

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 14th September, 1978

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney General) [2.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. F. E. McKENZIE (East Metropolitan) [2.42 p.m.]: During the Committee stage last evening, debate took place in relation to clauses 6 and 7 of this Bill and at that time I did not hear the Minister outline any amount in relation to the security deposit. There is provision in the Bill for a formula to be applied in respect of this deposit but no amounts are listed in the Bill. It seems it is a matter purely to be determined by the State Energy Commission.

My concern in relation to clause 7, and proposed new section 43A states that although no deposit is currently required by the commission for domestic users this could well apply in the future. My attention has been directed today to the minimum deposit required for commercial users, an amount of \$100, which can range, perhaps, to many thousands of dollars.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Has someone been asked to pay that amount already?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Yes, I had an inquiry today from people who have the business next door to my office.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They are doing that before the Bill has even been assented to?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: That is correct. I was queried on this very point. Perhaps the Attorney General can give reasons as to why it has been so.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: They have been taking deposits for years. The honourable Ron Thompson admitted he paid a deposit years ago.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: My concern is that this formula which has now been prescribed in relation to the point I have raised has as a

minimum an amount of \$100. I do not know how that minimum figure is arrived at.

If one looks at the formula in the case of quarterly accounts—we generally deal in quarterly accounts—the formula arrived at in proposed new subsection (2) (b) (iii) is 1½ times the average amount of the quarterly account taken over the three preceding quarterly periods. There is a problem in relation to people starting up in business for a first time.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: You have given the explanation.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I would like to know how the commission would determine that someone has to pay \$100 as a minimum deposit. It might well be that the person's previous quarterly account was only \$30 and 1½ times that is \$45. However, he is required to put down a deposit of \$100. Proposed new subsection (3) states as follows—

(3) Where a deposit is made or any other security is given in excess of the amount applicable pursuant to subsection (2) of this section, the amount required by the Commission shall be re-assessed and the security modified or the depositor refunded or credited accordingly.

Is the commission going to do that? I can see difficulties with this.

We have lost the deposit system. It is not applying to the domestic rate but it may well apply in future. I can envisage a lot of people, especially those in the lower-income group, having difficulty in placing that sort of money with the commission. This is what we are agreeing to here; the right for the commission to introduce at any time a deposit for domestic users in addition to commercial users.

Certainly we will be asked by people similar to the gentleman next door to my office about the requirement to put down \$100 as a deposit, which the commission considers the minimum amount. I am opposed to this provision in the Bill.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney General) [2.48 p.m.]: Clause 7 deals with deposits and guarantees to secure accounts. The first part of proposed section 43A (2) refers to domestic tariff deposits; that is, where a consumer is on a domestic tariff and there may be a requirement to pay a deposit.

I said last night, and I repeat, that there are no deposits taken at present from any new domestic consumers.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: They can be introduced.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: The honourable Mr McKenzie wanted to know what the current practice was.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We know that.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Some members might know that but I have to make it transparently clear that there is power to do that. There are some people such as the Hon. Ron Thompson and myself, and no doubt other members, who did pay deposits to the SEC when, as domestic consumers, we had our electricity connected to our premises.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Not at 1½ times the amount.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: No-one said it had to be.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: It is now.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Those deposits were not taken under this Bill. This is new legislation which has yet to be proclaimed.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Consumers can be up for considerably more than \$10.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: The deposit which some people paid was 15s. Others paid \$2 and so on depending on the amount prescribed by the SEC at the time and over a long period of years. This has been going on since time immemorial; probably since the SEC first started. The commission has been taking appropriate deposits from domestic consumers.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: If they introduced a domestic rate now, in the case of quarterly accounts the formula will be for 1½ times that figure based on the last three quarterly accounts.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: No, that is not true. I am talking about domestic consumers. I have not gone on to commercial consumers yet. The amount will be such amount as is prescribed. If we look at proposed new subsection (2) (a) on page 10 we find that the deposit will be such amount as has been deposited with the commission in respect thereof prior to the coming into operation of the section. That includes depositors such as myself. I cannot remember whether I paid \$2 or \$3, and Mr Thompson probably paid a somewhat similar amount. That is not 1½ times. That is the amount which was then prescribed and it has varied over the years from time to time.

The provision goes on to indicate, "or such other amount as may be prescribed". There is no doubt that it can be varied as a result of inflation or for any other reason. However, since July, 1977, the SEC has not charged a domestic deposit and I want that to be made transparently clear.

The commission has power to charge it just as it has had in the past, but has not charged it. However it may make a charge in the future.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We would rather it came back to Parliament before it was done.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It is to be prescribed. The other part of proposed new subsection (2) refers to other tariffs, and they would include the industrial and commercial consumers and others in the business sector. If a person is running a business and asks the SEC to connect his premises to the power supply—say it is a small factory in Osborne Park—the SEC would ask for a deposit. It does so for business consumers and it will ask for a deposit depending on the nature of the account. If it is a monthly account it is twice the average monthly amount. That is what it will do under the Bill. In the case of a bi-monthly account the amount will be twice the bi-monthly figure, while in the case of a quarterly account it will be 1½ times the amount—not twice. It will bring the deposit down because a bigger amount is involved. In the case of a new account—and this is the aspect to which the honourable member referred—the following applies—

(iv) in the case of a new account, or of an account where it is anticipated upon reasonable grounds that the consumption will be substantially increased, or where the accounting period is less frequent than quarterly—

That covers all the other odd ones, where the SEC does not know what their accounts will be. To continue—

—such amount as the Commission determines having regard to the methods of assessment . . .

The SEC must estimate whether an account is to be monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly, and then fix an amount, because it does not have anything on which it can base the amount. It does not know how much a new consumer will use. If the businessman is an electrical contractor, the SEC might study the amount paid by another person in a similar business and then the charge might be based on what the other fellow pays.

Under proposed new subsection (3) if an error is made and the amount has been overestimated the SEC will refund the difference. After the person has been in business for a while the SEC will perhaps realise that the person concerned had paid \$100, but was scarcely ever on the premises. The commission would realise it was charging too much and would refund, say, \$50 of the deposit. Eventually when the person left the premises or

discontinued his business the SEC would give him the other \$50 back because it was a deposit.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: The commission will do that?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Yes, because it is a deposit and he gets it back. By its very nature the deposit is refundable in the normal course of events unless something unusual occurs or the person owes some money to the commission. In those circumstances the commission would deduct the amount owing and refund the balance of the deposit.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: Is it interest bearing?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It has been in the past. I cannot say whether the commercial deposit is. As I said last night, the deposits paid before July, 1977, were paid on a contract as was the case with Mr Thompson and me—and it is carrying interest. We will be able to retire on the interest which is about 2½ per cent on \$2, I think! I do not know about commercial deposit interest. It would depend on the rules adopted from time to time. The commission changes its rules periodically, as it is entitled to do. Just because the provision is included, this does not mean that the commission will always make the charge, but the Bill provides the enabling power to be used if the commission so desires.

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: I am clear on the point now.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Have I answered all the honourable member's questions, because when I sit down the debate will be closed?

The Hon. F. E. McKenzie: I am quite clear now, thank you.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

STATE ENERGY COMMISSION (VALIDATION) BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney General), and passed.

TEACHERS' REGISTRATION ACT REPEAL BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 13th September.

THE HON. N. F. MOORE (Lower North) [2.57 p.m.]: We are currently debating a Bill, the purpose of which is to repeal the Teachers'

Registration Act and abolish the ill-fated Teachers' Registration Board.

Last night I listened with a great deal of interest to the speech of the Hon. R. Hetherington and I believe he and I will agree on some basic principles, particularly that it is necessary to somehow ensure that the people who teach in our schools—those employed by the Education Department—are qualified, competent people and are able to do the job in a competent manner; and, conversely, that we ensure that incompetent and unqualified persons are not employed. We both agree on those points. We need competent teachers in our schools.

How we bring about that situation is the crux of the problem. I would like to give a brief outline of the circumstances which led to the establishment of the board.

During the late 1960s and possibly the early 1970s teachers' salaries were very poor indeed, to say the least, and at that time a large number of teachers left Australia for other countries, particularly Canada. As a consequence there was a severe shortage of trained teachers. To overcome this problem the Education Department employed almost anyone who applied for a job. I recall that the qualifications required in the 1960s for people to be admitted to a teachers' college involved in some cases only a two-subject Leaving Certificate. If a person had passed English and one other subject, it was okay, and he could be trained as a teacher.

Apart from that, people could walk in off the street with no qualifications and be given a job, and to me that was a poor set of circumstances, because there were many incompetent teachers in our schools. In the late 1960s there was a demand for a system of registration and it had its origin at a number of Teachers' Union conferences where the prospect of registration was canvassed.

It took 10 years, from the late 1960s to 1976, for various Governments to pass legislation to establish a Teachers' Registration Board, and this was the Teachers' Registration Act of 1976. However, the circumstances which led to the establishment of the board changed over that 10-year period. We now have the situation where there is a surplus of teachers. The Education Department is now in a position where it can be choosy about the kind of people it employs. It did not have that choice in the 60s. So since the board was set up many people, including many teachers, have questioned the need for the registration of teachers in this day and age.

The board also found itself confronted by many real practical problems. Mr Hetherington

mentioned last night that these were thrashed out by various committees, leading up to the legislation being passed by Parliament. Be that as it may, the board found it could not overcome the problems because the teaching profession is quite unlike any other profession, in that there is a need for a great variety of skills and qualifications to staff all the different kinds of schools and technical institutions we have in our education system. A great variety of different subjects is taught, even within one school. To take our secondary education system, the subjects range from the core subjects to manual arts, photography, grooming and deportment, and so on, which require people with very special qualifications but not necessarily teacher qualifications as the main requirement.

In this respect I therefore agree with the Neal report that the employing authority should have the greatest control over whom it employs because it must employ people for a variety of special, distinct jobs. However, I agree with the Neal report and Mr Hetherington that the Education Act will need to be amended to place greater responsibility on the employing authority.

The board also faced the problem of how to determine teacher competence. Mr Hetherington mentioned last night that one criterion for teaching is that a person likes children. He went on to say it was hard to measure but that in his experience people who liked children were good teachers. He spoke about wearing jeans and sitting on the floor. I agree it is necessary for a person to like children to be a good teacher, but how does a registration board decide whether a person likes children, if that is one of the criteria of competence? Does a member of the board ask, "Do you like children?", and, when the applicant says "Yes", put a tick against his name?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: How does the employing authority decide it, too?

The Hon. N. F. MOORE: That is right. It is difficult to determine teacher competence. It is very difficult for a board with cut-and-dried criteria to work out how to determine competence. I would hate to see a situation develop such as we had in the late 60s, but I emphasise that setting up a teachers' registration board will not necessarily solve the problems of the 60s.

Had there been a system of registration at that time when the department was confronted with a shortage of teachers, how would the department have staffed the schools? It would not have had enough registered teachers to staff the schools at that time. It appears to me the department could

have done either of two things. It could have had much larger classes with qualified, registered teachers, or classes of a more reasonable size and gone outside the registration system to employ teachers. The department would have to choose between larger classes and unqualified, unregistered teachers. So it could be argued that at a time of shortage of teachers registration does not solve the problem.

Another argument which has been put up in favour of registration is that it would assist in improving the professionalism of teachers. Many teachers have for many years been endeavouring to increase the professionalism of their occupation. One way to do this is to ensure first of all that nobody who is unqualified is permitted to teach. In that respect registration, because it simply bars unqualified persons from teaching, can lead to greater professionalism in teaching. However, that is as far as it goes. Registration does not in itself enhance the professionalism of the teachers who are already registered. Professionalism goes well beyond merely having the qualifications to do a job.

Over the years we have come to expect from the occupations which we term "professions" a certain standard of ethical behaviour and competence. The public have even come to expect that the persons engaged in the professions maintain standards which they often regard as not necessary for persons engaged in other occupations; and rightly so.

Fortunately, we have in Western Australia many teachers who can truly be regarded as professionals and members of the profession. Most of our teachers are hard-working, dedicated people who are carrying out their job in a professional manner. I disagree with Mr Gayfer when he says farmers are the only people who work hard and mentions teachers and social workers as being people who do not work hard. That is not the case at all. In fact, whether or not they work with their hands, many teachers are very hard-working people who work very long hours.

However, unfortunately there are teachers in the education system who would denigrate the "profession". The public tend to view groups of people in terms of the worst among them, and unfortunately the teaching profession is often judged by the worst teachers.

While speaking about unprofessionalism, which perhaps relates to some people within the Education Department, I would like to make the further point that I believe some of the recent pronouncements of the Teachers' Union have not

done anything to enhance the professionalism of the people in that union, and I quote the announcements about the 150th anniversary boycott, which to me is a very childish and, I venture to say, foolish way to put across a point of view. I was very disappointed that it was put forward by the Teachers' Union as an option to try to achieve its ends.

On the other hand, the Education Department has over the years adopted what I consider to be a fairly dictatorial attitude towards the people it employs. A master-servant relationship has been developed which to my mind is not conducive to professionalism. A great deal of control is placed on the activities of teachers, which I do not think leads to their adopting a professional attitude towards their job.

So we have a long way to go if we wish to attain a situation where teachers can be regarded as truly professional. As I pointed out earlier, registration enhances professionalism only in the sense that it bars unqualified persons from entering the profession, but in itself it does not enhance the professionalism of the people who are registered.

It seems to me that in replacing the Teachers' Registration Board there is a need for a directive to be given to the Education Department to tighten up its employment procedures and give greater emphasis in its programmes to the professional development of teachers.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: What about the private sector? Would you do that to them, too?

The Hon. N. F. MOORE: I am talking about the Education Department at the present time.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Registration was to apply to them all.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I ask members to speak up when interjecting; otherwise, *Hansard* and other members cannot hear what they say.

The Hon. N. F. MOORE: If I were teaching perhaps I would say to Mr Hetherington, "Sit up and speak up", but as I am not teaching I will not say it.

I believe that the Education Department or any employing authority of teachers should give greater consideration to the professional development of the teachers it employs. Over the last few years this has been slowly happening with the development of in-service courses, more professional attitudes on the part of teachers in the schools, and more professional attitudes by principals towards the teachers on their staff.

I was heartened to read in the Minister's second

reading speech that while the committee recommends that the present legislation be repealed, it has indicated that the object of the Act—that is, ensuring that the public interest is safeguarded by only competent persons being permitted to teach in schools—is still a valid and worth-while objective for which to strive.

I hope we will see legislation in the very near future which can achieve this objective, without the necessity for a cumbersome registration board.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [3.11 p.m.]: One would think from the remarks made by Mr Moore that the Education Department is obliged under the Act to employ under all circumstances only teachers who are registered. That simply is not the case. The situation that Mr Moore described occurred in the late 1960s when there was a shortage of teachers; and it did not apply only then because it was the case when I was training. Special courses were being offered at that time for people without the basic qualifications to enter into what was called a qualifying course for entrance to the teachers' college and to university. So the sorts of circumstances that applied at that time, and particularly in the 1960s when there was a shortage of teachers, are envisaged in the Teachers' Registration Act, and if the honourable member cares to read sections 19 and 21 he will see the provisions laid down. Section 19 says that no person who is not registered shall teach a course of instruction, whilst section 21 says that the Governor may, if he considers it necessary or expedient in the public interest, by proclamation declare the operation of sections 19 and 20 to be suspended. Therefore, there is no real basis for the concern Mr Moore voiced. His argument was used as a sort of camouflage for the action of the Government. For some reason this Government seems to hate teachers.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Rot!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That seems to be evident from its actions. If the Government does not dislike teachers, I would like to hear why it is embarking on this course of action because there seems to me to be no sound basis at all for it. If the best arguments that can be offered are the sorts of reasons advanced by the member for Moore, then the Act itself shows those arguments simply do not apply. The Government is not obliged to comply with the Act in a time of concern. Not only that, but there is provision for professionally registering teachers who may be used for a period of only three years.

It would not be the intention of the teaching

staff or of its organisation, the Teachers' Union—which is simply the collection of teachers and is not an entity in itself but is only the voice of the teachers expressed through their organisation—to employ teachers who are not properly qualified. The professionals are well aware of the different sorts of circumstances that apply in schools, and they know there are people with lesser qualifications who are needed. I am referring to people who are specialists in their own field and who make a valuable contribution to the education system. In fact, the Teachers' Union has been endeavouring strongly to have more of these people available to schools to undertake the teaching of special subjects such as art, music, crafts, and so on. The union does not expect such people to be fully qualified teachers, but it would certainly like to see more of them available in the schools.

The reasons given by the Government are simply not good enough. These are matters that we discussed over and over again in the years leading up to the introduction of the Act into the Parliament. I assume that the Government at that time satisfied itself that all these problems had been overcome. I presume it was satisfied that adequate safeguards were included and that any remaining problems could be overcome with experience.

Unless the board is allowed to continue to carry out its function, the remaining problems—whatever they may be—are never likely to be resolved. I do not believe there are any problems of such a magnitude that they should lead to the repeal of the Act. The teachers wanted legislation such as this to protect their profession. It is true that unqualified people were brought into the classrooms, and that was a source of worry to the profession, as I think it should be. However, the teachers wanted also to raise their professional status so that they would be recognised as people of expertise, which is important in the community.

It seems to me that this reluctance to allow the profession to regulate itself in this way is a reluctance that applies only to teachers. Any other group which approaches the Government or the Parliament seeking to be registered or to have its profession regularised seems to be given a *carte blanche* suit to go ahead.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I do not think that is so. I think there is far too much of it, quite frankly.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Masters may say that, but he still supported legislation of that nature only recently.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Do you want to get rid of all the boards I read out last night?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Masters would be a lonely voice in his party, because none of the other proposals of this nature has had any difficulty in being presented to Parliament and accepted.

I wish that the Government would desist from venting its spite on teachers, and would recognise the tremendous contribution they make to our community. I hope the Government will give them the recognition they so richly deserve by allowing this legislation to remain and the registration to proceed. I would like to see the Government setting about achieving a reconciliation with the teaching profession to the benefit not only of the Government and of the teachers, but most importantly of the people they serve.

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [3.20 p.m.]: The reasons for the Bill have been explained quite clearly. I wish to comment on a few aspects of the Bill, and not necessarily on the reasons spelt out for the repeal of the Act and the abolition of the board.

In common with other ex-teachers who have already spoken, I was involved fairly deeply when registration was being discussed initially. Shortly after the initial stages I became the president of a substantial branch of the Teachers' Union. In that branch we had a committee that looked closely at the subject of registration. Teachers feared that the standing and the professional recognition that they had been seeking was under attack.

Mention has been made of the qualifications of some of the teachers employed at that time. I remember one gentleman who had a degree, not in education, who had taught for a brief period in a private school in another country. His last job before becoming a teacher in Australia was as a bus driver. I do not object to bus driving, but it has little relationship to school teaching. He was appointed to a class half-way through a year. The result was an absolute disaster for that gentleman's mental health and for the educational well-being of the children.

There were very real problems at the time when the request for registration was introduced. It is my belief that the union was conducting itself very responsibly. It was led by responsible people, although their views varied greatly.

Since that time there have been bitter struggles between factional groups within the Teachers' Union. The control of the union has changed several times. On some occasions there was an attitude projected which was not professional.

As the Hon. Norman Moore has said, the majority of teachers are responsible, hard-working people. They see the need for a teachers' union, because from time to time they need the industrial representation that a union provides. I have always encouraged people to join the Teachers' Union, because I believe it is a good organisation which protects them. The majority of them do not always agree with the actions of the union.

In relation to the current situation, the majority of teachers that I have spoken to are appalled at the suggestion of strikes. The majority regard registration as a non-issue. They consider that if there is registration, that is all right; if there is no registration, it is no great loss. Apart from those teachers who are involved actively in the union, there is no great concern amongst teachers in regard to this Bill.

The Hon. Norman Moore and other speakers have mentioned that there is a need for some system of assessment of teachers. This is what we should be looking at, instead of at a registration board. In this regard, I wish to sound a warning. When I first began my teaching career there was a very strict and very rigid system of assessment of teachers. The pendulum swings from one extreme to the other. At that time, teachers were treated with no professional respect by the department. With the swing of pendulum, teachers could do almost as they wished, without any assessment. That has been the situation recently.

Many years ago teachers were paid by results. Representatives of the department would go into a school and test the children. The pay of the teacher was determined on the results the children achieved. Those are the sorts of extremes that I think we should be trying to avoid.

If we are to look at a system of assessment of teachers which would be established to protect the educational well-being of our children and to establish a standard of education in our schools, we should not let the pendulum swing as it has done before. We should look at methods of curtailing its swing so that the community, the children, and the teachers are best served.

In my early days of teaching, what a teacher had not done counted more than what he had done. I remember an inspector coming into my classroom and searching through all of the children's pads until he found a sum that had not been corrected by the teacher. He was not interested in what my class knew; he was interested in the fact that I had missed that sum

in that child's pad. That system was very unsatisfactory.

There was also an inspector under whom a teacher's future and his getting good assessments depended upon the fact that he happened to play for a particular football club.

The Hon. Tom McNeil: Hooray!

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: One of the requirements for getting a good assessment under another inspector was that a teacher had to be doing external studies at university. If a teacher was doing studies, the superintendent did not care very much what his standard of work was. He gave his approval. Another superintendent went into the classroom of a friend of mine, patted him on the shoulder and said, "Son, I'm here to help you. Tell me your problems. Have you had difficulties with anything?" The young teacher admitted that he was having difficulty with written expression. The superintendent went through all of the composition books, as they were called in those days, and wrote out a report tearing the teacher to pieces.

There is a need for sensibility in assessments if teachers are to be helped. There is a need to have regard for the aims of education and for what the children are going to do when they leave school. There has to be regard for the stresses and strains on the teacher. Those stresses and strains are very real and at times very great.

I think it is essential to have a system of assessment that teachers have to front up to. As the Hon. Norman Moore has said, the majority of teachers are hard-working people. Unfortunately, in this State there is the whole range of abilities and characteristics. While many teachers are hard-working, there are those at the other extreme who are not.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: What has that to do with registration?

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: They put in the time it takes to fill a day.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: What a lot of twaddle!

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: These people must be sorted out by a system of assessment. I feel the ineffectiveness of these people would be very effectively hidden by the registration system that we could have had. For that reason—

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I think you ought to read the Act.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT:—I support the Bill. I sound a note of warning that, when we look at a system of assessment, we should do it with very great care.

THE HON. G. E. MASTERS (West) [3.30 p.m.]: I should like to make one or two remarks in relation to the matter. The Hon. Roy Cloughton suggested that members on this side of the House were against teachers. That, of course, is quite ridiculous, and I suggest he knows it. But, for the record, I should like to say we are certainly not against teachers. I should like to repeat, as I mentioned by way of interjection, that I am delighted the Teachers' Registration Board will not proceed and I should like to make it clear I am not in favour of the vast number of boards and the number of controls which seem to be increasing in this day and age. In certain circumstances such boards and controls are necessary; but whenever they can be avoided, they certainly should be. This is a situation where the facts and the second reading speech clearly point out the Teachers' Registration Board should be done away with.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: The second reading speech did not point it out.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It is quite clear to me, and I am sure most members of this Chamber agree with what I have said. Probably the Hon. Robert Hetherington, in his heart, feels the same way, as do quite a few other members opposite.

There could be nothing worse for the education system than for it to have too many regulations and for there to be a too great a control of teachers. They are a dedicated group and it is imperative their independence be maintained. The Hon. R. Hetherington said yesterday that it was fundamental that teachers like children. That has been repeated by Mr Moore. However, there are many different methods of teaching and I find it difficult to understand how a board can set regulations to cast teachers virtually in a mould. This is the worst possible situation for the education system. It is not what we want.

I believe it is important teachers have flexibility and that parents have a choice as far as the education of their children is concerned, the type of teachers involved, and the type of teaching undertaken. Possibly the original concept of a registration board was a mistake. It appears that way with the withdrawal of the registration board. Certainly in my opinion, it was a mistake.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I happen to agree with the Minister.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The Neal Committee was an independent body. It was not made up of Government members or Department members. This should be borne in mind, because the Hon. Robert Hetherington is virtually accusing the Government of changing its mind.

In fact the Government did change its mind, but it did so on the recommendations of the Neal Committee which studied the problems fully. It based its report on the views of people who were interested in the matter. Not only were the views of teachers taken into account, but also the committee took cognisance of the opinions of people who the committee thought would be interested and affected. It certainly took into account the views of the public and our party is interested in the public interest before the self interest of teachers. It is interested in the public interest more than anything else. We will take into account the views of teachers; but the most important matter is public interest and the interests of the children themselves. Perhaps members opposite will agree with me in that respect.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I am interested in that also.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We must agree that we live in changing times; therefore, we must reassess our position as we go on. A total of 1 100 part-time teachers are employed. I fail to understand how those part-time teachers could be registered without a great number of problems. The Hon. R. Hetherington did not make it clear in his speech last night. He mentioned it at some length and came back to it a number of times.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: You should look at section 22 of the Act.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The Hon. R. F. Cloughton made his speech, not that I understood it very well.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I can understand your lack of understanding from your remarks.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: In these changing times there is a new directorate for staffing which allows for improved procedures in staff handling and selection. Perhaps this is one of the reasons registration is not necessary. The matter of public interest and competence, as the Minister has stated, has been difficult to determine and it has not been easily evaluated by the Education Department. However, the Neal Committee, which was an independent body, was interested in the public interest solely. Therefore, I support the Bill.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: But it could not define the public interest; that was one of its difficulties.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is a matter of opinion.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I have read the

report. They had great difficulty defining the public interest.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It was a very fair and thorough report. The members of the Neal Committee did their best and evaluated the situation based on the comments of people who were vitally interested in the matter.

I agree with the comment made by the Hon. Robert Hetherington last night that too much emphasis has been placed on paper qualifications. Perhaps abolishing the registration system and allowing the employer to determine the ability of the teacher may be a better way of handling the situation.

THE HON. M. McALEER (Upper West) [3.35 p.m.]: I should like to make a few comments in support of this Bill. I have been very interested in the arguments of all the speakers, both from this side of the House and from the other side. I am only sorry I was briefly called away and missed some of the remarks made by the Hon. Roy Cloughton. I hope that, as a result, I do not misquote him.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I am sure you would not do that.

The Hon. M. McALEER: It seems to me that perhaps the crux of the problem as we see it now with the repeal of this Act is not, as Mr Cloughton suggested, that members on this side of the House are not willing for teachers to regulate themselves; but in fact that the registration board which was set up found the situation impossible and asked to have its functions suspended while the position was examined. Therefore, as a result of a re-evaluation of the Act, the repeal of the board has been brought about.

Nearly all the members who have spoken so far have mentioned the period in the 1960s which led up to the formation of the Bill and its enactment. The fact that it took 10 years probably suggests it was very difficult to obtain agreement. It was very difficult to draft an Act which was thought to be workable. It is not very surprising that, given that period of time and the difficulty involved, it should be found now that in fact the Act is not workable.

We have to look at the Act and see what was involved in the registration of teachers. It set up a board, the function of which was to deal with the proper academic qualifications of teachers, and to judge their competence by looking at their experience and personal development. Further, it gave the board power to liaise with teacher-training bodies to provide teachers with opportunities for obtaining the right

qualifications. Finally, the Act empowered the board to reconsider or investigate the fitness of those teachers already registered.

On the face of it, the Act would appear to be very well suited to enable the board to obtain its objective which, I would like to say, is the public interest, by ensuring that teaching and the administration of teaching and courses of instruction are undertaken by competent persons. But the board, given all these powers and having worked on the situation for 12 months, found it was not able to use the powers effectively. As I see it, there are a number of reasons for this.

The board was left to devise criteria or tests for competency or suitability; that is to say the academic qualifications, the type of experience the teachers had, and the way they themselves had developed their personalities. Further, the board had to determine a method whereby it could inquire into or investigate those teachers who were already registered and might not be competent or suitable.

It must be remembered that the Act contained a grandfather clause which said that a teacher who had been teaching for three years, regardless of his academic qualifications, could be registered. Therefore, it would be probable that there were a number of teachers who were not perhaps truly academically qualified, or who were not suited for teaching in other ways—

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: They could be very well suited by experience.

The Hon. M. McALEER: They might be very well suited by experience; but there could be teachers who, as other people have claimed, are totally unacceptable and who bring down the level of teaching.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: The registration board does not require that they be employed.

The Hon. M. McALEER: I would like to refer to the part of the Act which allows teachers to teach, with special permission, although they do fulfil the other requirements of the board. The Hon. Roy Cloughton has already referred to this matter and said the provision catered for those teachers teaching in technical schools who, in fact, belong to other trades or professions, and who needed to continually practice in those trades or professions—or go back to them from time to time. In no way could they be covered by the Act and become teachers in the true sense. As far as registration is concerned, they are permitted to teach for a period of five years and that, in itself, could not be considered to be entirely satisfactory.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I think most

tradesmen are required to obtain some teaching qualifications.

The Hon. M. McALEER: Yes, but in a very limited way. Perhaps not sufficient qualifications.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: They would be sufficient for registration, I would think.

The Hon. M. McALEER: I bow to the knowledge of the honourable member.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: It would depend on what was laid down by the board, but I think that class of person is required to obtain some teaching qualifications.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Margaret McAleer.

The Hon. M. McALEER: I am in total agreement with Mr Masters and Mr Hetherington that perhaps the whole idea of registration of teachers was misconceived. Last night Mr Hetherington read out a very long list of registration boards for various trades and professions. Most of them seemed to have one thing in common; they were concerned with trades or professions where the people so registered were likely to set up their business or profession on their own account, and might very well impose themselves on a public totally unqualified to judge those qualifications and their performances—at least until considerable damage had been done.

I am not at all sure that all these registration boards do, in fact, fulfil the sort of function they are set up to do; I am not at all sure that the standards they set are sufficient to protect the public in the way people should be protected. In fact, I am not sure that the registration of some trades and professions is really justified at all and in many cases the whole thing is a farce.

As far as teachers are concerned, I agree that with very few exceptions the employers of teachers—the independent schools as well as the Education Department—are in a better position than a registration board to assess both qualifications and performances. As has already been said, with so many teachers available there is no reason to have incompetent or unsuitable people teaching our children. It has been said, and stressed by one or two speakers, that there is still no provision for identifying the incompetent or inadequate teacher. I think it is important to look at the question not so much from the point of discharging incompetent teachers, but from the point of identifying them so that they can be assisted. There is nothing in the present Act to enable that to be done, and it is one of the problem areas which I imagine the Minister will

be discussing with the Teachers' Union and other interested parties.

As has been said by a previous speaker, that matter will be subject to future legislation or some arrangement outside the legislation so that teachers can be identified and helped if that is possible.

All in all, the circumstances which produced the Teachers' Registration Act no longer obtain. The problems which the Act raised are not easy to resolve, and they have prevented the board from being able to act effectively. I believe that no member can do other than support the repeal of the Act.

Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.00 p.m.

THE HON. F. E. McKENZIE (East Metropolitan) [4.00 p.m.]: I thought I would rise, not really to speak to the Bill—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Then you are out of order, aren't you?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: —but to enlighten the Hon. Gordon Masters on a point relating to the difficulty he mentioned about trade teachers.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Which provision was that?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: This is section 22(1) of the Act. I wished to draw his attention to this, because I thought it might have some influence on his ultimate decision in regard to this Bill.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I have a copy of the Bill here. In fact, I had it in my hand all the time I was talking.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I will still refer to this provision for the interest of members who may not have understood it. Section 22(1) reads as follows—

22. (1) The Board may, in writing, authorize a person who is not registered as a teacher to teach a course of instruction, and may, in writing, vary or revoke such authority.

(2) Authority in writing under this section may be given in respect of—

- (a) a course of instruction specified in the authority;
- (b) courses of instruction of a class specified in the authority; or
- (c) courses of instruction generally,

and for the purposes of this Act any person—

- (d) specified in the authority;
- (e) of a class specified in the authority;

- (f) holding an office or position specified in the authority; or
- (g) holding an office or position of a class specified in the authority or at a school specified in the authority,

shall be regarded as having the authority in writing of the Board to teach that course of instruction, or those courses of instruction, as the case may be.

So, Mr Deputy President, you will see there should not have been any problems in relation to the people mentioned.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [4.04 p.m.]: I thank the various members for their speeches. I was a little concerned at the outset that we may have had merely a resurrection of the debate in another place. Fortunately, we have heard—

The Hon. R. Hetherington: A bit of new material.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, some new material has been introduced and there was a keen debate from members all around the House. I find that most of the points made by the person leading the debate for the Opposition have been answered more than adequately.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I had not noticed that actually.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Certainly, when looking at it from an independent point of view, it is clear that very few points have been missed. However, I am quite happy to go over them again if need be. If one looks at this matter from a distance, one picks up a few points. The first of these is that it took some 10 years to get this legislation into Parliament. That is a good starting point, because I pointed out by way of interjection that this hesitancy to introduce the legislation was not just on the part of the Government. Several other Governments and, if I may say so, a host of Ministers, had not chosen to introduce it. If I recall correctly, there were three changes in the education portfolio during the three years of the Tonkin government.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: There were three Ministers actually.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: So there has been ample opportunity for this legislation to be looked into. That in itself was a warning that while the sentiments to introduce teacher registration were admirable, the actual implementation of a scheme to achieve this would cause a great deal of difficulty. Nevertheless, the present Leader of the House did introduce the

legislation here, and I suppose that is indicative of his very kind nature and co-operation.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I think it is indicative of his good sense actually.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That certainly does not indicate, as Mr Cloughton said, that the Liberal Party is anti-teachers and anti-Teachers' Union. Here was a Minister for Education doing just what the union had tried to persuade the members of the Labor Party to do, and which they had not been willing to do.

When one looks at the debate on the original Bill, I think it is fair to say that it was not received very enthusiastically. It was supported by both sides, and every one hoped it would succeed. Regrettably, goodwill was not enough to make the Act work successfully, and within a short period the board itself recommended that it should suspend its operations.

It is recorded that in October the board suggested it should suspend its operations for 12 months, although I see that the 12 months was stretched to January, 1979. The recommendation was to suspend the board until further investigations could be carried out.

Undoubtedly further investigations were carried out. Not only were there meetings between the Minister and the Teachers' Registration Board, meetings with the private schools, the Catholic schools, and the Education Department, but also the Neal Committee was established.

On one occasion I was able to tell Mr Hetherington what his next sentence would be because when he referred to the committee he said, "But these people are not teachers". During the debate in another place it was mentioned that the members of this committee were not teachers. Was not Dr Neal himself in the Education Department?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: The three members of the committee were Dr Neal, Mr De Laeter—

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Mr De Laeter was not a teacher, nor was the third member.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: The gentleman from National Cash Registers was not a practising teacher.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Mr Drake-Brockman was the third member. I notice that Mr Hetherington has now qualified his remark; he referred to practising teachers. A little research shows that these three people did have experience in the education field.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Dr Neal had a great deal of experience; we know that.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Their qualifications were such that they were suitable people to conduct such an inquiry. It is wrong to throw doubt upon their competence.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Hear, hear! I have heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mention Caesar appealing to Caesar. I have heard him say that on many occasions.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Let us accept the fact that they were competent. Certainly members on this side of the House accept that. It is rather interesting to see the material that was presented to them, and I must refer now to this matter of public interest to which Mr Hetherington referred, and to which I think Mr Claughton referred.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: No, I did not mention it.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: This is one of those catch cries that are so easy to refer to. It is interesting that in all the evidence put before the Neal Committee, no-one endeavoured to identify what the public interest is.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Actually the committee said the Teachers' Union did try to do it. It said that nobody else did try.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: This is one of those intangible matters and probably any attempt to identify it was not successful. The report says—

No submission attempted to clarify the meaning of these terms.

Perhaps the Teachers' Union did try, but it was not recognised as being able to do so. Anyway, it is useless arguing whether it was attempted or not. We all have some difficulty in attempting such a definition, as well as attempting to define what the term "competence to teach" means.

It is interesting to note that in another place the Deputy Leader of the Opposition stated that a significant number of incompetent teachers are employed within the system and yet here in the debate in this House, Mr Hetherington said we could not endeavour to cull the teachers. I think these were his exact words—

We cannot start culling them, throwing back the small ones as it were, because we would not know what we would have left and it would waste a great deal of time and cause chaos.

So we seem to have this contradiction.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: There is no contradiction. I said that we cannot start culling them, before we bring in registration. If we have

to cull them we do it later; that is what I was saying.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: My reading of the speech does not indicate that the honourable member said the culling would be done later. Mr Hetherington said he felt it would be better to accept the teachers as they are—rather as in the provisions of a grandfather clause—and then to work upon the new teachers as they enter.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I did say that, and I pointed out that we could deregister them.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: I read Mr Hetherington's speech—

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I am glad you can read.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: —and he put forward that the teachers' qualifications should be the criteria.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That is right. It is rather interesting that the Opposition is not united in its approach to this matter.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: The carbon copies are all on your side—we are individuals.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: By their interjections they seem to be in disarray.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am quite sure Opposition members are in disarray.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: As I said before, it is perhaps rather unfortunate that there was not more debate when the original Bill was introduced. When I read through the speeches to endeavour to determine the feelings of members on that occasion, I found it was very hard to do so. It is interesting that during the debate Mr Bryce said—

It cannot be assumed that a teacher, once registered, will, for the rest of his or her days, be accepted as a qualified or competent teacher.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: There is provision for deregistration in the present Act.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That is right.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: And we know that we are not doing that.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Suddenly we find that some of the teachers are getting cold feet. How are we to start culling out some of these teachers?

Several members interjected.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Teacher registration was required to protect those already in the profession.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: That was not the position of the Teachers' Union.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, it was.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I do not think so.

The PRESIDENT: Will the Minister proceed with his summing up?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Thank you, Mr President. I believe the point has been made. The protest from the other side confirms the lack of agreement on this question. Certainly, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in another place was talking about culling out teachers when the debate took place there, but when the Bill came on for debate in this Chamber we found Mr Hetherington was very reluctant to suggest we should start culling out teachers.

Times have changed; there are more teachers, and the employing bodies—whether they be the State Government, or the Catholic or private schools—now can select better teachers because of the sheer numbers which are available. I think it would be highly unlikely that any teacher who is able to obtain employment today would not qualify, anyway, with the sort of qualifications most teachers possess. The standard now is way above anything registration would have achieved. This in itself is good reason to look again at this whole matter of teacher qualifications. It must be remembered that not all competent teachers are qualified and not all qualified teachers are competent.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We are in agreement again, but that does not change my argument.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: One of the other things which perhaps was not fully appreciated was the difficulty of registering part-time teachers. It would be of interest to members to know there are over 1 000 part-time teachers employed by the Education Department, and great difficulty was experienced in being able to identify and qualify those teachers.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: The Opposition would not be in agreement with that, either.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Probably not.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I think we can talk better for ourselves, than have Mr Oliver as our mouthpiece; everything comes out twisted when he says it.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: I have examined this matter on a logical basis and—

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is far too much cross-Chamber conversation.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Mr President, I feel we have been able to debate this Bill adequately. The Government has covered all the various points raised by the Opposition, for the second time.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You did not cover them the first time.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: They were covered the first time in another place, and again in this Chamber; that should put the matter to rest.

I believe this Government has done the right thing by teachers' registration. We have listened to the need for registration. We introduced a Bill when we were asked to, which incorporated the various suggestions which the idealists put to us. We established a board, as suggested, and when the board asked for it to be suspended, we suspended the board. When the board wanted more investigation we established an investigating committee under Dr Neal. Now that the investigating committee has recommended the repealing of the Act, we are doing that. I believe that covers the issue adequately.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 17

Hon. N. F. Baxter	Hon. O. N. B. Oliver
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. W. M. Piesse
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. R. G. Pike
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. M. McAleer	Hon. R. J. L. Williams
Hon. T. McNeill	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. N. McNeill	Hon. G. E. Masters
Hon. N. F. Moore	(Teller)

Noes 7.

Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. R. T. Leeson
Hon. D. K. Dans	Hon. F. E. McKenzie
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. R. F. Claughton
Hon. R. Hetherington	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Hon. I. G. Medcalf	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. A. A. Lewis	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. D. W. Cooley) in the Chair; the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Repeal—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: This clause is fairly crucial to the Bill, and I wish to oppose it

because nothing I have heard in this Chamber has convinced me we should repeal the 1976 Act. The Minister told me he had given me reasons, but in fact I have heard no real reasons. As a matter of fact, some of the argument that was developed in the Chamber was for the retention of the present Act rather than for its repeal.

The fact that, in the 1960s, there was a shortage of teachers and now there is not is not a reason for not setting up a registration board. It is in times when we have plenty of teachers and when we do not feel the pressures that we should set up such a board and establish the criteria.

If we had had a board established before the 1950s or 1960s, when the shortage came in the 1960s, we might have found the board had criteria laid down. Some of the appointments may not have been made and some other appointments may have been made for three years or five years and then registration may have been rescinded because those teachers had proved unsuitable.

It is time we looked to the future; we should not say, "In the past we had this problem but there are plenty of teachers now, so let us not worry about it. Let us not plan ahead." This kind of thinking is typical of conservative parties. They say, "Let us keep things going as they are now. Let us not learn from the past or plan for the future." This is what is required now and this is why we need a teachers' registration board.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Let us get everyone regimented now.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I do not believe that all teachers at present employed by the Education Department necessarily should be kept there. However, I would argue that if we wait until we have solved our problems before we put the present Act we are about to repeal into operation, we will be waiting a long time.

I should like to quote what I said last night, because it is particularly relevant to the point. I said—

This grandfather section says that all those who were teachers before the 1st February, 1978, may be registered. That may be regarded as an objection, but if we want to get rid of some of the people we must set up machinery for getting rid of unsatisfactory teachers. This is provided for in the Act at present, although it might be argued that the Act needs strengthening. But of course we have to start somewhere, and we could not now go through all the teachers in Western Australia and start culling them out—throwing back the little ones, as it were—because we would not know what we

would have left and it would waste a great deal of time and cause chaos.

What I was suggesting then is what I am saying now.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: What are you saying now? You are reflecting—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will tell the honourable member what I am saying if he will just be quiet for a moment.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: I will not be quiet. You are reflecting on the standards of the Education Department.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (The Hon. D. W. Cooley): Order!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am saying that we cannot wait until we have gone through the whole Education Department to see whether there are any unsatisfactory teachers. We should implement this legislation immediately, not repeal it. It will be a grab bag at first, but then the provisions will start to work and in due course, if the standards of our department are lower than they should be, we may get them up higher.

What I do not understand and what has not been explained to me is why the representatives on the board of the private sector of education decided they did not want to go on with it. This is what I find unsatisfactory in the Minister's explanation and in the Neal report. Perhaps Dr Neal's committee did receive adequate explanation; but, of course, I have just read the report. It states that the representatives in the private sector voted to get rid of the Teachers' Registration Board. I want to know why. The only reasons given in the report are that the Catholic Education Committee said it would take care to employ good teachers and that it thought it would be a good idea if the Education Department did likewise. I do not find this to be a very satisfactory argument.

My argument is that we should try to standardise the qualifications and to establish criteria in a time of plenty, when we have "enough" teachers. Of course, whether in fact we have enough teachers is another matter. I would argue that if we received the funding from the Federal Government that we needed we would not have enough teachers; we would probably find we were short of them.

However, we do have teachers unemployed at present and if that is regarded as an oversupply of teachers, then this is a good time to implement such a proposal, because we can employ the kind of people we want. This is the time we should be trying to establish our standards. I argued that last night and I still argue it today.

I still do not know why the people who object to the board being there so object. I still do not know why the changes in the administration and the way the teachers' colleges assess their students specifically alter the need for a registration board. I would like to hear an explanation of why these things make all the difference.

To list a row of factors and to say that they are reasons no longer to have a registration board is to give no explanation at all. Therefore I am not satisfied with the explanation given in another place. I do not blame the Minister opposite as I indicated to him that I did not believe he would be given the information—and he was not—which would enable him to give the adequate explanations, which he has not been able to do. I do not hold this against him personally. The person I am not very happy with is the Minister for Education who is not a member of this House.

I point out to the Hon. Gordon Masters that the objections he raised were met in the Act and it seems to me that the anecdotes of the past we received from some members about what happened in the 1960s and what is not happening in the 1970s are not valid arguments for the repeal of the legislation. For these reasons I continue to oppose this clause.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Mr Hetherington asked what were the changes that have taken place. I understand there have been changes within the Education Department and that since this Act was introduced the department has appointed a director of staffing. The department feels these are some reasons for the repeal of the Act.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Our feelings differ.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The other point raised by Mr Hetherington was that of the changes seen by the Catholic schools. In evidence before the committee the Catholic schools indicated that they believed the teaching institutions could set their own standards and exercise those standards in appointing staff.

As an employing authority they believe they have the right to do a certain amount of sorting out when choosing staff. They believe they can select whom they consider to be the more competent teachers coming from teaching institutions.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Nothing in the Act says one has to employ a registered teacher.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That is correct. I am sure anybody employing teachers today would first ask what the applicant's qualifications were. Perhaps in the Catholic schools a different criterion is used and this must

be allowed. While it is compulsory for a child to go to school it is not compulsory for him to go to a Catholic school.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: I am surprised at the opposition from certain members of this Committee to this particular Bill. I would have thought that if a person had qualifications from an institution such as that attended by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that person should be eligible for employment in a position to which that qualification applies.

A very large amount of money has been put into the advancement of the teaching profession and if a person has pursued such a career and graduated with the relevant diploma that person should be qualified to teach.

If a teacher has not been practising in his profession for some years there may be some question as to his ability to teach when he re-applies. Such people may have to be reassessed as to their ability to teach.

Last night I had the opportunity to examine a speech made by Mr Hetherington about various boards. I have not finalised that study. At this stage I would point out that when a child is at school it is a time when he should be carefully nurtured as it is a period of the child's life which cannot be repeated. It is one of the critical periods of a person's life.

The bulk of the boards mentioned by the honourable member in his speech have nothing to do with the safety of the individual. This is a list put forward by the Labor Party. The others have been put forward by the Liberal Party or both parties.

Mr Deputy Chairman, I know that over many years you have been concerned with technical education involving the advancement of tradesmen and apprenticeships in this State. In no way should people who wish to involve themselves in the advancement of tradesmen and students be educated by people who would need to hold a degree in teaching practice purely to instruct others on how to fix a window or lay a brick.

I support the repeal of this Act on the premise that it will deny the opportunity of skillful tradesmen to pass on that knowledge to their pupils. There is no better person to train an apprentice than a tradesman.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is why section 22 is in the Act.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: The member did not mention that.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: It was mentioned by my colleague, Mr McKenzie.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: I can understand why the technical education section of the Act has been repealed. I might mention here that my wife was given the opportunity to enter a teachers' college. By entering the college, passing the necessary examinations, and obtaining a degree it was almost obligatory for her to be employed. In the repeal of this Act it is proposed that whatever qualifications a teacher may have, it will not be paramount that after graduating from a teaching college a teacher need be employed. I am sure members would agree that one should not necessarily have to be employed merely because one has graduated from a particular course of study.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You are arguing for registration, I gather.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: I am certainly not. Accountants do not have registration and it is about time the Deputy Leader of the Opposition understood what registration is about. He wants to register everyone.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I did not say that at all. I am talking about teachers.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: A woman who operates hairdrying equipment must be registered. I take that aspect to its conclusion. The hairdressing salon which operates the electrical equipment has to close and open at certain times. I will be delighted to follow that to its conclusion if Mr Hetherington would like me to do so. The honourable member is saying that because a person has a diploma he must be registered and therefore employed.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I have not ever said that.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: I have read the honourable member's speech.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: You cannot understand what you read, in that case.

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: If the honourable member cannot understand what he says, I suggest he re-read it.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: What nonsense!

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (The Hon. D. W. Cooley): Order!

The Hon. O. N. B. OLIVER: In conclusion I say that qualification by degree does not mean qualification for employment.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Don't I know that?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is a pity the honourable member who has just resumed his seat did not give his second reading speech at the appropriate stage of the debate.

We are dealing with clause 2 which is designed to repeal the Act. From the arguments which have been advanced I cannot understand what has persuaded Government members to support the clause. When replying to the debate the Minister said the members from his side who had spoken had given the arguments and it would not be necessary for him to repeat them. When Mr Pratt spoke about the assessment of teachers in the classroom and used that as a basis for his support, I wonder how much of what Government members have said is worth while.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: If you had listened you would know that I said I was commenting on the field in which this is happening.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: With respect, I say that the honourable member was not commenting on the substance of the legislation or the Bill, but about the assessment of teachers in the classroom. They are teachers who are already employed. The assessment for the purposes of employment can be completely different from the requirements laid down for registration. They are not the same thing.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: That is dead right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member has confused them as being the same thing.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: With all respect, I said they were not. Don't tell me I said something else.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We lose the point of his argument which was supposed to be relevant to the subject under debate. If the honourable member gave an argument not related to the substance of the Bill, it was irrelevant.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: It was related to the Neal report, which you would know if you had listened.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member would be talking in respect of the Neal report in support of the action being taken by the Government and he would have been giving reasons for his support. What I am saying is that his argument had nothing to do with teachers' registration. The Minister said that Government members who have spoken have given reasons for the repeal of the legislation, but they have not.

The Minister has not given a reason, because his colleagues have not given any. Mr Moore spoke about the situation in the 1960s, but that has nothing to do with the substance of the Bill. The fact that there was a teacher shortage at that time is not an argument against registration now. It is a completely different period in time.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I was explaining where the idea first came from—out of the 1960s.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The shortage was in the late 1960s, and the idea was current when I was teaching which was from the mid-1950s. It is all of 10 years, and a bit more, that the subject of registration has been debated, and it certainly originated before the teacher shortage. It may have been related to the earlier shortage in the 1950s following on from the end of the war when there was still a number of unqualified teachers employed, because the teachers were recruited and sent away and in order to staff the classrooms the department employed whoever was available at the time. Many of them were not qualified. However, that is not a reason for repealing the legislation.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I did not say it was. I was trying to explain the situation.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Minister said that Mr Moore, Mr Pratt, and Miss McAleer had given reasons in support of the Bill. In fact they gave no reasons and they just confirmed they were not giving reasons.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I did explain in my speech that if there had been registration in the 1960s it would have presented a problem.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: But this is not the 1960s. If we adopted that argument we should say that, because there is not now a teacher shortage, we should have registration.

The arguments of the Government members were really against the Minister and against the Bill. Miss McAleer said she was supporting the Bill, but I did not follow her precise reasons.

The Hon. M. McAleer: I think I was saying that there was a reason for the legislation being enacted in the first place, but it proved unworkable.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member did not say why it proved unworkable. All we have been told is that a committee looked at the subject and had asked the Government to repeal the legislation. That recommendation was not supported by the Teachers' Union, which is the only professional organisation in operation at the present time. I would have thought that its desires would carry much greater force than they have.

We are talking about reasons for the view adopted by Government members. They said they intended to support clause 2, but their arguments demonstrated their complete lack of knowledge of what was in the Act. Mr Oliver said he had no knowledge of section 22 and then proceeded to

make a second reading speech on the subject of tradesmen who are adequately covered under section 22.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You are not doing too badly yourself.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Under section 22 the board still has to decide whether a person has authority to teach if he is not registered.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The question of whether tradesmen would be permitted under the Act to continue to act as instructors and teachers in their particular field is unquestioned, because the Act was designed with those sorts of people in mind. There is no suggestion that they would have to obtain a university degree, although they would not be expected to do so, and for administrative positions the Government would be encouraging some instructors to obtain higher qualifications to fit them for administrative positions in the technical section. However, those higher qualifications would not be required for instruction purposes. The tradesmen would be expected to do some study to give them a knowledge of teaching theory, and that is a reasonable proposition. Again, Mr Oliver demonstrated a depressing ignorance of what is in the Act and of the practical aspects.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Could you take it to its logical conclusion in commercial practice?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: We are not talking about commercial practice. We are talking of school teachers.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Could you take it to its logical conclusion—

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I dread the prospect of Mr Oliver ever being in the position of authority in any field related to education, because he has an extremely poor understanding of it all.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Having examined your performance, I can understand that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is very difficult to know the relevance of most of the comments made by Mr Oliver, particularly by way of interjection.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Take it to its conclusion.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Why not get a parrot?

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Take it to its conclusion in commercial practice rather than—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (The Hon. D. W. Cooley): Order!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: When it comes to a question of hairdressers—

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Obviously it is beyond you.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: —because a person is registered under the hairdressing legislation and is able to use the hairdriers referred to by Mr Oliver, it does not mean that an employer is obliged to employ that person any more than there is an obligation on an employer to employ a teacher registered under this Act. That seems to be something which Government members say would cause confusion. They may have been duped by that sort of argument and honestly believe it, but members on my side, and the teaching profession itself, would not experience that confusion. If people ever bother to read the reports of the debate concerning the Bill they must, particularly if they are Liberal supporters, feel the utmost disappointment and trepidation for their future.

I hope members opposite have reconsidered their attitude, because it has been clearly demonstrated that those arguments submitted in support of the legislation are not reasons and that the fears they have expressed have been proved to be unfounded and that the situations they envisaged are already adequately catered for in the legislation.

If the Act is allowed to continue on the Statute book and the board is allowed to operate with registrations going forward, we will have a chance to sort out any residual problems which exist. With new legislation there are always residual problems. Even in the short experience of some members here they would have seen legislation brought back to be amended because of unforeseen difficulties which have arisen. The best of us, whether in Government or in private enterprise, are not omnipotent. We cannot foresee all prospective situations and cover all problems which may arise. Experience teaches us those things and it is quite normal for legislation to be brought back to be amended because of an unforeseen problem or changed circumstances.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver interjected.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I will endeavour to ignore the honourable member who is interjecting, because he has not made an interjection which is sensible or relevant to the debate.

For the Minister to suggest that the fact that the department has a personnel director provides a reason for this legislation is almost beyond belief. Here is an officer who has to deal with the personnel employed by the Education

Department, which has its own requirements in relation to the people it employs. A vast range of duties and subjects is covered by employees of the Education Department.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: So you obviously disagree with qualifications as a means of registration.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The requirements of the department as far as employees are concerned are not entirely parallel to the requirements of registration.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver interjected.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I must ignore the honourable member. Certain requirements for registration would be the same as or similar to the requirements of the Education Department in employing a person, but the requirements as far as the conditions of employment within classrooms are concerned are different again. There is a parallel but they are not the same. The Minister must have had his tongue in his cheek and perhaps felt he was placed in an invidious position—because he is only representing the Minister for Education—in having to put that argument forward in this Chamber as a reason in support of the Bill.

I ask members opposite to reconsider. There is value in the legislation, and I think they will have to agree no sound reasons have been put forward for its repeal. I hope members opposite will allow it to proceed.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I should inform Mr Oliver, through you, Sir, of one or two facts of life. I am not sure what he meant when he interjected and talked about qualifications. He referred to the institution at which I used to teach. If he meant that anyone with a degree from the University of Western Australia should be qualified to teach or has an adequate qualification to teach, that is nonsense. Many graduates would not be any good at teaching, although they may be brilliant at research work. If he was referring to people with a Bachelor of Education degree, I am inclined to think they would have the qualifications to teach, because in order to get that degree they would have studied certain subjects.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: Then you do not agree with registration.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Of course I agree with registration, but the honourable member seems to think that anyone who obtains a bare pass anywhere is able to teach or that there is not a variety of qualifications which must be examined. I would hope that if we continue the Teachers' Registration Board, perhaps all of the

graduates from the training institutions will automatically be registered, because I would hope the quality of those institutions was such that they would produce people capable of teaching.

I would not be sure that people from other institutions, perhaps in the United Kingdom, the United States, or other States of Australia were necessarily people who would be registered automatically.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: If that is the case, why bother to go on sabbatical leave to find out what is happening in other countries.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I wish the honourable member would not make statements which sound so stupid. Some institutions in the United States, for example, are such that one would not employ anybody from them. That does not mean other institutions in the United States are not of the highest quality. One has to decide between them, and that in fact is what we do. We look at the kind of degree and the institution from which it was obtained.

The other point as far as the registration of teachers is concerned is that some people might prove to be psychologically incapable of teaching.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver interjected.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I wish the honourable member would keep quiet long enough to allow somebody to develop at least a paragraph.

In some training institutions in this country in the past, particularly when people were bonded, many who got through had barely graduated and they should really have been turned back and persuaded not to teach. I think that situation still applies and it is one of the problems now facing some of the training institutions because they do not always like to be cruel and say, "Why don't you give up? You aren't really cut out to be a teacher." But of course we hope the products of our training institutions will automatically be registered.

We may sometimes have to deregister people, and I think this is one of the important functions of a registration body. In an age of rapid social change, with the development of computers, the skills and abilities people acquired in the past might no longer be relevant, and perhaps those people will need to be retrained or deregistered until they acquire more skills.

Teachers' registration bodies exist in the majority of Australian States and they seem to work fairly well. I do not know why we are afraid to grasp the nettle. Certainly nothing Mr Oliver said has convinced me we should repeal the

legislation, but I am afraid nothing the Minister or any other member opposite said has convinced me, either, and I still oppose this clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Consideration of Report

Report of Standing Orders Committee now considered.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [5.13 p.m.]: I move—

That the President be invited to take the Chair in Committee.

Question put and passed.

In Committee

The President (The Hon. Clive Griffiths) in the Chair.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: It is my privilege to give members some information. The Standing Orders Committee has met on a number of occasions in recent times and has given consideration to several matters. Arising out of the deliberations of the Standing Orders Committee members now have before them recommendations regarding amendments to some of the Standing Orders of this Chamber. Before dealing specifically with the proposed amendments, I would like to take this opportunity to comment briefly on one or two features of the Standing Orders and the work of the Chamber.

I say at the outset that one of the matters to which the committee gave some consideration, but on which it has not made any recommendation, concerns Standing Order No. 61 relating to the adjournment of the House.

From time to time, as is their right, members do make contributions to the adjournment motion. The Standing Orders Committee is most reluctant indeed to impose any time limit on speeches made on the adjournment motion. Nevertheless, the committee is conscious of the fact that at times one or two lengthy contributions have been made. The Standing Orders Committee, generally, would prefer that any contributions made under Standing Order No. 61 should be concise and to the point, without delaying the House unduly at any time. There is

no intention to restrict speeches under that provision; however, the committee is conscious of the fact that on occasions lengthy contributions and, indeed, lengthy debate have ensued. I will say no more on that point.

I would like to draw the attention of members to one or two other Standing Orders relating to the good order and conduct of this House. The Standing Orders are terribly important for the running of this Chamber and it behoves all members to endeavour to understand them and to carry them out at all times. I refer quickly to such Standing Orders as No. 64 under which it is customary for members to be seated when the President wishes to make some comment. Standing Order No. 65 refers to members not walking or moving about the Chamber when the Presiding Officer—either the President or, when in Committee, the Chairman—or the Clerk of the House is addressing himself to the business of the House.

Another Standing Order to which I would like to draw the attention of members is No. 67.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Would members direct their attention to the Hon. V. J. Ferry, who is discussing the report of the Standing Orders Committee. Amongst other things, Standing Orders suggest that members should not carry on conversations while a member is speaking.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Standing Order No. 67 refers to the movement of members around the Chamber and specifically prohibits a member passing between the speaker on the floor and the Presiding Officer. I think that is one Standing Order to which we could pay a little more attention.

I would like to make a couple of other observations in respect of the good order and working of the House. You, Mr President, have just referred to one in respect of audible conversations in the Chamber, which seem to be increasing, when members are addressing themselves to the business of the House. Whereas it is permissible to talk in undertones in the Chamber, it is distracting to members and, indeed, almost impossible for the *Hansard* staff at times to record speeches being made. I think we must have regard for the *Hansard* staff. Further to that, it is disconcerting for members if comments are being made which cannot be clearly understood. I think that is another matter to which members should pay some attention.

I turn now to the amendments.

Standing Order No. 35: President relieved by Chairman of Committees or a Deputy Chairman—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The first recommendation is as follows—

Line 2—To delete the words “in his absence”.

The purpose of this amendment is to enable Deputy Chairmen to take the Chair as Deputy President even though the Chairman of Committees be present in the House. The object of the amendment is to allow the Deputy Chairmen to gain experience in the Chair, and also to ensure that the Chairman of Committees is not precluded from participating in a debate through having to occupy the Chair in the absence of the President.

I heartily support that proposed amendment because it will allow for greater flexibility in the working of the House. Certainly, as Chairman of Committees, I would appreciate the situation because when I am interested in legislation it will be possible for Deputy Chairmen to take the Chair and leave me free to take part in the debate. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 62: Motion for adjournment to debate matter of urgency—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The next recommendation is as follows—

Page 21 line 10—To insert after the word “President” the following passage—

“, at least two hours previous to the meeting of the Council,”.

This amendment will allow the President sufficient time in which to determine the urgency of a matter which is the subject of a proposed urgency motion. With regard to the mechanics of it, one could imagine some difficulties arising from time to time if the President is absent from the House or engaged in other business in the House and is unable to give proper consideration to a request for an urgency motion prior to the meeting of the House. Further to that, there could be occasions on which the Clerks of the House are otherwise engaged on parliamentary business either within or outside the House, and have insufficient time in which to consider the matter if so requested by the President. Therefore, I believe it is reasonable that any request for an urgency motion be handed to the President at least two hours prior to the sitting of the House. This will also facilitate the opportunity for the Clerks to offer any advice that the President may require. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I agree with the recommendation because I believe there have been occasions when members have been inclined to rush into matters they consider to be matters of urgency, and after they have been speaking for some time it is realised by the President and other members that the matters are not urgent at all and debate on them could have been left to another day of sitting. This recommendation will give the President, whoever he may be, the opportunity to consider the matter on which a member proposes to speak.

I recall on one occasion a member rose to speak in the adjournment debate on a matter that was not urgent at all. Although this recommendation does not deal with the Standing Order relating to the adjournment of the House, I believe that matter should have been considered by the committee. When I rose to speak on the occasion to which I refer I pointed out that the opportunity to speak on the adjournment motion should be taken only in respect of urgent matters. For many years from 1950 onwards at no time was the adjournment motion used for debate. I think Sir Arthur Griffith was the first person to take advantage of it in this House. I believe it is wrong to do it, and I will never be dissuaded that it is wrong, unless a member wishes to introduce a matter of great urgency.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not oppose the recommendation, but I have been a little confused by Mr Baxter. Without reflecting upon him, it seems to me he was talking about adjournment debates.

I have been instrumental in moving two urgency motions in this House, and one of the reasons I used the particular Standing Order which enables me to do that is the very reason Mr Baxter spoke about; that is, to introduce a matter of urgency so that it could be debated in the House before that time of the evening when the adjournment motion is moved and members are in a hurry to get out of the chamber. On the last occasion the matter of the adjournment debate was raised and a move was made to curtail the debate, I spoke very strongly against the move. However, at the same time I said it should be kept under review so that the situation is not abused.

I think the provision which enables us to speak on the adjournment motion should be preserved at all costs. I do not think it should be allowed to develop into a full-scale debate, but that is in the hands of members.

One of the matters that mystify me about this endeavour to write into Standing Orders a requirement that two hours' notice must be given

of an urgency motion is that to the best of my knowledge on every occasion that an urgency motion has been introduced the President has been given much more notice than that. In my own case—and I cannot recall an urgency motion being debated on any other occasion since I have been here—I have made it perfectly clear to the President or his Clerks at about 9.00 a.m. that I wished to move a motion when the House met at 4.30 p.m. Therefore, I am mystified as to the reason for this requirement.

Mr Ferry has pointed out some reasons, and it is true that from time to time we are apt to try to dot every "i" and cross every "t". All members of this Chamber are responsible people—although I suppose sometimes one would not think so, depending on the stage of the debate and the hour of the day—and have due regard to what is entailed and act accordingly. However, there are occasions when for any number of reasons an urgency debate is considered to be the most appropriate action to take. It may not necessarily fall within the realms of a political wrangle.

Let us suppose that I agree with the Leader of the House that it is necessary to move an urgency motion to debate a certain issue, and we make that decision about half an hour before the House is due to sit. If this recommendation is adopted, what kind of Solomon would we need to have in the Chair to determine how to turn back the pages of history? One of the attractive features of this place—and there are not many attractive features to members of the Labor Party—is that we have some leeway. Yet a matter that disturbs me is that there is a constant move every time Standing Orders are reviewed to make them an exact blueprint of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly. It has not been demonstrated that anyone has abused a privilege.

I do not oppose the recommendation, but I would like to go on record as saying that as far as I am aware members have been courteous enough to give the President much more notice than is prescribed here of their intention to move urgency motions. Secondly, I think sometimes we are in danger of painting ourselves into corners. Our Standing Orders have evolved over many years, and they have been amended by people who have had due regard to the exigencies of the day. That is something we should bear in mind. However, I merely make that comment; I do not oppose the recommendation.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I support the recommendation because I believe as the Leader of the Opposition has said—and he is as good an example of this as our own leader—there is perfect courtesy between members of this House

in respect of the procedure of business, even though not always in the conduct of debate.

I take the point of the Leader of the Opposition that it is a generally accepted practice to give as much notice as possible before introducing an urgency motion. The Federal Parliament is made aware of an urgency motion 24 hours before it is moved. We learn in the Western Australian Press at night that an urgency motion will be introduced in that Parliament the next day. That is a matter of courtesy.

The Leader of the Opposition asked what would happen in a real emergency where he and the Leader of the House agreed that there was some form of natural disaster which this Chamber had to discuss quickly. I think that is covered—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did say that there were probably other methods available.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: This is covered by Standing Order No. 426. That is a notice for the suspension of Standing Orders at the discretion of the President. In this case, Standing Orders may be suspended after two hours' notice. The proposition is for five minutes. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that there is no way of doing that. I would ask the Committee to bear that in mind.

We are trying to cater not only for the present but also for the future when we consider our Standing Orders. Indeed, the authors of these Standing Orders did the same thing. We have Standing Orders which somewhat bemused me when I first came into the Chamber. In relation to one of them, I thought I always had to be properly dressed, because it states that any member rising in his seat shall be uncovered. This was a reference to the wearing of hats.

I would ask the Chamber to support this amendment. It may be that the President, having received insufficient notice, may in his wisdom require a second opinion from his Clerks. If both his Clerks were absent on other business, he may not be able to contact them within half an hour. The Standing Orders Committee thought they may be able to be contacted, but not within half an hour or an hour. It is sometimes difficult to obtain the references required to ensure that justice is done.

I ask the Committee to support the amendment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: When I first read this proposed amendment, I felt the same way about it as Mr Dans. I thought how unfair it would be if there was a national calamity somewhere which had a bearing on this Chamber—a tidal wave, or something like that.

We would want to discuss the matter with urgency. As Mr Williams has pointed out, it is necessary that we should be able to do so.

Mr Dans touched on the matter of the form. I do not believe that Standing Orders ought to be absolutely crystal clear. I think there is a lot of advantages in the way they were drawn up years ago. Sometimes the Standing Orders appear a little confused and cloudy. They leave latitude for interpretation. I do not think that is a bad thing. When we have a surfeit of people who are meticulous in their verbiage, we have to look to a number of different types of standing orders.

Mr President, you have seen that kind of thing happen in the Standing Orders Committee of an organisation that you attend once a year. The Standing Orders and the Constitution have been amended endlessly, for little reason other than to "clarify the situation". I have never seen the situation arise where an intelligent chairman has not been able to keep the business moving.

I believe, together with Mr Dans, that the Chamber should give some thought to a far more intelligent use of the opportunities that this particular Standing Order allows. We could all think of matters which have been debated on the adjournment motion which, with a little forethought, could have been the subject of quite useful discussion in this place. I am thinking of one matter which arose recently, and some advantage could have been gained by everybody if a fuller discussion of that particular matter took place.

The adjournment at the end of the day is an unfortunate time to raise a matter which ought to excite the attention of members. It frequently happens that some members, thinking that the House is going to adjourn at a particular time, might ring their wives to say they would be able to attend the dinner party they wished to attend that night. They may be ready to leave, and somebody rises and makes a speech on the adjournment which would have been much better received if it were made in the early part of the meeting.

I intend to support this amendment. However, I took advantage of the words of Mr Dans to elaborate on the particular aspect in which I think the business of this House may be more thoroughly carried out.

In the case that Mr Dans raised, no doubt he did not give notice of the matter on that particular morning. If he remembers correctly he indicated to me the night before what he was going to do. One was able to prepare one's thoughts and the discussion, hopefully, followed a

more intelligent line than it might otherwise have done. I think that sort of situation is to the advantage of us all.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: At the outset, I wish to associate myself with the comments that have been made by the Leader of the Opposition.

I was concerned when I saw the notice paper, and I discussed the matter with one of the members of the Standing Orders Committee. I believe the points made by the Hon. Des Dans were relevant.

I point out to the Chamber that there seems to be a problem contained within the proposition, and I say that with great respect to the members of the Committee. An amendment to Standing Order No. 62 applying a two-hour time limit will introduce another matter that we have not yet discussed. In the rare event of there being more than one motion for urgency, that would place the President in a situation of determining which of those urgency motions would take precedence. More importantly, as I read Standing Order No. 62 both as proposed and as amended, there is no question but that the urgency matter will be discussed providing four members support it.

I refer the Chamber to Standing Order No. 426, which has been referred to already by the Hon. John Williams. I recall an event in the Senate when Sir Alister McMullin was President of that august upper House when a similar situation under similar Standing Orders presented itself. For some reason, Sir Alister McMullin was recalcitrant and was of the opinion that it was not a matter of urgency. The Standing Orders were thereby prevented from being suspended.

That is something which certainly would not happen with such a competent, authoritative and kind-hearted man as our President. However, one must look to the future and be prospective as well as retrospective.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Flattery will get you anywhere!

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: If the amendment is passed in its present form, we are not safeguarding the House in a situation where it would be possible for the President to determine, in accordance with Standing Order No. 426, that the matter was not of urgent necessity. He would then disallow the right to introduce the matter. Because of a time factor that has been mentioned by the Hon. Des Dans it may mean that this Chamber would be effectively prevented from discussing the matter. In an upper House and in a competent House of Review, which we unquestionably are, that is an undesirable

situation. I intend to oppose this particular amendment.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is of some significance that my colleague and I are on similar ground.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You are going to agree with me? What a remarkable occasion!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Back-bench members should be most concerned about what happens to Standing Orders which provide members with an opportunity to raise matters of concern to them, particularly in their own electorates, and provide the procedures by which these matters can be debated in the Chamber. Any move which tends to limit that ability should be resisted very strongly and there are good reasons for that.

In the Standing Orders there is provision for questions on notice and for questions without notice to be asked so that a whole range of situations are covered. If a member wishes to raise a matter which does not need to be attended to immediately, and on which he requires an adequate answer from the Minister responsible, he can give notice and the Minister can provide a satisfactory answer as a result of information obtained from the department.

In the case of questions without notice, the general practice is we advise the Minister, or his department, prior to answering the question. We are not required to give notice of the question, but we usually do so in order to obtain a satisfactory response if we wish the matter to be answered on that day.

We have purposely changed the order of business in the Chamber to fit in with a recent practice which has occurred. That is, in a case where an answer given by a Minister is felt to be unsatisfactory, or does not provide all the information sought by the member, he may immediately get to his feet and direct a further question to the Minister concerned. Therefore, it can be seen a whole range of situations is covered by the Standing Orders. We have questions on notice where a period of warning is given that the question is to be asked and we have the situation where no warning is given. I think it is desirable. I would not want to see the situation changed.

The same situation applies with motions. There is provision in the Standing Orders for notice to be given of motions and there is provision also for motions to be moved without notice. The Hon. D. K. Dans pointed out in the case of the two most recent motions moved without notice a considerable period of notice was actually given. The President was advised first thing in the

morning that the matter would be debated later in the afternoon. However, the situation could arise where a member wishes to debate a matter which is of considerable importance in his electorate. If he were a Government member, the Government may wish to complete the business and it may not want to be bothered with the private member's constituent problems. As a result, the member may not receive the leader's support for that motion. The same situation could apply to members on our side of the House. In that case, we would not be able to obtain the voting support of the House to comply with Standing Order No. 426 which requires a majority of the House. In other words, there has to be a division on that particular Standing Order so that the motion may proceed.

This matter was tabled only yesterday and we are debating it today. I do not intend to vote against it; but I should have liked to have had longer to consider it. Perhaps we should report progress on the matter in order that the situation may be reviewed next week. I can understand the President wanting to receive warning of the matter; but Standing Order No. 62 does not require the President's consent. It requires the member should advise the content of his motion. He must introduce the motion to the House in written form and four members must support it.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: That is right; but if it is less than two hours the situation is different.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am talking about the existing situation. It is not necessary to give two hours' notice and the member may introduce a matter as long as he has the support of four members. If that is the case, it may be debated in the Chamber. Under Standing Order No. 426, the President's consent must be obtained and a majority of the members of the House must agree with it before the matter can be debated.

Members should have been allowed more time to consider this matter. In my opinion the House should delay the matter so that it can be considered. If that does not occur, the matter will obviously be dealt with inadequately.

The PRESIDENT: If my memory serves me correctly, the last occasion on which we had an exercise such as this the presiding officer took the opportunity to comment. I cannot find a reference which says the presiding officer may do so; but I also cannot find a reference which says he may not. In the absence of such a reference, I should like to take the opportunity to make one or two comments on the various submissions by members.

The suggestion has been put forward as an

alternate procedure that Standing Order No. 426 be used; that is, the suspension of Standing Orders. As I understood the comments made by the Hon. D. K. DAns, if an urgent situation presented itself whereby he approached the Leader of the Government and decided that a calamity was in existence, Standing Order No. 167 would be used. It reads as follows—

No Motion unless by leave of the Council, or in pursuance of the Standing Orders, shall be moved except after notice openly given at a previous sitting of the Council and duly entered on the Notice Paper.

I suggest that Standing Order should be used to introduce a matter of urgency which it was agreed should be discussed at that time. In that case, the decision of the President to suspend Standing Orders is not required. Standing Order No. 62 covers only motions that the House adjourn to some other time. It is not a provision for moving a motion by which some action in respect to that motion be taken; but it is a provision that the House adjourn to some time other than the normal adjournment time.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: With respect, I think the President should read further under Standing Order No. 62. It uses the words, "for the purpose of".

The PRESIDENT: I have read it. I simply say this to explain that there are means other than Standing Order No. 426 by which it can be done. However, I make those comments only in passing. It is up to the Committee to decide whether it accepts the recommendation.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I just want to say that in my view a little time would be advantageous to the person proposing or wishing to move an urgency motion. Certainly the person occupying the position of President could be placed in an invidious position if circumstances prior to the sitting did not allow him time to give consideration to it, because this could present some problems. Therefore I consider that the proposal is reasonable and the amendment should be accepted.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 145: Inspection of documents laid on the Table—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The next three amendments recommended by the Standing Orders Committee read as follows—

Line 1—To delete the word "All".

Line 1—To insert before the word

"documents", the words "During office hours all".

Line 2—To delete the words "during office hours".

There has been a little indecision as to the meaning of existing Standing Order No. 145 and the amendments are designed to redraft the Standing Order in order to make it clear. In addition the English will be better. As amended, it would read—

During office hours all documents laid on the Table of the House shall be open to the inspection of the Members of the Council or of the public, who may take copies or extracts thereof, but such documents shall not be removed from the precincts of the House without the written consent of the President.

The amendments merely clarify the situation as to when the documents may be inspected. I therefore move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 146: Custody of files and original documents—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The next three amendments recommended by the Standing Orders Committee read as follows—

Line 2—To insert after the word "Table" the passage "shall,".

Line 3—To insert a comma after the word "sitting".

Line 3—To delete the word "shall".

Here again the amendments are designed to clarify the situation similar to the Standing Order we have just amended. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 253: Preamble postponed without question put, Clauses read and put—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The last amendment recommended by the Standing Orders Committee reads as follows—

Page 63, line 3—To insert after the word "printed" the following proviso—

Provided however that by leave of the Committee it shall be competent for the Chairman to put the question on multiples of clauses where discussion is only required on intervening clauses.

The existing Standing Order provides that when a

Bill is in Committee the clauses may be put singly or the Bill may be considered as a whole as printed. There is no provision to deal with any group of clauses and therefore a great deal of time of the Committee is taken up by the Chairman unnecessarily going through each clause. I could instance the Real Estate and Business Agents Bill which contained 147 clauses and a schedule. Clauses 8 to 60 were agreed to, but each clause—some 53—had to be called by the Chairman. Similarly clauses 63 to 100 were agreed to without debate. Debate ensued on clause 101 and then clauses 102 to 147 were agreed to without debate.

This procedure takes up a great deal of time and provides unnecessary work. Therefore it is competent for this House to agree that a Bill can be taken as a whole as printed, that the clauses can be dealt with individually, or that groups of clauses can be dealt with *en block*, provided the Chairman inquires of members which clauses they wish to debate.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Can parts be dealt with instead of clauses? The real estate legislation contained parts.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: It contained clauses 1 to 147 plus the schedule.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought there were parts in it.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

The PRESIDENT: I have to report that the Committee has considered the report of the Standing Orders Committee and has agreed to the recommendations without amendment.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Report

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [5.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed; the report adopted.

House adjourned at 5.57 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ROAD

Mitchell Freeway

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

- (1) Is the Minister aware of traffic congestion occurring on roads leading to the present northern point of termination of the Mitchell Freeway?
- (2) Does the Minister agree that a further extension of the freeway to approximately Delawney Street would overcome most of these problems?
- (3) Has the Government received representation from the City of Stirling for an early commencement of this extension?
- (4) Is the Government making financial provision for further extension to the Mitchell Freeway north this financial year?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The Stirling City Council has stated that it looks forward to an early commencement of the next stage of the Mitchell Freeway.
- (4) No.

EDUCATION

Teachers: Holiday Pay

301. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Education:
- (1) In the past 10 years have any teachers who failed to attend school on the first day of school not forfeited their pay from the 1st January of that year?
 - (2) If so, what steps did they need to take in order to avoid the automatic forfeiture of their pay?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes, one.
- (2) Appealed to Minister on compassionate grounds and special concession granted.

SEWERAGE

Sewage Treatment Plant: Shenton Park

302. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House:
- (1) What is the estimated annual cost of—
 - (a) alkalisation with caustic soda; and

- (b) chlorination of sewage (as proposed by the United State consultants Kalinske and Kachinski;

for solving the problem of the odour from the Shenton Park Sewage Treatment Plant?

- (2) What other effective methods are being considered by the Government in respect of this problem?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) (a) Approximately \$250 000.
(b) Approximately \$100 000.
- (2) (a) Oxidation of sewerage pipes communicating with the plant.
(b) Modification of the aeration process within plant as a short term measure.
(c) A plan is being evolved to modify the existing plant to overcome release of malodours.

RAILWAYS

City Arcade Booking Office

303. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Further to the answer to question No. 272 on Thursday, the 7th September, regarding the Railways City Arcade booking office, does the gross revenue stated include amounts applicable to—
 - (a) Ticket Orders; and
 - (b) Credit Notes for tickets exchanged?
- (2) If not, what was the additional value of these items for the two financial years in question?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not applicable.

EDUCATION

Teachers: Holiday Pay

304. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Education:

Referring to the answers to my previous questions No. 252 on the 6th September, and No. 286 on the 12th September, if

no records are kept of the teachers who have forfeited pay for failing to attend school on the first day of school, on what evidence does the Minister base his positive assurance that some have done so?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The appeal to the Minister, on compassionate grounds, by a teacher who failed to take up duty on the first school day in 1977, as reported in my answer to question 301 today.

ASSISTANCE AND SECURITY CORPORATION

Membership

305. The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Leader of the House:

In view of the Premier's admission that the Government did in fact provide funds to the Assistance and Security Corporation, and the often stated support by certain Liberal Legislative Councillors for the use of scab labour, can the Minister advise whether any of his Party colleagues in this House are members of this organisation?

The Hon. G. C. MACKINNON replied:

The questioner asks about matters not under the control of any Minister and therefore need not be answered. However, under the circumstances, it is felt that the inferences and implications need to be rebutted.

The question is based on a false premise. The Government has never "provided funds" to the Assistance and Security Corporation as the honourable member claims. That phrase implies a grant of some kind—and no grant was ever made. The Government paid for services rendered—services which allowed the community to get access to existing stocks of flour being denied it.

As to whether any of my colleagues are members of Assistance and Security Corporation I can only say, firstly, that I have no knowledge that any are, and secondly, that in any case as I have already pointed out this is a matter which does not come under my jurisdiction or that of any other Minister.

RAILWAYS AND BUS TRANSPORT

Central City Railway Station Booking Office

306. The Hon. F. E. MCKENZIE, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that each day quite a considerable number of people enquire at the City station seeking to book or obtain information relating to intrastate bus tours and interstate passenger rail travel, and that they are directed to the City Arcade booking office because bookings for these services are unobtainable at the City station?
- (2) Does he not consider that the most logical place for people to inquire about passenger services and obtain bookings is the Central City railway station?
- (3) Will he effect an annual saving in rental and rates exceeding \$21 000 by having the Booking Office located on property owned by Westrail at the City station either now or when the station is redeveloped?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) I am aware that some such inquiries are received and are so directed.
- (2) and (3) The answer to question (2) is "Yes" under circumstances which obtain at present. However, Westrail's planning is directed towards centralising all its passenger bookings at Westrail Centre, East Perth with its superior facilities including easy parking. Although intrastate booking facilities will always be provided at City Station while it remains the terminal for the *Australind* it is not intended to establish a general purposes booking office in any possible scheme for redevelopment of the city station building.

SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

WAY 79 Pamphlets

307. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Does the Minister realise that one of the WAY 79 pamphlets being distributed called "The Way West" is distinctly sexist?

- (2) If so, will he agree to withdraw it and have it rewritten to have regard for the important role also played by women pioneers in the history and life of Western Australian society?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No. The references to man and men in the pamphlet are taken to refer to *homosapiens* in general, with no specific reference to either gender.
- (2) No, and it should be noted that the art work in the centre fold of the pamphlet depicts several women in the foreground. One could ask, because the female figures are more prominent than the male, whether that makes the pamphlet discriminatory in favour of females?

COMPUTERS

Education Department

308. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Education:

What plans does the Education Department have to adapt our education system to deal with the impact of computers on our society?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The Education Department has established a Schools Computing Centre. Computer studies are available in all Government secondary schools, both country and metropolitan. Investigations are proceeding in possible uses for computers in primary schools.

The Technical Education Division is well equipped to respond to industry's needs for training programmes in the use of computers.

