

a meeting convened. He would have the ear of his Minister who would soon raise "bobsy-die" if there was any tardiness in having a meeting. However, the non-Government members of the council are not in this position. I am not fussy if this power is given to two, or three people, but I would like this provision for the small group of people who are, for practical purposes, outside the Government appointees.

I hope the Premier will give this further thought and that on reflection he will see it is not an idle piece of machinery to allow cranks, for want of a better name, to convene meetings at the drop of a hat. This machinery would enable responsible people on the council to have a meeting of the full council called. It must be borne in mind that nothing can be passed unless the council agrees, so it is not a question of the Government or the environmental protection authority being defeated in its objectives. This amendment would merely mean that a meeting can be held and a decision made quickly. Members will realise that speed will be very important in many of these issues.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I do not think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has established a need for this provision. I cannot see why a request to the Minister or to the authority would not result in a meeting if there was a genuine reason for it. However, I would be prepared to accept the amendment if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would agree to three members. This would mean that at least two groups of representation would be involved, as otherwise the two persons not employed by the Crown could call a meeting irrespective of the wishes of the others. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is prepared to amend his amendment to three, I will accept that.

Mr. COURT: I accept the argument of the Premier that with three people we would need to go outside one group and would avoid any ganging up. Mr. Chairman, I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

Page 13, line 3—After the word "Authority" insert the words "or any three or more Council members."

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Progress

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

House adjourned at 10.14 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 18th November, 1971

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

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE.

1.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION

Payment of Adjusted Rates

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

As it is understood that former Members of Parliament receiving superannuation pursuant to the Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1970, have not yet commenced to receive the adjustment arising from the recent determination of the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal, would the Leader of the House ascertain the reason for the delay?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

Superannuation increases to former Members of Parliament were paid on 22nd October retrospective to 16th September the effective date of the increase resulting from the recent determination of the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal.

2.

BOARDS AND TRUSTS

Details of Personnel

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON (for the Hon. R. Thompson), to the Leader of the House:

Will the Minister submit to the House in printed form for the purpose of laying on the Table an up to date list of the personnel of all boards, commissions, trusts, etc., operating pursuant to State statutes, indicating—

- (a) the name of the body;
- (b) the individual members and the date when their appointments are due to expire;
- (c) the qualifications of such persons and who they represent; and
- (d) the remuneration paid to each person?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

This information has been received from Departments and is at present being collated by the Public Service Board. It will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as it is completed.

3. WATER SUPPLIES

Laverton

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Can the Leader of the House inform the House whether the Minister for Works and Water Supplies is aware that the level of water in the Laverton Town Dam is down to the 12.5 foot level, and as the town wells can only supply 17,000 gallons per day and the consumption is now 24,000 gallons per day, a serious water shortage will occur before the end of the year?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes", will immediate steps be taken to connect the Gladiator Well supply to the town reticulation?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) The present situation is known and mild water restrictions may prove necessary if no summer rains occur.
- (2) No. This will be determined by overall future development in the area.

Subsidy Fund controlled by a Government Department to assist the Parents & Citizens' Association in the provision of facilities such as canteens and libraries in State schools?

(2) If so—

- (a) when was the fund established;
- (b) what amount of money was allocated to the fund in the 1971-72 financial year;
- (c) what is the balance of the fund at the present time; and
- (d) (i) which schools have been assisted from the fund during the 1971-72 year;
- (ii) for what purpose was the assistance granted; and
- (iii) what was the amount of financial assistance granted from the fund in each case?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) 1965.
- (b) \$52,000.
- (c) Although the vote has not been expended, it is fully committed with approved projects.

4. SCHOOL FACILITIES

Building and Related Projects Subsidy Fund

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Is there a fund in existence called the Building and Related Projects

(d)

(i) School	(ii) Details	(iii) Estimated Subsidy \$
Rossmoyne High	Cool room	401
Armada S.H.	Hot water system	600
Morley High	Canteen stove	375
Como High	Change rooms (swimming pool)	5,000
Merredin S.H.	Cool room	454
Perth Modern	Cool room/hot water system	2,400
Narrogin S.H.	Hot water system	1,500
Dianella Primary	Canteen/Library	5,000
Morley West Primary	Canteen	4,180
South Bunbury Primary	Quadrangle cover	2,613
Mt. Lockyer Primary	Hall lining	79
Yokine Primary	Library	5,000
Cottesloe Primary	Utility room	3,100
Cloverdale Primary	Canteen Library	5,000
Balga Training Centre	Pavilion (swimming pool)	5,000
Embleton Primary	Canteen	5,000
Tuart Hill Primary	Canteen shelter	198
Dalkeith Primary	Change rooms (swimming pool)	594
Balga Primary	Canteen/Library	2,000
Spencer Park	Hall/Library	5,000
Mt. Hawthorn Primary	Canteen improvements	333
Bluff Point Primary	Library carpet	240
Middle Swan Primary	Library carpet	310
Attadale Primary	Hall ceiling	1,300

5. LINSEED AND RAPESEED

Production

The Hon. N. McNEILL, to the Leader of the House:

With respect to the growing, processing and marketing of

(a) linseed; and (b) rapeseed—

(1) What was the average price paid to growers in Western Australia in the years 1969-70, 1970-71?

(2) What are the specific market outlets for the Western Australian production, and what quantities were supplied in each case in the year 1970-71?

(3) What was the average market price in 1970-71 on—

(a) overseas;

(b) interstate; and

(c) local consignments—for seed, extracted oil, or other by-products?

(4) In the same year, what amounts of the local production have been grown under contract arrangements with—

(a) local extraction firms or refiners;

(b) other interests?

(5) What are the estimated market requirements for the years 1971-72, 1972-73?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

(1) (a) Linseed: 1969-70—\$2.00 per bushel on farm.

1970-71—expecting \$1.90 per bushel on farm when sales are finalised.

(b) Rapeseed: 1969-70—No production.

1970-71—Expecting \$2.20 on farm when sales are finalised.

(2) (a) Linseed: Supplied to local refiners and the Japanese. These have been the principal markets in the last three years.

1970-71—Local, 850 tons. Export, 3,000 tons expected; shipping has not yet been completed.

(b) Rapeseed: Supplied to local refiners and the Japanese.

1970-71—Local, 2,000 tons. Export, 400 tons.

(3) (a) Overseas market for Western Australia's linseed and rapeseed.

Linseed approximately \$85 ton.

Rapeseed approximately \$90 ton.

(b) Interstate markets for Western Australia's linseed and rapeseed.

Not applicable.

(c) Local consignments for Western Australia's linseed and rapeseed.

Linseed approximately \$80 ton.

Rapeseed approximately \$85 ton.

Figures for oil and other by-products for these markets are not available.

(4) (a) In 1970-71 2,000 tons of rapeseed and 850 tons of linseed were refined locally. It is not known how much of these amounts were supplied under contracts.

(b) Not applicable.

(5) Over the next two years Western Australia's production of linseed and rapeseed, if maintained at about present levels, should be quite easily disposed of on export markets.

Any increase on present production will also have to be placed on export markets. It will be increasingly difficult to market small quantities of linseed. It may be necessary to store rapeseed for some months to take advantage of export markets.

Local requirements for rapeseed and linseed for refining will be approximately 5,000 tons and less than 1,000 tons respectively.

6.

EDUCATION

North West Concessions

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

With reference to my contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate on the 20th July, 1971, will the Minister please advise whether—

(a) the Minister for Education has planned to implement the education allowances for country students as requested; or

- (b) whether our Federal Members have been approached for the purpose of granting equal rights for non-Aborigines under the Aboriginal grants scheme?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (a) Boarding allowances for children whose parents live north of the twenty-sixth parallel will be increased from 1st January, 1972 to \$261 for children in their third year of secondary school or lower, and to \$312 for children in their fourth and fifth year.

This increase will make the cost to a north west parent keeping a child at a hostel comparable to the cost to a parent in the rest of the State who keeps a child at home.

- (b) No.

7. POLICE STATION

Yalgoo

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Minister for Police:

In view of the report in *The West Australian* on Wednesday, 17th November, 1971, that a contract had been let for a new police station at Mt. Magnet, when is it expected that a new police station and quarters will be built at Yalgoo?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

A new police station and quarters are proposed for Yalgoo in 1972-73 subject to funds being available.

8. PARLIAMENT

Prorogation

The Hon. V. J. FERRY (for the Hon. A. F. Griffith), to the Leader of the House:

With reference to the reply to my question on Wednesday, the 17th November, 1971, relating to the prorogation of Parliament, will the Minister enumerate the occasions and circumstances under which the Parliament of Western Australia has been previously prorogued as indicated?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

The information relating to the various occasions when Parliament has been specially prorogued can be obtained from the Clerk of Parliament by enquiry. As this is the source from which such information is available to the Government it is not considered unreasonable to suggest that the Hon. Member make the necessary enquiry personally.

CORRIDOR PLAN

Inquiry by Select Committee: Authority to Continue

THE HON. F. R. WHITE (West) [2.44 p.m.]: I move, without notice, under Standing Order 171—

That in view of the opinion of the Solicitor General dated 8th November, 1971, and referred to The Hon. the President by The Hon. the Premier on the 12th November, 1971, to the effect that this House is not competent to empower a Select Committee to continue its work notwithstanding the prorogation of Parliament, this House now resolves that the Committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the Corridor Plan for Perth was properly constituted and is authorised to continue its inquiries in accordance with the motions agreed to on the 16th September, 1971.

A question of privilege has arisen; the question being whether this Chamber is competent to move a motion similar to that moved on the 16th September, 1971. The motion for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the Corridor Plan for Perth provided—

That the Committee have power to call for persons, papers and documents and to adjourn from place to place; that it may sit on days over which the Council stands adjourned; that the Committee be authorised to function notwithstanding the adjournment or prorogation of Parliament; and that the report be presented following the reassembly of Parliament in 1972.

Acting in good faith, the committee continued to operate until the 16th November, which was Tuesday of this week. During the period between the first meeting of the committee, and the 16th November, a tremendous amount of time was devoted to inquiries. For the benefit of members I feel I should give a brief coverage of the activities of the committee.

The motion was agreed to on the 16th September, and the committee was appointed. However, due to the fact that there was a motion before the Chamber for the formation of a joint Select Committee, the committee which was appointed did not commence to function until the 24th September. On the defeat of the motion for the formation of a joint Select Committee on the 23rd September, the committee held its first meeting on the 24th September. That meeting lasted for 2 hours and 10 minutes.

Following that meeting notices were inserted and published in *The West Australian* on the 2nd and 9th October. On the 27th September the committee met again for a period of two hours. On the 1st October it had an informal meeting with the Town Planning Department which

lasted for three hours, and on the 4th October it had a committee meeting which lasted for 1 hour and 45 minutes.

An informal meeting was held with the Director-General of Transport on the 7th October and that meeting lasted for three hours. On the 11th October Parliament was prorogued. Up until that time the committee had met on three occasions and the time involved was 5 hours and 55 minutes. The informal meetings with the departments to which I have referred numbered two, and they covered a period of six hours.

Because the committee had been authorised by this Chamber to continue its operations irrespective of the prorogation of Parliament it continued its activities and at that stage nobody questioned the operations of the committee. The committee made various inquiries and was advised that no question had been raised, and that it was competent to continue to operate.

On the 14th October the committee had a five-hour meeting with the Wanneroo Shire Council, in its area. On the 18th October the committee had a three-hour meeting with the Metropolitan Water Supply Board, and on the 22nd October it had another meeting with the State Electricity Commission, which lasted for 1½ hours. On the same day, the 22nd October, the committee had a meeting which lasted for two hours. On the 28th October it carried out an aerial survey and the flight lasted about 1½ hours. Other business took up a further 1½ hours on that day. On the 29th October a further committee meeting lasting for 3½ hours took place.

It was on the 1st November that the first witnesses appeared voluntarily before the committee and on that date the hearing of witnesses lasted for 5½ hours. On the 5th November the committee met for 2 hours 50 minutes. On the 9th November further witnesses were heard, covering a period of 7½ hours, and on the 11th November witnesses were also heard for a further 3 hours. On the 15th November more witnesses were heard for a period of 2½ hours.

Right up to and including the 15th November, no indication had been given to the committee that it should not operate. No such direction at all had been given. Up to that time the committee had held committee meetings lasting a total of 8 hours 20 minutes. It had had informal meetings with and made visits to various Government departments and local authorities lasting a total of 12½ hours, and it had spent 18½ hours listening to witnesses. To that time, 21 witnesses had been examined, covering 240 pages of evidence reported by *Hansard*. As at that date 14 witnesses were still to be examined. Eight written submissions had been received and four written submissions had been promised

to that date. Since that date, further interest has been shown in the committee's proceedings and additional people have expressed a desire to submit evidence.

It is obvious from the activities of the committee that it has worked industriously. There has been 100 per cent. attendance by committee members and they have been on all occasions punctual and dedicated to their work. The same degree of dedication, punctuality, and attendance has been shown by Mr. Hoff, who is the secretary of the committee.

All these activities have been carried out in good faith under the direction of the Legislative Council and the motion authorising this action on the 16th November. At no time up to that date had these operations been questioned in any manner whatsoever. If the operations had been questioned in any official manner whatsoever, the committee would have ceased its activities, as it did from the afternoon of the 15th November, when it was advised by you, Mr. President, that you had received a letter from the Solicitor-General expressing the opinion that the Chamber did not have the power to authorise the functioning of the committee, notwithstanding the prorogation of Parliament.

That was an opinion. It was not a ruling, and to this date no ruling has come from any source; from any person or group of people. In good faith, the committee continued to act until the 15th November. At the moment the committee is in recess. It does not know whether or not it is allowed to continue to function, in view of the opinion of the Solicitor-General. The committee's future activities are in doubt.

Throughout the whole period the committee has been allowed to operate despite the fact that, obviously, somebody had questioned its right to operate and had asked the Solicitor-General to express an opinion; but those people or that person—whichever they or he may be—had not contacted members of the Legislative Council or the committee. Therefore, the committee continued to operate.

Throughout the whole period a tremendous amount of publicity has been given to the functions and operations of the committee. Notices appeared in the newspapers prior and subsequent to the prorogation of Parliament. Parliament was prorogued on the 11th October, yet subsequent to that date items appeared such as that published in *The West Australian* on the 26th October, 1971, under the heading "Air Survey in Corridor Inquiry"; and an article in the *Daily News* of Tuesday, the 19th October, 1971, under the heading "Corridor Plan Committee Keeps on Working" in which it is stated that the committee was still working irrespective of the prorogation of Parliament. On the 25th October a large article, in two columns, entitled "Strong Support for Corridor" was published. On the 31st October an item

appeared under the heading "Public to Have Say in Perth Corridor." On the 29th October *The West Australian* carried an item under the heading "Committee Flies Over Corridor."

I could go on and say that nobody anywhere was in doubt of the fact that the committee was operating. As a result of this knowledge, anyone who questioned the operations of the committee must have condoned them owing to the fact that he knew full well that the committee was operating.

Yesterday, Mr. President, I asked for a ruling from you on a point of order which I raised. You ruled in favour of certain actions being taken within this Chamber, even though a case had been presented to the effect that perhaps it would not be competent for the House to operate. But it was accepted that the House was competent to operate, irrespective of the quotations I have given from Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice* and section 36 of our own Constitution. I consider that if it were competent for that action to proceed, it is therefore competent for the committee to proceed. However, if it should be decided by some authority or other that it is not competent for the committee to proceed, what security would any committee have at any time in the future?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please!

The Hon. F. R. WHITE: We are all aware of the possibility of Parliament being prorogued at any time. Many of May's statements are based on the anticipated dates of prorogation, but circumstances which cannot be anticipated could arise, as in the case of the unfortunate death of the Speaker.

Accordingly, if the opinion of the Solicitor-General is held as being factual, then no committee could have any security of tenure on being appointed to carry out a job on behalf of either House of Parliament. If I move for the reappointment of the committee there would be no security unless a motion such as the one previously passed by the Council was in order.

If the Government considered it desirable that a committee be appointed an honorary Royal Commission there may be avenues open to us, but there is always a possibility that a committee may not be so appointed.

We find that if it is ruled from any source that the Select Committee appointed to investigate the corridor plan for Perth is considered as being defunct, then it will be necessary for this Chamber to take immediate action to amend section 36 of the Constitution.

I must point out here that at no time, even to this date, has the appointment of the committee itself been questioned; it is the actions of this Chamber which have been questioned. Therefore this

Chamber—which I have always understood is master of its own destiny—surely can resolve this particular question.

The Solicitor-General apparently is of the opinion that the committee should not be permitted to continue. It would appear that this Chamber would be bound to disagree with that opinion in view of the ruling given yesterday; particularly in view of the fact that nobody disagreed with the ruling given by the President.

At the moment the committee in question is in recess, but it is unable to proceed with the good work it has carried out up to this date. This Chamber, having decided on the 16th September to appoint the committee to inquire into the corridor plan and having provided it with certain powers, is entitled to know what has developed since that date.

I have advised the Chamber on this matter and therefore I feel that the Chamber should be fully advised and acquainted of all the facts—as I have advised it—and of all the actions which have occurred since the 16th September, and in my opinion, the Chamber must then decide whether to direct the committee to continue its activities or to terminate those activities.

On behalf of the dedicated members of the committee I implore every member in this Chamber to consider all the aspects of the question which I put before the House—particularly in view of the President's ruling yesterday on the point of order—and to cast their vote accordingly when this motion finally is put to the vote.

At the same time I do trust the question will be resolved very quickly and that it will not be delayed for any period of time. It is not the committee alone but the public in general who would wish the inquiry to continue with a minimum of delay.

In considering the motion we should remember that the ruling given by the President yesterday was based on the effluxion of time and on the usage of the powers of the Council. The committee has also operated on this basis; time has gone by without any question being directed against its activities. This time has been used and, in addition, a usage of this time has been condoned by the people who have seen fit to question it; but the people who have thought fit to question it have failed to acquaint either the committee members or the Legislative Council that doubts existed concerning the Council's competence to authorise the committee to operate notwithstanding the prorogation of Parliament—a doubt which was never expressed at any time until the correspondence from the Premier to the President dated the 12th November, 1971, was sent and which was not received by me as Chairman of the committee until the 16th November, 1971. I now leave the decision in the hands of members of this House.

Debate adjourned until Thursday, the 25th November, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the House).

LAPSED BILLS

Restoration to Notice Paper: Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it has agreed to resume consideration of the undermentioned Bills which lapsed during the last session of Parliament—

Censorship of Films Act Amendment Bill.

Adoption of Children Act Amendment Bill.

Property Law Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act Repeal Bill.

Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill.

ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

PROPERTY LAW ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

WILLS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

COAL MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the House), read a first time.

FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT

Motion

Disallowance of Regulations 6 to 9:

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate, from the 28th July, on the following motion by The Hon. G. W. Berry:—

That regulations 6, 7, 8 and 9 made pursuant to the Fauna Conservation Act, 1950-1969, as published in the *Government Gazette* on Wednesday, the 18th November, 1970, and laid upon the Table of the House on Thursday, the 19th November, 1970, be and are hereby, disallowed.

Debate adjourned, until Thursday, the 16th December, on motion by The Hon. J. L. Hunt.

LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East—Chief Secretary) [3.12 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

In doing so, I wish to explain briefly that on the 6th October last I undertook to obtain some information that was required. I have seen members of the Lotteries Commission on the question of whether a sporting club is a charitable organisation. I think this is the main objection that was raised. The members of the commission have assured me that they will watch the position closely. The definition of "charitable purpose" in section 4 of the Act will be observed to the letter. This definition embraces such organisations as public hospitals; any free ward at a private hospital; any organisation that raises funds for the relief of former sailors, soldiers, airmen or nurses of Her Majesty's forces; any institution for the instruction or care of the blind; any institution that cares for the deaf or the dumb; any orphanage; any institution for the reception of dying or incurable persons or any body which distributes relief to sick, infirm, or indigent persons.

The members of the commission also drew my attention to section 4 (j) which reads—

any object which in the opinion of the Minister may be fairly classed as charitable.

That provision has been in the Act for quite a long while and covers the granting of permission to any organisation to sell tickets for the benefit of charity.

The members of the commission also said that on the application form the requirements of the Liquor Act will be clearly stated and it will be pointed out that these must be observed to ensure that there will be no misunderstanding on the part of those making an application. On the application form the venue of any particular function to be held will have to be clearly shown together with the names of those responsible for conducting the function.

The members of the Lotteries Commission therefore consider they can handle the situation quite well in the same way as they grant permission to any organisation to sell charity tickets. I certainly do not envisage large sporting clubs, such as a league football club, being covered by this legislation. Perhaps some small local football club may desire to raise money to purchase football guernseys for children who play in junior football matches. This will be an entirely different position altogether. As I have said, those sporting clubs that are well able to look after

themselves will not be covered in any way. With that explanation, I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [3.15 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In introducing this Bill to amend the Stamp Act, I would invite the perusal of members to the comment made at pages 6 and 7 of the 1971-72 financial statement supporting the Budget Speech which was presented to members in another place on the 16th September by the Treasurer.

A reference will be found that revenue in some areas over the past 12 months, notably probate duty, stamp duty on conveyances, and transfers and mining royalties had failed to reach the estimate.

With inescapable increases in expenditure the Government, in seeking means to keep the State's finances on as reasonable a footing as possible, has decided to increase stamp duty imposed on cheques from 5c to 6c. It has been decided also to increase the stamp duty on marketable securities, so that duty on share transfers will rise from 20c per \$100 of consideration payable by both buyer and seller to 30c per \$100 of consideration on each transaction.

This Bill, which proposes these increases, is therefore one of the first measures required to implement the revenue proposals which were outlined when the Budget was presented to Parliament.

The first of these proposals needs no further elaboration.

The second proposal, which affects marketable securities, entails a number of amendments to the Act to cover the various types of transactions.

Where transactions are not conducted through a broker the transfer document is to attract duty of 60c per \$100 of consideration.

If the consideration is below \$100 the rate is to be 15c for each \$25.

Where transactions are conducted through brokers the buying broker pays duty to the commissioner, as does the selling broker. In each case the rate payable by the broker is to be 30c per \$100 of consideration.

As two amounts of 30c per \$100 are paid on each transaction—that is 30c per \$100 by the buyer and 30c per \$100 by the seller—the total rate is the same as for transactions not conducted through a broker.

The amounts paid in duty by brokers are passed on to their clients.

As for other transactions, provision is made for payment at proportionate rates for transactions through brokers where the consideration is less than \$100.

Another type of transaction is the transfer of shares in co-operative and provident societies which at present attract duty at the rate of 10c per \$25 of consideration. It is proposed to raise this rate to 15c per \$25 in conformity with other proposed increases.

The revenue yields from provisions which are contained in this measure are based on their operation on and from the 1st January of next year, as it is intended to bring the new rates into operation on that date.

It is estimated that from cheques the following additional collections will be received:—

\$255,000, in 1971-72—that is during the remaining part of the current financial year—and \$510,000 during a full year.

Estimated additional collections from share transactions are \$315,000 during the remaining portion of this financial year, and \$630,000 in a full year.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. I. G. Medcalf.

MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE SURCHARGE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [3.19 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is one of the Bills which have been devised with a view to revenue-raising proposals which were outlined by the Treasurer in the Budget.

When introducing the Budget in another place, the Treasurer indicated that the present surcharge of \$2 on third party insurance premiums was introduced to provide revenue to compensate in part for the heavy burden of State expenditure on hospitals, ambulance services, and police traffic control which is directly attributable to the motorist.

It was further pointed out that costs of all these services had soared in recent years and an increase in the surcharge was considered to be fully justified to compensate to some degree for that increase. This Bill accordingly proposes that the surcharge be increased from \$2 per annum to \$5 per annum.

The rate applicable to broken periods is to be increased proportionately from 17c to 42c per month.

It is proposed to bring the new rates into operation on and from the 1st January next year. The estimated revenue to be obtained in this financial year is based on that commencing date.

For the remaining portion of this financial year it is expected that the provisions in the Bill will yield \$693,000 additional revenue and in a full year \$1,400,000 additional revenue.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan.

ROAD MAINTENANCE (CONTRIBUTION) ACT REPEAL BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Minister for Transport) [3.22 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is simply the repeal of the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act of 1965-1970.

Those of us who were members in this Chamber at the time of the passing of the principal Act in 1965 will recall its rather stormy passage through Parliament, not only in this House, but in another place as well.

Briefly, the Act now proposed to be repealed levied a charge against a certain group of road transporters operating vehicles the load capacity of which exceeded eight tons; or if that load capacity did not exceed eight tons if such vehicles were being used frequently for the carriage of a loading in excess of eight tons.

While the purpose of the levy was to make available to the Commissioner of Transport substantial sums of money to be used towards compensation for wear and tear on our roads, considerable opposition to these proposals emanated from those who were conscious of the fact that the imposition of the levy constituted an added burden to communities living in remote areas of the State in particular.

However, the Bill passed into an Act and substantial sums of money have been collected under the initial provisions of the Act and devoted towards the maintenance of our roads.

It was not until 1970—that is, last year—and after the general impost had operated for a period of about four years, that the Act was amended in respect of the carriage of livestock and in recognition of the difficult season which the farming community had faced. The effect of the amendment was to permit a livestock transporter the option of claiming either the exemption from road maintenance charges or the rebate in his traffic license fee. Members will recall the original concession that only half the normal license

fee would be payable under the Traffic Act in respect of vehicles subject to payment of road maintenance charges.

In the overall, then, the levies charged under the principal Act have brought substantial funds forward for the maintenance of roads and on the repeal of this legislation that source of revenue will cease. Therefore, I would like to explain to the House the consideration the Government has given to the practicability of raising funds to replace those receipts.

The Government examined possibilities of (a) a special tax on motor fuel and (b) a tyre tax, but because of the difficulties these alternative taxing measures were rejected.

The Government considers that the only satisfactory way to produce replacement road funds is to impose an increase in the motor vehicle registration fees of all trucks and commercial vehicles. Again I emphasise that there will be no increase in motorcar licenses and there will be a special concession for farmers' trucks.

To return again to the Bill, members of the Labor Party have always maintained that the road maintenance tax is an iniquitous imposition. Mr. J. T. Tonkin is reported as stating that he could not recall any other taxing measure at the State level which had been resisted so strongly by such a large section of the community. There appear to have been many reasons for this resistance. One quite obvious one is the principle that the Act imposed a special tax on one section of the community—that is, on the owners of the heavier type of truck and particularly the owner-driver.

The Hon I. G. Medcalf: What about payroll tax? Is that not an iniquitous tax which is imposed on only one section?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will answer that later.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Why not now?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would like an opportunity to study the question to see the implication. Another point against this tax is that it falls heavily on those situated in isolated areas remote from railways, many of whom are engaged in pastoral and farming activities. Indeed it has been from this section of the community that many of the complaints have emanated and the Farmers' Union has been strongly opposed to the tax.

The administrative costs and the administrative procedures related to the road maintenance tax, both in Government and in the transport industry, have been quite complex. Each truck owner-driver who comes within the scope of the tax has to complete a return at regular intervals and this has brought about another strong feeling of resentment to the tax.

A rather unsavoury feature of the administration of the tax is the many prosecutions imposed against those caught evading it and, from figures of percentages

of collection, evasion is apparently not very difficult. Some of these figures of prosecutions are interesting. Since the legislation came into force in April, 1966, there have been 7,535 prosecutions and there are still in excess of 3,000 prosecutions pending. When considering this situation the question that first comes to mind is this: How can legislation which produces such a result in the normal course of private enterprise, in the normal course of daily business, be good legislation?

Many of the prosecutions have accumulated because of problems of procedure. For instance, quite a number of the owners are in the Eastern States.

The number of outstanding prosecutions indicates the sort of administrative turmoil which has been created by this legislation. Other States which have passed similar legislation are facing similar problems in this field. For example, in 1969-70 there were 11,461 prosecutions for evasion of road tax in the normal course of business in New South Wales and 5,592 in Victoria. From this it is obvious that this form of tax is not only just as unpopular in the Eastern States as it is in this State, but that similar administrative difficulties are encountered.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you know whether they are going to repeal it in the Eastern States?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I could not say at this stage.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Can you tell me any tax which is popular?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I do not know of any. Certainly those which apply to myself are not, and I suppose it would be the same with every member.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I can tell you when they were not popular; that is, when you were sitting over here.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: They are still not, as a matter of fact, and more particularly those which have a personal application.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Quite a number are popular, as long as the other fellow is paying.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I pause here to quote the Leader of the Opposition who, when he was Premier, said in his political notes published on the 10th April, 1969—

The Government has always been aware of some unsatisfactory features of this particular charge.

However, no legislative action was taken to remove these unsatisfactory features, except as I mentioned earlier in respect of the carriage of livestock.

Some action was taken, however, by the Premier of the day for he set up a special committee to examine certain proposals which had been brought forward by various public bodies as alternatives to

the road maintenance tax. From this committee's deliberations, however, there emanated nothing acceptable to the Government at that time. Doubtless this was because its terms of reference were not broad enough and did not cover the field of raising the license fees of all commercial vehicles.

On the other hand, this Government's proposals to replace the tax by increasing the commercial vehicle registration fees will resolve the many problems I have just mentioned and costs also will be reduced. Evasion will be much easier to identify and it follows that truck owners will be less prone to try to avoid it.

It is of interest to mention in this connection that in the past 12 months the Police Department has detected only 335 persons who have attempted to evade the payment of motor vehicle registration fees. This compares with the 1,343 prosecutions launched by the Road and Air Transport Commission in 1970-1971.

I now return, briefly, to the aspect of evasion. I am advised that although it is difficult to obtain firm figures regarding the percentage of tax actually collected the indications are that evasion of the tax could be as high as 30 per cent. From this it would appear that no more than about 70 per cent. of those eligible for payment have been contributing to the road maintenance fund. This further reduces the section of the community which has been contributing towards the maintenance of our roads and lends credence to the belief that the Bill now before members will eliminate a taxing measure which has placed an unfair burden on the community since it came into effect in 1966.

If only 70 per cent. of those eligible have been paying the tax it is patently clear that the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act is legislation which in all practical application is not effectively enforceable. I put it to members that legislation in this category cannot be good legislation. Legislation to be good must be capable of being enforced equitably at least in respect of those whom it touches.

I shall now give members a run-down on the proposed new license fee schedule, which it is intended will come into effect as from the 1st January next.

The license fee schedule will be divided into two sections—

- (1) A motor wagon, tractor (prime mover type); and
- (2) A utility or panel van that is not used solely for social, domestic or pleasure purposes or by a charitable, benevolent, or religious institution.

Should the panel van or utility be used partly for commercial purposes it will then have to bear this particular license; but if it is a utility or a panel van used solely

for social, domestic, or pleasure purposes or by a charitable, benevolent, or religious institution, the ordinary license applied to motorcars will be paid.

The vehicles which will be licensed on this basis will be those in the first instance not exceeding 50 cwt. aggregate to be licensed on a tare weight basis.

Mr. President, I would digress at this point to mention for the information of members that the complete schedule of the proposed license fees has been published in volume 5 of the proof number of *Parliamentary Debates* of last session and will be found at page 717. If members would refer to that reference, we could obviate tedious repetition of all the details in this House.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: Is that authentic in view of the statement in this morning's paper?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have not read this morning's paper.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It says that on these new rates farmers will have a greater differential than commercial users.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is right. I mentioned earlier in my speech that special concessions were being granted.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Have you any idea what the concessions will be?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Yes, although I do not have the exact percentages. I have asked my adviser to find this out for me, but the information has not yet been made available. It is quite a large percentage on the first truck and a subsequent percentage on the second. I think the variation is half. For example, if it were 50 per cent. on the first, it would be 25 per cent. on the second; if it were 66 per cent. on the first, it would be 33 per cent. on the second. Whatever it is, the second is half of the first. It is quite extensive and I understand it has given great satisfaction to members in another place.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It will still be much more costly than previously.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I could not say that at this stage.

The Hon. J. Heitman: According to the statement.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If it is not going to be more costly, why introduce it?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The fees for vehicles not exceeding 50 cwt. in the aggregate will rise progressively from \$11 annual licensing fee for a vehicle not exceeding 5 cwt. tare weight to \$46 for a vehicle not exceeding 35 cwt. tare weight. The license fee for vehicles exceeding 35 cwt. tare but not exceeding 50 cwt. aggregate will be \$47. Vehicles exceeding 50 cwt. aggregate are to be licensed on an aggregate weight basis.

For a vehicle of an aggregate weight not exceeding 2 tons 15 cwt., the fee will be \$48, rising to \$1,845 for the licensing of a vehicle not exceeding 40 tons. With regard to vehicles exceeding 40 tons aggregate, for the first 40 tons the fee will be \$1,845, as already indicated, while for each additional ton or part thereof the fee will be \$62.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: What does this have to do with the abolition of road maintenance tax?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Really nothing. This is an explanation which members in another place practically demanded and it was thought desirable that this information should be given in advance.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: I thought you were abolishing a tax and not increasing a tax.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: At this point I would make particular mention of interstate hauliers. Any difficulties which were encountered in the collection of the levies under the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act from interstate operators will be avoided by its repeal.

Perhaps I could interpolate to set Mr. Medcalf's mind at rest. When a measure is brought down to repeal a tax surely it is quite in order to give reasons for repealing the tax and surely, too, it is quite in order to give the House the benefit of knowing what is proposed as a substitute.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: It will end up by increasing the tax.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Not the road maintenance tax. That tax will be repealed.

This is for the reason that a way has been found to make hauliers from other States pay the extra fee when operating intrastate. I am referring to vehicles from other States which operate in Western Australia.

Some time will be required to develop the changed procedures in the department—the altered method of assessing the license fees and so on—so it is not intended that this new scheme will come into operation prior to the 1st January of next year.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Therefore, your Government will continue between now and the 1st January to collect what your Government regards as an iniquitous tax?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The Government has been doing that ever since it became the Government and will continue to do so until the tax is officially repealed.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: By a change of method the Government is raising the same amount of money.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Mr. President, members can interject with this kind of comment.

The intervening time will be required to effect the altered procedures so that the new license fees can be collected in accordance with the scale to which I have referred.

The introduction of the new scale of license fees in lieu of the levies presently being raised under the principal Act will result in there being no loss of income to the State. The road maintenance tax will still apply until the new license fees come into force in order that there will be no loss of revenue during the intervening period. The department could not reasonably be called upon to face the loss of revenue which would result from the immediate abolition of a tax with nothing at all to replace it. Therefore, in order to ensure that there is no loss of revenue and so that the same level of expenditure can be maintained, the Government was advised after careful consideration by the department, the Treasury, and the Police Department that they would require this period of time to organise the new procedures.

Debate adjourned until Tuesday, the 30th November, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Leader of the Opposition).

MARKETING OF LINSEED ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [3.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Western Australian Linseed Board, established under the Marketing of Linseed Act, 1969, has been the State's marketing authority for linseed since the 1st August last. The principal Act was requested by the Linseed Growers Association which had sought a compulsory marketing pool modelled on the authority controlling the marketing of barley.

This amending Bill proposes an extension of the board's ambit to enable it to control the marketing of seeds other than linseed. There are, for instance, extensive areas planted to rape for the purpose of producing rapeseed on a commercial basis. I am advised that overseas markets exist, an important outlet being Japan. There is also some local demand.

Farmers are looking to alternative crops such as rapeseed, linseed and lupin seed because of the present conditions existing in the marketing of our agricultural produce which for many years has consisted mainly of wool and cereal grains.

Preliminary figures for linseed for the year 1970-71 show 26,000 acres sown for a yield of 4,850 tons. It is estimated that for the year 1971-72 12,000 acres will be sown for a yield of 3,000 tons. The corresponding figures in respect of rapeseed are

1970-71, 12,000 acres sown and 2,700 tons produced. The 1971-72 estimate is 70,000 acres planted objectively to produce from between 10,000 to 17,000 tons, 5,000 tons of which is required for local usage.

The Farmers' Union of Western Australia and also the Pastoralists and Graziers Association have supported proposals to the Minister for Agriculture which are now before members. These proposals embrace rapeseed under the Marketing of Linseed Act.

This Bill has been designed to extend the scope of the Marketing of Linseed Act to control the marketing of rapeseed as well as linseed and further, to provide for other seeds to be included as and when required. Such approval would be granted by the Minister or by Order-in-Council.

Another proposed amendment in the Bill is that the Seed Board be permitted to establish a fund to be known as a seed research fund. Administration of the fund would be in the hands of a committee recommended by the Seed Board and approved by the Minister for Agriculture. The suggested committee would consist of three producers, one representative of the Department of Agriculture and one representative of the University of Western Australia.

Provision is made for the research levy to be a compulsory one and to be contributed at a rate to be determined from time to time by the board up to a maximum amount of half of one cent per bushel.

These funds would be devoted to research into production, quality and marketing, the committee determining the lines of research to be pursued and the amount of funds to be expended.

This Bill is regarded as a small measure introduced in the interests of primary producers and is commended to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. N. McNeill.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.04 p.m.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd September.

THE HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) (4.04 p.m.): This small Bill proposes to increase the penalty for certain offences from £20—or \$40 in modern currency—to \$200. I must confess that at first glance one's reaction to the Bill is one of hostility because this seems to be a pretty hefty increase. However, on examination of the position and the reasons for the increase I find myself in complete agreement with it.

Under the existing regulations, any transport vehicles in excess of 70 feet in length, 14 feet in width, and 16 feet in height are subject to a special permit from the Police Department. I understand such vehicles are normally supplied with an escort. It is now proposed to introduce a new by-law to control the speed of some vehicles, in excess of the dimensions I have mentioned, to 10 miles per hour. This amendment will apply only to vehicles which are limited to 10 miles per hour and it is proposed that, in addition to the special permit from the Police Department, where the vehicles must proceed over a railway level crossing—and only then—notice must be given to the Railways Department 48 hours before the vehicle proceeds over the crossing. It is for a failure to do this that the \$200 penalty is proposed.

The Minister, when introducing the Bill, instanced a case in England in which there was a very severe accident involving a large transporter and a fast train. When a vehicle of this size which is limited in its speed is required to stop at a railway crossing because the warning lights commence to operate as it arrives at the crossing, it has been found that there is insufficient time between the commencement of the operation of the warning lights and when the train arrives at the crossing for the vehicle to clear the crossing, particularly in the case of dual tracks.

This is how the accident in question occurred in England and I think it is quite on the cards that a similar accident could occur here with our faster moving trains. In the past, our trains did not travel at high speeds but nowadays our ore trains travel at very high speeds. Under these circumstances, I think it is necessary that the operators of transport vehicles give the required notice.

At first I was a little concerned that this penalty might apply in other cases; perhaps in regard to the by-laws governing the conduct of railway employees. In such a case a penalty of up to \$200 is most severe. However, a perusal of the Act will disclose that this is provided for separately and that there is a limit of \$20 in the case of misconduct on the part of railway employees. So that eased my mind on that score.

I see no reason whatever for not agreeing to this Bill because it not only protects those operating large road vehicles, but also those who use the railways. If fast-moving trains such as we have today were involved in an accident it could result in severe loss of life. It is quite feasible that an accident similar to that which occurred in England could occur here. This provision will not apply to a great many vehicles because if it is not proposed that a vehicle should proceed over a level crossing, it will not be necessary to give 48 hours' notice to the department. I am in complete agreement with the Bill.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.10 p.m.]: I wish to thank Mr. Willmott not only for his address on this Bill, but also because he has gone into it so deeply and so thoroughly as to be able to weigh up any disadvantages which might have been apparent when the measure was first introduced and to eliminate these by his own research. The Bill has received 100 per cent. support and I think that is a good thing because, as Mr. Willmott mentioned, there was some doubt in my initial second reading speech as to the extent and the scope of the Bill.

I am sure that any person interested in this measure will be perfectly satisfied after reading my remarks and those of Mr. Willmott that it does no more than it purports to do. The measure is designed to avoid any loss of life, and there can be no more worthy objective. I thank the honourable member for his support.

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.

ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd September.

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [4.13 p.m.]: Once again, this is a small Bill, but a Bill which could have very far-reaching effects. When one reads the Bill in the first place one finds that it merely says it is to give the Midland Junction Abattoir the chance to trade in its own right. To what extent this trading will be permitted is anyone's guess, particularly after reading the Bill. However, of course, we are reminded that the Robb Jetty Abattoir has the same privilege and up to this point of time has not stepped out of line. It has been able to buy cattle and sheep for slaughtering and to sell them through its own shop on the premises.

It has been mentioned that the sales of meat from the Robb Jetty Abattoir could run into just under \$100,000 a year. I do not think this is to the detriment of those who supply the stock. I think that if we have another competitor in the field of buying stock at the various sales in order to get the abattoirs working at full pressure throughout the year this must be of some assistance to the farming community.

A dangerous situation would arise if the Midland Junction Abattoir decided to enter the retail butchering business. I do not think this will happen, because the abattoir is controlled by the Minister and by various boards which have been set up to advise

the Government on various aspects of abattoir operations. I would like the Minister to give us more information about the abattoir when he replies to the debate.

Going beyond the provisions of the Bill, I would point out that several committees have been appointed to investigate the need for establishing additional killing works in the State. One such committee was chaired by Mr. Abbey, and it comprised several lay members of the Liberal Party as well as myself. Three years ago we made a strong recommendation to the Government to investigate the need for establishing more killing works, but at that time we were told that the proposal was not a new one, and the Government was aware of the need. However, no notice was taken of the recommendation with this exception: as a result of the deliberations of the committee the Towns and Austen report was submitted.

At the time the Minister for Agriculture did not seem to think it was necessary to establish additional killing works. The lack of killing facilities in Western Australia has resulted in a tremendous loss of many millions of dollars annually to the farming community. When our committee was taking evidence we were told by several witnesses who were engaged in the meat industry that they were losing \$400 to \$600 a week during the busy time of the year. It does not take long for \$400 to \$600 a week to amount to a very large sum, especially when we take into account the fact that in the last four years the rush period ran into four or five months each year.

Eventually additional killing space was provided at Midland Junction Abattoir. Although many claim that was not the right step for the Government to take, at the present time a number of farmers are thankful for the additional space that has been provided. The abattoir will be able to handle an additional 4,000 sheep and 200 cattle a day; that is, if there are sufficient operators to carry out the killing operations.

The price of mutton in Western Australia lags far behind the price obtaining in the other States. The reason is that Western Australia does not have sufficient killing works to treat the number of sheep and stock that are available, with the object of selling the meat on the overseas market. To make a comparison, Victoria which has the same number of sheep as Western Australia — something like 33,000,000 — has more than twice the number of abattoirs that Western Australia has. I should point out that many of the abattoirs in Victoria do not function for the whole year, but they do function throughout the lamb killing season and for as long as the facilities are required.

At one period a co-operative meatworks was established in Victoria. Despite competition it eventually made good, but on

two occasions it almost went bankrupt. It was only by trading in stock, and by slaughtering the animals and selling the meat on the overseas market that the co-operative works was able to keep its head above water. The present manager of the Midland Junction Abattoir was formerly the manager of this co-operative killing works in Victoria. We can be assured that the conferring on the Midland Junction Abattoir of the right to trade will not be misplaced, and the operations will be administered by a person who has undertaken successfully the same sort of business in Victoria; one who knows the operations of killing works inside and out. He is aware that if the abattoir is able to buy sheep and slaughter them, and so keep the men fully employed, he will be able to make sales of the meat on the overseas market.

Although some fears are held that the manager might go too far, these fears can be allayed by the knowledge that the manager has the operations of the Midland Junction Abattoir in his hands; apart from which the abattoir still comes under the control of the Abattoirs Board. I do not think a great deal of harm would be done by conferring on the abattoir the right to trade, especially when we take into account the retail price of lamb and other meat, as compared with the price which the producers receive.

In his second reading speech the Minister said—

The board has for many years operated the abattoir merely as a service works for the butchering industry for the reason that it has no power under the Act to trade in its own right.

Many of us have held the same view for years. The abattoir was not being operated for the benefit of the producers, but for the benefit of the butchers around the metropolitan area. The fact was that the board seemed to be more interested in running the works this way, than it was in making sure that the producers received a fair price. Perhaps the hands of the management were tied, as it did not have the authority—which this Bill will confer—to compete on the open market and sell meat overseas.

I support the Bill and trust it will have a safe passage through the House.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West) [4.23 p.m.]: As has been stated, this is a small Bill which makes provision to enable the Midland Junction Abattoir Board to trade. This might sound simple enough, but I would like the Minister to supply some information which has not yet been supplied to us. Passing a Bill to enable the Midland Junction Abattoir to trade does not achieve anything, because as it is constituted the Abattoir Board is not in a position to trade. It is not geared to

buy or sell. The personnel of the board cannot engage in trading, because that is not the board's function.

If the Bill is passed it appears that the Abattoir Board will have to set up a buying organisation and a selling organisation, if it is to achieve the desired objective. If it engages in buying stock I would like to know where the stock is to be held, and whether its own stock will be killed before that of its customers. I imagine that its own stock will be given preference. I also want to know what freezing space will be used by the Abattoir Board for its own trading, and what space will be left for the private operators. These are some of the points on which I seek information.

Speaking of abattoirs in general, I am certain that too much emphasis has been placed on the provision of the required abattoir facilities by the Government. Why should the Government provide the service facilities for exporters, when the exporters are making a huge amount of money at the present time? I contend the exporters should provide the facilities for themselves. If in the past they had been compelled to provide their own servicing facilities Western Australia would be much better off today.

Let me draw attention to the return on the capital employed by some of the companies which are using the service facilities at Midland Junction. I can assure members that the return is pretty large, compared with the amount invested. Why should not the companies spend some of their profits in providing the facilities?

Not long ago I read an article in a newspaper in which one operator was reported to have said that he could sell 40,000 sheep carcasses a week if he could obtain the facilities to kill them. What is wrong with this operator setting up his own facilities to kill the 40,000 sheep per week?

Looking at the number of abattoirs that have been established in Western Australia and the number that ought to be established, I am inclined to think that no additional abattoirs are needed in or adjacent to the metropolitan area. Surely it would be more sensible to establish an abattoir at Esperance, and it would be much cheaper to kill the sheep and stock at Esperance and bring the carcasses to the metropolitan area than it is to transport the livestock here to be killed. In this connection I refer to the return received by one producer for the stock he sent from Esperance. He sent 248 sheep, and all he got back was a cheque for \$18. If the animals could have been sold at Esperance and killed there, and the carcasses sent to the metropolitan area, not only he, but the State and the Esperance district, would have been much better off, and it would have helped to decentralise industry.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Where would that producer find a market in Esperance for the sheep?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The market would be in the metropolitan area, but the stock would be killed at Esperance.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: He would still be subject to the Perth market.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There has been a great deal of reference to the large number of carcasses that are required to meet the need in the metropolitan area, and to the number that are killed to satisfy the demand.

The Hon. J. Heitman: The meat could be supplied by the country abattoirs. That happened in the recent meatworkers' strike.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: A new abattoir has been set up at Manjimup which will be capable of treating 10,000 sheep a week; the abattoir at Katanning will cost \$2,500,000; and Tip Top Meats are spending \$1,000,000 on establishing additional facilities at the abattoir at Wooroloo. I do not know what will be the capacity of the lastmentioned abattoir, but it will be fairly great. Despite the existing large abattoir at Geraldton, a new one is to be established at a cost of \$100,000.

By establishing one authority and giving it complete control of the handling of meat throughout Western Australia, all the existing facilities could be used to advantage, and no wastage would occur. If the Government were to supply all the abattoir facilities that some people want it to provide, there would be a surplus of killing facilities for three or four months of the year, and a waste of the capital invested in the establishments. Furthermore, the cost to the farmer would be pretty high. Let me draw attention to the cost.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It has been pretty costly to the producer.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It has been costly, because of the strikes, the drought, and the low price of wool which resulted in many Merino lambs being placed on the market. These are the factors which create gluts.

In answer to a question asked by Mr. Wordsworth yesterday it was said that the capacity of the Midland Junction Abattoir was 58,000 sheep a week, but that this rate of killing had not been reached. The reason is that there are insufficient operators to carry out the operations.

Even if the Government were to provide \$5,000,000 for the provision of additional killing facilities, I ask: From where will the operators come? At present they are not here, and they will have to be trained. There has been too much talk about the need for the Government to supply additional abattoir facilities. I contend it is time the exporter who is making all the

money, the wholesaler, and others did something for their own industry. They should not call upon the Government and the taxpayer to provide something for their benefit. Some companies want others to provide the facilities to enable them to move in. They want the Government to supply the facilities so that they can use those facilities themselves. These are the points at issue. If we have one authority to handle all the meat in Western Australia we will be able to use all the existing facilities to the advantage of the producer and the consumer.

Perhaps we might get our meat a little cheaper than we do today. I refer not only to strikes and so on, but also to the low wool prices which have an effect. Some abattoirs are licensed for export, but many could not comply with the conditions. I would like to say that some of the restrictions imposed by the Americans are too stupid for words. As far as America is concerned it is a political issue and everything possible is being done to stop the export of our meat to America. Some of the restrictions are unnecessary and unjustifiable, but we have to comply with the conditions laid down. This has meant an increase in the cost to the consumer with no benefit to the producer. These are the things we should be looking at.

Recently someone complained that farmers were killing on their farms and hawking the meat around the countryside. Good luck to those farmers; there ought to be more of it so that the farmers will receive some benefit. Millions of sheep have been killed out in the open. Those sheep have been consumed by people during the last 150 years, and I have never heard of any person dying as a result of eating contaminated meat. Why is there so much worry about the health problem? I have killed plenty of sheep out in the open, and I have hung them overnight. The meat has been of a far better quality than that which one can buy through the abattoirs.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Just as a matter of interest, were they your own sheep?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, Mr. Willesee, they were my own sheep! When we talk about abattoirs we have to look at the overall problem and not just one particular aspect. I know I have strayed a little from the contents of the Bill but I would like the Minister to supply the information which I seek because it is important. I ask: Who will do the buying; who will do the selling; and to what extent will the limited space be used? If the meat is placed in the freezer and it cannot be sold within 24 hours, what will happen?

The Hon. J. Heitman: There is 1,000,000 cubic feet of freezing space available.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I know, but up to date it has not been possible to work on more than a 12-hour basis. If the Midland Junction Abattoir Board uses the available space, will someone else be denied that space? I would also like to know the capacity of the holding paddocks.

I will not oppose the Bill because there is nothing wrong with the principle involved.

THE HON. C. R. ABBEY (West) [4.33 p.m.]: This Bill gives members an opportunity to thoroughly examine a long-standing problem in the agricultural community: the ability to get stock killed. I agree generally with the remarks of Mr. Heitman and Mr. Logan. When referring to the situation of the abattoirs, Mr. Logan said that in his opinion there ought to be an overall authority. I could not agree more.

I have personally advocated an overall authority for a long time. However, I do not think Mr. Logan went far enough. He did not develop the theme to any great extent, but no doubt he has a definite opinion of his own. There is no doubt that had we had an authority charged with the overall control of abattoirs in this State the industry would not have reached the parlous situation in which it finds itself at present.

It is a shame that the major abattoirs at Midland and Robb Jetty were extended beyond the standard necessary for export. It is obvious that continuing problems will occur at Midland. There has been an outcry in recent months because of the strong smell emanating from the effluent. There is no real room for expansion. I am quite sure that an abattoir needs to be situated in an area of several hundred acres. It is important that such a set-up be isolated so that it does not interfere with the immediate surroundings. Such a set-up was proposed at Kwinana, and it would have been a very good one.

At the W.A. Meat Export Works something like 100 acres was available, and only a small proportion of that area was being used. It would have been quite possible—and more desirable—to spend a great deal of the money which was available in that area rather than waste it at Midland and Robb Jetty. At the W.A. Meat Export Works a wing could have been built to handle export mutton. Such a wing could be closed when it was not required. That system operated when a large number of lambs were available for export. At the conclusion of the season a certain number of the chains were closed down. I know there were problems, but those problems were overcome. Similar problems could be overcome today.

The abattoir at Midland has been upgraded and is now of a fairly high standard. However, it should be handling many more sheep than it is at the moment.

I understand that some of the new chains are not in full use and, as was indicated by Mr. Wordsworth, there is also a lack of sufficient skilled labour. However, if provision had been made for a fairly extensive killing system two shifts could have been worked. Private industry would not allow such a large amount of capital to lie idle without full use being made of the abattoirs. At Midland the premises are used for approximately seven hours a day in spite of the fact that large numbers of stock are available for killing.

The number of sheep coming forward at the abattoir has had to be restricted and as far as I can see this situation will continue into the future. However, if two shifts were employed, the capacity of the works could be almost doubled. I am aware that some of the handling facilities are not sufficient but that is because the planners who were responsible for recommending the extension of the works did not do their homework. The planners did not examine the likely results of the impact on the industry generally when the State provided finance for extensions. The planners failed in their job and I feel they could have come up with a much better answer.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: We would not have had the present facilities if we had waited any longer.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: I do not know that that is the answer. Had the planning taken place two or three years ago it would have been obvious that the main factors were the inadequacies of the abattoir. We should have doubled the freezing capacity and employed a double shift. I realise that it will be argued labour would have been difficult to obtain, but this problem could have been overcome with proper planning.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Would there be sufficient continuity for the work force?

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: Yes, because the expansion of production in this State has been huge. The drought has had a certain effect, but with planning and, if necessary, some direction as to when stock should come forward, there would be continuity. After all, the producers ought to be able to realise that they cannot all sell their stock during the same two or three months of the year and expect to get a reasonable price.

It is pretty obvious that the whole industry needs to be rationalised. Mr. Logan hit the nail on the head when he said that we needed an overall guiding authority. We know the present Minister for Agriculture has set up an advisory body, and no doubt this will have some effect. However, it will not have the desired effect.

I understand that just recently a deputation from the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association and the Farmers' Union waited

on the Minister for Agriculture. They proposed, among other things, that a system of levies or tolls on producers might well be a means to overcome the abattoir situation. I would go much further. Of course, the deputation might have gone much further than was indicated in the scanty newspaper report.

I can recall the early history of the grain industry—in particular, that of wheat. In my early farming days one bagged the wheat, laboriously carted it to a siding, and sold it for what one could get. That situation became totally untenable for the producers and they did something about it by forming Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. Why cannot we have the same situation with the handling of meat?

The meat producers who are suffering so badly could make a contribution—it need only be a small contribution per head—to set up an organisation similar to Co-operative Bulk Handling. The pressure could be taken off the Government and a service works could be provided. If such an organisation were set up there is no reason why it could not eventually take over the service works now owned by the Government. If such a scheme were put into operation it would be quite unnecessary to involve the expenditure of public money.

There would be a considerable outcry if the grain industry requested the State Government to provide facilities for the handling of grain because provision has already been made by the industry to handle such grain, and this has been very successful. We now find that the various oil seeds, and so on, are coming into the same sort of situation. They are being bulk-handled by organisations on which the growers are well represented, and this system is overcoming some very serious marketing problems.

The Pastoralists and Graziers' Association and the Farmers' Union have made the constructive suggestion that this sort of system should be used to provide abattoirs and could, in effect, supply a marketing scheme. The Marketing of Lamb Bill is now under consideration in another place. That Bill provides a trend for marketing in the future. As I understand it, the Bill will also include mutton, which is an obvious thing to do. It leaves only such things as beef and pig meats to be handled, and there is a very strong movement for the beef industry to be included in such a scheme.

If that is the case, the agricultural industries are in a very serious position. They have been alerted and are prepared to consider changes. This is an opportunity to change. We have reached a point in history when the producer must accept

further burdens, but in accepting a further burden I feel quite sure he will eventually place the meat industry in a much sounder position.

When and if a constructive plan is eventually put forward, I advocate, and hope the Government will agree to, the setting up of an organisation similar to Co-operative Bulk Handling for the handling of meat products, to be financed by a levy per head or per pound. Such a scheme would overcome all the present problems.

As most members know, it did not take very long to get Co-operative Bulk Handling under way. Wesfarmers—which, at the time, was a farmers' company—was prepared to take some responsibility for finance and management when the co-operative bulk handling movement commenced, and the company did a very fine job. Perhaps it could be called upon to assist in commencing a similar scheme for the meat industry. I feel sure the board of Wesfarmers Co-operative has the vision and know-how—and possibly some finance—to assist with such a scheme. I have not approached the company in any way: that is merely supposition on my part.

All in all, this appears to me to be a new approach by the industry and a golden opportunity for everybody, including both Houses of Parliament, to take a very constructive look at the proposal that has been put forward. I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West) [4.48 p.m.]: I wish to support the Bill, but in so doing I would like to make a few short references to it in particular and to the abattoir situation in general.

The first point I would like to make is that I think we must regard this measure as being no more and no less than a stop-gap measure towards the total objective of resolving what has been a very difficult situation—certainly a most embarrassing situation and one which has cost Western Australia, and Western Australian farmers in particular, a tremendous amount in the marketing of their products over the last two or three years, at a time when they have been unduly harassed by a great many other difficulties in addition to that of being unable adequately to dispose of their products at a reasonable price.

When I say it is a stop-gap measure, I must express a small doubt about the motive because in the explanation that accompanied this Bill it was indicated that because the present Abattoir Board had no authority to trade, and because facilities which were available at the abattoir were not being fully utilised—in other words, the tremendous capital investment in that enterprise was not being fully exercised—the board should be given the power to trade. It was stated that such a power would give better utilisation of what has hitherto been a service industry—an abattoir servicing the butchering trade.

I think the motive in all things relative to abattoirs should be to upgrade all the facilities to a point where they can adequately deal with our products, not only in selling and processing but also in marketing. In this particular instance the intention appears to be to try to make better use of the facilities that exist. Reference is made to 1,000,000 cubic feet of freezer space.

In the past, all sorts of reasons have been advanced as to why the Midland Junction Abattoir could not cope with the quantity of stock that was available for slaughter, and which was placing a very severe restriction on the selling price on the hoof in the saleyards as well as on the ultimate potential of the sales. The facilities in short supply were, firstly, the actual handling facilities—the chains and the physical side of operating the abattoir. It was then said we needed more freezer space in order to be able to handle the throughput of the abattoir, so the freezer space was installed. We now have the freezer space but not the facilities to fill it. The wheel seems to have made a complete turn. A new function has now been thought up for the abattoir—to give it the opportunity to trade so that it can make better use of the facilities that have been provided.

I mention those matters for the purpose of directing attention to what I believe should be done. At this stage in our history the whole question of handling in the meat industry needs complete rethinking. What, in fact, is the function of the Midland Junction Abattoir or any other abattoir? It might be necessary and very desirable to make better use of this capital investment, but that is only a small portion of the whole business. This action appeals to the farming community because it has been indicated that the Abattoir Board may engage in all sorts of activities which have not hitherto been regarded as the function of an abattoir. Such activities include buying and the operating of the saleyards as well as selling.

Having been given very wide powers to trade, it could well be that the Abattoir Board—not necessarily this one but some future board—or its management might think it would be far more profitable to function deliberately as a profit-making enterprise, and engage in trade rather than operate as an abattoir, and the Bill will give it the opportunity to do so. I believe that is part of the motive; which brings me back to the point that we need to rethink the purpose of this type of industry.

For many years in the past we had the operation of a State trading concern when the State Government operated butchers' shops. I express no support for a venture such as that. Having gone so far as to give the board the opportunity to trade, it may well be found profitable to go beyond wholesaling and into retailing. It is

now understood that the Minister for Agriculture has indicated this is not the intention. Perhaps it is not the intention now but it may well become the intention at some time in the future. If that should occur or if there should be any trend towards that occurring, it would detract from the overall function and purpose of providing an abattoir industry. We will lose sight of its true purpose and function.

I indicated that there is some support amongst the farming community, in particular, for this Bill. The support arises from the fact that there will be increased competition in the saleyard. That is very good, but one of the greatest limitations and restrictions upon competition in the saleyards is the fact that there have been inadequate abattoir facilities to handle the stock which has been purchased. This has placed an automatic restriction on competition and the prices paid in the pseudo-competitive atmosphere of the saleyards.

Let us not believe that increased competition will necessarily solve the problem if we do not have the handling facilities. Let us not forget that in the last two or three years we lost considerable overseas sales through not having the facilities geared to meet the situation.

Mr. Abbey referred to other means by which greater use could be made of the investment at Midland. He referred to shift work. I have heard that at a public function in recent days the Minister for Agriculture indicated that the matter of shift work was being closely examined by the Government but he pointed to all sorts of difficulties, including the freezer space and other facilities, which made it impracticable to introduce shift work. That may well be so. I put it on record that the Minister has indicated that the Government has had a look at this situation.

It comes back, perhaps, to the philosophy of the role the abattoirs should play in the operation of the entire industry. In circumstances where we have a State concern operating under a board, as at Midland, another State concern at Robb Jetty operating under the administration of the Department of Agriculture, and a multiplicity of private works scattered throughout the countryside which handle either local or export products, surely this particular abattoir at Midland should operate as a service works. I have doubts as to whether it should be expected to operate at a profit. We would like to think our railways could operate at a profit but we recognise they provide a vital service and may therefore become a charge on the taxpayer. I do not necessarily think that is desirable but that is the way it frequently results and it is accepted. Obviously, many such enterprises do not lend themselves to a private enterprise operation, and I believe a basic works such as the Midland Junction Abattoir comes within that category.

In my view, there must be an establishment which is available to handle the tremendous fluctuations in stock numbers which must result from the stock population we have in this State.

It cannot be expected, no matter how big a private enterprise works might be, that it would necessarily be geared to handle the very wide fluctuation that occurs from month to month or season to season throughout the year. They just cannot do it, because they must at least operate on a profit-making basis.

Therefore I do not think that places like the Midland abattoir should always be expected to operate at a profit. By the same token, and in my view, this should not provide the opportunity to make the Midland Junction Abattoir the receptacle for vast amounts of Government funds—loan funds and others. These funds should not be sunk into it when in fact surely there must come a time—and the Towns and Austen report referred to this fact and indicated that there comes a time—when capital funds should no longer be expended on such works.

We could build up private enterprise by an extension of such matters included in this Bill. They will, however, not meet the total situation; a situation which perhaps would be better covered by the proposition to which Mr. Abbey has referred—the creation of a new abattoir altogether.

I agree with the view expressed by Mr. Logan; it is a view I have already expressed publicly in relation to the marketing of agricultural products generally and specifically in relation to meat.

I believe that private industry is not serving its own interests as well as it might and I certainly do believe it is not necessarily serving the interests of the grower, which is surely its function; its total motive.

I might be excused for saying that the Midland Junction Abattoir has in the past been "used" by certain people who have been absolved from the necessity to invest in the works or to provide the necessary throughput, thus obviating the demand to provide the necessary processing or abattoir facilities.

There needs to be a complete rethinking in this matter not only by the Government side of the meat industry but also by the private side of the industry. When I say that I do not mean to reflect on the large organisations and enterprises which have established abattoirs throughout the country areas.

Some of these abattoirs are extremely successful and efficient; they provide a very good service. If we did not have these abattoirs things would be very difficult indeed. I could mention at least two of them

in my own province; two which have done particularly well. I refer to Greens of Harvey and to Glover Meats at Waroona.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Were they set up for export?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Yes, they were set up for export purposes. Had we not had these abattoirs established in recent years I shudder to think what would have been the state of our meat industry in Western Australia. It is tragic that we are faced with such a situation when we have the available market—in this instance for beef particularly.

I am one of those who believes that if the right sort of work is done in the right quarters we could have a much improved market for lamb in one instance and perhaps for mutton in the other. I do not believe that this position has been in any way near adequately explored.

I now come to the point made by Mr. Logan when he said that the board would have to set up a buying organisation, and which I will pass over for the moment. I will refer more particularly to his reference to a marketing organisation. So many of these authorities have set themselves up as marketing organisations when in fact they really are processing or production organisations.

They never consider the question of marketing; they are more concerned with production and processing. Therefore I would hope that the Government and the Abattoir Board will give attention to the development of these facilities in order to properly satisfy the requirements of the proposed resellers; that they will be motivated by the thought and the necessity to expand their markets overseas where opportunities do exist—particularly if they can be explored—rather than confine their activities to the more domestic side. They could thus emerge as a great trading concern in Western Australia within their own right. There must be a very clear view expressed by them as to just how they propose to operate.

I do not think it would be in our interests if they developed as domestic trading concerns and expanded that sort of business when in fact they should be developing along a totally divergent line out in the marketing field and particularly overseas.

I instance this to indicate that I am aware of the application being considered for the establishment of an abattoir for the provision of domestic supplies and smallgoods in the nearby shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale. The advice given by the Minister at that time was that because it came within the 30-mile limit of the metropolitan area—as this related to abattoirs—it was most unlikely the application would be approved; that is in the event of an application being made.

The application would not be considered if the abattoir were to confine its activities to the local domestic trade; it would have to gear itself as an overseas and export proposition.

If the Government's view is inclined in this direction it should express the same view in regard to its own enterprises. We have any number of abattoirs in this State which could in fact operate within the State as local concerns without that extra impetus needed to push themselves into the export field.

I will conclude my remarks by saying that I do no more than express my limited support for the Bill.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan) [5.08 p.m.]: The purpose of this Bill is to enable the Abattoir Board to extend its activities by authorising it to carry on in a trade which in its opinion might conveniently be carried on in conjunction with the preparation and processing of meat. Any trade which might conveniently be carried on in conjunction with the preparation and processing of meat must obviously mean the butchering trade and anything which can be conveniently carried on in conjunction with the butchering trade. This of course would refer to retail outlets such as supermarkets, and so on.

This seems to be a pretty wide power; it is the type of power which can be found in the articles of companies which are formed to carry on any business whatever. They carry on anything that can be conveniently done in conjunction with their principal object.

As I understand it the principal object of abattoirs is to arrange for the killing of the sheep and cattle sent to the abattoirs by the farmers. It would also refer to the processing of such meat in order that it might be made available to the trade.

Not only does this Bill enable the abattoir to service the agricultural community but it also allows it to carry on in any other trade which it feels can be conveniently carried on in conjunction with the purpose of its principal function—that means any other trade at all in connection with the preparation and processing of meat.

Accordingly the provisions of the Bill appear to be pretty wide. In other words it enables the Board to trade in its own right in addition to performing its service to the agricultural community. The board is to be authorised to carry on any trade which in its opinion can conveniently be carried on in conjunction with the preparation and processing of meat.

This seems to me to be a very wide charter. It means that the Board which traditionally has provided a service to the farmers is in future to be permitted to carry on in all these other trades. So long as we know what we are passing I have no objection, because it is the prerogative

of Parliament to pass any Bill within its constitutional ambit—and this is clearly within our constitutional ambit.

This means we are giving the Abattoir Board very wide powers to carry on trading. I understand the agricultural community on the whole is in favour of the measure because that community hopes it will provide another means of establishing a better market for livestock.

In the last few years we have witnessed a most lamentable situation, where livestock belonging to Western Australian producers—and I refer particularly to sheep—have fetched such ludicrously low prices. Indeed it is a wonder to me that so many farmers are still in business.

The whole situation is ridiculous, particularly when we compare the prices that local farmers received for their sheep this year—during the July-August period for instance—at the Midland Junction Abattoir, with the prices they received last year. From such a comparison we find the average price this year was \$2.80 per head while last year the figure was \$4.60 per head. This constitutes a drop of \$1.80 per head. This is a tremendous drop in price; a tremendous loss to the farming community.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is continuing to drop.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: That is quite right. The price has dropped progressively. We find, however, that in the Eastern States the farmers are receiving an average of \$2 more per head than their counterparts in Western Australia.

It is a sad and shocking state of affairs that farmers here have not only lost \$2—in round figures—during the last year per head of sheep but they also find themselves \$2 per head behind their counterparts in the Eastern States.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Victoria has a home consumption market three times greater than ours.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: That is right. So what have we done to stimulate our export market? We have limited our activities to the internal market. I know it is easier to talk about these things than find a remedy for them, but we must face squarely the problems that confront us.

Within our midst we have organisations like the Farmers' Union and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association which have been constituted to consider such matters. I do not think that we should kid ourselves too much about this legislation. I do not say the Government is kidding itself, but I feel sure this legislation will not cure anything, really. I do not suggest for a moment that the Government feels that the legislation before the House will correct the situation that exists at the moment. I certainly do not believe that the

honest members on the Government side would feel that the legislation will rectify the evils that face us.

I consider this to be a gesture on the part of the Government; it is something which the Government believes will help the position a little. I think this is the way in which the measure has been accepted by members of the House and by members of the farming community. The measure merely constitutes a poor little gesture, but in the long term it will not solve anything. We have far more problems ahead of us than we have yet faced in connection with abattoirs, but we have not been willing to face or try to correct them over the last decade.

I sincerely hope we will come to grips with this in the next year or two.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Do you think it is a question of the provision of abattoirs or a question of markets?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It is a question of both; one is tied to the other. It is a little like transport, where the problem is a question of whether we should firstly make the buses available, or try to reduce the number of motorcars using the roads. In other words, in dealing with this question, the killing facilities must be made available otherwise the goods cannot be supplied for export.

I will cite to the House an illustration of this. Only two months ago a leading stock firm in this State received an order for 1,000 tons of export carcase mutton for Japan, and that firm cast around the State to obtain the mutton, but without success; and this despite the fact that I heard Mr. Logan say that the supplies could readily be obtained from the existing facilities if they were more efficiently organised, but unfortunately they are not. This firm, as I have said, after casting around the State for meat at 11½c per lb. could get only a quota of 75 tons from the abattoirs. As a result it had to refuse the order, because unless 1,000 tons could be supplied the order was not available. It was finally filled in the Eastern States.

At that time the price was 7c a lb. for sheep killed in the abattoirs. In actual fact, the farmers received 3c a lb., and the killing charges amounted to 4c. The exporter would have paid 11½c a lb. for those sheep and the farmer would have received the extra 4½c a lb. That would have been handy money for the sheep-owners who were able to fill that order. That is the answer to the question asked by the Leader of the House; the killing facilities must be available.

There is an export market already, but I am not saying that it is readily available all the time. It is an elusive market that must be chased. People are engaged in chasing the market, but they are having great trouble.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Basically, I was trying to elucidate whether we should kill on site or at a given point. That seems to be the big question with the killing situation at the moment.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: If we are dealing with the export market my advice is that the killing must be done near a port. In other words, the abattoirs must be situated reasonably close to a port. I believe there is now another theory; that with fast road transport the killing facilities do not need to be near a port. This theory has been expounded in connection with the Katanning abattoir and it may be right.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I am thinking mainly of the development in the Kimberleys with the heavy stock. The trend is to kill on site.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It may be that, with mechanised transport, the killing could possibly be done on the site, but the necessary facilities would have to be there and up until now we have not had them. So basically, returning to the first question that was asked, we cannot supply the export market until we can provide the necessary killing facilities.

Is it not rational that we should take a gamble? Let us face it! Is it so much of a gamble? There is a large amount of money tied up in this question. Mr. Logan and other speakers mentioned this; therefore, should we not take a gamble? After all is said and done, look at the sheep potential in this State! Look at the large numbers of sheep that are coming in to be killed each year! We have the facilities to kill 5,000,000 sheep a year in this State, but we have an annual lamb drop of 9,000,000. What is to happen to the other 4,000,000?

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: They die.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Yes, they die of old age on the farm. We cannot market them because we have no way of getting reasonable prices for them. This is something that is vital. If we are to keep the agricultural industry going this is something we must tackle on a national basis, no matter which Government is in power. This is a matter that is vital to the whole economy of the State, and I am afraid this is one of the reasons that the agricultural industry in Western Australia is suffering the economic depression it is at present. It is because we just do not have the necessary outlets.

I am not pointing any political bones; I am merely stating facts. These facts have been evident in agricultural circles for some years. I seriously hope the Government will realise what it is doing with this Bill. Actually it is solving nothing at all. As I have said, I am not criticising the Government, because the Government has not said it will solve the problem with this

Bill. Whether it will help in some way remains to be seen. I doubt very much whether it will, but it is so easy to be critical and difficult to be constructive.

I wonder whether the Treasury's hopes to make some money out of this will be realised. On past achievements I wonder whether the Government will, in fact, make any money if it does enter the retail trade, as it has power to do under the provisions of this Bill, and whether or not the Minister proposes to do so immediately. It does not concern me very much whether the Government makes any money or not. What I do believe is that we must have a healthy, and, to use that popular word, a viable, agricultural industry, and we can get it if we provide an outlet for the sheep.

What is the use of a farmer buying sheep if he cannot get rid of them at a reasonable price when he so desires? He is on a quota. The Midland Abattoir can handle only 70,000 sheep a week, whereas, in fact, the farmers can supply 100,000 sheep a week. What about the other 30,000? This is quite a hopeless situation!

I am embarking on a subject that is not my natural subject, but I know a little about it and I hope the farmers will excuse me, because I am not very well acquainted with their side of the question. However, it has occurred to me that somebody must stand up and say something for them.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: The probabilities are that you are a much better farmer than you are a lawyer.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I thank the Leader of the House. He would know, of course, I believe that it behoves more of us other than farmers to take an interest in this matter. I have always been concerned about people leaving agricultural matters exclusively for the attention of farmers. Nevertheless, the farmers must take a little blame for this, too, because, in the main, they are jealous of anybody who tries to find a panacea for their troubles, but I can well understand their attitude.

I believe it is a good thing for other people to take an interest in farmers' problems. I have taken an interest in this particular problem which faces farmers. I think the problem has now reached the stage where it is acute. It is similar to a person who is suffering from an acute medical complaint. An operation is required. It is of no use any of us kidding ourselves that this Bill will achieve a great deal. I have not heard any member of this House say it will. Do not let us kid ourselves that the Bill represents the solution to the problem. We must continue to ask for the solution. We must continue to ask the Government to keep searching for a solution.

I hope the Government understands that the solution is not to be found only in Government activities. This Bill will enable the Abattoirs Board to enter the trade; any kind of trade that can be carried on with meat processing. That is not the only answer. If it is desired that the export trade shall be stimulated, it is necessary that it should be gone into hell for leather, if I may use that expression. It means that we have to get right into the trade to catch the market. I have seen Government agents at work in other parts of the world, particularly in the Far East, and they do not have the same initiative as those who have some private stimulus from the firm or company they represent.

I think it essential that we should engage others in private enterprise, and we should also endeavour to obtain people who are skilled in the export trade and in marketing. We should bring them in and get them onside in this matter in an endeavour to stimulate them to do something to improve the export trade of this State. There is no doubt that such markets exist. I have already cited to the House a case of a firm which had obtained an order for 1,000 tons of carcase mutton which had to be supplied to Japan. I understand there was another order for 7,000 tons recently, but this order could not be filled, either. What is the use of having a representative in Japan or in the Far East if, at the moment, we cannot fill the orders? We have representatives of various firms in these places, but they are turning to other avenues because they cannot fill their time on selling meat they cannot get. They can get orders, but they cannot obtain the killing facilities in Western Australia. There is no doubt that this is tragedy for this State.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: Would it not pay them to provide their own facilities if they can get the orders?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: This could well be the solution. It could well be that the solution lies in private enterprise providing these works. However, so far, during the last decade, the Government has resolutely turned its face against this proposal. It has been very difficult for people to obtain all the facilities and the premises that are necessary. They find it difficult to obtain the necessary permits to establish an abattoir in this State. Many difficulties have been placed in the path of people who have tried to obtain permits to establish such facilities.

At one stage, about two years ago, no less than three different firms were trying to establish abattoirs in Western Australia. They were competing against each other. I was approached by two people who told me they were interested in establishing abattoirs in this State.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: When they face up to the barrier they are not prepared to go on.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I understand that some of these firms are still interested. When they face up to the barrier some of them face difficulties in obtaining land, and difficulties with zoning and with the Western Australian Meat Export Works. They were confronted by various problems and they never got off the ground, as Mr. Logan has suggested. What I am suggesting now is that we should open the doors a little and give these people some encouragement. I believe it is up to the Government to encourage private enterprise and say to the representatives of these firms, "All right, here is a challenge! We will assist you and give you the opportunity to establish yourself. Are you prepared to do this?" We must give these firms an opportunity such as this, because they may possibly be prepared to establish abattoirs to meet the requirements of the domestic or the export trade. One of the difficulties such firms face at present is that they are not permitted to engage in the internal trade, but only in the export trade.

This is a hazardous business operation. A firm may be able to get rid of a certain amount of meat, but there is always a slack period, as Mr. Logan and other members know full well. However, such firms must keep their works going all the time. The Government side of the argument, of course, is that it has a great deal of money tied up in the abattoirs, and it does not want to see them lying idle. This was the Government's motivation, but it does not overcome the problem. We have to take a bit of a gamble by looking to the future and saying to ourselves, "Are we going to keep our agricultural industries or let them go to pot?" because that is what will happen.

I have only dealt with the Bill briefly and have not really devoted my time to consideration of its terms, because I do not believe they merit a great deal of discussion. I felt it was necessary to ask the Government to take a serious view of the general situation. I believe there is much to be gained by studying the proposals I have put forward. I am only representing what has been said for some years by reputable agricultural organisations. I commend these views to the Government, and I regret I cannot wax more enthusiastic over this Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. Lyla Elliott.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd September.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [5.30 p.m.]: This Bill contains a very simple principle which has my full concurrence, and I therefore do not propose to speak for more than two or three minutes.

It seeks to amend the Parliamentary Superannuation Act by altering the date in subsection (2) of section 28 from the 31st December, 1970, to the 30th June, 1971.

The purpose of this is to make it more practicable for an actuarial assessment to be made of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund. The previous assessments have been made at the 30th June whereas the Act indicates they should be made at the end of a calendar year. As it is more practicable to have the assessment made in June, this Bill has my full concurrence and requires no further comment. I recommend that members accept it.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) (5.32 p.m.): Briefly I want to thank the honourable member for his remarks. He spoke in an authoritative way which indicates that the Bill has the concurrence of all members.

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.

House adjourned at 5.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 18th November, 1971

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

SPEAKER'S COMMISSION

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Norton) [11.01 a.m.]: I wish to report that I have received from His Excellency a Commission to swear-in honourable members, and this I hand to the Clerk to read to the House. The Commission was read.

QUESTIONS

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Norton) [11.03 a.m.]: I wish to announce that questions will be accepted until 2.15 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays. On those days questions will be answered at a convenient time after lunch.

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill.
2. Administration Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
3. Evidence Act Amendment Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. T. D. Evans (Attorney-General), and read a first time.

4. Railway Standardisation Agreement Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. May (Minister for Mines), and read a first time.

LAPSED BILLS

*Restoration to Notice Paper:
Council's Message*

Message from the Council requesting the restoration to the notice paper of the following Bills now considered:—

Censorship of Films Act Amendment Bill.

Adoption of Children Act Amendment Bill.

Property Law Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act Repeal Bill.

Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN (Premier): I move—

That the Legislative Council's message be agreed to.

Mr. NALDER: I have no objection to this proposal but yesterday the Premier indicated to the House that there would be only about three more new Bills. I took him to be referring to the introduction of new Bills in this House. Can the Premier indicate the number of new Bills that will be introduced in the Legislative Council?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I regret that, off-hand, I am unable to give that information to the Leader of the Country Party but I shall make inquiries from my leader in another place and let him know as early as possible.

Question put and passed.

ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Amendment

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Bateman) in the Chair; Mr. T. D. Evans (Attorney-General) in charge of the Bill.

The amendment made by the Council was as follows:—

Page 2—Delete proposed new subsection (2) in lines 17 to 22 and substitute the following:—

(2) In any proceedings where a person relies on a matter of fact made relevant by the provisions of subsection (1) of this section—

(a) that fact shall not be taken to be proved unless it is established to the reasonable satisfaction of the Court; and