Evidently some people are on the mailing list to get this sort of publication.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am not on the mailing list. It was obtained on the streets. Can you tell me your immediate reaction?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I do not like this sort of thing, irrespective of who does it. That is my immediate reaction, and I cannot go beyond that.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You certainly would not approve of it?

3. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

Since the Minister now has the publication, which is apparently the official organ of the Trades and Labor Council, before him and is reading it will he kindly tell me what is his immediate reaction to propaganda of this nature?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON replied:

I have not had time to study the publication. At first glance it probably does not look good. I have not read the publication. I am not prepared to go further than that. If the question is flavoured to such an extent that the honourable member thinks I am in any way responsible for this

publication, I assure him that I am not. I would inform him that the Trades and Labor Council is not affiliated with the A.L.P.

4. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

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

- (1) Between now and next Tuesday would he study the publication more closely? After having had sufficient time to digest it, and in view of the remarks he made in the House yesterday afternoon about pressure groups, will he tell the House of his reaction to that publication?
- (2) Will he also pass the publication on to the Chief Secretary and ask that Minister to examine it?
- (3) Will he ask his colleague, the Minister for Community Welfare, to give his considered opinion on propaganda of that nature when the House meets next Tuesday afternoon?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) to (3) I can give no undertaking to that effect. I do not think a publication of this nature, which has nothing to do with the A.L.P., is really the concern of the Government. The Leader of the Opposition is seeking information. Personally I do not mind giving my opinion at any time, but I cannot speak for the other Ministers. If they wish to make any statement it is up to them. I certainly do not tie their hands nor do I close their mouths. They are free agents.

5. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

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

Would the Chief Secretary—

The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs: I do not know what you are talking about.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I can understand the Chief Secretary's comment, because I have not really started to ask the question. Would the Chief Secretary be good enough between now and next Tuesday to look at the publication and tell me his immediate reaction to that type of propaganda when the House meets next Tuesday?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS replied: Being always co-operative I certainly will.

6. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

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

I would really like to put the question to Miss Elliott, but I do not think I am permitted to do so. Would the Leader of the House determine whether or not Miss Elliott was correctly reported on page 9 of the publication *The New Deal* where she is reported as having said—

The Upper House is just another Chamber where members vote on political lines.

If that is the case would he request Miss Elliott to give evidence to support this view?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

I ask that the question be placed on the notice paper.

TAXI-CARS (CO-ORDINATION AND CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan (Leader of the House), and passed.

DISTRESSED PERSONS RELIEF TRUST BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Minister for Community Welfare) [2.50 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to establish a trust responsible for distributing funds placed at its disposal, to assist in the relief of personal hardship and distress.

In the course of the Treasurer's speech on the 1972-73 Budget, Mr. J. T. Tonkin referred to a provision in the Estimates for refunds of receipts duty paid on transactions involving goods produced or manufactured in Australia.

As members know, this tax was found by the High Court to be invalid and therefore the Government undertook to refund amounts paid to the State in previous years.

The Premier also announced that where claimants agreed to forgo refunds on condition that the sums involved were used for charitable purposes, the amounts due would be paid to a trust fund for subsequent disbursement.

The trust now proposed to be set up aims at this objective. Included in the funds of the trust are to be such amounts as are appropriated by Parliament from

time to time. In this respect, a sum of \$29,000 has been appropriated in this financial year under an item titled—

Receipts Duty—Contribution to a Charitable Trust in lieu of grants to sundry persons on account of receipt duty collections in previous years.

It is intended that this amount be paid over to the proposed distressed persons relief trust.

The total of refunds which claimants have agreed to forgo is in the order of \$290,000, and the payment to the trust of \$29,000 in 1972-73 will be the first of 10 annual instalments on this account. There is, of course, nothing to prevent a larger appropriation in any year if this is considered desirable for the purposes of the trust.

Gifts, devises, bequests, and donations may also be made to the trust and I would hope that with the passage of time it will be able to attract additional charitable funds in this way.

Although in recent years social services have been expanded and extended both at Commonwealth and State levels, with the result that main areas of need are generally covered, instances do occur where help is not readily available from an existing agency. It will be the function of the trust to examine these cases and to grant assistance for the relief of personal hardship and distress where such assistance is unobtainable or unlikely to be obtainable from the various statutory and voluntary social welfare agencies operating in the community.

For many years now Mr. J. T. Tonkin has considered that there is a real need for a body of the kind proposed in the Bill and I am sure that it will have the support of all members, many of whom would have knowledge of particularly distressing cases of hardship and the absence, on occasions, of a suitable agency for the relief of this distress.

I have interested myself in such cases from time to time and one particular worry in which Mr. J. T. Tonkin himself became interested is worth relating to members. It was a very distressing case about which he took a deputation from the Melville R.S.L. to the then Premier (Sir David Brand) and asked him if there was any way in which he could assist.

The case was that of a working man who had a son born to him who was malformed. The malformed son had to have the services of a doctor and a nursing sister every day of his life. No hospital fund was available at the time which would meet the costs. The unfortunate father had mortgaged practically everything in his home to meet the cost of the service. The member for Melville asked the then Premier if it would be possible to find some way to grant assistance, but he was unable to help.

It was that particular case which set Mr. J. T. Tonkin thinking along the lines that there ought to be a fund to which application could be made. We envisage cases such as the one which occurred in Collie a few years ago where a child had a serious affliction. It was considered that medical treatment was not available in Australia, but it was available, I understand, in Germany. The local people in Collie contributed the necessary money to send that child abroad. That is typical of cases envisaged and which will receive assistance from this fund.

It is appropriate that I reiterate in this Chamber the Premier's expression of appreciation of the Government to those persons and firms which indicated that although they were entitled to a refund of receipts duty they were prepared to forgo the money in order to set up a fund from which distressed persons could be assisted. This is a Bill which I heartily commend to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon.

RESUMPTION VARIATION (BOULDER-KAMBALDA ROAD) BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East—Minister for Local Government) [2.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Bill now before members is to overcome a problem which is preventing the State reaching settlement of the compensation payable to owners of the land over which the Boulder-Kambalda Road is constructed.

Action was originally taken to resume part of the land required for this project on the 25th November, 1966, when the Main Roads Department published a notice of intention to resume approximately 200 acres of land. A further notice of intention to resume additional land for the project was issued in 1970.

The owner of the land affected by the 1966 notice, Hampton Gold Mining Areas Limited, objected to the proposed resumption on the grounds that the resumption would take away its right to mine minerals under the proposed road reserve.

The grounds for objection were unusual and arose out of the fact that the land in question had been alienated before the turn of the century when the original grant of land included minerals.

Subsequently the then Minister for Works dismissed the objection of the company, subject to the Main Roads Department arranging for all minerals within the road reserve below a depth of 100 feet from the surface being revested in the company.

At the time it was thought that section 15 (3) of the Public Works Act, which states *inter alia* that the Minister can return rights which have been taken by resumption, empowered the State to return to the company the land that contained minerals below 100 feet from the surface. However, further research disclosed that under the Land Act it is not possible to issue a Crown grant which includes minerals.

We then had a situation where the State, which was only seeking to obtain surface rights, was committed to the payment of substantial compensation for loss of mineral rights, unless mutually acceptable alternative arrangements could be made.

Crown Law Department officers were asked to study the legal position and they advised that the simplest and best way to overcome the problem was to introduce a Bill which would have the effect of limiting the resumption of freehold land required for the road to 100 feet below the natural surface.

The Bill incorporates this advice and in clause 3 it also limits a mining lease already granted over part of the road reserve in a similar manner.

For part of its length the road alignment travels over pastoral leases, the lessees of which do not have any right to the soil or minerals and are therefore not involved with this Bill. The three owners of the freehold land affected by the resumption have endorsed the action proposed. I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth.

FIREARMS BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the 2nd May. The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. J. Dolan (Leader of the House) in charge of the Bill.

Postponed clause 11: Restriction on Commissioner's discretion—

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after the clause had been partly considered and Mr. Medcalf had moved the following amendment—

Page 8, line 4—Add after the word “relates” the following—

provided however that membership by such a person of a properly constituted recognised and responsible association of shooters or gun club or engagement in agricultural industry as a primary producer shall for the purposes of this section be deemed to be a sufficiently good reason.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I undertook to obtain Crown Law opinion about this addition. I will read it as I received it—

Clause 11 (c): To permit the amendment moved by Mr. Medcalf would enable a member of the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia to obtain a licence for a high powered rifle by merely producing a membership receipt from the organisation such as suggested and by virtue of that membership, the Commissioner's discretion is considerably reduced. The discretionary vetting of what is a good reason for requiring or possessing a firearm or ammunition would be transferred from the Commissioner of Police to any of the types of organisations mentioned or to a certain person if engaged in the agricultural industry as a primary producer. Mere membership of an association of shooters or gun club, or just because a person is a primary producer, ought not be the decision that says whether or not a person should or should not possess a high powered firearm.

Consequently, I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I am astounded at the Minister's comment that he has obtained an opinion from the Crown Law Department, because the opinion he has expressed is a political opinion. It has nothing to do with the merits of the Bill before us. Having heard it for the first time I must recall what he said, and he has given an opinion which says it would not be desirable for this to take place. That is not a legal matter; it is a political matter. To say it is undesirable for a certain action to take place brings it into the area of politics or policy rather than into the area of law.

I do not regard that as a legal opinion at all. If anyone gave me that as a legal opinion, I would give it straight back and say, “You were asked to report upon the questions raised by members last night when they pointed out that the commissioner has power to prohibit completely the use of high-powered rifles.” The opinion contains no reference whatever to clause 6, which is the clause enabling the commissioner to make regulations “to prohibit the acquisition, sale, possession, or use of any firearm or ammunition” absolutely.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: That is a new provision. It was not in the old Act.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: That is right. Clause 6 contains a new provision which enables the absolute prohibition of any firearm, including any type of high-powered firearm, and the Crown Law comment makes no reference to clause 6.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The department was not asked to comment on clause 6.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Clause 6 was commented upon last night, and I certainly commented upon it. As I understand it, the Leader of the House was to ask the Crown Law Department to decide whether the commissioner was the person who had the power to decide whether or not an organisation was a responsible organisation. I did not detect any reference to that in the answer.

I am wondering how much work was done by the Crown Law Department in researching this question, or whether it was dashed off between cups of tea. I say that with all due respect, but anyone who produces an opinion like that under the name of the Crown Law Department needs to be asked whether he knew what he was giving an opinion about. I wonder whether the Crown Law officer who gave that opinion had put to him fairly and squarely the point which was exercising the minds of members last night.

It is true that Mr. Ron Thompson raised the question of the high-powered rifle, and when I was speaking to the comment made by him I pointed out that clause 6 provided certain very definite and strong safeguards, in that the commissioner had the power to proscribe or prohibit absolutely the use of any particular high-powered rifle which he found it was not desirable for the public to use because of its especial potentially dangerous nature.

Clause 6 reads—

6. (1) The Governor, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, may make regulations to prohibit the acquisition, sale, possession, or use of any firearm or ammunition, whether licensed under this Act or not, either—

(a) absolutely; or

(b) except upon and subject to such conditions, restrictions, and limitations, for such purpose or purposes, and in such place or places, as the Governor considers desirable in the public interest,

having regard to the especial potentially dangerous nature of that kind of firearm or ammunition and the need to exercise special precautions in relation thereto.

Mr. Willmott moved an amendment to clause 6 in which he sought to substitute the word "pistol" for the word "firearm". This Chamber did not agree to the amendment but agreed with the Leader of the House that the word "firearm" should remain. The reason given by the Leader of the House was that it would not be proper to allow high-powered rifles to become generally available for licensing. The Leader of the House was quite clear in stating his objections to the amendment. Mr. Willmott sought to make it possible to use high-powered firearms, but the Chamber agreed with the Leader of the

House that they should be prohibited. Having said that, how can the Minister now say, as he said in his Crown Law opinion, that if my amendment were passed people would be allowed to use high-powered rifles?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: To say I resent the remarks of Mr. Medcalf is to put it mildly. Evidently he is prepared to criticise and cast a slur not only on the officers of the Crown Law Department who gave this opinion but also on my credibility in the way I went about it.

The honourable member wanted to know whether the debate was brought to the attention of the Crown Law Department. I think there is no better way to bring to the attention of that department the debate which occurred in this Chamber than to make available to it copies of the speeches made last night. I had my secretary obtain copies of the speeches and they were taken to the Crown Law Department by my officers. The department was asked to give an opinion on Mr. Medcalf's amendment, bearing in mind what was said during the debate. The department was asked to do the same thing in relation to matters raised by Mr. Clive Griffiths and Mr. Williams. If there is any fairer way of handling the matter I am sure I do not know what it is. I did not tell the Crown Law Department what I thought members had said; I sent copies of the speeches.

I inform Mr. Medcalf that I have the highest regard for the opinion of the Crown Law officer who prepared my advice. I do not think it is necessary to name him in this Chamber. I did not speak to or influence that officer in any way whatsoever. If there is any political significance in the opinion it could only come from me, because I am the only person who has handled the matter. Certainly I said nothing to the Crown Law officers.

It is true that if a person wishes to obtain a high-powered rifle, but knows he has little chance of success, he may join an organisation or club, and then the onus is upon the commissioner to say that that club is not a recognised organisation.

I feel I am justified in being a little upset about what has been said about the Crown Law Department officers. To attribute political influence to the opinion is completely unrealistic.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: The Minister should not read into my words any criticism of him, personally. I have never doubted his credibility—in fact, I did not refer to his credibility—or his integrity, both of which I have regarded as being very high for as long as I have been in this Chamber. I wish to make it transparently clear there was no intention of that in my remarks.

I do not know who prepared the opinion in the Crown Law Department, and I believe the Minister was right in not telling us. I am not blaming that officer in any respect. However, I believe it behoves any person who presents an opinion to see that it is relevant to the topic under discussion and is an answer to the question that is asked. Perhaps I should not have made the remark, "between cups of tea". I regret saying that because I am sure officers of the Crown Law Department do not drink any more cups of tea than officers of other departments.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They treat business passed to them by the Minister very seriously.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I am sure they do; but when an answer is provided which does not answer the question asked, I believe one should ask for another answer. The real purport of my remarks was that the opinion did not refer to clause 6, which was amply referred to last night. It does not refer to the power of the commissioner to prohibit high-powered rifles. Certainly I believe he will prohibit them because he has in the past.

From memory it was stated in the opinion that any person who is a member of a gun club or shooters' organisation can demand or require the commissioner to give him a license. If that is what the opinion said, I disagree with it. I do not believe such a person has any right to demand a license.

Before granting a license the commissioner must be satisfied about certain things, quite apart from the requirements of clause 6 that certain rifles will be made available only on certain conditions, one of which may well be that it is not used in connection with the shooting of game. However, leaving that aside, the conditions about which the commissioner must be satisfied before he grants a license are: Firstly, that it is in accordance with public interests; secondly, that the person is a fit person to have a license; and, thirdly, that the person has good reason for applying for a license. The other circumstance in which a person may obtain a license is if he is a primary producer.

The purpose of the amendment is to state that it shall be good reason if the person satisfies the commissioner that he is a member of a responsible, recognised, and properly constituted shooters' organisation or gun club, or is a primary producer.

I am fortified in my view by the fact that the Minister when replying to the second reading debate said that if a person is a member of a recognised shooters' organisation or a primary producer, that is sufficient reason for him to be granted a license.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I did not say any such thing.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Well, in that case we will have to refer to *Hansard*. I was quoting from memory, and I admit my memory is by no means perfect. Clearly the Minister cannot recall exactly what he said. Therefore it will be necessary to refer to *Hansard*. I believe I heard him say that sufficient reason for the issue of a license would be membership of a recognised organisation, or that the applicant is a primary producer.

However, the Minister denies that. The only way to settle the matter is to refer to *Hansard* which we cannot do at the moment because we do not have a copy of the Minister's speech which was made only yesterday. When I thought I heard the Minister make the remark to which I have referred I felt fortified in my opinion that the police would take a reasonable view. I believe the police are entitled to ask the reason a gun license is desired. I thought I heard the Minister say that if an applicant were a member of a recognised shooting association that would be sufficient reason but I will stand corrected if the Minister did not say that. I would be grateful if an opportunity could be given to peruse the *Hansard* report of the Minister's speech in order to ascertain what he actually did say. If I did not hear him correctly I will be the first to admit it.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not think it can be assumed that every member of a recognised shooting club, or every pastoralist or farmer is necessarily a fit and proper person to possess a firearm. I think that the Minister has correctly interpreted the amendment because in my opinion it would remove from the commissioner his discretion in granting a license.

Quite regardless of what Mr. Medcalf thought the Minister said at the time, it was my impression that he questioned the credibility of the Minister when the honourable member spoke.

Point of Order

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: On a point of order, I object to that comment. I explained that I did not do anything of the sort.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am saying that was the strong impression I gained from the remarks the honourable member made at the time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I believe that the innuendo in the remark Mr. Cloughton is making is that I made a comment which I have quite clearly said I did not make. I ask for that to be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable member quote the words to which he objects?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I object to the words in which he stated I had cast some aspersion on the Minister's integrity.

The CHAIRMAN: Would Mr. Cloughton be prepared to withdraw that remark?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am not prepared to withdraw the remark because the honourable member cannot say precisely what I said, in the same way he is not able to state precisely the words he used when he—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I have quoted the words I believe the honourable member used and I do not have to quote the words I used.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I must persist in what I said before, because the honourable member is not able to say precisely—

The CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable member intend to withdraw?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: No.

The CHAIRMAN: I will ask the *Hansard* reporter to supply a copy of the words used as recorded by her.

[At this stage the *Hansard* reporter handed the requested transcript to the Chairman of Committees who read it to the Committee.]

The CHAIRMAN: Does Mr. Medcalf still request the honourable member to withdraw those words?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Yes I do, because I quite clearly indicated in my comments that I was casting no aspersion whatever on either the credibility or the integrity of the Minister and I have not done so since I first entered this Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: I will remind Mr. Cloughton that Mr. Medcalf did say he did not question the credibility of the Minister. I think he should remember that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I said that it was my impression that the honourable member did question the credibility and integrity of the Minister. It was my opinion. I would be prepared to withdraw the remark if you, Mr. Chairman, would ask the *Hansard* reporter to read back the words which I believe the honourable member—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am afraid the honourable member cannot make any condition to his withdrawal.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Can I ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether, if I withdraw the remark, you would be prepared to ask the *Hansard* reporter to read back the remarks of the honourable member in which I believe he questioned the credibility and integrity of the Minister?

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I cannot do that. Under Standing Orders when words are objected to, the honourable

member who used the words must either withdraw them or not withdraw them. I think the impression of the Committee is that Mr. Medcalf made it clear when he was last on his feet that he did not question the credibility of the Minister.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: You leave me no choice of course but to accept your ruling on this matter and I withdraw my remark, but I think in fairness the honourable member should do likewise in respect of the remarks he made.

The CHAIRMAN: I think at this stage the honourable member should proceed with his speech.

Committee Resumed

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Crown Law opinion is that the amendment would remove the commissioner's discretion in relation to the issuing of a permit or license to such person as referred to in the amendment. I think the Crown Law opinion must be held to be correct, particularly when we consider that clause 11 does place a restriction on the commissioner.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—16

Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. T. O. Perry
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. F. R. White
Hon. J. Heltman	Hon. R. J. L. Williams
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. N. McNeill	Hon. C. R. Abbey

(Teller)

Noes—10

Hon. R. F. Cloughton	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. L. D. Elliott	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. T. Leeson	Hon. D. K. Dans

(Teller)

Amendment thus passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Postponed clause 13: Delegation of the power to issue licences and grant permits—

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: Members will see that I have on the notice paper today an amendment which is identical with the one I had on the notice paper yesterday. It will be recalled that some discussion ensued between Mr. Logan and myself and it was suggested it would be advisable to have a further look at the matter.

After having considered the position carefully I believe the amendment should stand as it was originally drafted, because firstly the amendment will leave the matter in the position where the only time the commissioner can delegate his power to issue a license or a permit to a particular person—who is a centralised person—would be in the case of a pistol or a firearm curio license. In the case of the latter it would not matter at all if there were quite considerable delay in the issuing of the license. It would of course have to

be investigated once the license was issued. There is no requirement necessitating an annual renewal because the license would be continuous.

Accordingly once the license is issued there would be no delay each year because the license will continue unless it is revoked, and it would not be revoked unless there was some good reason for its revocation.

A pistol license is generally only held by people in pistol clubs and so on. It is not a license that is held by everybody. But here again there may be some delay.

I would like to refer to rifles where these form part of the livelihood of the person concerned; persons like farmers, and so on. A lot has been said in this debate about the potential danger of certain rifles but I think it will be agreed that a rifle is not dangerous if it is locked in a cupboard or left on a shelf. It is only dangerous when it gets into the wrong hands. In the hands of a person who knows how to use it a rifle is not at all dangerous; it is certainly no more dangerous than any other weapon.

I think we would all agree that the potential danger lies not with the firearm but with the individual who is handling it. In such matters who but the local police officer would be best qualified to judge whether an individual is a right and proper person to have such a firearm. If the person were in Timbuctoo, or in Halls Creek, or in some other place, the person in a centralised position would not be the best one to handle the matter. It would be far better if this were left to the local man because he knows a great deal more of local conditions than is generally thought. He knows where potential danger lies, and who the troublemakers might be. If such decisions were made centrally the matter would most certainly have to be referred back.

The amendment I have placed on the notice paper is, I believe, the correct way to handle this. Under normal circumstances local police officers would issue licenses and restrictions would be placed only on the issuing of licenses for pistols and firearm curios. In the case of the latter, there would be only a few issuing centres. I move an amendment—

Page 8—Delete all words from and including the word "firearm" in line 23, to and including the word "section" in line 26, and substitute the word "pistol".

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I can only repeat what I said yesterday when this matter was debated. The inclusion of the words in subclauses (1) and (2) was for the purpose of clarification. Their removal would not lessen the purpose of the provision but would achieve very little, as the commissioner could still exercise his discretion, as he thought fit, in respect of delegation of authority other than in relation to firearm

curios and pistols, for which authority must be delegated by way of notice in the *Government Gazette*. Also, the removal of the words would mean that the person wishing to ascertain the delegation of authority would need to refer both to the measure and to the regulations for the sake of clarification.

I can say no more than that it is desirable for the clause to stand as it is.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: With due respect, the Minister's own words are a fair enough reason for the Committee to accept my amendment. The Minister thinks it would achieve little but I disagree and think it would have a considerable effect.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I agree with Mr. Willmott. Obviously the commissioner will contact the local policeman when a person in a remote area is seeking a license for a particular firearm. The local policeman will be the only one who knows the background of the individual concerned.

The commissioner, or someone delegated by him, will have no alternative but to send a description of the application to the local policeman. He will ask for a report to be sent back to him and will then send a reply indicating whether or not the license will be issued. This will be done entirely on the information which the commissioner, or his delegate, receives from the local policeman who is the only one in a position to know the facts. For that reason alone the Committee ought to support the amendment.

It is of no consequence that a person must refer to the measure and the regulations in an endeavour to decide whether or not a particular rifle can be licensed in the ordinary way or only by the commissioner or his delegate. It is incumbent upon everyone to make himself familiar with the law relating to a specific subject. The subject under discussion is firearms and anybody who wants to use a firearm and obtain a license is obliged to familiarise himself not only with the measure but with the regulations associated with it. For this reason, the Minister's argument is not a good one and Mr. Willmott's amendment deserves support.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I oppose the amendment if it is the intention in any way to ease the restriction on licensing high-powered rifles. Mr. Willmott has truly said that a rifle is only as dangerous as the person handling it.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Clause 6 deals with the restrictions.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I must have misunderstood. We all know that many people with A and B-class rifles—shotguns and .22s—are not responsible. When I drove to Parliament on Tuesday I counted 47 road signs with bullet marks on them. I imagine the people were shooting with

licensed rifles. If we give this type of shooter the right to a high-powered rifle I shudder to think what may happen.

As Mr. Willmott said, a rifle is only as dangerous as the person handling it. However, some people shoot at road signs, water tanks, and telephone booths. During the last 12 months police in my district were called in to investigate the shooting of a valuable beast. I think the legislation is good enough without this amendment.

Sitting suspended from 3.48 to 4.05 p.m.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: When dealing with this amendment it is necessary to look at subclauses (1) and (2) of clause 13 and also clause 14. Under subclause 13(1) the commissioner has the power to authorise any member of the Police Force to license firearms. However, the firearm is qualified in the provision as one prescribed under the regulations. We have not been told what type of firearm will be prescribed under the regulations.

Then in subclause (2), we find that a firearm, except those prescribed under subclause (1), cannot be licensed by a police officer unless he is invested with the authority by the commissioner to license such a firearm, and this fact must be published in the *Government Gazette*. We will then have the situation that people in outback areas who wish to license firearms which are not prescribed under subclause (1) cannot do so unless the Commissioner of Police gives permission. The ironical point is that the commissioner will have to rely on the opinion of the police officer to whom the application is made. The commissioner will not go to the country areas—he will have to rely on his officer.

It seems to me rather silly that he can only delegate his authority through the *Government Gazette*. In that case there is no need for the provision in subclause (1).

I agree that the position in regard to curios and pistols is quite different. However, at the moment we do not have a regulation regarding a firearm as prescribed in subclause (1).

Subclause (1) of clause 14 specifically prescribes that the commissioner may delegate his authority subject to subclause (1) of clause 13. I therefore prefer the amendment proposed by Mr. Willmott.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: It is not my intention to delay the Chamber unduly. However, I wish to comment briefly on a remark made by Mr. Perry. I hope other members do not misunderstand my remarks in the manner that I believe Mr. Perry did.

It is often said that we license the firearm and not the person who will use it. That is not entirely correct. Great attention must be given to the individual who seeks a license. As Mr. Logan says, the

people to know whether or not an applicant is responsible are the local police officers.

Mr. Perry instanced the example of irresponsible people shooting at road signs. I know this does go on, and it strengthens the comments I made in my second reading speech that the .22 rifle is often a more dangerous weapon than the high-powered rifle because it tends to get into irresponsible hands. I may be getting a little away from the amendment, and I do not wish to be called to order. I will content myself with my remarks that I believe the local police should be the ones to formulate an opinion of the person applying for a license.

Amendment put and a division called for.

Bells rung and the Committee divided.

The CHAIRMAN (The Hon. N. E. Baxter): Before the tellers tell, I give my vote with the Noes.

Division resulted as follows—

Ayes—13	
Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. A. F. Griffiths	Hon. R. J. L. Williams
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. L. A. Logan	(Teller)
Noes—14	
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. E. F. Claughton	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. D. Elliott	Hon. F. R. White
Hon. R. T. Leeson	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. T. O. Perry	Hon. D. K. Dana
	(Teller)

Ayes	Pair	Noes
Hon. D. J. Wordsworth		Hon. J. L. Hunt

Amendment thus negatived.

Postponed clause put and passed.

Postponed clause 19: Licensing offences—

The further consideration of the clause was postponed after the following amendment, moved by The Hon. Clive Griffiths, had been partly considered—

Page 14, line 19—Insert after the word "who" the word "knowingly".

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: As I previously explained to the Committee, the purpose of the amendment is to transfer the word "knowingly" from line 20 to line 19, following the word "who". By doing this the clause will then provide that it is an offence for a person knowingly to sell, deliver, or dispose of a firearm to a person who is not the holder of a license. I explained the reasons for that amendment previously.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: To add the word "knowingly" before the word "who" in line 20 on page 14 would create almost insurmountable problems in establishing foreknowledge that a person knowingly sold, knowingly delivered, or knowingly disposed of a firearm or ammunition.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You referred to before the word "who". I presume you meant after the word "who".

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I meant after the word "who". It would be almost impossible to establish evidence to secure a conviction to establish prior knowledge of those facts. On the other hand, to knowingly permit is a different matter. There is precedent in other Acts—for example, section 63 of the Police Act—to knowingly bring or take a dog into a public garden. The fact that the dog is there does not necessarily mean foreknowledge of its presence.

Possession of a firearm does not necessarily denote permission of the owner to possess it, but it would be difficult to imagine the circumstances of a person selling, delivering, or disposing of a firearm unknowingly.

It would require a physical act by the person. While it would have little effect on subclause (2) (a) as it now stands, it would lessen the effect of subclause (2) (b), by allowing offenders to escape responsibility in the purchase of unlicensed firearms. This would be particularly so in the case of a person licensed to deal in firearms—the onus being on the prosecution to establish that the purchaser knew he was dealing with a person not entitled to possess a firearm—a most difficult situation.

The Hon. F. R. WHITE: It seems the Minister has dealt with only half the question. He did not make any reference to knowingly selling, delivering, or disposing of ammunition.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I did. I referred to firearms and ammunition.

The Hon. F. R. WHITE: I did not hear that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: What the Minister has just said accentuates the very purpose for moving to delete and to reinsert the word "knowingly". He said it would be extremely difficult to obtain a conviction by placing the word where I want it. What he did not tell us was that by retaining the word in its present position it deprives the individual of some of his rights.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That individual has broken the law.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: He might have broken the law; but the circumstances might be extenuating. He might not be aware of it, or somebody else might have coerced him into buying the firearm. It could be a case of a fictitious license. The Minister has based his argument on the fact that he feels it would be difficult—but not impossible—for the police to obtain a conviction. That is the very point I have been pursuing since we have been

dealing with this amendment. For that reason the Minister has given members the answer as to what they should do.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I cannot agree with the amendment. If we alter the position of the word "knowingly" we will provide snide operators with an opportunity to get rid of guns. At present a person cannot purchase a gun without having a permit. Under the amendment a person who has an unlicensed gun would be able to say "I did not know the gun I purchased was not licensed."

I would point out that in the winding up of estates, sometimes a great deal of paper work is involved in the transfer of weapons, and permits have to be obtained. For those reasons I cannot support the amendment.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Mr. Syd Thompson referred to snide operators, but I would point out that a snide operator will continue to traffic in guns and ammunition outside the law, and is not concerned with what is written in legislation.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Under this amendment if he is caught he will have a loophole.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The snide operator is not looking for loopholes in the law. He would make sure that he was not caught.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You are kidding yourself if you think that snide operators do not get caught.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: They endeavour not to be caught. What Mr. Clive Griffiths intends to achieve by his amendment is the protection of innocent parties. Previously I gave the example of a messenger boy delivering a parcel without knowing the contents. Mr. White also gave an example of two friends who went out shooting; one had an unlicensed gun, and he ran out of ammunition. I should point out that when one goes out shooting with a friend one does not say to him "Have you a license for your gun?" Both examples are valid. For those reasons I consider the amendment to be necessary to protect innocent parties.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have had occasion to be approached by a young man who was caught up in a situation, in which he had purchased an unlicensed firearm unknowingly from a person who sold it unknowingly. When the purchaser went to the police station to license the firearm he was charged. He had broken the law, but when he went before the court the magistrate dismissed the case because he believed the defendant was not trying to conceal the fact that he had bought a firearm.

The onus is on a person to ensure that he does not break the law, but in a court the judgment is based on the facts of the case. In the instance I referred to the seller of the weapon who was living in the country was prosecuted and fined for his part in the transaction.

Ignorance of the law is no excuse. However, the changing of the position of the word "knowingly" will provide a loophole for a person who is prosecuted to say that he committed the offence unknowingly.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am astounded at the attitude of Government members which shows they are prepared to deprive an innocent individual of his rights. The Minister told us that because it would be difficult to prosecute someone who deliberately broke the law, we have to sacrifice the people who break the law unknowingly.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How could a person sell a gun unknowingly?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister has been harping on that matter for two days. We have given him two instances.

The Hon. F. R. WHITE: We have already dealt with subclause (1) of clause 19, but I must refer to it in discussing subclause (2). Subclause (1) makes it an offence for a person to do certain things without a license. The penalty is a fine of \$200, imprisonment for six months, or both.

Subclause (2) deals with the case of a person who sells, delivers, or disposes of a firearm or ammunition without a license to a person who is not the holder of a license. This is in a completely different category, and involves innocent people who do not know that they are breaking the law. I think that the penalty provided in subclause (2) should apply only if a person knowingly does the things specified.

Amendment put and negatived.

Postponed clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

First schedule put and passed.

Title—

The Hon. J. DOLAN: When I replied to the second reading debate I referred to spearguns. I wish to take this opportunity to correct an impression which was given in a report appearing in *The West Australian* of the 3rd May, 1973, to the effect that in the future spearguns would need to be licensed under the proposed Firearms Act. I did not say anything about that at all.

I stated during the second reading debate, in answer to a query previously raised as to whether spearguns could come within the definition of a firearm as defined in the Bill, that spearguns came within the official definition of a firearm as contained

in the Act; just as the other things which were mentioned—some quite facetiously. They all come under the clause dealing with lethal weapons. This has always been so. No change in the definition is proposed in the Bill now before Parliament.

It is widely known that the use of spearguns is controlled under the Speargun Control Act and that Act contains no licensing requirements nor are any intended.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I have had a look at the Minister's reply as it appears in *Hansard*, and the transcript refers to the fact that sufficient reason for requiring a firearm license was membership of a reputable shooting association, or to be a primary producer.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I said that that was sufficient reason?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: That does appear in *Hansard*.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 1st May.

THE HON. R. J. L. WILLIAMS (Metropolitan) [4.32 p.m.]: This Bill to amend the Education Act is very important, and no matter what we think of various pieces of legislation which come before this House, or the other place, it is worth remembering that on published figures the last Federal Government, in point of fact, spent the largest proportion of its revenue on education throughout Australia. The amount involved exceeded that spent on defence.

Having said that, let me say that the Bill has three objectives. Two objectives can be dealt with quite summarily and quite quickly, but the third will cause some contention. Let me say at the outset that the previous Government in this State—and also the previous Government in the Federal sphere—has never done anything but support the system of education via Government schools and via non-Government schools. Both Governments considered that both educational systems were absolutely essential.

The first part of the Bill deals with a purely machinery matter and merely provides for the appointment of two assistants to replace the Deputy Director-General, which position has been abolished. The new appointees will each be able to act as the Chairman of the Board of Secondary Education. My party has no quarrel with that provision at all. However, in passing, I would say this is another brick in the monolithic structure of the Education Department. It is hoped that this Government—and future Governments—will look

into the structure of this department to ensure that we get value for money when considering what we put into education. I feel our present Education Department—not its officers—and its methods of administration are outmoded and would bear some keen examination.

The second major item dealt with in the Bill is the alternative which will be given to trainee teachers. They will be able to select either the bonded allowance scheme or the interest free loan scheme. This will not be a great step forward but it will remove some of the objections of those who want to enter the profession, but who do not want to be bonded. In point of fact, it will mean that trainee teachers will be able to obtain an interest-free loan and if they do not complete the course they will have to pay the money back. The same procedure occurs with the bonded scheme and I cannot see just how we could have teachers in Western Australia without the bonded system. The interest-free loan scheme will be an alternative, and if it increases the number of teachers that will be a very good thing.

Not all teachers or trainee teachers like the idea of having to go to any part of the State at the drop of a hat, whether they are bonded or not. However, this scheme has been essential and it will be essential for some time to come.

There are teachers who prefer to teach in the metropolitan area, and under no circumstances would they go to the country. On the contrary, there are those teaching in country areas who would no more think of coming to the metropolitan area than trying to fly to the moon unassisted. I can think of one principal in the constituency of Mr. Jack Heltman who enjoys his work and the amenities available to him in the country. He is only one of a large band of people in Western Australia who enjoy country life and country teaching. Of course, it is rather unfortunate that those who seek promotion in the department have to move around the State like shuttlecocks. They are in and out of different schools and I feel that such a system does not provide a full and decent education for the children whom such teachers have to teach.

If members care to look at previous debates they will find there has been criticism, since time immemorial, of this particular aspect of teaching in Western Australia. It is not always the student who suffers; I know from personal experience and from talking to people that many teachers and their families also suffer.

It is hoped that we will attract more teachers into teaching, and not just into the department. It will be possible, under the proposed scheme, for a young man or a young woman to obtain a loan subject to certain conditions which the Minister has outlined. It would be tedious repetition for me to repeat those conditions. Teach-

ers will be able to serve in a school of their own choice, either a Government school or a non-Government school.

We have now moved from the era of the dedicated teachers in the private colleges and, of course, I am now speaking of the religious organisations. I ask members not to misunderstand me; we still have dedicated teachers within the system. However, dedicated teachers in the various religious orders have been willing to work in schools for no more than their food and their clothing. Perhaps this has been unfortunate but the provisions of the third major part of this Bill will face up to the problem of the cost involved in the education of children in non-Government schools.

The first recognition of this problem in this State was by the previous Government when it introduced Act 17 of 1965. That Act established the principle of tuition fee subsidies for non-Government schools. Increases were granted through the provisions of Act 48 of 1967, Act 23 of 1968, and Act 3 of 1972—the last named having been passed by the present Government.

So, indeed, our views do not clash with those of the present Government, in that we support strongly the idea of non-Government schools. This is as it should be. I make the point that when one begets children one also begets responsibility and in a totally-free country one should be able to decide, as a parent, where one's children should be educated.

If one parent prefers a Government school system, and another parent prefers a non-Government school system, then there should be freedom of choice. It would be very sad indeed if our education system were reduced to one shade of grey as has happened in other countries of the world where certain teaching orders have been outlawed.

It is a sad situation where a parent can no longer educate his children in the manner in which he feels they should be educated, with the right emphasis and with the religious outlook which they feel is appropriate. I, for one, have seen such a system working. I have seen socialism destroy some of the better educational systems in the world. Those countries have never attempted to upgrade their educational systems, but have only scaled them down to a lower level. Such countries deny—by their very principles—that there is a difference in attainment and ability between individual children. The authorities in those countries consider that if the same opportunity is given to all then the level of education will be lifted. However, nothing is further from the truth.

Any ex-teacher who may be in this House will agree that when he has been faced with a class of 40 students he has been faced with a class of 40 individuals who need different types of education in

different ways. It is a fact that some parents prefer to have their children educated in one manner while other parents prefer their children to be educated in another manner. We should do everything we possibly can to preserve that freedom of choice in the field of education.

From time to time accusations have been levelled in the Press at members of Parliament. However, it should be remembered that members of Parliament send their children to different places to be educated because of certain advantages attaching to those places. If one of the advantages is comfort of mind to the parent, then that is sufficient.

As far as I am concerned, personally, my own children attend a State school and I am quite satisfied and quite happy with the education they receive; so the reverse is also true. It is sometimes thought that Liberal Party members always send their children to expensive colleges. However, that is not true in every case and neither is it true that all Labor Party members send their children to State schools. Those members also have the same freedom of choice. As far as I am concerned politics should never enter into education because children are not political pawns. No matter how much we say and think about certain things, there is one off-mouthed platitude from which we cannot depart. I refer to the fact that the future of any nation is in the education it provides for its children.

I am sure that every member in this Chamber seeks to ensure that every child in this State receives the best possible education which can be provided for him, and which Government assistance will afford.

One must go back to find out what the third part of this Bill is all about. It is not sufficient just to look at it and say we agree to it. The Bill comes before us as a direct result of action taken by the Liberal-Country Party Federal Government in November, 1972. The Federal Bill was in two parts and was introduced into the House of Representatives by the then Minister for Education. It promised a five-year plan. I will have more to say about that period of time in a moment, but the amount to be given to both Government and non-Government schools in capital grants during that five-year period was to be \$167,000,000 a year for Government schools and \$48,000,000 a year for non-Government schools. They were to be unmatched capital grants.

One of the conditions which applied to both types of school was that at least 70 per cent. of the grant should be used for new development and not just for refurbishing. The Minister at the time consulted with the States and worked out a formula on a *per capita* basis for the non-Government schools. It was agreed that the Fed-

eral Government would give a grant of 20 per cent., which would be matched by 20 per cent. from the States.

When he introduced the Bill in this House, the Leader of the House was extremely explicit in giving the figures, and they are absolutely correct. However, in running a business—and the administrative side of a non-Government or a Government school is a business—one thing occurs, and that matter must be put right in this Bill. When concluding my speech, I will appeal to the Leader of the House to seek from his ministerial colleague—the Minister for Education—an assurance that the 20 per cent. grant for non-Government schools will be continued for the period from 1973 to 1978.

I do not think the five-year plan is unreasonable. The objection might be raised that the new Federal Government is appointing a schools commission which will vary the method of payment; but I do not care what its colour, no Federal Government would ever reduce the amount which has been proved to be necessary for any school, and with continually escalating costs the amount is likely to increase rather than decrease. So the Leader of the House need have no fear about that, and if the Federal Government wishes to increase the amount of aid there will be no difficulty.

In point of fact, when we consider the school organisations as such, I think it is only fair to non-Government schools that they should know for the next five years they will be in possession of certain funds. The Bill before us is the first amongst those I have named which specifically omits the amount that is to be granted. Every other Bill has stated in actual figures or by formula the amount non-Government schools can expect, and I think that is only right because they need to plan in advance.

When he introduced the Bill the Leader of the House at first offered only half the amount, but as a result of questions in another place and, no doubt, negotiations with other interested bodies, the Minister responsible for this portfolio eventually said he would make the whole amount available in this year. I am at one with the parents' educational organisation which commended the Government for doing this, as quoted by the Leader of the House. We have no quarrel with that action, but we must ensure the prescription of the amount to be given annually by regulation to non-Government schools is not left at the whim of a department or a Minister.

I have the greatest respect for the Leader of this House as being a man of integrity. If he gave me his word on something I could depend upon it. However, with the effluxion of time certain things could happen to the Minister. He could be translated from that particular portfolio and, although my colleagues and

I might have an understanding with him, his successor might well interpret differently the clauses in this Bill and the regulations.

I want it to be understood very clearly that no criticism is intended of the particular Minister or party. If my party were in Government—which is now not far off—I would say exactly the same thing in the same circumstances. I do not like leaving things to chance; I like to see them spelt out. When this is totally—and I repeat, totally—impossible, then perhaps I would be willing to agree to certain regulations, but I think I have previously made clear my position as regards regulations. Regulations are proposed from time to time as an administrative necessity, but they can go wrong, and that has been pointed out in this Chamber this week.

I wish to leave nothing to chance in the matter of education. I do not want parents and friends' associations, principals, and the staff of schools to be wringing their hands not knowing where the next penny is coming from. I do not want discrimination to be practised, whereby some schools could have a lot and others could have nothing. I sincerely believe it is possible to devise a formula for a quinquennial settlement so that non-Government schools will know precisely the minimum amounts of money they can expect.

The 20 per cent. matching grant with the Federal Government does not stop the State Government turning around to the Federal Government at any time and saying, "We are very sorry but we just cannot raise 20 per cent. this year and need more help".

The previous Federal Government over its 23 years in office poured millions of dollars into education. If one had listened to certain election slogans during the last election campaign, one would have thought the previous Federal Government had been extremely niggardly and had never spent a cent on education. That is the name of the game but, getting down to the hard, nitty-gritty of the matter, the Federal Government has poured hard money into education, and from 1965 onwards its programme was accelerated tremendously.

We have in this State a system of secondary education and teacher training which is almost unparalleled in the western civilised world today. I could ask the Leader of the House—because he is a far older man than I—whether in his day as a teacher he ever saw anything comparable with some of the science blocks, libraries, and amenities which are now provided in certain schools in this State. They are truly magnificent. One only hopes the amount of money and the facilities provided will be reflected in the standard of work done by the students in those particular institutions.

The other day I had the opportunity to visit a teachers' training college, and the quantity of sophisticated aids truly amazed me. I could understand the philosophy of that college but, as I was going through it, I wondered how the devil the teachers of old ever managed without those aids and how we, the people in our generation, ever became educated without them. I am sometimes a little worried about the outcome of what we are putting into the schools. I do not wish to go into the philosophy of education as such. I am quite content to listen to the arguments put forward in that respect by the authorities—in other words, the educationists in this world.

It is amazing to realise that these days the teachers are being taught to teach. That might sound paradoxical but in point of fact many of them only learn a subject at a teachers' college or a university and are then, as it were, in one year practised in the art of teaching. I am sure the members in this Chamber who came from the profession will remember the first time they were ever confronted with a class. Being honest men, they would agree they felt inadequate as they stood there. They picked up the business as they went along, with a little assistance from the headmaster, etc.

Having said that, and having, I hope, made out a case for the aid to non-Government schools on the 20/20 formula being guaranteed for five years, I urge the Government to go along with it sympathetically. Non-Government schools cannot be divorced from the educational system in this State or in any other State in Australia. However, if the Minister cannot give the guarantee that the 20/20 formula will be written into the legislation, I foreshadow that at the appropriate stage in Committee I will propose an amendment to the Bill to ensure that an equitable and just formula is arrived at so that the non-Government schools can plan ahead and not just live from hand to mouth.

I know the Leader of the House will sincerely represent what I have said, and I can only add that at the end of the term of the last Federal Government in 1972 the schools had been given an assurance that they would receive a certain amount of money, which was worked out on a national basis, and they went ahead with certain projects. It has taken a great deal of work by the Opposition in another place to arrive at the present position in regard to the grants, and I ask my colleagues for their support in ensuring that no child in a non-Government school in this State will be in any way disadvantaged by the fact that Governments at both State and Commonwealth levels change from time to time.

Education should be removed from the political arena. The moment politics enters the political arena, the standard of education will drop considerably. Non-Government schools must be assured of finance with which to continue their operations. We must remember they cannot absorb an 8 per cent. teachers' salary increase as readily as Government schools can absorb it—and such an increase occurred last year. An 8 per cent. pay rise represents a great deal of money to non-Government schools. Salaries and allowances paid to staff form the greatest part of their expenditure.

Non-Government schools have the right to employ the very best teachers they can attract. In the past people in some religious orders have devoted their lives selflessly to education, and they are to be highly commended. It is perhaps a reflection on this day and age that the source of supply of those dedicated people is fast drying up. No longer can non-Government schools easily provide teachers, because they demand, and they have the right to demand, conditions equivalent to those enjoyed by teachers in Government schools.

My plea is that we should remember that the end product is the most important aspect of this matter; and the end product is the child. A child is entitled to the best education that can be afforded him.

The present Federal Government is not insensible to this need, nor was the previous Liberal-Country Party Government which was in office for 23 years, because certainly it put its hand into the exchequer time after time to ensure justice to all children in the field of education. I appeal to the Minister to ask his colleague—the Minister for Education—to consider the formula once again and to write it into the Act. By that deed this Government and successive Governments would be bound to the promise made to non-Government schools.

Those schools need the money. The 20/20 formula has been carefully assessed, and with escalating costs there is no reason at all why more money cannot be granted to non-Government schools because no Government in its right mind would reduce the amount of aid granted to these schools unless economic circumstances allowed it. For the sake of example, if teachers throughout Australia suddenly agreed to accept a reduction in salary of 25 per cent. the grants could be adjusted. I cannot see much chance of that happening, but if it should happen adjustments could be made.

I ask the Minister to give sympathetic consideration to the introduction of such a formula written into the Act to enable non-Government schools to budget well ahead. I think it is an agony for them to have to live, as it were, almost from hand to mouth. Certainly the last Federal Government was in no way shy to provide aid. It introduced this scheme and assured the

schools that for the next five years the greater part of their financial worries would be resolved by formula and not by regulation. With those remarks I give my qualified support to the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. R. White.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 1st May.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [5.10 p.m.]: As members will appreciate, this is a short Bill which does little else but add a further representative to the Government Employees' Housing Authority. I have taken the opportunity to study the last annual report of the authority and I notice that this year its funds were increased by almost \$2,000,000. Some of that money came out of the general fund, but was returned; and the greater part of the money came from the Superannuation Board of Western Australia, which produced over \$1,500,000.

The authority now has under its control over 1,000 houses in country areas and the north-west. As members are aware, the purpose of the authority is to provide housing for Government employees in areas where, generally speaking, the employees are not permanent citizens, but residing only temporarily.

I notice that the Superannuation Board has now purchased from the authority houses to the value of over \$5,000,000, and also that many country shires are raising loan funds in order to help supply houses in country towns for needy employees such as school teachers, policemen, water authority workers, and electricity authority workers.

I note that the Government Employees' Housing Authority is endeavouring to lift the standard of its houses in the north-west. At least half of the houses in that area have now been air-conditioned, and it is hoped to air-condition the other half in the coming year.

When the authority was established in 1964 its object was to supply housing cheaply to Government employees, and at that time the maximum rent was fixed at \$10. It has since been increased to \$12, but that is still an insignificant amount when one realises that the average economic rental of the houses concerned is now in the vicinity of \$30 in country areas, and \$40 in the north-west.

At present the members of the authority are the Director-General of Education, the Chairman of the State Housing Commission, the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, and the Under-Treasurer; and it is intended to add a representative of the three unions whose members are housed by the authority; that is,

the State School Teachers' Union, the Police Union, and the Civil Service Association. Upon reading the 1964 *Hansard* I find that the then Leader of the Opposition—the present Premier—pointed to the need for a union representative on the authority. Having taken over the reins of Government, he is providing for just such a representative.

The previous Government considered that the Director-General of Education and other civil servants on the board could look after the interests of tenants. However, we have nothing against a unionist being on the board as well. I had hoped that a younger person living in one of the houses would be appointed because he would be aware of the difficulties facing civil servants living in the country. However, I understand that the first person who will be appointed to the board will be the Secretary of the State School Teachers' Union, and it is intended that the three unions will probably take it in turn to supply a representative.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: How do you work that out?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It is not contained in the Bill, but provisions do exist for the representative to be changed and I gather that an amicable agreement has been reached regarding representation.

The authority has the right to sell assets should the need arise. I am very happy to know that already the chairman and secretary have toured the south and have sold some of the old buildings owned by the authority. One of the problems facing the authority is that it is difficult to continue to renovate old buildings. Primary producers supply housing for their employees and we face the same problem. Some of the American companies in the Esperance area have endeavoured to house their employees as cheaply as possible by providing the minimum standard house costing \$7,500. However, in no time at all these houses become too dilapidated for the type of employee they desire. Therefore they are forced to sell them at a reduced cost.

I am glad that the authority is getting rid of some of the older houses because most of the people who live in them in the country are leaders in their communities.

The authority should look very closely at some of the buildings which are older than 10 years because our standard of housing has increased during this time. It would be quite a good idea if some of the houses were transferred to other Government authorities for use by them. Many of the houses cannot be renovated any further. Already the authority is spending well over \$1,000,000 a year to upgrade the buildings, but it is impossible to upgrade some any further. Perhaps these could be used to train Aborigines in housekeeping. It is rather unfortunate that in some

towns Aborigines from reserves are placed in homes which are better than those occupied by Government employees.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: In the main that is the fault of the local authority which sets the standard.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Many of the old police houses could be used for this purpose also. Dumbleyung is a case in point because the property has reached a very low standard. Consequently it would be advisable for the house to be removed and used for another purpose. I understand, of course, that many of the police houses are not owned by the authority, but are part of the police set-up. Nevertheless I do draw attention to the poor type of housing in which some policemen are expected to reside.

One of the difficulties of course is the low rental which is asked for the houses. Probably \$12 a week is too low a rental for these Government houses. Already Government departments subsidise their housing to a great extent because houses for which they ask \$12 are capable of returning \$30.

I consider the authority would be well advised to consider building a higher standard of house in the first place even if it has to increase the rental. The present figure listed for a house in the country is \$14,000 and \$21,000 is the figure for a house in the north.

Members must keep in mind that a \$14,000 house in the country is the equivalent of a house costing less than \$10,000 in the city. Most of the loans are taken over 30-odd years, but the houses will be in very poor condition in 30 years' time, and something will have to be done to replace them. If houses of a higher standard were erected at the beginning such a course would not be necessary.

Many of the houses built by the commission are not adaptable for country services. Members will recall that I referred to the need for a water supply for the town of Pingrup. Most of the Government houses have one corrugated iron tank placed 3 ft. 6 in. off the ground. This is necessary to catch the water from the roof. The tank supplies water not only for drinking, but also for all services in the house including the toilet. Consequently the tank runs dry within a fortnight of the cessation of rains, and water must then be carted from Government dams. As that water is then used for drinking, many of the children become ill with all sorts of diseases. Other people in the town have the same type of tank for drinking, but then they also have an elevated tank in which they can place the dam water with which to run the toilet and in which to bath. Perhaps that is not completely satisfactory, but it is far better than the situation prevailing in the Government houses. I am surprised that

the Government authorities have not realised that they must provide in the country facilities different from those provided in the city. I support the Bill.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [5.24 p.m.]: I also support the Bill which will allow a tenant representative to be appointed to the authority. Such an appointment will result in better representation of the tenants who have some complaints about the G.E.H.A. The authority's houses in the north are not properly designed, as Mr. Wordsworth indicated. The design of some of the houses in the north makes me wonder just how much thought went into this aspect because most of them were certainly not designed for tropical living. I hope the tenant representative will be able to change the thinking of the authority by pointing out the shortcomings of the homes it builds.

As Mr. Wordsworth has already said, the listed cost on page 8 of the annual report is \$21,000 for a house built in the north. I consider that a properly designed house with larger rooms could be erected with higher quality materials for less than that amount, and I hope to be able to prove this.

The design of some of the houses is almost incredible. Hopper-type windows are being used, including a hopper window to floor level. For those members who are unfamiliar with this type of window, I have here a simple cardboard model. If a lower hopper window to floor level is opened in the tropics it does two things.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You can hop in and out easily.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: First of all the cool air which collects near the floor of the house is lost. In addition the hot air just outside the house enters the building and rises to the ceiling. It is then pushed down by the ceiling fans and goes out through the house again. A hopper window would have been fine in the days before ceiling fans were available because a hopper allows a cross current of air, a convection current to take place. This enables a person who is perspiring inside to be cooled by the air passing across his body. Of course it is only a relative coolness.

The ceiling fans move the air mechanically, and the ideal situation would be to have a cool pool of air in the ceiling and have it moved to the floor and back up again, but of course we know this is not possible because of the physics of cold and warm air.

As I have said, the lower hopper windows became absolutely useless in a home in the tropics. What is all the more puzzling about the use of these windows is that they cost in the vicinity of \$40, not for the materials alone; this also includes the cost of fitting. When we consider

that each northern home contains approximately 14 lower hoppers, we realise that \$560 is added to the cost of the home, and for what reason?—to make the home hotter.

The hopper windows also allow the dust in, thus forming a dust trap. As we know dust initially comes from ground level, and when the wind blows the dust will travel into the house through the lower hopper.

The argument against hopper windows is not new to me or to many others in the north. In fact, it is not new to the departments because I submitted the theory to them nine years ago, but I was advised by one very senior departmental officer who had high qualifications in house and building design that my theory was wrong because the housewives were not using the hoppers correctly.

I pointed out there are 14 lower hopper windows, but I did not indicate that there are also 28 other hopper windows, making a total of 42 such windows in an average house. Each hopper window is covered by a fly screen.

When I mentioned my theory to the senior officer who designs homes and said how much extra it was costing to build these houses, he replied that the housewives were not using the hopper windows correctly. He added that the hopper window should only be opened when the ground temperature has cooled to a reasonable degree. He said the windows should be closed before the sun rises and heats the ground. I replied that if he could show me a housewife anywhere in Australia who would open up 42 fly screens and hopper windows at 10 o'clock at night and then get up at 4 o'clock in the morning in order to close them, I would show him a raving lunatic. I have yet to see a woman who would do this.

I have dealt with the extra cost of \$560 which is involved as a result of these lower hopper windows being installed in both the G.E.H.A. houses and those built in accordance with State Housing Commission policy. In this regard I might mention that there are other costs involved which are not at all necessary. For instance, wooden-framed windows are still being used in the north.

This may be good for our timber industry, but when we consider the cost of transporting the timber frames to the north and the fitting of them in the houses in that area there is little doubt that this would be more expensive than fitting aluminium windows.

In isolated regions fibro and iron are still being used as roofing material. I have done the costing on this myself. I constructed three buildings in the north and on each one of them I have used

aluminium roofing, because this material is popular with many people in the tropics; quite apart from its being cheaper.

When one mentions the use of iron, fibro, and aluminium as roofing materials to the departmental officers, they will invariably reply that aluminium is far too expensive. This may be so in the city, but when one considers the cost of transporting these materials and gives some thought to their relative weights—because fibro and iron roofing require slightly heavier frames for the rafters and the joists on the roof; and one must also take into consideration the fixing costs and the insurance cover while the materials are in transit—one will see there is little doubt that aluminium is the cheapest of the three materials.

The Hon. G. W. Berry: How does it stand up to strong winds?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: We have had some pretty severe blows in the north but have not experienced any problem in this regard. Aluminium storm battens are used and these prove quite satisfactory.

The Hon J. M. Thomson: Are they pitched roofs?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: We have a skillion roof on one building, which is a service station, and on a private home there is a pitched roof or gable. On one of the buildings there is a combination of gable and skillion.

Aluminium has a further advantage when it is used in the north because it is a reflective insulator; it will help to reduce the temperature inside a house and, indeed, it makes it possible to do away with the aluminium insulation inside the ceilings of houses which, of course, is very necessary in the case of the iron and fibro-type roof.

Accordingly, it will be possible to reduce the cost of these houses if proper materials were used; we should not conform to the old-fashioned ideas that seem to pervade the departments today.

I would now like to comment on the design of some of these houses. I mentioned earlier that I could not altogether understand the thinking of some of the departmental officers. I am sure you will agree with me, Mr. President, that some of the designs for departmental homes leave a lot to be desired inasmuch as when a person goes to the front door of some departmental homes he looks straight at the kitchen sink and the washing up that has yet to be done. Some of these homes have the master bedroom opening straight off the dining room, and some of them have kitchens that look out onto the toilet and laundry. The designs of these homes are not at all sensible for the tropics. Some of the designers have the opinion that if the houses are provided with small rooms the cost will be less.

This, of course, is a crazy idea because several little butter-box rooms increase the cost considerably. This is so because extra footings are required as are extra architraves. I will admit there are homes with more sensible designs than those we have in relation to the houses built in the north by G.E.H.A. and the Government departments.

I think I have said enough about housing in my province. I support the Bill and I do hope the tenants' representative will heed the advice that will be received from the people in the north, who are now setting up organisations to constructively criticise the Government's building of homes in that area.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West) [5.37 p.m.]: Whilst agreeing with my colleagues in their general support of the Bill, there are one or two matters to which I would like to draw the Minister's attention. I did think of bringing these to his notice by way of a question but I feel it would be opportune for me to do so whilst speaking to the measure before us.

The particular matter concerns the problems of housing for school teachers. While I have been working in various towns—strangely enough not in my own electorate at the moment—I have found it is becoming the habit to build houses for headmasters in some of these towns without what I believe is sufficient investigation as to whether in fact they are going to be used.

I have noticed that several houses have been built and not used; or they have been used virtually in the form of temporary accommodation, because the person for whom they have been built has found that it suits him much better to literally camp for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights and then return home to a place which suits his family better from the point of view of accommodation. In this connection I can see areas in which a fair amount of money can be wasted.

Nowadays school teachers are transferred quite frequently, and it often happens that the headmaster or the particular teacher desires that his family should have a more stable life. Accordingly he leaves his wife and children in a particular town and he himself commutes frequently over considerable distances—sometimes 100 miles or so.

It is a pity for the town concerned that this should happen, because up until quite a few years ago school teachers were of great importance to the towns in which they became resident for a number of years. This still applies in some of the towns today. In some locations, however, the school teachers never become citizens of the town in which they teach, because they are there only on Monday, Tuesday,

Wednesday, and Thursday nights, after which they return to a town closer to the coast—a more central town—where their wives and children are residing.

This is a matter which is worthy of some attention to ensure that money is not wasted in the building of homes for such teachers, particularly if the pattern of their lives necessitates their having to travel at frequent intervals from one place to another, say, after a year or 18 months. Alternatively, the situation should be changed to ensure that teachers in this category remain for longer periods in the towns in question.

I know the Education Department has endeavoured to solve the problem by trying to ensure that teachers remain in towns for longer periods, and if this can be achieved it will be all to the good.

I would now like to raise a specific matter, and I do so with some reluctance, because I do not like to comment on areas which are not in my own electorate; particularly in relation to specific problems. The matter to which I refer was raised by a very reputable citizen from Bunbury, and it has to do with Toodyay. I am sure Mr. Abbey will forgive me if I raise the matter here.

The daughter of the gentleman in question is a teacher in Toodyay and at the present moment she is apparently accommodated in the old hospital at Toodyay. Unfortunately, however, adjacent to the hospital there is other accommodation which has been let to people who are not quite as circumspect in their behaviour as they could be. I say this because recently there have been one or two squabbles outside the accommodation which is occupied by female single staff, and, as a result girls have been considerably embarrassed.

I wonder whether the Minister in charge of the Bill could make some inquiries in regard to the accommodation question of teachers in Toodyay and see whether better facilities cannot be arranged.

It would be a good thing if this could be done, because these are girls who live at home. They are not very old, nor are they very experienced. It follows automatically, I suppose, that to some degree school teachers lead a fairly sheltered existence. They attend school to obtain their leaving and matriculation certificates, after which they proceed to a reasonably disciplined existence in a teachers' training college where there is a fair amount of supervision.

Having completed their training they then go on to teach at a school, without having had the usual "breaking in" experienced by girls who go out to work in an office or some other line of activity and who come home and receive guidance from their parents in the normal difficulties which confront people when they go out into the world.

I gather the situation in Toodyay is far from ideal. I know that the girl's parents who brought this matter to my attention are concerned and worried for the welfare of their daughter. They are worried because they believe the accommodation is not good enough and there appears to be no alternative.

I am sorry that I am not in a position to have this matter investigated. It was brought to my attention early this week by a constituent of mine in Bunbury, and I regret that I have not been able to arrange for the matter to be as thoroughly investigated as I would have liked before I raised the question.

Perhaps a member who is more aware of the situation in Toodyay would be able to give me some advice in respect of the information I have given and, in turn, I could pass on that advice to the worried parent in Bunbury. I have reason to believe that the department appreciates that the situation in Toodyay is far from ideal. I would appreciate it if the Minister could advise me as to what action is intended. I could have obtained this information by way of a question but the subject matter is a little involved to put into question form.

I apologise, once again, to those members who represent the area of Toodyay, but the matter was raised by a constituent of mine and I have taken the opportunity—as I should do—to make the necessary inquiries. I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West)
[5.46 p.m.]: I intend to speak briefly to the Bill and to give it my support. I shall refer specifically to a situation relating to availability of housing under the Government Employees' Housing Authority which has come to my notice, with particular reference to accommodation for school teachers.

I am rather surprised that the measure provides for representation of the persons who would be the occupants of the Government Employees' Housing Authority accommodation while, in fact, the accommodation for such persons is still considerably inadequate. It is easy to recognise that a representative from the three organisations mentioned would have a considerable part to play on the authority and would endeavour to ensure that accommodation is more readily available. To that extent I can see great virtue—and great value—in such representation, if it means that the provision of housing for Government employees throughout the country will be expedited.

Such a representative could make contributions in other ways, too, in respect of the conditions and standard of occupation, and the facilities which are, or could be, made available in such accommodation.

The first objective should be to ensure that sufficient accommodation of this type is available throughout the countryside. We should first ensure that this is so before we resort to a change in the membership of the authority.

In saying that, I shall refer to a problem which has arisen in my own province where the housing for Government employees is not sufficient. Consequently, advantage has been taken of State Housing accommodation—particularly, pensioner flats—which has been constructed over the past number of years. At the time the pensioner flats were constructed there were not enough pensioners eligible to occupy those flats. Not unreasonably, the State Housing Commission made the flats available to the Education Department on what we generally accept and recognise as a guaranteed rent system. This has meant that it has been a continuing scheme.

There is now a demand by local pensioners for such accommodation which is not available because it is occupied by Government employees. The situation has become embarrassing. I refer to a particular case in Waroona which has been the subject of a considerable number of representations to the Education Department and the State Housing Commission. I am sure the purport of those representations has been conveyed to the Government Employees' Housing Authority; namely, accommodation is being denied eligible pensioners because school teachers are occupying the flats.

The Pensioners' League and the Elderly Citizens Group are extremely sympathetic to the situation in which school teachers are placed, more particularly because the accommodation is being occupied, at the present time, by single girls. For similar reasons expressed by my colleague, Mr. MacKinnon, at times it is not altogether satisfactory for a girl to live singly in a pensioner flat. School teachers occupy this type of accommodation for the simple reason that no other type of accommodation is available to them in the town.

The Pensioners' League and other local associations have been extremely concerned that the accommodation is not available for people of their own ilk but they are not unsympathetic to the school teachers. The Government Employees' Housing Authority has indicated that more housing, under its sponsorship, will be constructed in the town within the next couple of years depending on priorities.

I have given the details because I wanted to draw the Minister's attention to the problem which may well exist in other centres also where there has been insufficient recognition given to the needs of Government employees and, more particularly, to the needs of single school teachers, and especially girls. It also ap-

plies to young married couples who are school teachers. We recognise that such couples may be in a town or district for no more than a year or two but they constantly face this type of accommodation problem.

The correspondence that has been written and the representations which have been made are, I feel, relevant to this measure, and to the constitution of the authority. I know the matter is a source of embarrassment to the State Housing Commission at the present time. It could well be a cause of embarrassment to the Government Employees' Housing Authority which would not wish to be offside with a group of deserving people such as the Pensioners' League. The situation nevertheless remains and will not be resolved until the Government Employees' Housing Authority is able to supply alternative accommodation for school teachers.

I am prepared to support the measure if the proposed representation on the authority will make a difference and mean that accommodation will become more readily available.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [5.55 p.m.]: I thank members who have contributed to the debate. Their comments were varied and covered a number of aspects of this situation. The measure itself deals only with the appointment of a representative from the organisations chiefly concerned, whose members occupy the houses in the main. The organisations are the State School Teachers' Union of W.A., the Police Union of Workers of Western Australia, and the Civil Service Association of Western Australia. It is desirable for these organisations to have a mouthpiece on the authority.

For instance, in respect of the matter referred to by Mr. MacKinnon, I assume the teacher would contact the union and, at the first opportunity, the union would raise the matter to see whether the situation could be improved.

I will refer the comments made by members to the appropriate Minister, Mr. Bickerton, and ask him to examine them closely to see what can be done. If the Minister for Housing feels that it is desirable he could send a written statement to each of the members who have sought information. I cannot do more than that at this stage except to thank members for their comments.

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.

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE

1. TOURISM

Cossack

The Hon. V. J. Ferry for The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Has the Minister sighted the article on page 18 of *The Sunday Times*, dated 29th April, 1973, which refers to the damage and the deplorable state of the historic town of Cossack?
- (2) In view of question 4 asked on the 29th July, 1971, and question 6 on the 4th August, 1971, concerning Cossack and the adequacy of the Government caretaker to protect the buildings and to meet the needs of tourists, have government officers carried out periodic checks in the area?
- (3) What amount of money has been spent by this government on restoration works in Cossack?
- (4) Have vandals damaged any part of the works carried out by the previous government at a cost in excess of \$18,000?
- (5) What were the final arrangements made by the government in regard to the performance of a caretaker as advised in part (5) (b) of answer to question 4 on 29th July, 1971?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Regular checks every 6 to 8 weeks are made by the Public Works Department District Supervisor.
- (3) Nil.
- (4) Departmental officers are not aware of any damage caused by vandals to the restored work, which was undertaken in 1969.
- (5) At the time of the regular checks it is normal practice for the Departmental Supervisor to raise with the caretaker any matters coming within the scope of his duties.

2. ABORIGINES

Pastoral Leases: Purchase

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

- (1) In view of the answer to question No. 2 given on Wednesday, 4th April, 1973, concerning pastoral properties purchased for Aboriginal groups, will such land be owned or operated under the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act?

- (2) If so, will the Minister advise how the answer given to question (f) would be carried out in practice?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is "no", is there a Commonwealth Act which affords the same protection to Aborigines as provided by our Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act?
- (4) Under what conditions can mining be carried out on the pastoral properties described in question No. 2 on 4th April, 1973?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON replied:

- (1) The Aboriginal Land Trust is willing to accept responsibility for these leases as provided for in the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act, but to date the Commonwealth Government has indicated an intention to transfer such pastoral leases directly to the incorporated Aboriginal communities concerned.
- (2) If such land were vested in the Aboriginal Lands Trust each case would be dealt with on its merits, but it is probable that the Trust would lease the land to the Aboriginal community concerned under an agreement requiring compliance with the normal obligations of a pastoral lease.
- (3) Not at present.
- (4) Under the normal provisions of the Mining Act.

3. TRAFFIC

Inspection of Horse Floats

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

- (1) Would the Minister ascertain the reason for the Police Traffic Department checking horse floats en route to the racing trials at Helena Vale Racecourse on the morning of 1st May, 1973, thus delaying the arrival of horses at the trials, and resulting in horses being too late to compete?
- (2) Would the Minister agree that the floats could have been checked just as easily when returning from trials?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that some owners wasted money and time in floating horses which could not compete through Police action?
- (4) Would the Minister instruct the Officers concerned to use common sense when carrying out vehicle checks of this nature?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) Yes. Information had been received that the brakes of some of the horse floats were in a dangerous condition.

- (2) Yes. The floats could have been checked at the Racecourse or when returning.
- (3) No.
- (4) I thank the Hon. Member for bringing the matter to notice and assure him that appropriate instructions have been issued by the Commissioner of Police.

4. CURRENCY REVALUATION

Case to Commonwealth

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

- (1) Has the Minister seen the article titled "Our dollar valued too high but strong" on page 14 of the *Daily News* dated 1st May, 1973?
- (2) Because of the views expressed therein by overseas financial writers and the evidence presented by Western Australian industries with submissions from members of the Opposition, will the Government prepare another case for presentation to the Federal Government in support of the request for devaluation of the Australian dollar to offset the loss of \$204 million in Western Australia for 1973?
- (3) What was the reply given to this Government by the Federal Government in reply to any previous submission for devaluation of the Australian dollar?
- (4) Did the Federal Government reply make mention of the \$112 million loss in the 1973 export value within the industries exporting iron ore, cotton, beef and salt from the Pilbara and Kimberley?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The opinions expressed in this article are among many read that contain conflicting views. The Premier has no intention of acting on the opinions expressed by one newspaper.
- (3) In the submission to the Commonwealth Government the Premier did not single out any specific course of action, but urged that consideration be given to means of lessening the impact of currency re-alignments on major Western Australian industries. The Acting Prime Minister advised that our representations would be referred to the Federal Treasurer for study.
- (4) No.

5. FENCE POSTS

Shortage

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

- (1) Are firms treating pine for fencing posts experiencing shortages of timber from the Forests Department?
- (2) Due to this shortage is it necessary for these firms to go to the added cost of drying these posts mechanically before they can be treated?
- (3) Are farmers experiencing increased freight costs due to the need to take delivery of posts before drying?
- (4) When is it expected that the backlog of timber supplies can be eliminated?
- (5) (a) Is there a price rise of posts ex Forestry expected this year, and—
(b) if so, has this had any bearing on deliveries?
- (6) Can farmers look to greatly increased supply over the next five years or does the Forests Department consider the State will have to renew imports from South Australia to meet agricultural expansion?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) Yes, but every endeavour is being made to meet current demands.
- (2) Yes, this has been occasioned by the sudden increase in demand and the reluctance of the firms to carry stocks.
- (3) Not known.
- (4) Answered by (1).
- (5) (a) Pine prices are under review.
(b) No.
- (6) It is considered the demand for treated pine fence posts can be met from Western Australia's pine plantations.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 3rd May, 1973

The SPEAKER (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND FALSE ADVERTISEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. TAYLOR (Cockburn—Minister for Labour) [11.04 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.