

## 5. "C"-CLASS HOSPITALS

*Engagement of Undertakers*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of allegations that at one or more "C" Class hospitals, it is the practice on the death of an inmate, for the administration to retain an undertaker without the knowledge of the deceased's relatives?
- (2) Will the Minister inquire into these allegations and, in the meantime, inform the hospitals that this practice is improper and not to be condoned?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes, if the Hon. Member will substantiate the allegations.

6. *This question was postponed.*

*House adjourned at 3.35 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 9th September, 1976

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

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### *Postponement*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Hutchinson): As is customary on Thursdays, I advise that I propose to have questions taken at a later stage of this sitting, probably after the afternoon tea suspension.

### BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Irrigation (Dunham River) Agreement Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Neill (Minister for Works), and read a first time.

2. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Neill (Minister for Water Supplies), and read a first time.

### RACECOURSE DEVELOPMENT BILL

#### *Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Minister for Police), and transmitted to the Council.

### CRIMINAL INJURIES (COMPENSATION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Second Reading*

**MR O'NEIL** (East Melville—Minister for Works) [2.20 p.m.]: Before commencing to read my notes I would like to indicate, for the benefit of *Hansard* and the Opposition member who will take the adjournment, that I will depart a little from the way in which my speech has been prepared. I know that you, Mr Speaker, would object to my referring to the various clauses by their numbers. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Last year the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia presented to the Government its report to the Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Act, 1970. As anticipated, the commission recommended certain changes in the law. It had been realised that the existing legislation was inadequate in certain respects. For instance, although it is doubtful whether legislation of this kind can ever afford the victim of crime full compensation for his, or her, injury, as would occur in a civil action for damages, it was generally agreed that the \$2 000 limit on compensation which our Act provided was, as a result of the passage of time, too low. It was also felt that some provision should be made for those cases in which, whilst injury had been done by some action which certainly constituted a criminal offence, the person responsible was never—for whatever reason—brought to trial, or if brought to trial was acquitted on the ground of insanity. There is no provision for these situations at the moment.

The present Bill is based substantially on the report of the Law Reform Commission, although not all of the recommendations in that report have been accepted. The Government will not, at this stage, act on the recommendation that a special tribunal should be created to deal with claims under the Act, but has decided, instead, that the courts before which the particular criminal is convicted should continue to adjudicate on claims. This should avoid a certain duplication of effort and, also, some expense.

It has also been decided not to accept the commission's recommendation that claims be met from revenue, with the State having a right of recovery from the offender. Instead, the present system is to continue, whereby the claimant must seek, initially, to enforce the order of the court made against the criminal, with the State becoming liable only where such procedure proves fruitless.

So much for what the Bill does not do. Let me now summarise what it does do. I will consider the various innovations and changes in the order in which they appear in the Bill.

First of all, the maximum amount which may be awarded is increased from \$300 in the case of simple offences and \$2 000 in the case of indictable offences to \$7 500, as recommended by the commission. This is, so far as can be ascertained, the highest compensation pay-out figure of any State and in these circumstances, and in view of the increased category of possible claimants, it has been found necessary to ensure that only one award of that amount may be made. This will apply irrespective of the number of individual offenders concerned in the commission of an offence against the victim, or irrespective of the number of offences committed against the same victim, whether by one or more persons, if the offences are related to one another. Common examples are assaults and rape, or assaults of varying degrees involving different participants but taking place more or less simultaneously.

It has been suggested by one or two people that the proposed maximum amount of \$7 500 compensation is not high enough. I would remind members that this is the amount suggested by the Law Reform Commission and it is considerably higher than that in other States. Obviously there must be a limit and in view of the increased scope of the likely claims the Government must act responsibly. Compensation has been extended to certain other losses as well as personal injury. The loss must be occasioned by or arise directly from the injury and include loss of earnings, damage to items of personal apparel, spectacles, artificial teeth, artificial limbs, and like appliances.

Next, there is the right to claim which is now given to the estate of a victim of crime who has died. In this connection members are directed principally to the second definition of "loss" which appears in the Bill. It is provided that an application may be made by the personal representative of a deceased person who dies as a result of an unlawful act of another, in respect of loss incurred by persons who are related to the deceased. The category of relatives is the same as that provided for many years under the Fatal Accidents Act; namely, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, stepfather, stepmother, son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, stepson, and stepdaughter. The Fatal Accidents Act is at present the subject of a reference to the Law Reform Commission and if the category of relatives is subsequently extended under that Act a similar extension could subsequently be made under this legislation.

It is relevant to draw attention to one fundamental difference between the assessing of loss under this Bill and the assessing of loss under the Fatal Accidents Act. Where a personal representative sues in civil proceedings under the Fatal Accidents Act, the damages which may be awarded are specifically not reducible by reason of

any amounts payable under any contract of insurance, superannuation, provident or like fund or scheme, or by any social security type benefits. The Bill proposes the opposite, and the Under-Secretary for Law, when acting under section 7, will have to certify as to the value of such benefits; and the Treasurer's authority to pay will be limited to the difference between the sum ordered by the court, which in most fatal cases is \$7 500, and the aggregate of all amounts recoverable by law from the offender and the insurance, superannuation, and social security benefits mentioned previously.

Further, the sum of \$7 500 is the maximum that may be awarded to all dependants, and again the same rule applies; that is, only one award may be made where the victim's death was caused by multiple offenders or was attributable to a number of distinct but related offences. The court making the order to a personal representative is to direct the way it is apportioned amongst the eligible relatives of the deceased.

One problem involved in this apportioning should be mentioned. To take an example, the court might have found that the victim's wife suffered a loss of \$100 000 and each of his two children \$50 000. One would assume that the court would order \$3 750 to the widow and \$1 875 to each of the children. However, when it comes to the application being made, the Under-Secretary for Law is required to state what other amount from any source the beneficiaries are entitled to, including, as I have mentioned, amounts in the nature of superannuation, insurance etc.

It is more than likely that cases will arise where the widow, for example, is to receive \$50 000 from an insurance policy effected on the deceased's life. In the hypothetical example taken, that would exclude her from any entitlement payable by the Treasurer. What, then, is to be done about the children?

It has been decided that in these circumstances the Treasurer may increase the amount payable to the children, but in such a way that the total amount paid does not in the aggregate exceed \$7 500. In the case quoted the children would be paid \$3 750 each.

I should now like to point to the new proposals whereby it will be possible for a claim to be made even though the person responsible for the injury or loss has not been brought to trial. The new proposals fall into two categories; namely, cases where the offender is acquitted on the grounds of insanity, and cases where he is never brought to trial.

I shall deal first with acquittals on the ground of insanity. At present under section 6 a certificate may be granted by the court to the victim of an offence if a trial has taken place and the defendant is

acquitted, but the court is satisfied that the victim suffered injury by reason of the actions of some other person. That does not create any entitlement where the accused is acquitted on the grounds of insanity, and the Bill would seek to provide an entitlement in those circumstances. Consideration was given as to whether, when a certificate is granted on the acquittal of a person on the grounds of insanity, the insane person ought to be ordered to pay the amount to the victim as in the case of a convicted person. It was finally decided not to so provide, because it would create serious anomalies when the cases of the unascertained offender or the offender who is not tried at all because he is unfit, mentally, to plead are taken into account.

Then there are the cases where the offender is never brought to trial. There may be a variety of reasons that a person is not brought to trial and tried for a criminal offence which caused injury or death. The most common would be—

- (a) where the identity of the offender has not been ascertained;
- (b) where the identity is ascertained but he cannot be found;
- (c) where the offender has been identified and apprehended but is either found to be insane on a pre-trial examination in custody or is put to trial but the jury, as a preliminary issue, find him unfit to plead on the grounds of his insanity; or
- (d) because the victim does not co-operate with the police and thus insufficient admissible evidence is available to put the offender on trial.

At the outset it is obvious that in circumstances of the last-mentioned reason no application should succeed for payment from Crown sources, and the Bill provides accordingly.

In all other cases the application will be made to a judge of the District Court, and if the court is satisfied that a person did suffer injury or has died as the result of the commission of an offence, it may grant a certificate on the same principles as if the offender had been convicted.

Members will notice that the Bill provides that, except where the offender is known to be dead, no claim shall be made in situations where no-one has been brought to trial until the expiration of 12 months from the time of the offence. This is to give the Crown a reasonable opportunity to apprehend the offender and bring him to trial.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the Treasurer's absolute discretion to decide whether or not to make any payment at all has been retained. But because the maximum amount of \$7 500 will now apply to simple offences as well as

indictable offences, whereas previously compensation in simple offences was limited to \$300, the Bill will amend section 7(3) of the Act to provide that the Treasurer can vary an amount if the original order was made by a court of summary jurisdiction, but not if it has been made by the Supreme Court or the District Court. The only exception to the latter is the Treasurer's authority to increase the amount in the circumstances mentioned earlier where a number of dependants are entitled to the benefit of the order but the proportions have gone awry because one or more of them, but not all of them, has or will receive payments from other sources.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bateman.

### PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Second Reading*

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Works) [2.34 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill now before members is to amend the Painters' Registration Act to place beyond doubt the fact that two categories of painting are exempt from the provisions of the Act namely, protective coating of steel or other material which does not form part of a dwelling, and signwriting.

Under the Act at present, contractors who carry out abrasive and mechanical cleaning of steel followed by painting with protective paint are not subject to the provisions of the Act while the steel is only a component of a building and is being processed in a factory yard. However, once the contractor treats steel which has been incorporated in a building, it can be argued that the Act applies. This makes for a ridiculous situation, as by far the greater tonnage of steel used in building is protective coated before it is placed in the structure.

It is also relevant that firms engaged in the industry are principally carrying out work to strict specifications for large organisations that have the technical back-up and inspection facilities which render superfluous the protection afforded to consumers by the Painters' Registration Act.

It is not intended that painters who clean the exterior of dwellings prior to application of a protective coat of paint will be exempt.

A similar situation exists in regard to signwriters. These specialists rarely, if ever, carry out contracts for ordinary citizens. Their work is principally for companies or businessmen who do not in normal circumstances require the protection of consumer oriented legislation such as the Painters' Registration Act.

It is also a fact that at present it is not clear whether signwriting comes within the ambit of the Act. By this amendment a grey area will be removed and administrative procedures will be streamlined. The proposed exemptions are supported by the respective trades associations and the Painters' Registration Board.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr T. H. Jones.

## EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

### *Second Reading*

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [2.37 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill deals with special education, the language of instruction in schools, the service of student teachers and the elimination of certain textual anomalies in the principal Act.

The WA Council for Special Education was established by this Government in 1974 to report to and advise it on matters relating to special education. In the course of its continuing study of this extremely important area of education, the council examined the present provisions in the Act dealing with handicapped children and recommended that they be brought up to date. The council's specific proposals have been accepted by the Government and have been embodied in this Bill.

The basic philosophy underlying these proposals is that the law should treat children suffering from various types of physical or mental disability, and their parents, as far as possible the same as the general body of children and parents; in other words, the Education Act should single out these children only to the extent that is absolutely necessary and no further.

Accordingly, there are only two major proposals, one to permit the Minister to direct a child to special education and another to permit the Minister to exclude a child from school.

It is to be noted that nowhere is the term "handicapped" used in referring to a child. The Council for Special Education considered it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to write a definition that would satisfy professionals in all the various disciplines that are concerned with special education. The Bill therefore, refers simply to a child with a physical or mental disability or disorder that requires education of a special kind.

Where a child requires education of a kind not available at the school he would normally be required to attend under the general compulsory attendance provisions of the Education Act, the Minister is empowered to direct that he attend a school or schools specified by the Minister. While

the Minister has the power to make the direction to special education, he does not decide that a child has the appropriate degree of disorder or disability that requires special education. That decision, as well as the recommendation of what kind of special education is required, is made by an advisory panel of people particularly qualified or experienced in the area of the child's disability. Except for the requirement that one of the panel must be a teacher and one a psychologist or Education Department guidance officer, no attempt is made to limit the choice of persons the Minister may consult. Different professional expertise is required for different types of disability and it is essential that the Minister be able to seek the most competent advice appropriate to each individual case.

Provision is also made for the rare case of a child who has a disability so severe that his presence in any Government school would disrupt the normal operation of the school. The Minister is given power in such a case, and where a direction to special education is inappropriate, to direct that the child not attend a Government school. Again, the Minister may do so only on the recommendation of a specialist advisory panel.

The Government is acutely aware that the direction of a child to special education or for his exclusion from school because of a disability are very serious matters requiring the utmost in safeguards for the children and parents concerned. The requirement of professional advice is one such. Further, the Bill provides for an appeal to a Children's Court against the Minister's decision to make a direction. In addition, the parents of a child under a direction have the right to demand that the Minister review the necessity for the direction.

The Minister must reconsider the case and must either confirm or cancel the direction. He may confirm it only on the recommendation of an advisory panel and his confirmation is subject to appeal to a Children's Court. If the Minister neither confirms nor cancels the direction within 60 days of the request, the direction lapses.

The other provisions of the special education clauses of the Bill ensure that, the making of directions to special education or directions for exclusion apart, all other provisions of the Education Act relating to children and parents in general apply equally to children with a disability and their parents.

The Bill proposes to abolish the requirement that instruction in schools be solely in English. The Government believes this requirement to be discriminatory and particularly objectionable in relation to the early instruction of Aboriginal children in their own tongue. As the Education Act now stands, such instruction is illegal.

Until recently most student teachers received State Government allowances and students were, therefore, permitted to count time as a student as service with the department. Now that increasingly larger numbers of student teachers do not receive State financial support, it is proposed to delete the right to count time spent as a student as service with the department.

Lastly, it is proposed to delete references in the Education Act to sections of Acts that have been repealed and to substitute references to the school leaving age in portions of the Act containing references to a lower age.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bryce.

## BILLS (2): MESSAGES

### *Appropriations*

Messages from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the following Bills—

1. Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Act Amendment Bill.
2. Education Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

## FIREARMS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Council's Amendment*

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

### *In Committee*

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Thompson) in the Chair; Mr O'Connor (Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I give the call to the Minister I draw the attention of the Committee to a typographical error. The printed notice paper of today indicates Page 2, line 36—To delete the word "seven". In fact it should read "page 2, line 38". I direct the Clerks to make the appropriation alteration.

The amendment made by the Council is as follows—

Page 2, line 38—Delete the word "seven" and substitute the word "twenty-eight".

Mr O'CONNOR: I move—

That the amendment made by the Council be agreed to.

During the second reading and Committee stages of this Bill when it was previously in this Chamber discussion ensued regarding the period of time in which interstate gun clubs could operate in Western Australia under a special permit from the Commissioner of Police. Members of the Opposition requested that the period we have suggested of seven days be extended to 28 days. In the co-operative manner which we have shown in the Chamber for most of the year we agreed to this amendment.

Mr T. H. Jones: It is not April Fool's Day today, is it?

Mr O'CONNOR: I thought we had been co-operative in regard to this Bill because it helps most people who are using firearms in this State generally. I suggested that an amendment should be made in another place. It has been made, it is in accordance with the request made by the Opposition in this Chamber and one with which I agree.

Mr T. H. JONES: The Minister has rightly outlined the position. I should like to thank him. No doubt he would agree with the promptness of the Opposition in recommending such an amendment. The period of seven days was far too restrictive and the amendment is in line with the suggestion raised by myself on behalf of the Opposition. I am certain that the gun clubs which visit Western Australia from now on will appreciate the amendment. It would be wrong in principle to allow the Bill in the form in which it was originally presented to this Assembly to pass through the Parliament. I should like to thank the Minister for his co-operation and hope that it extends for the rest of the session.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

### *Report*

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MEAT INDUSTRY AUTHORITY BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 26th August.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) (2.50 p.m.): When introducing the measure the Minister pointed out its purpose which is to establish a meat authority with statutory powers to replace the Meat Industry Advisory Commission which was established by the Tonkin Government as part of the development policy which had been adopted during that period of good government.

The whole of the work of the MIAC is recommendatory. It has no powers to make decisions on its own, but it has achieved, to a large measure, the purpose for which it was initiated. Indeed, the Minister went out of his way to indicate some of its achievements—the assessments it had carried out and the report it had produced which was of considerable benefit to the industry as a whole. The commission also recommended the retention of the Baldvils site as a future abattoir; and this was designated and earmarked for an abattoir by the Tonkin Government in December, 1972.

Mr McPharlin: It was designated before the change of Government.

Mr H. D. EVANS: It was not.

Mr McPharlin: It was. I have the file here.

Mr H. D. EVANS: It was designated in 1972 because the State Housing Commission had a very real interest in that piece of land. The Cabinet minutes of that time will reveal there was some difference of opinion between the then Minister for Agriculture and his colleague, the Minister for Housing.

It was unfortunate that the opportunity to build on that land was not seized at the time; but more will be said about that later on.

The composition of the authority is practical and fair. It shall comprise the following—

- (a) one shall be the Director of Agriculture or an officer of the Department of Agriculture nominated for appointment by the Director of Agriculture;
- (b) one shall be representative of the interests of Government abattoirs;
- (c) one shall be representative of the interests of private abattoirs;
- (d) one shall be representative of the interests of the wholesale and retail meat industry;
- (e) two shall be representative of the interests of producers of meat; and
- (f) one shall be representative of the interests of persons directly employed in the processing of meat at abattoirs.

The question of appointment needs clarification. We would like to know precisely how the Minister anticipates the various individuals who will represent particular sections will be appointed. Will he determine the appointee from a panel of names, and will he be given some latitude? We would like to know the method which is to be adopted. I assume that at the request of the Minister the various interests involved will submit to him a panel of names. Thus he will have latitude in which to make his final choice.

I am very pleased about the appointment to be made under paragraph (f); that is, a representative of the interests of persons directly employed in the processing of meat at abattoirs. I think it is about the first time that such an appointment is to be made. The previous Governments of the colour of the one which now occupies the Treasury benches was adamant in rejecting union representation on authorities of this kind. Whether the proposal in the Bill is a sign that finally there has been some enlightenment on the matter, I do not know, but it is pleasing to see the provision included.

If the Minister could clarify the point I have raised it would be of advantage and would be appreciated by everyone in the Chamber.

This brings me to a further point which is crucial as far as the operation of the abattoir industry in this State is concerned, and is one which had its genesis over a considerable period of time. Now that the authority is to be established it can be seen that the actions taken in the past in trying to operate the abattoir industry without expert guidance were wrong. The follies are now clear and distinct because the industry is ongoing. The magnitude of the results of those blunders is almost unbelievable. The immediate problem is what is to be done with Midland as it exists at the present time.

Does the Government have any intention to move on the problem Midland has created? Does it propose specifically to refer the whole question of the Midland abattoir to the statutory authority when it is established? It should be remembered that the responsibility in this matter rests fairly and squarely on this Government. It would be as well for me to recapitulate the genesis of the problem which has caused this monster at Midland, because it cannot be described as anything much less than that. The effect of Midland having reached the size it has is considerable. The difficulties experienced include those involving administration and organisation.

Prices, just prior to and after the expansion was made, were considerably less than was rightly to be expected, and Colonel McArthur himself at the opening of the carcass judging competition in 1969 referred to the matter and said that the lack of abattoir space had cost the producers of this State many millions of dollars. If it is estimated at something like 3c a pound on the total amount of stock through Midland in the drought years and just afterwards, the validity of his statement can be recognised. That was the cost at that time—the initial cost. The consequences have been ongoing and the charges to farmers, from that time onwards, have been in excess of what they should be. Today farmers are paying charges which they should not necessarily be paying, and this is because of the blindness of the Brand-Nalder Government.

Mr Blaikie: How do the charges in Western Australian service abattoirs compare with those in other States?

Mr H. D. EVANS: We will look at a comparison of charges in abattoirs in Western Australia, how they are determined, and the consequences. That is the criteria which should be adopted, instead of our just fobbing off the problem with a comparison of abattoirs elsewhere where conditions are different. Let us look at what has occurred here.

Mr Blaikie: The charges in the Eastern States are approximately one-third higher than they are in Western Australia.

Mr H. D. EVANS: That does not mean to say that the charges in Western Australia are correct, by any means.

Mr Blaikie: You mean that those in the Eastern States are correct?

Mr H. D. EVANS: The country abattoirs in Western Australia base their charges on Midland charges, and not one abattoir operator will say they are not satisfactory from his point of view. We will examine the reason Midland's charges are set and satisfy the member for Vasse that the stupid actions of the Government of which he was a back-bench member have really come home to roost.

With regard to the operation of Midland over the past 10 years, the capital expenditure has exceeded \$13 million. In 1975-76, it was at its lowest, being then only \$217 671.

It was at its highest in 1970-71 when the opposition to the Towns and Austen report was in full swing. The figure was \$2.947 million. The following year the loss was \$2.793 million. The losses which ensued from a capital investment of that level must have placed the abattoir at a distinct disadvantage because of the high rates of interest.

The operations covering the last 10 years reveal that a profit was made on only two occasions, during 1968-69 and 1975-76. The increase in charges has become obvious in the fact that the profit was in the order of \$167 895. The previous year the loss was \$1.557 million. The only other profit recorded was in 1968-69, when it was \$35 014.

As a consequence of that overcapitalisation the problems that are attendant upon an oversized establishment—which denies opportunity for full effective management—can be seen.

Had an additional abattoir been established, as recommended in the Towns and Austen report, that situation would not be with us today. I am also sure that the odours which have caused so much discomfort to the people of Swan would not have been as manifest as they now are. I have no doubt the member for Swan will have a word or two to say on that matter. The very size of the abattoir establishment, and the difficulties associated with the disposal of effluent, have made it an almost impossible problem despite the millions of dollars which have been spent on effluent disposal in the area.

It can be seen that had the recommendations in the Towns and Austen report been adhered to the present situation would not have arisen. It is stated at page 11, item 5, of the report that it was time for an additional abattoir to be made

available. When questioned as to when that should occur, the answer was that it should be made available in time for the summer of 1970.

Another relevant item appears at page 10, item 4, when Messrs Towns and Austen were asked whether the future additional needs could be met by the expansion of the present building. The answer was a firm negative. That was the advice given to this Government by A. E. Towns, Abattoir Consultant and Manager, and by K. J. Austen, of the Australian Meat Board. Those two men were brought from Melbourne for the very purpose of advising the then Government on what should be done at Midland.

The report could have been of some value, but it was totally rejected and Midland was expanded to its present size instead of retaining its level of 8 000 sheep per day. That is the reason we have the attendant and ongoing problems facing us today which are a drain on the revenue of the State because the State Government has had to pick up the losses over the years. They have been considerable indeed. When the losses related to an abattoir operation are in excess of \$1.5 million, as they were last year, the revenue of the State has to be affected.

Had the second abattoir been built, as was recommended, the situation at the present time would have been that in times of a dearth one abattoir could have been closed and the other operated to its capacity, or to near capacity. In that way the scale of operations would have been far more economic. Instead of having two abattoirs operating at half capacity, one abattoir could operate at full capacity and that would have made such a vast difference today. Instead, the results of the action taken at that time, against the judgment of the experts, has left us with unavoidable consequences. I would be interested to learn whether the statutory meat authority is to examine that proposition in an attempt to rectify it.

I would like to expound further on the responsibility of this Government to do something about this question, not only in the interests of the meat industry, but also in the interests of the taxpayers of the State. I am sure that justification can be afforded for the general revenue contributing to the upkeep of the service abattoirs, because the service abattoirs have the difficulty of having to train abattoir workers.

The Midland abattoir is the only effective training unit in the entire industry. Once learners are fully experienced they are recruited by other abattoirs. The other abattoirs do not consider they are responsible, to the same extent, for training meat workers so in the main private abattoirs neglect the training aspect. The responsibility falls on the service abattoirs.

The same responsibilities of which I have spoken, and which still need to be rectified, were very clearly outlined in a letter to *The West Australian* on the 8th November, 1971. The letter was from Mr Richard Outhwaite of Kojonup. In the letter he replied to a statement in a previous edition of the paper stating that the then Leader of the Country Party (the Hon. C. D. Nalder), said that the low sheep prices at Midland were caused through the lack of abattoir space.

Mr Nalder, as he then was, was taken to task very sharply by somebody who knew the ramifications and the full background of the industry. Indeed, he stated that the Government, of which Mr Nalder was a part, was fully responsible for the situation which was pertaining. Mr Outhwaite stated that about four years previously, at a meeting in Pastoral House attended by representatives of organisations concerned with the production, selling and slaughtering of livestock, a decision was reached that there was an urgent need to plan for increased killing facilities to prevent an oversupply situation developing in the future with the problems of glut that were causing the downturn in the prices in the saleyards. He said the strongest pressure was then applied to Mr Nalder, the Minister responsible, to provide funds to build another abattoir. However, it soon became apparent that Mr Nalder was not prepared to take any action and when an approach, made to Mr Court, as he then was, in his capacity as Minister for Industrial Development, produced no results, the Premier of the day, Sir David Brand, was approached by correspondence and a deputation. This is going back to before the catastrophic drought of that year.

Again, there was no result. Eventually a committee of experts was appointed to investigate and advise on the issue. Towns and Austen were that committee of experts and they brought down the recommendation I have already mentioned—that there should not be any extension to the abattoir at Midland, and that a new and additional abattoir should be established for the forthcoming summer. As a matter of fact, a new abattoir would not have been constructed in time.

Four years before negotiations took place approaches had been made to every responsible Minister in the Government of the day—the Minister for Agriculture, the Minister for Industrial Development, the present Premier, and the Premier of the day.

There was more delay, and at long last action. The Government allocated \$4 million for an expansion programme at Midland. The result, as stated in the article, was that sheep all over Australia were being sold at a figure at least 3c a pound higher than in Western Australia. Even in that year the loss would have run

into millions of dollars. Subsequently, the loss to Western Australia as a result of that stupid decision has become almost inestimable. Worse than that, we were denied the opportunity to build a second modern complex on a site near to the port. We then could have totally restructured the industry and this would have been far preferable to the course we have pursued.

Mr McPharlin: How long would that have taken?

Mr H. D. EVANS: This project should have been started four years before the Towns and Austen report, and even then it was too late. The Government had all the time in the world. According to one of the officials who was connected with the representations made at that time to the Ministers I listed, there was more than ample time—there was a period of four years. And yet the Government sat back and allowed it to happen. It is still happening today because we are left with that monster at Midland which has now reached such proportion and size that it is having the greatest difficulty operating economically on charges that would be commensurate and competitive with the charges of country abattoirs throughout the State.

That is the point I am making. So it is completely invalid for the member for "gas" to make a comparison with the Eastern States abattoirs, as he did by way of interjection when he referred to what could have been achieved within the State.

One does not have to look beyond the State border to realise that we are saddled with an impossible situation. Something like \$13 million has been invested in the abattoir in the past 10 years and it would be impossible for the Government to convince the Treasury that we should walk away from that capital outlay and build another service abattoir on the site I hope will be retained at Baldvis.

I would hate to be a Minister trying to convince the Treasurer that all this capital outlay should be abandoned and a new edifice erected in a more appropriate position. That is the situation we are facing.

I am sure the member for Swan, whose knowledge of the mechanical and engineering structures of the abattoir and the management's ineffectiveness in dealing with the abattoir smell, will further support my contention that the initial structure was a colossal blunder.

I am happy that a statutory meat authority is to be set up. It will be clothed with powers that are not much greater than those held by the Meat Industry Advisory Committee, although that committee does have some statutory recognition at this time. The powers of the authority are more limited than I would like them to be but it is a start.

The measure proposes to convert the Meat Industry Advisory Committee to an authority such as we would have proposed



had we remained the Government. It was a developmental step, as I said, and one which we on this side of the House would approve. However, the whole future of the abattoir industry is caught up in the situation at Midland. Because of its size and the number of sales that take place there, Midland Junction Abattoir dictates the trends in sales throughout the State. It also has a bearing on the operation of other abattoirs.

Having got the State into this impossible and undesirable situation, it is up to a Government of the same ilk as that Government to rectify it with all dispatch. The State just cannot afford to see the abattoir continue in the same way.

I support the measure as it is brought to the House. I seek clarification on the points raised in regard to appointments and I trust the Government can rectify the situation in which it finds itself.

**MR GREWAR** (Roe) [3.15 p.m.]: The meat industry in Australia is in a mess. It is this way for two main reasons; firstly lack of planning and direction, and secondly, lack of liaison between participants within the industry—from the producer to the exporter.

The whole problem has been compounded in recent years by a rapid increase in the turn off of livestock for slaughter with little study being given to or heed being taken of market requirements and capacity.

The organisations we have relied upon to give us directions have been the Australian Meat Board and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, whose task it was to monitor the industry and give guidance. My opinion, and it is shared by others, is that these bodies failed dismally in giving direction.

Early in 1973 these bodies made forecasts of a bright outlook for carcase meat exports. Within a few months of this prediction, the market collapsed and producers' incomes turned downwards. This trend has continued over the last few years with some slight recovery only now being evident, and we do not know how permanent this recovery will be, much depending on the American market.

It is always easy to have hindsight and to be critical, but these organisations had within their power the means to predict the supply position, and the Australian producer should have been alerted to this oversupply developing. If these warnings had been enunciated, producers would have been able to take corrective action to reduce the size of their herds and flocks. As it was we had an unprecedented increase in the Australian livestock population.

All this is now behind us and we face the future much more alert to the pitfalls and hazards of the market place. The awareness has flowed through to the Government which now realises the necessity

to alter the structure of some of our organisations; these changes are now in process.

The Bill before the House represents one such change brought about by this Government. It will bring in an authority with more positive powers than the Meat Industry Advisory Committee which it replaces. It is hoped that this body will undertake its role very seriously and that it will keep the industry actively informed.

It is vital to the Australian national interest that the meat industry be maintained in a viable state. The industry earns between \$600 million and \$800 million of export income each year, and it employs in the vicinity of 350 000 people in various categories.

Australia has a lot to learn about meat marketing; we are juveniles in this field. We have been concerned only with growing a product without regard for market requirements. We have not heeded specifications and needs. We hope we can learn from our past folly.

With the advent of refrigeration in the last century, Australia entered the meat trade seriously. Due to our developmental phase and the large area of pastoral land to be developed, we were in a build-up situation rather than an overseas sales situation. It is only now when most of our land has been alienated that we have surplus stock available in large numbers for export. The situation has come upon us fairly quickly and we find now we do not have the capacity in our abattoirs and cool stores to handle the increased turnoff.

The Australian farmer as compared with his overseas counterpart is highly efficient in his methods of production. Up to now, his costs have been below those of his competitors, who have been able to remain in their industry only through tariff barriers and producer subsidies. The Australian farmer has been able to remain competitive despite the high shipping and refrigeration costs, due to three factors; namely, cheaper land and fertilisers, the greater use of mechanisation, and sheer hard work and sound technology.

However, the holiday is fast coming to an end. All along the line our costs are increasing; we are very much caught up in the inflationary spiral. There is now little profit in the meat industry for the producer. He takes his profit last, and is frequently left with a bill.

I should like to illustrate the effects of inflation on this industry, and what it has done to the beef producer in the last two years. In 1974, the cost of killing, processing and shipping to the east coast of America amounted to 38.06c per kilogram, representing an increase of almost 50 per cent in only two years.

In that same period, the cost to the overseas consumer has gone down. I instance the American price being down by 2c per kilogram over the two years. It is

the Australian farmer who is taking the brunt of this and this is reflected in the price he receives. In 1974, he received 75.17c per kilogram whereas in 1976 he is receiving only 61.18c per kilogram. There is little the Australian producer can do now to save himself. He is almost as efficient and economic as it is possible for him to be. He must look to others in the industry, or associated with it, to help him fight the cost spiral.

Australia now is the largest exporter of carcase meat in the world, and we should retain this position because we have a great deal of potential. I regard the cattle industry in many parts of the world as rather wasteful of resources. In European countries it would be possible to grow up to 10 times the amount of food units per acre than that produced by livestock on the same area. There are also expanding markets in the Asian region, where the people are becoming more adapted to a Western diet.

There will be no way that these countries will be able to produce their own red meat requirements in the future; they must be imported. Australia has the capacity to increase its supply and turnover, but this will be possible only if it is profitable to the producer.

If passed, the Bill will establish a statutory authority within the industry. I am opposed to this proposal, but I can see no better alternative at this time. The authority will have some very important functions and these should improve the efficiency of handling and processing of meat, which is the area of biggest cost to the industry, amounting to some 30c a kilogram.

The authority will be empowered to monitor the industry relative to abattoir capacity and usage, to recommend refinements and improvements and, if there is a need, to recommend new works, their location and design. In addition, the authority will be able to liaise with all facets of the industry, from the producer through to the processor to encourage efficiency in the processing of animals and meat products.

It will also advise the Minister on the methods of overcoming areas of conflicting interests which may develop in the meat industry. It will be able to study or be commissioned by the Minister to study any aspect of the meat industry which requires investigation.

I should like to discuss these points in some detail. It is obvious that efficiency and maximum utilisation of an abattoir is essential. We have experienced lack of capacity at abattoirs and in cold stores before, and this has had a depressing effect on the prices the producer receives, by affecting demand. It will be extremely important for the authority to monitor the supply position and ensure the free flow of stock through the abattoir system.

We wish to ensure that no more bottle-necks develop within the processing industry.

If it is found that abattoir capacity is insufficient, a new works could be recommended. Here, I request the authority to look beyond the metropolitan area for the establishment of these works. Livestock resources are beyond the Darling Range. It seems pointless that animals are transported hundreds of miles to the killing facilities in the metropolitan area.

The operation should be carried out in country areas, and as a result only the carcasses would have to be transported. The meat industry is one which lends itself to the principle of decentralisation, and I hope the authority will look very closely at the possibility of establishing an abattoir at Baldiwin. In my opinion, abattoirs should be located where the resources are located.

I must give a bouquet to the previous Government for providing the initiative to establish the Esperance meatworks, by granting a Government guarantee of \$1.4 million to enable a new meatworks to be established in that area. Inflation now has made it necessary for the Esperance meatworks to approach the Government with a request that the guarantee be increased to \$2 million. This move has been necessary to permit the company to attract an additional \$500 000 in share capital. The feasibility studies are now before the Department of Industrial Development and the Premier, and I would ask that urgent consideration be given to these studies because currently negotiations are taking place with companies interested in providing share capital.

The Government has given assurances relating to the supply of water to the abattoir site and has also agreed to investigate the possibility of providing homes for abattoir workers. I should like to see assurances on these requirements being given at this stage, so that the abattoir can plan for the future.

The building of an abattoir at Esperance and the associated Government works will do much to improve the employment situation of the town and add to its stability. It will yield approximately \$2 million in abattoir charges and represent a cost saving to the producer of approximately \$750 000. The town and district will considerably benefit by this input of almost \$3 million.

It is envisaged initially that processed carcasses from Esperance will be railed to Fremantle. However, it is hoped that as throughput increases, shipping will become much more important. The cost savings by this mode of transport are considerable, and it is up to us to make Esperance an economic port of call for shipping lines. To this end, the Esperance Port Authority will be looking very closely at ways of attracting shipping to our port.

It is considering the possibility of exporting wool and nickel matte. It is to be hoped that a large proportion of the Esperance wool will be stored in the district and shipped through the Port of Esperance. Only samples of Esperance wool should be submitted to the regional auctions, with the bulk of the product being stored at Esperance for shipping after sale.

Esperance has been very much affected by the conversion of nickel concentrate to nickel matte at the Mt. Hampton smelter, and its ultimate export through Fremantle. This has had a considerable impact on the throughput at our port, and it is hoped that the Government will use its influence on companies entering the mining industry or expanding operations to encourage them to utilise the Port of Esperance from which to export this nickel matte. All these additional exports will enable shipping lines to become viable on the Esperance service.

Another important function of the authority is to encourage research directed towards the improvement of abattoir design, operation and practice. We are all aware of the continual upgrading that has been necessary to meet export standards. If the authority is to do its job correctly it will monitor well in advance the changes that are necessary, and advise the industry accordingly.

Abattoirs are very highly labour intensive, and because of the high costs of this input the authority should be looking closely at automation processes which are possible within the industry. We are competing with other countries where labour costs are much lower per unit of production than our own. Hence, to stay viable we must reduce our processing costs.

The only way to do this, as I see it, is through improved automation. If we cannot achieve savings in costs I fear for the profitability of the meat industry of Australia.

I do hope that expertise can be employed by the authority to research automation innovations with the aim eventually of producing a completely automated process, where the dressing and processing of a carcass is performed mechanically. The human resource is too valuable to have monotonous and mundane operations in abattoirs performed by people.

It will be an important function of the authority to disseminate information that will improve efficiency in processing, transportation, etc. Continual liaison in the industry is vital. It is one thing to collect information, but it is another thing to pass it on to where it can be used.

Recently we saw a bottleneck situation developing as a result of oversupply of animals at abattoirs; the system was not able to absorb them. This was occasioned by the lack of shipping space which resulted in cold stores becoming full to

capacity. This situation has had disastrous consequences for the producer, for it affects considerably the demand position, and consequently the price he receives for his product.

We need greater liaison between producers, abattoirs, cold stores, and shipping companies to ensure that there is a free flow system operating. It is my hope that the new authority will be better able to monitor the situation than has been the case in the past.

I am pleased to see the inclusion in the authority's functions of a provision for investigating areas of conflicting interests within the meat and livestock industries. We have seen a great deal of this conflict already with the Australian Meat Industry Employees' Union recently interfering in the export of live sheep. This trade has been building up considerably over recent years, and we should be encouraging it as an additional outlet for our surplus stock.

To instance the importance of this trade, in 1973-74 there were 1.052 million sheep exported from Australia, and the projected figure for 1976-77 is 2.4 million sheep.

The AMIEU has shown a certain amount of irresponsibility in opposing the marketing of live sheep with little regard for the producer, the waterside worker, or the wishes of the consumer countries. The live animal is, after all, the property of the farmer, and it should be his right to determine how or where he sells his stock. If he can obtain a better net price by selling the animal to a live sheep trader, then it should be his prerogative to so sell.

The meat industry worker need have little fear about the volume of livestock that will flow through the abattoir facilities. This volume will expand in time. The volume has tended to rise in an upward direction, and will continue to do so as Australia's turnover expands.

The trade in live animals has some very definite advantages to the overseas consumers, and we should heed their needs. Some of these countries have inadequate cold store space, and it is therefore expedient for them to have a live animal that can be utilised as required, as in the Middle East countries.

Some of our consumer countries have specific requirements as to the fattening of animals and opt to perform this function themselves, as with Kobe beef in Japan. Some of the importing countries have a cheaper or more efficient processing system, and therefore they prefer a live animal. The live animal trade is additional to, and not competitive with, the carcass meat trade.

Western Australia is in a strong export situation. More than half of our beef and two-thirds of our mutton are exported. It is a market that is subject to many vagaries and much political interference,

as we have seen recently. Everyone involved must be keenly alert and efficient, for all irregularities have resounding consequences to a great number of people.

We must forever be looking for new markets, not only for carcase meat but also for specialised products produced from either the carcase, or carcase derivatives. Markets exist for these specialised products, but they have not been exploited by Australian processors currently; for example, dried meat which, in total tonnage terms, amounts to the equivalent of 80 000 tonnes of carcase meat per year.

The CSIRO has recently developed a process under which blood, normally a by-product used in the manufacture of fertilisers, can now be processed into a protein concentrate with potential value as a human food.

It will be an important function of this authority to monitor marketing requirements and trends; and I am pleased to see that provisions have been included in the Bill to enable this to be done.

I commend the Bill in the belief that the enactment of this legislation will bring about great benefits to our meat industry.

**MR SKIDMORE** (Swan) [3.37 p.m.]: As suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition it would perhaps be right for me to mention the indignity which people living in close proximity to and even at some distance from Midland Junction Abattoir have had to suffer. I refer to the offensive smell emanating from the abattoir. Contrary to what the Minister has said, those people will have to put up with the obnoxious smell for many more months.

I would like to deal in general with some of the attitudes that I expressed previously relating to the control of this industry. On each and every occasion I have spoken on this topic I pointed out that I had a great amount of sympathy for the primary producer who always seems to be on the receiving end of the deal, when it comes to the price he receives for his product which after going through the process of killing passes to the wholesale butcher, the retail trade, and the consumer.

I have advocated consistently that the only way to bring about a fair and equitable return to all concerned is to have complete control of the industry. One cannot merely control one sector of the industry, and allow other sectors to run riot and for those engaged in them to make an unreasonable profit. This is made abundantly clear when we look at the rapacious appetite of the sectors of the industry that are not within the control of the producer. Surely the producer is the first person to be considered, when it comes to determining what he should receive as a just return for his product.

I commend the member for Roe for putting forward very succinctly the problems confronting the producer today. Some of those problems have been brought about by the producer himself, in not being able to assess the market and being properly advised.

There is another calamity which this nation has suffered; and that is drought. No-one can assume at any given time that drought can be bargained for. However, the inability of the farmer to prophesy a drought should not be a means to disadvantage him when he markets his excess stock which has to be taken off the land because of drought. That responsibility rests fairly and squarely on the Government.

Repeatedly members on this side of the House have told the Government that it should do something to get off the ground the more viable and efficient abattoirs which will at least be able to take care of the excess slaughter of stock brought about by drought.

Time and time again we have suggested that the way to do it is to have an overriding authority with the power to direct industry as to what it shall do. In that way alone will the industry be controlled.

I might refer fleetingly to the efforts of the farmers themselves to control their own fellowmen so that the kill at the abattoirs under the token system would have been such that the system would not break down. As it was it was a dismal failure because there was control only over the start of the process and not over what occurred to the animal once it was bought for killing. The capacity of the industry was not sufficient.

This brings me back to the market requirements. I simply say to the member for Roe and others that it is not, and will not ever be, possible to control the industry until everyone in it is controlled, including the producers, the abattoirs, the wholesale and retail outlets, and the consumers. I am not struck on price fixation.

**Mr Old:** Why not control the customer?

**Mr SKIDMORE:** Of course the customer is entitled to protection.

**Mr Old:** You have controlled everything else, why not him?

**Mr SKIDMORE:** I have suggested that, but I do not know how it could be done. Does the Minister suggest the customer should be told what sort of meat he should buy?

**Mr Old:** You say the whole industry should be controlled.

**Mr SKIDMORE:** That is right.

**Mr Old:** It is not right at all.

**Mr Bertram:** You control plenty of others.

Mr SKIDMORE: Does not the Minister want to give the producer a fair return?

Mr Old: That is what we are doing.

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister has not given fair control since he has been in Government. If he had the member for Roe would not be complaining about the deal the producers are getting as a result of abattoirs having insufficient killing and chilling space and because of a lack of export markets. The producers should be told to watch the situation carefully. Instead the Government opened up and said, "This is Utopia for you."

Mr Old: Carry on with your expert opinion. I am listening.

Mr SKIDMORE: Do not let the Minister try to tell me that he has ever done anything for the primary producer to ensure he gets a fair return. All the things the Minister has done have been very weak and really relied upon the good grace of the industry itself. However, the Minister's efforts have failed dismally because of the human element. Even the people in the industry itself do not agree with one another.

Mr Old: What do you do? Put an in-human element in?

Mr SKIDMORE: The Minister is inhuman in his attitude. I suggest he goes back to what he was doing before I commenced my speech.

Mr Old: I was listening to some intelligent remarks prior to that.

Mr SKIDMORE: The easiest way to denigrate anyone is to use the well-known ploy of saying that anyone on his feet is not intelligent. I simply say I believe my intelligence on this issue at least is sufficient to point out the inability of the Government to control the industry.

Let us consider the factors which are at present affecting people of the Swan electorate. This has come about because of the ineptitude of the Government. Ever since I have been in the House I have been speaking of this matter and I have approached not only the present Minister, but also previous Ministers. The abattoir's operations are inefficient and although a colossal amount of money has been spent the abattoir now has only a hotch-potch treatment plant for effluent and offal resulting in a stinking mess which must be endured by the people in the district. No-one should have to endure such a situation.

I might remind the Minister that some 10 years ago people told the board what it should do with the treatment plant.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.02 p.m.*

Mr SKIDMORE: Before the afternoon tea suspension I was dealing with the question of the inability of the abattoir board to come to grips with the problems

associated, in the main, with the treatment of offal. This difficulty has been compounded by the fact that the kill at the abattoir has been increased to such an extent that greater strain has been placed on the capacity of the abattoir, in the first place, to do the killing and provide chilling space, and it has also created the additional problem that the offal plant has been grossly overloaded.

On many occasions I have been told that the process at the abattoir is continuous. However, it is not a continuous process. As I understand a continuous process, once it commences it must eventually come to a conclusion. Once something in a process is started there should not be any stockpile in the middle of the assembly line. But, that is what is happening at the abattoir; there is a stockpile of offal for periods of up to eight, nine, or 10 hours. Naturally, in the summer-time that offal, when it is treated eventually, is much more offensive than it should be.

It has been stated by me time and time again to the Minister that the offal treatment plant is overloaded. The same statement has been made by me to various Ministers and by other people over the past 10 years, and various ideas have been put forward in an attempt to overcome the problem.

The obvious solution is to duplicate the existing plant once it has been upgraded. It is only necessary for one section of the plant to break down to produce more offensive odours. A plant cannot be called "continuous" if the killing takes six to seven hours and the processing takes 14 to 15 hours. It is obvious the plant is incapable of handling the amount of offal which it has to treat.

I am aware it is intended to install a new washer and scrubber, and also upgrade the afterburner. It is also intended to look at the question of ducting all the outlets which allow the escape of fumes. That staggering proposal was put to the Government when I first came into this Parliament. I said then that the escape of fumes was a major cause of the odours. However, it has continued and it seems it will continue in the future.

We are hoping that the assurance given to us by the Minister will lead to some alleviation of that problem but, all in all, it is still a patchwork job. It is similar to a doctor treating a patient who has constipation by giving him a dose of castor oil without finding out the cause of the constipation. That is exactly what is happening at the abattoir; it is constipated. It is overloaded with offal which cannot be treated. The abattoir is attempting to overcome the problem by running the treatment plant for longer periods of time.

The whole treatment plant is suspect. I will not go further than state that has been my bitch, and the bitch of the people in the Midland area. Our bitching will continue until such time as the offensive odour disappears. When I asked the Minister whether he would like to have to put up with the offensive odour he said he did not want it. We do not want it either and it is time something was done.

It pleased me greatly to observe that one of the functions of the authority will be to encourage research directed towards the improvement of abattoir design, operation, and practice. I think that is a splendid objective and I hope it will be carried out much more effectively than was the case with the previous authority. I understand the previous authority had the power to take the same action, but it will now be set out in the legislation.

I would like to quote a small article in relation to the decision of the magistrate on the question of the emission of obnoxious odours from the Midland abattoir. The article, in part, reads—

Mr Anton said that in its efforts to deal with the odour problem, the Board can justly claim to have demonstrated an awareness of its responsibilities.

That statement does set out the true position; the abattoir board was aware of its responsibilities, but did nothing about them. The article continues—

He added, however, that in its short term approach to the odour problem, the Board was open to criticism.

He referred to the evidence of Public Health Department officers, Mr Layton and Mr Powell, which indicated that much was amiss and that things which could have been done were not done.

Mr Anton said that on the level where technical expertise was needed, the Board was not well served by its own staff.

It may be recalled that I have said previously that the abattoir board was inefficient in so far as its ability to recognise problems associated with offal treatment was concerned. I have made that statement time and time again. Now we have an instance of a magistrate commenting on the inefficiency of the abattoir's own staff to recognise the faults which still exist. To continue the article—

The abattoir's chief engineer, Mr Leach, was criticised by Mr Anton for failing to correct the situation.

Mr Anton said it was disturbing that an enterprise with a turnover of millions of dollars did not have ready access to professional advice of a higher calibre.

I point out to the Minister that I held suspect the engineer who constructed the effluent plant. On the recommendation of

the engineer, the abattoir has had to install additional effluent pondage in an effort to overcome the problem.

I believe it will overcome the problem but the board should not have been doing that. With the expertise available to it the board should have received the right information so that it could go about rectifying the problem in an efficient manner. The article continues—

He added that the board, with the ability to think clearly and act promptly, could have achieved a great deal without incurring huge costs to overcome the problem.

The evidence under cross-examination given to the magistrate by the spokesman for the abattoir board has revealed what I have said time and time again. It was a patchwork job which was costly and ineffective.

When I raised the question the Government said, "There is nothing we can do about it." The Government will go on spending thousands of dollars on a plant which should be completely reconstructed. If it is left as it is and a new plant of modern design is installed alongside it, we might get somewhere.

I do not think that is the answer for the Midland Junction Abattoir. Under the Bill, the Minister can be advised on the overall requirements for slaughtering capacity etc., and recommendations can be made that the plant must comply with certain standards. I hope the new authority will have some teeth and will not be a toothless wonder like the previous authority. I hope it will throw down the gauntlet to the abattoir board and say, "This is what you must do."

I come back to the question I posed: Is that the complete answer? The member for Warren very ably put a case for a thorough investigation of abattoirs in this State. As this Bill giving functions to the authority is before us, we are hopeful that in the future some effort will be made by the authority to insist on decent standards of design and operation at the Midland Junction Abattoir.

To the best of my knowledge, open digesters are at present being used to treat dead stock and none of the fumes from those digesters are being vented into the afterburner system. They are expired into the air and nothing has been done to ensure those odours go through the washer-scrubber into the condensers and the afterburner. We have been told we will not now be subjected to smells but it seems to me we will be so subjected in the future. I hope the authority will have some teeth to ensure the Midland Junction Abattoir does not pollute the air in the Swan electorate.

The member for Roe mentioned the conflict of interests between the producers and the trade union—to wit, the Amalgamated Meat Employees' Industrial Union. It is

quite unfair to say, as is customary, that the union is at fault in all the problems relating to the export of live sheep. An agreement was reached with the union for a quota system allowing a certain number of live sheep to be exported which would be related to the size of the kill. It was because the number of live sheep exported exceeded the agreed number that the union dug its toes in and said, "It is not on." It must be remembered that the union, the industry, and the producers reached agreement on that matter. The union stuck to its side of the agreement but the producers did not.

A considerable time ago when it was brought to my notice that there were problems associated with the export of live sheep, I obtained some figures from the Minister. I took up the matter with all the interests concerned because it was obvious a problem was associated with excess stock due to factors beyond the control of the farmers. It is not quite fair to place all the blame on the union. The blame must be shared equally by those who destroyed the agreement which was willingly entered into, albeit it was restrictive for the producer.

The union cannot be blamed for wishing to protect the workers. That is precisely why unions exist, and the history of this union over the last two or three years has been excellent when it comes to a question of time lost in the industry. I suggest the language of the member for Roe was a little intemperate when he blamed the union for all the problems associated with the industry.

It is very difficult to assess overseas markets and I do not know how the authority will overcome the difficulty. Today's market may be gone tomorrow. This is evident in the attitude of the United States, which seems to be able to impose all kinds of import restrictions on produce from Australia and other countries at the drop of a hat. It causes a tremendous degree of discomfort and alarm, particularly to farmers in Western Australia, when a promised market is no longer available. I hope the authority will be able to do something about this problem. I do not know to what extent we can crack the whip over overseas markets. These are some of the problems I would like the authority to look at.

The Bill creates a Western Australian meat industry authority and vests certain powers in it. If the authority is encouraged to be active and do its job without ministerial or political interference it will give a tremendous uplift to primary producers. But if we allow politics to interfere with it the authority will have the same disregard for the industry that has been shown in the past.

I believe the Bill is a step in the right direction. In the near future perhaps it will bring about what I have advocated;

that is, an authority which will control the industry, make it viable, and have honest intentions for all concerned. I support the Bill.

**MR McPHARLIN** (Mt. Marshall) (4.20 p.m.): While speaking to this Bill I would like to refer to some of the remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Unfortunately he is not in his seat at the moment.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the selection of Baldvís as a proposed site for an abattoir. I want to make it clear how it came about that this site was recommended to the Minister of the day. Due to a decision of Cabinet in November, 1970, a committee was appointed to examine proposed sites for the establishment of an abattoir, and it looked at a number of areas considered suitable. The committee comprised Dr T. L. Dunne (then Director of Agriculture), Mr J. C. Harrison (Department of Industrial Development), Mr I. D. Carr (Town Planning Department), and Mr A. E. Heagney (Under-Secretary for Lands). A working committee was appointed and the working committee made recommendations to the committee which forwarded submissions to the Minister.

On the 6th January, 1971, a submission was presented to the Minister. It was stated that a number of areas had been examined including Robb Jetty, South Coogee, Bushmead, Maida Vale, the noxious trades areas of Jandakot, the aerodrome area in the vicinity of Jandakot, and Baldvís. This was the way Baldvís was selected. We know that there was a change of Government in February, 1971, and I point out that the site was actually chosen by this committee prior to the change of Government. Although the recommendation was gazetted—or other necessary action taken—by the Labor Government, the site was selected prior to its coming into office.

A number of criticisms have been levelled at the previous Liberal-Country Party Government, especially by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and he referred specifically to the Towns and Austen report. Nobody denies that that report recommended the building of another abattoir, but if we cast our minds back to the situation of the day, we will recall that a drought had affected the State and there was an urgent need to increase killing facilities. The building of the abattoir would have taken some years and it was necessary to act quickly.

The advisers to the Minister recommended the extensions at Midland in an endeavour to cater for the increased numbers of stock coming onto the market. There was insufficient capacity at the abattoir to cater for the stock coming forward, and we know that slaughtermen were imported from New Zealand for this

purpose. It may interest the member for Swan to know that those slaughtermen struck at that time and their action certainly did not endear them to the agricultural industry.

Mr Taylor: That is the time they had—

Mr McPHARLIN: Never mind the reasons—they could have been sorted out in the proper way. Thousands of sheep were dying and there was an urgent necessity to have them killed. The slaughtermen had no compunction at all in the action they took.

Mr Taylor: There were 600 men and changing facilities for 200.

Mr McPHARLIN: What about all the farmers affected and the numbers of stock which were dying in the paddocks?

Mr Blaikie: They struck at a most critical time.

Mr Bertram: The Federal Constitutional Convention took the whole State out—that is a fact.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mt. Marshall.

Mr McPHARLIN: The whole situation needs a little analysis and we must examine all that has taken place over the years in regard to the slaughtering of stock. From January to June usually insufficient stock comes forward to keep the full staff in employment. This has happened for many years and the staff numbers have been reduced. It happened again this year; the season looked promising, farmers were not selling their stock, and the staff were reduced. Then there was a dry spell and a change in the number of stock coming onto the market. A tremendous effort was made to get staff back. This has always been the situation and members will remember the impact of the drought of 1969-70 when there was a tremendous influx of stock and the abattoir was not capable of handling it. The effort to meet the emergency at that time was to build quickly.

Mr Skidmore: They built wrongly.

Mr McPHARLIN: The advisers to the Minister recommended that this was the best course to follow.

Mr Skidmore: What a calamity it turned out to be.

Mr McPHARLIN: It would have taken years to build a new one.

Mr Skidmore: Two and a half years.

Mr McPHARLIN: What would have happened to all the stock that needed slaughtering in the meantime? Should we have let them die in the paddocks?

Mr Skidmore: Of course not.

Mr McPHARLIN: That is what the honourable member is advocating.

Mr Skidmore: What is happening now?

Mr McPHARLIN: The Government of the day endeavoured to do something quickly to try to cater for the emergency. May I ask this question: The Labor Government was in power for three years after 1971; what did it do about building a new abattoir? Where is the new abattoir the Labor Party is now talking about?

Mr Taylor: Esperance is one, and another one is in Katanning.

Mr McPHARLIN: Esperance has not got off the ground yet.

Mr Taylor: They were built while we were in Government.

Mr Old: No way—they have not laid a brick in Esperance yet.

Mr Taylor: All the planning was done then. Katanning?

Mr Old: Yes.

Mr Taylor: As long as *Hansard* catches that.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are far too many interjections. *Hansard* has a difficult enough job under normal circumstances without the spate of interjections we have just had.

Mr McPHARLIN: The Minister for Development and Decentralisation in the Labor Government made promises about assistance in a rather extravagant way. After examination he found that it was not sound business practice to do what he thought he was able to do. It appeared that there would be a proliferation of abattoirs but these did not eventuate. We saw the expansion of the abattoir at Wooroloo. Eventually the export side of that abattoir had to close up because of insufficient stock numbers. It went into recess for some time and Wesfarmers took over the export side of it and I understand the abattoir is operating again.

There has been this hesitancy and caution about the establishment of abattoirs. All the advisers tell us that to operate an abattoir successfully one must have an export market. It is difficult for an abattoir catering solely for the local market to remain viable. I did not see the Labor Government acting as it is now saying we should act. Why did it not build a new abattoir at Baldy? The site was there.

Mr Barnett: You know damn well why not.

Mr McPHARLIN: Nothing was done about it, and yet the Opposition criticises the previous Government for doing nothing.

Mr Barnett: You are a former Minister and you would not even know.

Mr McPHARLIN: The Opposition leaves itself open to charges of hypocrisy when it comments in that way.

Before establishing an abattoir a great deal of consideration must be given to its requirements. A major requirement is for



adequate water supplies but we must also have sufficient labour available. Workers do not like to travel too far and they also wish to have the facilities and amenities of life. Nobody complains about that.

Mr Skidmore: The New Zealanders did!

Mr McPHARLIN: I believe this measure will provide for the establishment of a very necessary committee, one which will examine very closely any application in respect of the site of a proposed abattoir.

I suggest that because we need to obtain export markets it is necessary to establish abattoirs as close as possible to the seaboard, and this is a matter that must be examined and taken into consideration when the siting of abattoirs is under question.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about the environment?

Mr McPHARLIN: This Bill repeals the Meat Industry (Treatment Works) Licensing Act of 1937, which has been with us for something like 40 years. That Act contains a definition of "licence", but the Bill before us contains no such definition. However, in part IV, clause 17 (1) provides that a person shall not construct or operate an abattoir without prior written approval, so I suppose that could be interpreted as meaning a licence is necessary.

In respect of the membership of the proposed board, one member is to be the Director of Agriculture or an officer nominated by him, and another shall be a representative of Government abattoirs. Then there are to be two who will represent the interests of private abattoirs and of the wholesale and retail meat industry. No mention is made of the interests of the export industry, but one could assume that the export industry could be included in the interests of the wholesale and retail meat industry. Then there are to be two members who will be representative of producers, and one shall represent employees of abattoirs.

Mr Skidmore: Why not two? Everyone else has.

Mr McPHARLIN: Only one has been suggested.

Mr B. T. Burke: What about a representative of the sheep? Parliament has plenty.

Mr O'Connor: We haven't got the goats on this side.

Mr McPHARLIN: I think the move to include a representative of employees is a good one, and I offer no criticism of it.

I turn now to part III of the Bill, which deals with the functions of the authority, about which we are all concerned. The functions are outlined in clause 16, but it remains to be seen how successful the authority will be when it commences to operate. Paragraph (h) states that one of the functions of the authority is to

keep under review meat marketing and the marketing of animals in so far as such marketing may affect the meat industry in the State and in particular through consultation with relevant sections of the industry to keep under review trends and developments therein.

That is a wide, sweeping function for the authority to undertake. Perhaps it is desirable for the authority to review marketing and to conduct consultation with relevant sections of the industry. However, I think most of the time of the authority would be taken up if it were to be as thoroughly involved in that field as it should be. I doubt whether the authority would have sufficient time to undertake that function properly. However, let us hope its members can establish a proper system of marketing which is satisfactory to all those concerned in the industry. All sections should be included so that we have a system which is perhaps similar to the New Zealand system. New Zealand does not have a statutory marketing scheme, although the meat producers' board operates under a Statute. I suggest the proposed authority would be well advised to consider thoroughly the New Zealand system when it reviews meat marketing in this State.

This Bill is a step in the right direction because the authority will control the siting of abattoirs. I think it should iron out the differences of opinion that present themselves now when we have various people from different districts claiming priority. I feel the Bill will help the industry, overall. However, it remains to be seen whether paragraph (h) of clause 16 will be effective, and whether a review and examination of the marketing system will improve the meat industry, generally. Let us hope the authority does do this with beneficial effect.

I support the Bill.

MR BRYCE (Ascot) [4.37 p.m.]: I feel obliged to remind the Minister that, as far as the people whom I represent are concerned, the abattoir at Midland is an outrage and an utter disgrace. The Minister is aware that this sentiment has been expressed by the member for Swan and his predecessor in this place over some number of years. For those members who are not fully aware of the geographic location of my constituency, I point out that it happens to be contiguous with the electorate of Swan. The disturbing fact as far as the people of Redcliffe, Cloverdale, and Belmont are concerned, is that for the first time the offensive smells and the breathtaking stench of the abattoir is penetrating into these suburbs which I represent.

Mr Davies: You haven't got that on your own.

Mr BRYCE: I am aware that the stench has penetrated as far as Rivervale, but the seriousness of the point I make is that for many years the communities of Midland, Guildford, and Hazelmere have had to wear the presence of this abattoir around their neck like an albatross. They have been almost required to accept that, *ipso facto*, it follows that if one lives near an abattoir one has to put up with the stench and the filth which emanates from it.

The member for Swan has convinced us otherwise; he has presented first-class evidence to this House of the examples that have been set in other capital cities which prove that this is not necessary in respect of the Midland Junction Abattoir, and that it does not follow that people who live in the vicinity of an abattoir simply have to put up with the discomfort.

Every member of this Chamber will readily appreciate that when a member of Parliament receives 30 letters in one week from constituents in one particular neighbourhood as small as Redcliffe, and all the letters relate to a particular issue, the position must suddenly be very serious. I point out to the Minister that last week I received 30 individual letters complaining about this from residents of Redcliffe.

One particular individual drew my attention to his experience during the Second World War when as a member of some transport division he arrived at a town in Italy where in preceding days there had been unbelievable human carnage; in the intervening period of some 30 years he has never experienced a stench to compare with the one emanating from that town—that is, never until now.

I feel a very heavy responsibility to point this out to the Minister. In the last 12 months in particular, ranging from the early hours of the morning to the late afternoon the all pervading stench from the Midland abattoir has penetrated into suburbs south of the river where it has never previously been a problem. A decision was made to extend the abattoir and to step up the level of production with facilities that simply could not cope with the disposal of this production and we have reached the stage where, in my view, legislation such as this to establish an authority is well and truly warranted.

Hopefully, the authority will be able to fulfil its functions; namely, to survey and keep under review the facilities available in this State for the slaughter of animals and to record in respect of each abattoir its effective capacity and actual performance. These are the crucial aspects of this Bill which I sincerely hope do not become a dead letter.

If the new authority accepts its responsibility to monitor the effective capacity of an abattoir and its actual performance, we might hope in the future that the discomfort currently being experienced by people in the electorate I represent and in the suburbs surrounding Midland will be reduced.

Another important function of this new authority will be to encourage research directed towards the improvement of abattoir design, operation and practice. When I wrote to the Minister and complained about the unmistakable stench penetrating the suburbs I represent, and emanating from the abattoir—which has become increasingly unbearable in recent months—I received a reply to the effect that I should exercise a little caution before jumping to the conclusion that the abattoir was at fault; it was pointed out that there were other industries in the area between the Perth Airport and the abattoir which were emitting offensive odours.

It was an attempt to suggest that the abattoir was not to blame, but I should like to suggest otherwise to the Minister, because nobody living in those communities I represent could possibly mistake the frequency with which the smell now is invading the area, or doubt that the smell is emanating from the Midland abattoir. I sincerely hope that, with the establishment of this new authority, we have some hope for the future.

The Minister for Agriculture has indicated that the Government is prepared to spend \$130 000 on special equipment to control effluent, and the smell which emanates from the disposal section of the by-products division of the abattoir. As I pointed out, when within one week a member receives 30 different letters relating to the same subject obviously a great deal of local concern is felt. This is an extremely important local community issue, and one which should not be ignored. I draw the Minister's attention to the fact that the degree of smell has escalated dramatically in the last 12 months and I sincerely hope on behalf of the people I represent that the establishment of this authority—which I support—will give us something more than a pious hope that this problem will be controlled.

The member for Mt. Marshall early in his remarks referred to the decisions of previous Governments in respect of the Baldvis proposal. As I understand it, the people in the immediate neighbourhood of the piece of land which was set aside at Baldvis and on which an abattoir was to be constructed created such a stink—I assure members that no pun is intended—that the Government has been unable to proceed.

They were appalled at the prospect of an abattoir being established in their immediate vicinity on land designed for

urban subdivision. These people are to be forgiven for not having had any association with people living near the Midland abattoir; equally, they could be forgiven for not knowing that in other capital cities it has been possible to establish abattoirs in populated areas, without creating a stink which must be suffered by the people in the neighbourhood. They are not to know that, but I entirely sympathise with their reaction, which has meant that it has not been possible for the Government to proceed to establish an abattoir in that area.

I conclude by reiterating on behalf of the people I represent my hope that with the establishment of this authority empowered with the functions laid down in the Bill—so long as those functions do not become a dead letter—the people I represent who are unfortunate enough to live within smelling distance of the Midland abattoir will have some hope for the future.

**MR OLD** (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) (4.47 p.m.): I thank members who have contributed to this debate for their general support and indicate I appreciate the concern which has been expressed. I will endeavour to elucidate a little on the problems which have beset some members in their electorates. Unfortunately the member for Warren is not in the Chamber. However, he covered the situation very fully when speaking to the second reading of this Bill. He is well aware of the situation which presently obtains. He was highly critical of the fact that in 1969 the Brand Government decided to go ahead with the expansion of the Midland Junction Abattoir.

It is very easy with the benefit of the hindsight we all enjoy—nobody needs spectacles for hindsight—to say this was an incorrect decision. However, I challenge any member in this House to say he would have been able to solve the problem with which that Government was faced at the time, in the drought situation which existed. It is all very well to say decentralisation should have taken place five years earlier; but the Midland abattoir itself represented a considerable capital investment as was mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and this investment was carried on by the following Government which was of another political colour.

Quite obviously, no effort was made to taper off that capital expenditure, halt the expansion and improvements taking place at Midland and establish an abattoir somewhere else. During the three-year period of office of the Tonkin Government, as much money was spent as the Brand Government spent in the previous three years. Let he who is without sin cast the first stone; if there is any blame to be apportioned, it should be equally shared by the Governments concerned.

**Mr Bryce:** What about the last 2½ years?

**Mr OLD:** In the last 2½ years the capital expenditure at Midland has been very low. In 1974-75, this amounted to \$487 000, while in 1975-76 it was only \$217 000. This can be compared with \$2.8 million, \$1.5 million and \$2 million for the previous three years.

**Mr Bryce:** What about the capital expenditure needed to control the stench?

**Mr OLD:** As the honourable member himself pointed out, the capital expenditure required in this direction currently is being spent. However, I shall deal with the situation as it was enunciated.

The member for Warren made mention of the constitution of the proposed authority and how its members shall be appointed. Except for the first two mentioned, who will be Government employees or employees of Government instrumentalities and will be appointed by the Director of Agriculture on the one hand and by myself on the other, other members will be the representatives of the meat industry, the representatives of farming organisations, and the representative of workers within the meat industry. They will be appointed from a panel of names which I shall ask to be submitted to me.

Some pleasure and surprise was expressed at the fact that the Government has seen fit to include a representative of the union on the proposed meat authority. I am afraid that some of the debate this afternoon has been rather confusing because we have had the meat commission mixed up with the proposed meat authority which this Bill is hopefully forming. But when the Meat Industry Commission was formed criticism was expressed from the other side of the House that the member of the meat employees union was not included on that commission. We had no intention of having a union member on that body as it was a management situation and the commission was set up purely and simply to manage Government instrumentalities. But I did give an assurance that we would look into the possibility of including a member of that union on the proposed authority.

I had an interview with members of the union, including the secretary, and gave an undertaking that I would consider and put to Cabinet the idea that it should be represented. We were very happy to have it represented on the proposed authority as the union has been represented on the meat advisory committee and reports indicated that it has been of assistance to have the union representative on that committee. We have now taken the situation a step further and will be placing a union representative on the proposed authority.

The function of the proposed authority is purely an advisory one. Although under the Statute it will have some teeth and a staff of its own, its function will be concerned more with research and recommendations with regard to the location of abattoirs. It is also charged with the responsibility of matching abattoir capacity to the livestock industry. This is most important.

The member for Warren made a point which I do not think is valid. I am sorry that he is not here to criticise me by interjection. He said that in the past the growers of this State have been disadvantaged to the extent of 2c or 3c a kilogram compared with Eastern States markets because our abattoir capacity was inadequate. I challenge this. Western Australia does not have a great home market for mutton and we rely to a great extent on export. Consequently, prices in Western Australia are controlled to a large degree by export prices. This applies equally to beef. However, in the Eastern States, where most of the population of Australia is concentrated, there is a very healthy local market which controls to a degree the price paid in the saleyards there.

I point out also that in the past 12 months prices in Western Australia have been consistently better than, if not comparable with, those in the Eastern States. Therefore, I think some of the so-called useless things which have been introduced by this Government are paying off and I am quite convinced that, through the efforts of this Government and of farmer organisations, we are getting more rationale into the meat industry, especially from the point of view of sales.

The argument that the charges at Midland Junction and Robb Jetty, the Government instrumentalities, are too high, is quite erroneous. I think the member for Vasse pointed out by interjection that the charges in Western Australia are very reasonable when compared with those in the Eastern States and in fact are well below most. On average they are below other charges but in some lines our charges may be a little above one or two abattoirs throughout Australia.

I point out also that in running a service abattoir staff must be available at all times. It is quite easy to say that if the Midland Junction Abattoir had not been extended and we had started to build another abattoir, that second abattoir could have been closed down seasonally. I can imagine the unhappiness of the employees being told at a certain stage of the year that they were no longer required.

Mr Skidmore: They still have that forced upon them at the moment.

Mr OLD: That is correct.

Mr Skidmore: They accept that as part of the industry.

Mr OLD: To a degree, but I think the member for Swan will realise that in a service abattoir staff must be available at all times to kill for the trade. In a privately-owned abattoir if the meat is not there to be killed then they just do not kill and they minimise their expenses.

Mr Skidmore: It might be better to have the export market predominantly run and operated by a Government-owned service abattoir which will then relieve that situation because it will have a profitable organisation to back it up.

Mr OLD: I think the member is getting around to a philosophy which is a long way off. The member for Swan is well aware that there are many privately-owned abattoirs in Western Australia. In fact the member for Cockburn quite rightly boasted that the abattoir at Katanning was the result of negotiations with the previous Government. I do not deny this because it is quite correct. So we are not going to abandon the ship and say to those people, "No more will you be killing export stock." That is what they were put there for.

Mr Bertram: Is the Bunbury one up to standard?

Mr OLD: It is up to standard or it would not have the right to exist. I shall come to that point in a moment because there seems to be some confusion about the licensing of abattoirs and who does what to whom.

I turn now to the matter of the unpleasant odour at Midland Junction. I have sympathy for the members who mentioned this fact very forcibly on behalf of their constituents. I am not unaware of the stench at Midland. In my home town there is an export abattoir and when there is a breakdown in the by-products plant we get the same type of treatment as the people in Midland. For the sake of the member for Swan, who said that I did not want their stink, I shall repeat that I do not. I am not unused to it and, therefore, I have very much sympathy with the people who are experiencing problems in the electorates of Ascot and Swan. I can assure members that the Government and the meat commission, which now administers the Midland abattoir, are both aware of the situation. The newly-formed meat commission has taken expert advice on this matter. I think this has been well indicated by the fact that, because of a decision given by the so-called inefficient Midland Junction Abattoir Board, the meat commission has gone ahead with the installation of four new aerators in the ponding system. I understand this has made a tremendous difference to that source of the problem.

Mr Skidmore: It is working very well. I have had a look at it.

Mr OLD: Unfortunately that was not the only source of this terrible odour. As a consequence, the meat commission has entered into a contract with Alfa-Laval Pty. Ltd. which has given a guarantee that it will be able to cure the odour being emitted from the by-products section. The member for Swan intimated that although I said this would be installed by the end of the month and the problem would be solved, it will be many months before this happens. I should like to refute that suggestion.

Mr Skidmore: The statement was made in the Press under your name to that effect. It is reported in the *Swan Express*.

Mr OLD: I said by the end of September. The *Swan Express* had better check its source of information because my Press release stated that it would be completed by the end of September.

My up-to-date information indicates it will be probably the first week in October when this will be completed, because some of the equipment has been held up at the wharves in Sydney. I do not know the reason for that, and I leave it to the imagination of members to decide. The installation of the low-level feed into the continuous rendering plant was completed on the 28th August; as such it is a continuous process.

Mr Skidmore: It is not a continuous rendering plant.

Mr OLD: Some other equipment has now arrived, and work will start on its installation next week. The equipment which has been held up in Sydney will not arrive here for a week or two, so I cannot give the actual date of completion. However, it will not be very far after the end of September, as I said in good faith recently. Many people who are concerned and worried will receive relief in the near future. I can assure members who have expressed concern that I will take an interest in this matter and keep them informed on what is happening.

The member for Roe made mention of inaccurate market forecasting, and he was critical of the fact that the powers that be were not able to match the abattoir capacity with the livestock produced. Of course, that is the very purpose of setting up this authority.

The question of accurate market forecasting was a matter of lengthy discussion at the last meeting of the Agricultural Council. This is of concern not only to Western Australia, but to all States. We are hoping that a body will be set up shortly which will be in a position to forecast the markets more accurately than has been the case in the past.

I should point out that market forecasting has always been and will continue to be a gamble. It is not a mathematical

calculation. It is a forecast based upon the possible consumption of meat, and the possible proliferation of stock; therefore to a degree there is some chance in making market forecasts.

Mr Skidmore: I would like the Minister to pursue with the Federal Government the question of marketing in the USSR.

Mr OLD: A contract has been signed, but the prices are not very good. Virtually it will be a dumping market, but it will present us with an opportunity to get rid of some beef. Whether or not Western Australia shares in that market I cannot say. It is a question of shipping and the quantity of meat. We certainly have the beef to supply that market. Unfortunately the specification has been changed a little, and the beef we have in store cannot be exported on the new basis.

Mr Skidmore: I understand we can meet the standard requirements if we can get the market.

Mr OLD: That is so, but not from beef in store. The meat authority will not only be involved in the matching of abattoir space, but also the ancillary which goes with abattoirs, and this includes cold storage.

At this point we are again confronted with a problem, and it has been exacerbated by the drought. A larger number of stock have been coming into the abattoir when normally there would not be a flush in supply.

Mr Skidmore: It might help if the wholesale butchers built their own cold storage facilities.

Mr OLD: It is projected that a great deal of freezer space will be installed by private enterprise. Perhaps the honourable member will take comfort from that fact. Let us not lose sight of the fact that in the past this has been worked out on a throughput and shipping basis. Unfortunately we were caught a little unaware by the seasonal conditions.

Shipping is arranged well beforehand, and it has been necessary for the meat commission to charter a special ship to take some of the meat away from Western Australia, so that we can be assured for the time being that our freezer space is adequate. This matter will be kept under review.

Mr Skidmore: It is unrealistic for a service abattoir to provide facilities to the private enterprise sector, when it should be used as a service abattoir.

Mr OLD: If we had not provided the facilities for the private sector, the losses which have been picked up by the Government would have been far greater. We have some very good exporters and processors who use the boning rooms at Midland Junction and Robb Jetty, and they must be provided with freezer space. We

either have to cut down on staff at those establishments or provide the required facilities. In the past we provided these facilities, and as far as I am concerned we will continue to provide them, because they are a very necessary part of a service abattoir.

The meat commission has chartered a special ship to come to Western Australia to relieve the situation. This is a very positive step by the commission, and it should be commended for taking that action.

The member for Mt. Marshall referred to a Bill introduced previously which dealt with the licensing of abattoirs. I should point out that the licensing of abattoirs has nothing to do with the meat authority. The licensing of abattoirs within the State to process meat for home consumption is handled by the Public Health Department.

The Act which is to be repealed by the Bill before us provides generally for the licensing of export abattoirs, but it has been superseded by the Commonwealth legislation. Therefore it is no longer required, as the Department of Primary Industry is currently responsible for the licensing of export abattoirs. The Act is redundant, and we have taken the opportunity under the Bill before us to repeal it.

I reiterate my appreciation of the general support of the Bill by members. I hope in the near future I will be able to give a more solid demonstration of our attempt to solve the problem at Midland Junction Abattoir which affects the comfort and the living conditions of people in the Swan and Ascot electorates.

Once again I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

*As to Third Reading*

**MR OLD** (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) (5.10 p.m.): I move—

That leave be granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Old (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

## FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*Returned*

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

## COMPANIES (CO-OPERATIVE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*Council's Message*

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

## QUESTIONS (19): ON NOTICE

### 1. AGRICULTURAL LAND

*Eastern Wheatbelt: Salt Encroachment*

Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Approximately how many hectares of cleared land in the eastern wheatbelt region have become too salt affected for cereal production?
- (2) What is this expressed as a percentage of all land used for agriculture in this region?
- (3) Is it a fact the commissioner for soil conservation may control the clearing of land for agriculture in this region?
- (4) Will the Government make available to land holders low interest loans, similar to the key dam scheme, for the purpose of soil conservation?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) and (2) Taking the eastern wheatbelt region as being the shires of Kellerberrin, Nungarin, Westonla, Merredin, Yilgarn, Bruce Rock, Narembeen and Kondinin, the following information is available from the 1974 saltland survey:

Area of saltland previously used for crops and pasture = 15 111 ha.

Area of saltland as a percent of cleared land = 0.82%.

- (3) Under the Soil Conservation Act there is provision to proclaim soil conservation districts and to make regulations for the control of clearing in relation to soil erosion.

The eastern wheatbelt region is included in two proclaimed soil conservation districts.

- (4) The Soil Conservation Act makes provision for loans but the low cost of erosion control works required on farms has enabled farmers to meet expenses from normal operating costs.

Financial assistance for soil conservation throughout Australia is being reviewed as part of the Commonwealth/States soil conservation study expected to be completed later this year.

## 2. POLICE

*Letters Concerning Mr N. Dye*

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Will he please advise if he received my two letters dated 13th July and 18th August, 1976, concerning Mr N. Dye of Collie?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes" will he advise when a reply to my correspondence can be anticipated as I have not received any acknowledgment of my two letters?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A reply to this correspondence has been handed to the member.

## 3. PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE

*Kirup*

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Government considering establishing a pre-school centre at Kirup?
- (2) If "Yes" will he advise—
  - (a) the location of the school;
  - (b) the number of children who will attend the centre?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Kirup is included in the small school programme in which provision for five year olds will be made by using the existing primary school.
- (2) (a) Kirup.  
(b) Up to seven if all attend.

## 4. TRAFFIC

*Government Vehicles: Repair Orders*

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Traffic:

Since the Road Traffic Authority was established will he please advise—

- (a) the number of Government vehicles traded in on new vehicles;
- (b) the car firms involved;
- (c) of the vehicles traded how many had repair orders issued against them by Road Traffic Authority examiners following the removal of the Government plates?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Assuming the question relates to the Road Traffic Authority vehicles sold:—

- (a) 111 motor cycles.  
133 cars and vans.

- (b) vehicles are sold by tender or auction, not traded, with plates removed.

Names of buyers are not readily available from the Government Stores or Tender Board. This information would involve considerable research.

- (c) Figures are not available. Vehicles are presented for examination without number plates. Application for licence is usually marked "ex Government", but this information is not collated.

5 and 6. *These questions were postponed.*

## 7. HAINAULT TOURIST MINE

*Acquisition by Museum*

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has an agreement been concluded whereby the Western Australian Museum would purchase the leasehold title to the site and certain specified plant and equipment of the Hainault Tourist Mine at Kalgoorlie?
- (2) Was approval given by the former Australian Government for moneys to be committed by that Government for the development of this tourist mine as a museum?
- (3) If so, what was the sum referred to in (2) above?
- (4) Has this said sum been paid by the Australian Government and to whom?
- (5) If the answer to (1) is other than in the affirmative, would he please explain the current situation?

Mr O'Neil (for Sir CHARLES COURT) replied:

- (1) to (4) No.
- (5) In 1974 the operators of the Hainault Tourist Mine applied through the Department of Tourism for a Commonwealth grant to assist in the cost of the further development of their undertaking. Subsequently the Western Australian Museum became concerned for the preservation of the surface equipment at the mine and negotiations with the Commonwealth and tourist mine proprietors were conducted in association with the Director of the Museum. Initially it was proposed to purchase the lease and improvements on behalf of the Museum Board with the assistance of a Commonwealth tourist grant of \$50 000. The tourist mine operations were to continue as before under a lease agreement.

Agreement has now been reached with the Commonwealth Government for the grant to be expended

on purchasing, on behalf of the Museum, buildings, plant, equipment and other items of historical interest presently owned by the Hainault Tourist Mine Pty. Ltd.

Negotiations to this end are still in progress.

It is proposed that, for the time being, the mining material involved which is of tremendous importance to industrial archaeology, will remain in the care and custody of the operators of the Hainault Tourist Mine who propose to expand their present operation.

## 8. WHALING INDUSTRY

### Quota

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Has the Federal Government agreed to the recommendation of the International Whaling Commission to reduce the whale quota which Australia is to receive?
- (2) If "No" has the Western Australian Government pressed the Federal Government to resist such reduction or to lodge an objection, and if so, with what result?
- (3) At what level does the International Whaling Commission propose the Australian whale quota should be fixed?
- (4) Can Cheynes Beach Holdings Ltd. of Albany continue to operate if the recommended quota of the International Whaling Commission is accepted?
- (5) What has been the total value of whale products produced by Cheyne Beach Holdings Ltd. in each of the past five years?
- (6) How many persons were employed in the whaling industry in Albany during the last season?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Acceptance of the quotas for the various whale stocks by divisions on a global basis, as set out by the International Whaling Commission, is subject to ratification by member countries by 30th September, 1976.
- (2) The Government's policy is that rational acceptance of the whale stocks should be permitted based on the advice of the scientific committee of the International Whaling Commission.
- (3) The International Whaling Commission does not set quotas by countries, but only on a global basis. The quota for Division 5 stock, which is fished by Australia, has been set by the International Whaling Commission as 624.

- (4) This is an economic decision to be made by the company. I have not been advised that the company is considering not operating.

- (5) Approximate values are—

Year ending the 30th November,

1971: \$1.8 million.

1972: \$1.6 million.

1973: \$1.6 million.

1974: \$2.1 million.

1975: \$1.8 million.

- (6) Approximately 100.

## 9. INSURANCE COMPANIES

### Registrations

Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

Referring to question 8 of 8th September, will he advise—

- (a) the name, structure and Country or State (of Australia) of the head office of the 25 life assurance offices writing business in Western Australia;
- (b) the name, structure and country or State (of Australia) whichever is applicable of the head office of the 70 general insurance companies referred to in (b) of the answer to question 8 of 8th September, 1976?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (a) and (b) This information requires some research and will be conveyed to the member as soon as possible.

## 10. ABATTOIR

### Esperance: Establishment

Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is it proposed that the establishment of an abattoir at Esperance will proceed?
- (2) If "Yes" when is it expected that construction will proceed?
- (3) In what way and to what extent is the Government intending to assist the project?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

- (1) The proponents are confident that it will proceed.
- (2) Not determined.
- (3) By way of Government guarantee to assist with the capital costs.

## 11. MILK

### Additional Quotas: Commencement of Production

Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Of the recent allocation of 50 milk quotas to commence supply in



mid-1977, would he advise the number of farmers who have accepted allocation?

- (2) In regard to (1), if there are any farmers who had not yet accepted the allotted quota, would he indicate—

- (a) the number; and  
(b) from which area?

- (3) Has the Dairy Industry Authority been requested to allow any farmer the opportunity to supply quota milk prior to allotted time in 1977, and if so, would he indicate the number concerned?
- (4) Of the 50 farmers allocated milk quotas would he indicate the number, as assessed by the Department of Agriculture who would be in a position to commence supply of quota from January, 1977?
- (5) Does his department consider that the increased salinity of water in the Wellington Dam will have any effect on summer milk production in the State's dairying irrigation districts?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) 49.
- (2) (a) One—who has not as yet formally accepted.  
(b) Kirup.
- (3) Yes. Three farmers.
- (4) The possible date for the commencement of the supply of quota has not been assessed by my department.
- (5) There is no conclusive evidence that the salinity of the irrigation water to be supplied from Wellington Dam in the coming irrigation season will have an adverse effect on pasture production in the Collie Irrigation Area.

## 12. ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BOARD

### *Amending Legislation*

Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it intended to amend legislation controlling the Artificial Breeding Board during this session of Parliament?
- (2) Can he substantiate whether purchasers of semen will be required to have an approved certificate of insemination from an Artificial Breeding Board course before sale of semen from either the board or other sources will be permitted?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The draft legislation provides for the issue of certificates of competency to persons who artificially inseminate stock.

The legislation does not propose that an owner of stock must hold such a certificate before he is able to purchase semen or to inseminate his own stock.

## 13. SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS

### *Sex Education Course*

Mr HARMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many pilot schools were involved in the sex education course?
- (2) What are these schools?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) In 1976 six schools were involved.
- (2) (a) Kalamunda  
(b) Nedlands  
(c) North Balga Junior Primary  
(d) North Balga  
(e) Mirrabooka  
(f) Palmyra.

## 14. SCHOOL

### *Flinders Park, Albany*

Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Government intend to proceed with the plan to build a primary school at Flinders Park near Albany?
- (2) If "Yes" when is building planned to commence?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) A primary school site has been earmarked in Flinders Park. No definite programme has been scheduled for the establishment of a school on the site.

## 15. POLICE STATION AND COURTHOUSE

### *Cranbrook*

Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

When is it planned to replace the police and courthouse facilities at Cranbrook?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

No precise date can be given.  
A letter from the Minister explaining the current position has recently been forwarded to the member.

16 and 17. *These questions were postponed.*

## 18. MIGRATORY BIRDS

### *Agreement for Protection*

Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

Is the State Government and/or any of its departments under any obligation with respect to matters

contained in the "Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Japan for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Birds in Danger of Extinction and their Environment signed at Tokyo on 6th February, 1974" and reference to which is contained in the Schedule to the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1975?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

A draft of the agreement was agreed to by the Council of Conservation Ministers at an early stage of negotiations. I am advised that, so far as Western Australia is concerned, the State had already effected legislation, and was taking conservation measures consistent with the terms of the agreement and thus, in my view, no new obligations will devolve on the State as a direct result of the agreement.

## 19. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### *Wooroloo Brook: Pollution*

Mr MOILER, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Is he aware of complaints that Wooroloo Brook is continuing to be polluted by liquid from the Wundowie Charcoal-Iron Works?
- (2) Does he have any information which would suggest that the pollution is attributable to the Wundowie works or the sewerage lagoons in the area?
- (3) What action has he taken to correct the pollution of the brook either from the Wundowie works and/or the sewerage lagoons?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) Complaints have been received concerning contamination of Wooroloo Brook, and an inspection of the area has indicated a run-off from the Wundowie Charcoal-Iron Works entering Wooroloo Brook. Discussions are being held with the principals of the Wundowie Charcoal-Iron Works.

## QUESTIONS (4): WITHOUT NOTICE

### 1. POLICE

#### *Drug Squad: Information Funds*

Mr NANOVICH, to the Minister for Police:

Does the drug squad have funds available to pay for information supplied on drug pedlars and drug usage?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of his question. I was under the impression the drug

squad did not have funds available, and I advised accordingly. However, on further investigation I have been advised there is an allocation of \$100 available for the purpose.

## 2. MT. CHARLOTTE GOLDMINE

### *Closure*

Mr MAY, to the Deputy Premier:

It was my intention to ask my question of the Premier, having regard to the fact that he would have been able to answer it immediately. I gave some notice of the question to the Premier's Department, so I will direct my question to the Deputy Premier.

In connection with the working session to be conducted at Kalgoorlie on Saturday, the 11th September, in an endeavour to counter the effect of the impending closure of the Mt. Charlotte Goldmine and for which invitations are being despatched by the Premier's Department, will he advise—

- (a) who will be attending the meeting;
- (b) have the shadow Minister for Mines and local members of Parliament been invited;
- (c) if not, will he give urgent consideration to this aspect with a view to obtaining maximum support and co-operation in an endeavour to resolve the present unsatisfactory situation.

Mr O'NEIL replied:

To the best of my knowledge arrangements for the working session being attended by the Premier at Kalgoorlie on Saturday are being made by the Kalgoorlie Town Council and the Boulder Shire Council.

I also understand that the local members are being invited to a luncheon which is separate from and independent of the working session.

It should be appreciated by the honourable member that Saturday's meeting is not in the nature of a public meeting but is intended to be what has already been announced, namely, a genuine working session to see how local authorities and the Government can co-operate in achieving the desired objectives.

I will refer the question to the Premier on his return this evening.

## 3. MT. CHARLOTTE GOLDMINE

*Closure*

Mr MAY, to the Deputy Premier:

Further to the reply the Deputy Premier gave to my last question, in view of the urgency of this matter and the importance of it, would he contact the Premier in an endeavour to ascertain whether he is prepared to invite the local members to attend the working session? Even though they will be at the luncheon, surely their knowledge of the industry would be of advantage to the working session.

Mr O'NEIL replied:

I have indicated it is my understanding the invitations were extended by the Town of Kalgoorlie and the Shire of Boulder. I think the Premier will be in the Chamber before we complete this sitting, and perhaps the honourable member can take the matter up with him directly.

It is my understanding the invitations to the working session were not issued by the Premier.

## 4. EDUCATION

*Abrolhos Islands: Report*

Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Minister received the report prepared by a departmental officer, Mr F. O'Sullivan, following his visit to the Abrolhos Islands to examine education facilities?
- (2) If "Yes" to (1), will the Minister please table a copy of the report or make a copy available to myself?
- (3) Has any decision been made on my submission that the Education Department accept a greater responsibility for the education of children who are located on the islands during the rock lobster season?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3), will he please provide details?
- (5) If "No" to (3), when does the Minister anticipate being able to make a decision on this matter?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) and (4) The Education Department intends assuming greater responsibility for the education of these children but has not yet completed the plan in detail.
- (5) Not applicable.

## LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*In Committee*

Resumed from the 7th September. The Chairman of Committees (Mr Thompson) in the Chair; Mr O'Neil (Minister for Works) in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 7: Section 24 amended—

The further consideration of the clause was postponed after the following amendment, moved by Mr T. D. Evans, had been partly considered—

Page 4, lines 5 to 9—Delete paragraph (a).

Mr O'NEIL: I want to indicate at the outset I propose to request the member for Kalgoorlie to withdraw his amendment because I intend to propose a course of action which may not require the amendment to be moved.

In giving my reasons I will be canvassing the whole of the provisions of clause 7, and I trust that you, Mr Chairman, will give me the tolerance you usually extend to members of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I will.

Mr O'NEIL: I believe there is a course of action available to the Committee which will resolve a considerable number of problems in one fell swoop. Before I give my reasons I think it is important that, having carried some maps with me for some time, I seek your permission, Mr Chairman, to table them.

It will be recalled that the provisions of clause 7 divide the State into two zones; an inner zone within a radius of 160 kilometres of the GPO, and the outer zone which is the balance of the State. The member for Swan obtained from the Surveyor-General—or the Department of Lands and Surveys—a map of the State showing an arc at a radius of 160 kilometres from the GPO. The arc on that map passed through the Town of Collie, or through a dot on the map which is the situation of the Town of Collie.

A map which I had obtained previously shows the arc passing a little distance from the dot purporting to be the Town of Collie. The map which I have now has been certified by no less a person than the Acting Surveyor-General. I think that the map which I have is precisely the same as that produced by the member for Swan, and with your permission, Mr Chairman, I will table it.

*The map was placed on the Table of the House.*

I went further and asked for an enlargement of the portion of the map showing the Town of Collie and the arc which was at a radius of 160 kilometres from the GPO in Perth. I wanted to see whether or not the line went through the middle of the Town of Collie, and whether, in fact, it split the hotel complexes in half.

I have to report that the map supplied to me, and which was drawn under section 65 of the Evidence Act and certified by the Surveyor-General, indicates that the arc passes through some allotments at the extreme south end of Collie. The allotments appear to be vacant, and the six hotels in Collie are all situated in the inner zone.

Mr Bertram: How far would it be to the nearest hotel from that line?

Mr O'NEIL: I will table the map; I am not sure of the scale.

If the Committee decides to follow the course of action I intend to propose we will not have to worry about the map anyway. I am suggesting that the member for Kalgoorlie should consider withdrawing his amendment for the purpose of allowing the Committee to defeat clause 7. We will then maintain the *status quo* in respect of liquor trading, and we will not have to worry about an inner or an outer zone.

My analysis of clause 7 indicates that it contains four amendments to section 24 of the parent Act. The clause contains four paragraphs, (a), (b), (c), and (d). The first amendment is purely of a machinery nature and would be necessary only if we accepted the amendment contained in paragraph (c) of the clause.

The amendment contained in paragraph (b) is not of any major significance. It would merely clarify the law in relation to artists, and would include the singular as well as the plural. Whilst it may have been thought necessary, to tidy up the law, I do not think it is of any great significance.

The amendment contained in paragraph (c) is the one which is causing us some trouble, so I will come back to that. The amendment contained in paragraph (d) relates to the application by a hotel licensee for an occasional permit. Currently such applications must be made no later than 48 hours before a function is to be held, and it is felt the period could be increased to seven days or such lesser period as the court may determine. This amendment is designed to facilitate the operations of the court, but again, although desirable, it is certainly not of earth-shattering significance.

We come back to the one amendment which is significant and which has caused us all the trouble and was the reason we postponed consideration of clause 7. We come back to it at this stage, having dealt with all the other clauses in the Bill.

As I have pointed out, this amendment creates the two zones—the inner and the outer zones. It was introduced because at the time the Bill was drafted concern was felt about an element of rowdiness and larrikinism which was occurring mainly at metropolitan and beachside hotels

during the summer months. The Government's suggestion to overcome the problem was to create a situation where all hotels opened and closed at the same times on Sundays, so there would be no overlapping of hours enabling people to consume liquor on licensed premises for more than four hours with an interval in between.

It is quite obvious the Parliament is not prepared to accept that proposal and I do not intend to press it. It is my personal view that the establishment of two zones in which liquor trading hours and laws are different will create more problems than it will solve. On a previous occasion we got away from the bona fide traveller provision, under which a person had to travel 25 miles before he could obtain liquor on Sundays, by creating a situation where some hotels could be open on Sundays and others could not.

The point does not warrant the time the Committee has spent in trying to resolve it. If we agree to vote against clause 7, all the problems of trading hours and zones created by the proposal will disappear and we will be back to the *status quo*. Some members may see in clause 7 an opportunity to do things which the clause was not intended to do, but I can appeal to the Committee's common sense at least to "catchee monkey softly, softly". I have been aware of the Committee's opinion for some time and if we proceed with this proposal I am sure we will become bogged down in problems.

I want to go a little further and say whether or not the Committee accepts my proposition and agrees to any other amendment to clause 7, we will have reached the stage where the Bill will need to be recommitted. If we accept the amendments moved by the member for Kalgoorlie the Bill will need to be recommitted to cater for amendments to other clauses. We postponed consideration of clause 7 in order to make some progress but the Bill will have to be recommitted if these amendments are carried.

If the Committee agrees to dispose of clause 7 altogether, the Bill will still have to be recommitted to make amendments to the remaining clauses in the Bill consequential upon the deletion of clause 7. The Parliamentary Draftsman advises me this will be necessary in any circumstance.

The procedure will then be that I will propose that consideration of the Committee's report be made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House, the Bill will be held down on the notice paper until the Parliamentary Draftsman has designed amendments to sort out the mess we may have got ourselves into, and then the Bill will be recommitted to put before the Committee the amendments consequent upon the deletion of clause 7. I suggest in all good sense and logic that appears to be the best course to follow.

The other two relatively minor amendments in clause 7, regarding artists and permits for occasional licences, could perhaps be considered in the recommittal stage. Those amendments merely clarify the law and facilitate the operation of the court; there is no principle in them. We seem to be seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and I hope the Committee will adopt my suggestion.

Before I do anything else, it will be necessary for me to have some expression of opinion from the Committee. If it is favourable to my proposition, I am reasonably certain the member for Kalgoorlie will withdraw his amendments. We can then vote against the clause and dispose, for some time, of the Liquor Act Amendment Bill.

Mr T. D. EVANS: The amendments I proposed to clause 7 referred to the portion of the clause dealing with the hours in which Sunday trading could take place. My amendments sought to leave the liquor law in Western Australia as it is, without writing artificial zones into it.

I am very pleased to accept the Minister's assurance that the existing law in regard to Sunday trading hours will remain intact. I will have achieved my purpose. I therefore seek leave to withdraw my amendments on the understanding that Sunday trading hours will remain as they are now.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr SKIDMORE: I am unable to co-operate with the Minister because I have had an amendment on the notice paper for some time and I wish to move it to protect the interests I am representing. I hope this will not be taken as some of my time. If the Minister wishes to report progress, I would like to seek leave to continue my remarks at a later date.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think you will have any problem because next time the Bill comes before the Committee you will be entitled to make two more speeches.

Mr SKIDMORE: I am content to leave it at that.

### *Progress*

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

*House adjourned at 5.41 p.m.*

## **Legislative Council**

Tuesday, the 14th September, 1976

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### **BILLS (12): ASSENT**

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. The Confederation of Western Australian Industry (Incorporated) Bill.
2. Alsatian Dog Act Repeal Bill.
3. Local Government Act Amendment Bill (No. 3).
4. Building Societies Bill.
5. Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
6. Country Towns Sewerage Act Amendment Bill.
7. Law Reform Commission Act Amendment Bill.
8. Stock Diseases (Regulations) Act Amendment Bill.
9. Cattle Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.
10. Main Roads Act Amendment Bill.
11. Industrial and Commercial Employees' Housing Act Amendment Bill.
12. Teachers' Registration Bill.

### **QUESTIONS (7): ON NOTICE**

#### **1. RAILWAYS**

##### *Suburban Services: Electrification*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Health, representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) On what date was an application made to the Australian Government for financial assistance for the electrification of the suburban railway service?
- (2) (a) Have any subsequent applications been made; and  
(b) if so, on what date/s?
- (3) What reply has been received from the Australian Government?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) Verbal application in August, 1975, by Mr O'Connor to the Commonwealth Minister for Transport, Mr Jones, in Canberra.
- (2) (a) and (b) The matter has been subsequently discussed with Mr Nixon on a number of occasions.
- (3) In a letter dated 7th July, 1976, Mr Nixon said—

My predecessor agreed last August that the Bureau of Transport Economics would review the Wilbur Smith Report. This has now been done and the bureau has reported that investment in the busway system is superior to investment in the urban rail system. The bureau thus supports the findings of the Wilbur Smith Report.