

- (d) the recommendations made to the Government as a result of the study;
 - (e) any action that has been taken by the Government as a result of the study?
- (2) Will the Minister table a report on the study?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) (a) Three.
- (b) The study commenced on November 3, 1975 and concluded on December 17, 1975.
- (c) Since alcohol was a major contributing factor in the occurrence of approximately fifty per cent of the fatal traffic accidents in Western Australia for the first ten months of 1975, attention was given to the effectiveness of existing penalties for drink-driving offences. It was concluded that because of the number of persons who were repeat drink-driving offenders, a rehabilitation programme should be introduced for such drivers.
- (d) The Road Traffic Authority recommended to the Hon. Minister for Traffic that a study be made of the alternative treatment programmes which could be used for rehabilitating repeat drink-driving offenders with attention also being given to the availability of facilities for such programmes.
- (e) State Cabinet has established an inter-department committee to consider the Road Traffic Authority's recommendations. The Commissioner of Public Health and Medical Services is the Chairman of the committee, other representatives include the Public Health Laboratories, the W.A. Alcohol and Drug Authority, the Australian Medical Association, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' Road Trauma Committee, the Road Traffic Authority, the Royal Automobile Club and the National Safety Council.

(2) Yes.

House adjourned at 4.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 1st April, 1976

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Postponement

THE SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson): I have to announce that today the questions will be delayed until after the consideration of Orders of the Day Nos. 1 to 12.

ANZAC DAY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [2.19 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This year, Anzac Day falls on a Sunday, and for the first time the provisions of the Public and Bank Holidays Act, 1972, will obtain regarding Monday, the 26th April, also being a public holiday.

The Public and Bank Holidays Act fixes Anzac Day—the 25th April—as a public and bank holiday throughout the State. There is a further provision: "When . . . Anzac Day . . . falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the next following Monday is also a public holiday".

The interpretation of "Anzac Day" in section 3 of the Anzac Day Act, 1960-1975, says it means: "The twenty-fifth day of April in each year".

As the Act stands at present, there is no compulsion for racing or sporting clubs to submit statements of receipts and payments of their activities on the Monday holiday and pay the statutory percentage of any net proceeds derived from the fixture to the Anzac Day Trust Fund.

As it happens, the Western Australian Turf Club and the Western Australian Trotting Association have kindly agreed to conduct meetings on the Monday holiday this year on behalf of the trust and pay over the net proceeds from these meetings.

It is considered desirable to apply the provisions of the Anzac Day Act to the Monday holiday rather than the 25th April when Anzac Day falls on a Sunday.

For this purpose the amendment applies to section 5 of the principal Act, which covers payment to the Anzac Day Trust of the net proceeds of race meetings held on Anzac Day and section 7 which requires the association conducting certain defined sports on Anzac Day to pay 60 per cent of the net proceeds to the trust.

These provisions will, in relation to a year when the 25th April falls on a Sunday, apply to the next following Monday and to that day only.

I commend the measure to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Moiler.

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [2.22 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

At the commencement, I would advise members that I intend to table, with your permission, Sir, an advance copy of some explanatory notes that will be issued in respect of this measure and the one which follows it so that it will be easier for members to understand this rather complex piece of taxing legislation. By next week the Government Printer hopes to have these explanatory notes prepared in booklet form. I think members will find the notes useful because they give a layman's interpretation of some of the clauses; and they will be useful not only to members but also to others who are interested in the legislation and who wish to study it either during the passage of the Bills through Parliament, or at a subsequent time.

With your approval, Mr Speaker, I will table these notes now. One deals with the Land Tax Assessment Bill, and the other with the Land Tax Bill.

The explanatory notes were tabled (see paper No. 118).

The main purposes of this legislation are—

To implement the Government policy undertaking to "remove land tax completely from the land under the family home—up to 5 acres (2.02 hectares). This land will not be added to any other land belonging to the same person for the purpose of total land tax assessment".

To update archaic legislation, correct anomalies and remove the relatively high unimproved scale.

The reason for the first purpose of this legislation is obvious and I will give further details at a later stage in this speech.

The second main purpose arises from the need to review the legislation completely.

Our land tax legislation, which was originally enacted in 1907, is largely outdated, difficult to interpret, and contains numerous anomalies and inequities. In addition, land taxes are the most expensive of our taxes to administer.

The average cost of assessing and collecting all of our taxes in 1974-75, including land taxes, was 1.38c per tax dollar. The costs ranged from 0.07c in the dollar for pay-roll tax to 9.82c for land taxes.

The high costs for the assessment and collection of land taxes arise mainly from the existing complex legislation, the manual recording and assessing procedures and the semi-manual accounting system.

Before any system change can be introduced to further improve efficiency and to reduce costs, the law on which any new system is to be based must be clarified and simplified.

The Bill now before the House has been set out in the same uniform way as the other revised taxing Acts in this State, and it is hoped that it will be far easier to follow, by both taxpayers and administrators, than is our existing law.

At the same time as revising the layout of the legislation and simplifying its terms, certain basic changes have been made to our existing land tax structure.

The first of these is to introduce a single scale of rates.

Under the existing Land Tax Assessment Act, land which is to be assessed is divided into two categories. One of these is land which is unimproved; that is, vacant land. The other is improved land; that is, where buildings and other improvements have been erected on it.

The unimproved values of each of these types of land are separately aggregated for the purposes of assessment and separate rate scales are provided to be applied to each total.

One is known as the "improved scale" and the other as the "unimproved scale".

The unimproved scale imposed on vacant land is generally considered to be much too high and many complaints are received, particularly from those engaged in the provision of land for housing who have publicly stated that the high tax rate inhibits genuine development.

The original objective of a higher rate for unimproved land has largely been self-defeating. It was intended to force quicker development. All it has done has been to add a further cost to land coming onto the market. Experience shows that there are other more effective practical ways of expediting development. An amendment was made in the 1973 year which is providing some interim relief of a limited nature to land developers.

An anomaly which has been brought to the attention of the Commissioner of State Taxation, and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, is the case where a person may own vacant land which cannot be subdivided and improved. The land involved is often a small holding of two to four hectares in area. The planning authorities in these situations will approve only urban subdivisions and the erection of dwellings where deep sewerage is available.

In the cases brought to notice, provision of an approved sewerage system by the owner would be completely uneconomic from his point of view, as it would be impossible to recover the cost of installation, if permitted, in the sale price of subdivided land.

In addition, there is often no indication when the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board will be able to extend the sewerage system to service the land concerned.

There are other situations where the high scale of tax can operate unfairly.

One instance of these is where buildings are demolished in city or urban areas to make way for future development and the land is therefore vacant at the 30th June.

This is the date each year on which land tax assessments are based, so this temporarily vacant land attracts the higher rate of tax for the next assessment year.

In one of these cases the increase in assessed tax amounted to approximately \$7 500 in one year.

The introduction of the single tax scale will not only correct these anomalies but also eliminate considerable administrative problems and attendant clerical errors.

Taxpayers will no longer need to advise the department when improvements are made, and the constant arguments as to what legally constitutes improvements to qualify land for the lower rating will be resolved.

Another advantage will be that "rural zoning" records will not be required to determine which scale of tax applies.

The common scale of tax is to be applied to all land whether it is improved or unimproved, and the unimproved values of all land in the one ownership will be aggregated to determine the rate of tax under the single scale.

The single scale of tax that is proposed to be used is the existing "improved scale".

The application of a single scale of tax at the improved rate will substantially reduce the tax levied in many assessments, particularly where all of the holdings are vacant land.

For example, under the existing law and rates, a single vacant lot of land valued at \$4 050 attracts \$50.62 in tax. Under the new legislation it will attract only \$22.27 annually, being a saving of \$28.35 to the owner.

However, it must be remembered that, because all taxable holdings will be aggregated, whether improved or unimproved, in a few cases there could be a small increase in tax, but this is inevitable when a new system is introduced to grant relief in the majority of cases.

For example, where an owner holds land valued at \$5 400 which is improved but is not land on which his home is erected, and also an unimproved block valued at \$3 030, giving him an aggregated unimproved value of taxable land of \$8 430, under the current legislation, because

separate rates and conditions apply to each class of land, he pays total land tax of \$37.87 a year.

Under the new proposals he will pay \$49.79 or an increase of \$11.92 per year.

This is the effect of aggregating the more valuable improved land with the unimproved lot.

The examples given are from actual cases. I emphasise, however, that those cases where the increases apply are exceptional ones and the increases will affect very few of the approximately 50 000 total number of taxpayers who exist.

There will be a large number of taxpayers assisted by the elimination of the "unimproved" scale.

Another basic change to the existing structure of land tax is to the exemptions, particularly those which relate to Crown land, local authority land and land owned by charitable bodies of one kind or another.

Under the existing law, the exemptions provided may be broadly classified under four headings. Three of these are—

Crown land, which includes public roads, reserves, parks and commons, and land vested in the various Government instrumentalities such as the railways.

Local authority land, which also includes certain road reserves, other reserves, parks, cemeteries and the like.

Land owned by charitable bodies.

I should like to emphasise to members that we are talking about "charitable bodies" as defined for the purpose of the Land Tax Assessment Act, which includes land owned by churches, universities and educational institutions, as well as those bodies which are normally described as charitable. It is very important to realise the definition of "charitable bodies" is not as members would normally think of it. Also included is land used for specific purposes, which includes land used for primary production, as mining tenements, for show-grounds and residences, or owned by social security pensioners.

Under the existing law, where Crown land is leased for a non-exempt purpose, the lessee is taxed direct at full rates of tax.

Where local authority land is similarly leased, no tax is levied on the lessee.

Land leased by a charitable body for a non-exempt purpose is taxed to that body but on a concessional rate applied to the aggregated values of all the leased land.

The exception is that land owned by universities or other tertiary educational institutions is not taxed, irrespective of whether it is leased or used for non-exempt purposes.

The brief description of the existing situation clearly demonstrates the anomalous and chaotic situation which has developed in the exemptions contained in the existing Act. Therefore, it is proposed that—

All land leased by local authorities be assessed under the same conditions as now exist for leased Crown land. This will place business and commercial people who lease land either from the Crown or from a local authority on exactly the same footing in respect of liability for land tax, and in a similar position to a lessee of privately owned land who would be charged by the owner with land tax paid by that owner on the leased land.

It is pointed out that under the provisions of this Bill, where land is leased by a local authority and used for recreational purposes, this land will be exempt from tax, as it is under existing legislation.

All vacant or unimproved land held by charitable bodies, including the universities, which is not used for the purposes of these bodies or reserved for those purposes, will be taxed at full rates.

I have mentioned that land which has been leased by charitable bodies, with the exception of the universities, is already subject to tax at concessional rates. However, vacant land which they hold is now exempt from tax.

Quite clearly a number of these bodies have been, and still are, holding land for the purposes of investment and development and are, therefore, enjoying advantages over other developers using or holding land for similar purposes.

It is for this reason that it is proposed that vacant land held by charitable bodies for investment and development purposes shall be subject to tax. However, it is proposed to defer levying tax on this particular class of land until the 1st July, 1978. The reason for this deferment is to give the bodies concerned an opportunity to either make use of the land for their own purposes or to develop or dispose of it in the next two years, as they think fit.

Another feature of the law in respect of imposing tax on vacant land held by charitable bodies is that if a charitable body is holding the land for some use which is for its own particular purposes of operation, then that land will be granted exemption on advice being given to the commissioner of the reservation of the particular parcel or lot of land for those purposes. However, if the body sells the land without having used it for the purposes for which it was reserved, land tax will be payable for the previous five years, or back to the 1st July, 1976, whichever is the shorter period.

I think members, after a study of it, will understand the reason for this. It is to avoid the sort of case where, say, a university which is holding large tracts of land, as some of them have and have incurred a lot of criticism from members of Parliament and members of the community for not developing it, declares that the land is for the normal purposes of the university. If it does this merely as a means of escaping the tax and then all of a sudden decides a few years later that because the values are high enough it proposes to sell as an ordinary developer there are provisions for the previous five years' tax to be imposed so that the subterfuge will fail.

There is one other change to be made in respect of the tax payable under the conditions which I have outlined and that is the rate of tax to be levied on land which has been developed and leased by charitable bodies.

Currently, tax is payable by these bodies on the leased land, such as the sites of office buildings, flats and the like, at the improved rate but with a maximum of 1.1c in the dollar. I should mention that the scale provided for improved land rises to a maximum of 2.4c in the dollar. It is proposed in the new legislation that land leased by these bodies will be taxed at half of the normal rate. This will mean that in some cases the tax will increase slightly but in other cases it will fall. At the same time it is proposed that charitable bodies such as tertiary educational institutions, which lease land for commercial purposes, shall be subject to concessional rates of tax.

Currently they are exempt but as from the 1st July, 1976, they are to be taxed in the same way as are properties owned by other bodies which qualify under the definition of "charitable bodies". To continue, the fourth heading is—

Land used for genuine primary production will continue to be exempt.

However, the provision for exempting the primary producer in the existing law is difficult to administer and is, unfortunately, regularly abused.

Under the present legislation it is possible for a person to fence a large tract of land in the metropolitan area, arrange for a few sheep or other animals to be grazed on it, and successfully claim exemption. This is because it is correctly claimed within the existing law that the land is used only for primary production.

The purpose behind many of these cases of legal avoidance of tax is to minimise the holding costs of land at the rate imposed by the high "unimproved" scale. In fact, by entering into these arrangements, all land taxes are avoided. For example, one area of land in the metropolitan area of 1260 hectares is leased by the owners for grazing. This land has a value of \$325 000 and by leasing it for this purpose, the owners are successfully avoiding tax

of \$7 288 per annum, although they themselves are not in any way engaged in a business of primary production.

Another example is 14 hectares of urban land valued at \$94 500 which is owned by a syndicate but leased to one member who uses it in a minor way for grazing purposes. This syndicate is thus avoiding tax of \$1 272 each year.

Under the Bill before the House it is proposed that the exemption be restricted to genuine primary producer owners; that is, owners who derive at least one-third of their income from a defined activity of primary production.

The foregoing limitation is to apply only to land which is located in the metropolitan region or falls within the boundaries of an approved town planning scheme. In addition, where the owners are companies and those companies are related, such as holding and subsidiary companies, they will be treated as one owner for the purposes of this income test.

Any other land which is used for primary production will continue to enjoy the existing exemption; that is, complete exemption.

Therefore, under the proposal I have described, all rural or agricultural land outside the metropolitan region which is used for farming will be unconditionally exempted as it is today. This means that so far as the genuine primary producer is concerned, there will be no change in his exemption. Quite clearly this type of exemption has given rise to many cases which are difficult to determine and may continue to do so.

It is impossible to provide statutory rules which will allow perfect equity in all situations. For example, a genuine producer may not produce a sufficient percentage of defined income by reason of circumstances beyond his control, such as the result of a natural disaster.

To cover cases such as this, which are not numerous, the commissioner is to be given a discretion to apply exemption where, after examination of all the factors, he is satisfied that the land is being genuinely used in a defined business of primary production.

This discretion will also be applicable in other "grey" areas of other exemption provisions such as defining a "benevolent institution".

I know that members who have had experience with tax laws usually dislike provisions which give a degree of discretion to the commissioner; but after studying the complexities of this and the "grey" areas which members of Parliament in this Chamber will have experienced by the dozen, especially in determining what is rural land within the metropolitan area they will, I am sure, realise it is a wise thing to give this discretion to the commissioner, otherwise we could run into

some peculiar problems. I refer, for instance, to the times when a man faces a very serious downturn in the economics of the industry. Then the test as to what is his income is very difficult to determine and it is best left to the commissioner to decide whether he is a genuine primary producer.

Mr Thompson: The newly planted orchard, for instance.

Sir CHARLES COURT: That is so, and the commission has complete power to say who is a genuine producer and who qualifies, even if the person is in the heart of the metropolitan area. There is no problem outside the metropolitan region.

The concession now given to land used for genuine forestry purposes will remain unchanged.

Earlier in this speech I mentioned that I proposed to give further details of the exemption to land on which the owner's home is built.

It is proposed to exempt fully the land up to 2.02 hectares—five acres—in area on which the owner's home is built and which is used for no other purpose.

This will mean that whether or not the owner's residence is situated on land in excess of 2.02 hectares in area, or he has other assessable land, up to 2.02 hectares which is used for his residence will be exempted.

In order to implement this policy it is necessary to legislate for three different residential situations. These are—

Where the land is 2.02 hectares or less in area, and is used solely or principally as a home in which the owner resides, the exemption will apply to the whole of the unimproved value of the land and no tax will be payable thereon.

Where the land is in excess of 2.02 hectares in area and is used only for a home in which the owner resides, the exemption will apply to 2.02 hectares only and tax will be payable on the excess.

The method of calculation of the amount of exemption will be the proportion of the unimproved value which the unimproved value of 2.02 hectares bears to the whole of the unimproved value of the usable area.

Where the land is used for a combined purpose, such as a home and a business—for example, a shop with residential accommodation attached, or a small factory and home erected on a single lot of land—or is used both for a home and some other non-exempt purpose, the area of land used for other than residential purposes will be taxable.

The exemption allowable will be that proportion of the unimproved value which the value of the land used as a residence bears to the whole of the unimproved value of the land.

The tables demonstrating this will be in the brochure when it is released next week.

This proposal will mean additional initial work for the valuations division of the State Taxation Department, but it will place everybody on the same footing whether a home is erected on 1 012 square metres of land— $\frac{1}{4}$ acre—or a 40 hectare lot—100 acres.

It will also remove the anomaly which, under the existing law, exempts one person who owns a palatial home and no other land and receives his income from investment earnings, whereas it taxes all land owned by another person who owns a modest home and receives his income from operations on a commercial site which he owns.

The proposed exemption will be made, where applicable, before the tax is calculated. Members will realise that is in the favour of the taxpayers.

Therefore, not only will this proposal exempt all of the land on which homes are erected, but it will reduce the aggregated value of the land liable to assessment. In other words, it will be complete exemption.

Mr Davies: Does it mean that all land in one large parcel is equally valuable?

Sir CHARLES COURT: No. It means that the proportion of, say, that 100 acres which was the figure I used, which is used for the house, up to five acres, is exempt and so, before taxing the 95 acres, the five acres will be deducted and only the 95 acres will be taxed so there is not a silent tax creeping up because of the graduated scale.

Mr Davies: But it is considered that each of the 100 acres has an equal value.

Sir CHARLES COURT: If it were valued as an undivided piece it would; if it is undivided it would be valued as 100 acres; whereas if a subdivision has taken place the smaller subdivision would be taken which would be the one in the vicinity of the house. The 100 acres would be irrelevant.

Some members may wish to know the position under the revised provisions where home units are held under strata title or as a share in corporate or joint ownership.

Currently, the Act contains provisions which allow each unit to be assessed as a separate entity and allow the owner to claim exemption if the unit is his residence and is the only land owned.

These provisions will remain, but with this difference that, where the owner holds other assessable land, he will be entitled to claim exemption on the unit if it is his place of residence.

Another aspect which has been raised in connection with home ownership is the few cases where homes are owned by private family companies in which the only shareholders are members of a family.

For these cases a special provision is proposed which will allow the exemption for homes to apply for so long as all the shareholders live in the residence.

As a result of the proposed introduction of a total exemption for land on which the home is erected, and the use of a single tax scale, a number of existing concessions are either unnecessary or are no longer warranted and are to be repealed. These are—

The provision which allows the value of the land on which the owner's home is situated to be determined at the value applicable to a residential zoning where it has been rezoned for a higher use since his occupancy. As all land up to 2.02 hectares in area and used by the owner as his residence is to be completely exempted, irrespective of zoning, this provision is no longer required.

The provision which exempts improved land of up to \$10 000 in aggregated value and applies a concessional tax base for land valued in excess of \$10 000, but less than \$50 000. The main purpose of this exemption and concession was to eliminate or reduce the tax charged on land used as home sites of the owners. Because the owner's home is to be fully exempt, this concession is no longer necessary and, further, has created anomalies by allowing land used for income producing purposes to obtain a concession aimed at relieving home owners.

The provision which allows a rebate from the unimproved rate to the improved rate, for a period of up to four years, when a home is erected on a vacant lot.

Because there is to be a single lower rate of tax for all types of land, this provision is no longer necessary. However, the present section will continue to operate in appropriate cases until eligibility is exhausted by effluxion of time.

That, of course, is a transitional clause to avoid people being losers under the present conditions during the transitional period. To continue—

The provision which limits the value applied to certain lands zoned as "rural".

Under the existing law, land in the metropolitan region which is zoned "rural" and not otherwise exempt, has a limit placed on the valuation used as the tax base. This primarily provided a concession to those whose homes were on this type of land, the area of which was usually in excess

of the prescribed half-acre limit for gaining exemption. Under the proposed provisions, where a home is erected on this land, up to 2.02 hectares will be exempted. Now that there is a common tax rate and the home site is completely exempted, the concession is no longer warranted.

The provision which exempts all land owned by social security pensioners.

When these exemptions were placed in the law, all land, including that used for an owner's residence, was subject to land tax.

The original purpose of the pensioner's exemption was to remove from the tax field the land on which his home was built.

Because the land up to 2.02 hectares on which the owner resides is to be exempted, the provision of exemption of any other land owned is not justified.

In addition to this, there is another reason why this concession should be removed. With the existing and projected gradual elimination of the means test, everyone will eventually qualify for a social security pension. This would mean that under the existing provision, all land, with the exception of that in corporate ownership, would be automatically exempt from tax.

In addition to the changes proposed in the taxing of land which I have just outlined, the Bill provides for changes to administrative procedures, clarifications and bringing up to date the definitions and terminology used in the law.

The first of these administrative changes is to the time for the payment of tax. It is proposed that the tax be paid within 30 days of issue of the assessment, irrespective of the lodgment of an objection.

As matters now stand, a number of taxpayers, particularly some with very large assessments, lodge objections against assessments which cannot be sustained, merely to gain automatic deferment of payment. These are wasteful and time-consuming, as well as slowing down the rate of collection, and should not be allowed to continue.

These situations arise because of the provision in the existing law relating to valid objections against land tax assessments under which the taxpayer is required to pay only one-quarter of the assessed tax pending determination of the objection.

Under all other taxing legislation in the State, all of the tax is payable within 30 days and the procedure for objection and appeal continue without extending the time for the payment of tax.

The proposals in this Bill will require the tax to be paid on the due date, in line with all other taxing laws, irrespective of objection or appeal. This will also remove

another unsatisfactory feature in the existing legislation relating to the lodgment of objections and the rights of appeal to the courts.

Under the existing law, a taxpayer may lodge what would be an otherwise valid objection carrying the right of appeal, but which neglects to fulfil the requirement of paying at least one-quarter of the tax, in which case he automatically loses the right to go to appeal. With the proposal to make the tax payable by the due date, this situation will be resolved.

Another minor administrative change in the Bill is an extension of the time allowed for the lodgment of an appeal. Under the existing law it is provided that—

tax is payable within 30 days of issue of an assessment;

a taxpayer may lodge an objection within 42 days of receipt of the assessment;

if the taxpayer is not satisfied with the decision on the objection, he has 30 days from receiving notice of the decision to request the objection be treated as an appeal.

In the Bill before the House, the time for payment is the same, the time for lodging an objection is unchanged, but the time for requesting an appeal has been extended to 42 days.

In case there are some who believe that the administrative changes of which I have spoken may impose hardship on those who may be unable to defer payment by lodging a complaint or an objection, let me hasten to assure members that the Bill before the House still contains the same provision as the existing legislation under which the commissioner is able to defer payment beyond 30 days and, further, is able to enter into arrangements for the payment of tax which suit the particular problem of the taxpayer involved.

The commissioner informs me—and I think most members are aware of this—that using this and other powers, the department has been able to organise its affairs in respect of payment in such a way that no genuine case of hardship has not been relieved.

Another administrative change is in regard to the liabilities of landowners to lodge annual returns of land. Under the existing law there is a requirement that landowners should lodge a return each year listing the taxable land owned. However, over the years the system of administrative action has reached the stage where returns are requested only where there is a change in the ownership of land.

Under the planned administrative system it is proposed that all taxpayers who own assessable land be required to lodge an annual return. This is purely a change in administrative procedure and not a change in the law, but I felt that I should inform the House of the proposal.

Under the existing procedure, the department has, in effect, to operate a miniature Land Titles Office and land recording system to trace the ownership of land. It is impossible under the present system to avoid errors, particularly as taxpayers often neglect to send in returns and other necessary advice. This does not prevent them, however, from stringently criticising the department, which is vulnerable to the extent that the system automatically accepts the liability for determining how land is owned at a relevant date.

Subsequent corrections of errors are costly and time-consuming, in addition to which the constant maintenance and processing of ownership records absorbs a substantial number of unproductive staff, thus adding to the cost of administering the law. The introduction of an annual return system, as authorised by the existing and the proposed legislation, will pave the way for a complete staff reorganisation and, in due course, an ultimate substantial reduction in costs.

The adoption of the principle of the landowner filing an annual return will ensure that assessments are properly raised on the information flowing to the department, because obviously the owner is the one person who has the full knowledge of what land he owns, whether it be registered in his name or is being purchased by him under contract of sale.

Errors in this information will need to be detected by the department, but the new procedure will remove a constant source of criticism because the mistakes will have been made by the taxpayers concerned, and these can be easily corrected by departmental officers without undue friction.

The question may be asked: Does everyone who owns land in Western Australia need to file a return with the commissioner? The answer is "No". Under the existing and the proposed legislation, there are only about 50 000 taxpayers out of a total of 300 000 landholders who own taxable land and will be required to furnish annual returns. Most of these people—about 75 per cent of them—already submit returns each year because of changes in land ownership. Therefore, there will not be any great change or problems presented to taxpayers in this State.

Further, after the system is operating satisfactorily, it is the intention of the commissioner to provide a simple form of return for use by those people whose landholdings do not alter from year to year, in which case they can indicate by a tick in an appropriate block that there is no change in their land ownership. The furnishing of the annual return will be the basis on which the new system will be founded and is essential for its successful operation.

To facilitate administration, the Bill before the House is set out in the standard format that is designed to make reference easy; that is, if any tax law can be made easy to understand.

In addition, a number of definitions such as "land", "lot", "parcel", and "unimproved value" have been clarified.

As "unimproved value" is the base on which tax is calculated, I direct attention to this definition. This has in the past created some difficulties, and members will see that land leased from the Crown is now to be valued on a fee simple basis. Quite clearly this is necessary to preserve equity.

If a private owner leases his land to another person for use in a business activity, the owner is required to pay tax based on the fee simple value of his land, and under usual lease arrangements the tax he so pays is passed on in some form to the lessee. Therefore, where land is leased from the Crown for use for business purposes, obviously the same base should apply.

In addition, members will note that the definition of "unimproved value" has been updated to clarify the wording and to conform with valuation practice.

Another change in the law under the heading of administration, relates to sections which deal with limiting the commissioner's power of recovery from what are known as "present owners". Under the existing law, where a taxpayer fails to pay his taxes and the department has exhausted all available avenues of recovery without result, if the taxpayer has disposed of the land the law authorises the commissioner to recover the total outstanding tax from the person who then owns the land; that is, the "present owner".

This provision has sometimes resulted in inequitable and unfair treatment of taxpayers. In some cases, this arose where the issue of assessments was delayed for some reason, such as difficulty in obtaining information. This resulted in the late issue of assessments and eventually the department seeking to recover from present owners, taxes which should have been collected from previous owners.

Under the existing law, the power of recovery from a "present owner" is vested in the commissioner, even under conditions where a new owner may have sought and obtained under the department's tax inquiry system what was virtually a tax clearance.

There have been a number of taxpayers—and members will have had this experience with their electors—who have been required to pay arrears of taxes under the "present owner" provisions who had officially inquired about outstanding taxes and who had received advice either that

there was no tax owing or were incorrectly advised of the amount of back taxes to be paid.

As a measure of equity in such cases and with the concurrence of the Treasurer, the commissioner has levied taxes only on present owners where—

no inquiry was made; or

an inquiry was made and the amount of liability duly notified to the inquirer.

In the latter case, if the amount notified remains unpaid, the department recovers from the present owner, but only to the extent of the amount so notified.

Any outstanding taxes which cannot be recovered by the application of these principles are being written off.

These arrangements, of course, apply only to past taxes, as tax inquiry advices relating to taxes for the current assessing year are an estimate and this is clearly shown in large print on the advice supplied to taxpayers.

The Bill now before the House contains provisions which will bind the commissioner to observe the administrative arrangements now being carried out. I think this is fair enough. This will ensure that purchasers of land who make proper inquiry of the department at the time of purchase, and who comply with the official requirements as to the payment of back taxes designated on the advice, are protected from any further liability in respect of those past taxes which could be imposed upon them under the present owner provisions.

This concludes my survey of the changes to be made in the land tax law and which are contained in the Bill now before the House. It is proposed that, subject to this legislation being passed by Parliament, it will come into operation on the 1st July, 1976. That is, it will first apply to the assessment year 1976-77.

It is necessary that the operation of the new law be deferred until that time as systems have to be designed and tested by the department; staff training and public education will be necessary to ensure smooth transition, and financial planning at Treasury level will need to be made to absorb the impact on revenue of the major concessions granted under this Bill.

It will mean that the cost in the dollar of assessment and collection will at first rise marginally. However, in due course, it will be possible, when the system is operating smoothly, to use data processing for the assessing and collection of land taxes, at which stage the cost of collection should substantially reduce.

The annual reduction in revenue as a result of these proposals is expected to be approximately \$1.6 million.

In addition, the new system is designed to improve efficiency, to provide a better

service to the taxpayers and ultimately to reduce the cost of assessment and collection.

I want to commend the Commissioner of State Taxation (Mr Ewing) and his staff for the amount of work they have put into this proposal. As members study the Bill they will see it is a complex one, as are most taxing measures. I hope members will find both the speech notes and the explanatory data which has been tabled, and which will be embodied in a brochure next week, of use in interpreting the Bill. But if it so be that some members find they cannot quite follow either the Bill or the explanatory notes, I will arrange for the Commissioner of State Taxation to be available with me to discuss any complexity with the members concerned, as it is very important that they understand the implications of this legislation in view of the fact that it is a brand new Bill.

Mr Davies: Who will be the winner, the Government or the taxpayer?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Well, the Government will be losing \$1.6 million for a start.

Mr Davies: I imagine you will get it back somewhere.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Well, by growth. I should hope one day we will achieve this position. However, when the Bill comes into effect the Government will have to adjust to this situation, to which it is not only committed but has conditioned itself.

Mr T. D. Evans: To what extent, if any, has this Bill been influenced by the recommendations of the committee of inquiry into rating and general taxation on land? The report has just become available; has the Bill been influenced by that?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member will recall that the Commissioner of State Taxation was a member of that committee and, naturally, knew what was in the report. He has been largely the architect of the new legislation. However, I want to say quite categorically that there are aspects of the rates and taxes committee report which will not be reflected here. For instance, we have retained the exemption for truly rural land, and that is a major consideration and a matter of policy of this Government.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

LAND TAX BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [3.07 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This small measure is complementary to the Land Tax Assessment Bill and its prime purpose is to impose the single scale of tax as from the 1st July, 1976.

Under the existing taxing Act there are three scales. These are—

The unimproved rate, which is the highest, rising from 1c to 5.25c in the dollar.

The improved rate, which rises from 0.3c to 2.4c in the dollar.

The "club" rate, which rises from 0.3c to 1.1c in the dollar.

This Bill replaces the existing Act and imposes for the 1976-77 and succeeding assessment years, a single rate of tax which is the present improved rate.

The "club" rate which is applied to various charitable, sporting and other bodies, is to be replaced by a provision in the Land Tax Assessment Bill which stipulates that the tax to be paid by these bodies is to be at 50 per cent of the rate detailed in this Bill.

This small Bill also contains a saving provision for the legislation to be repealed so that the old rates may be applied where this is appropriate and necessary.

By way of explanation to members who are new to the Chamber and who have not been involved in taxing legislation before, the Bill I introduced previously is the assessment Bill which sets out how the amount to be taxed will be arrived at; hence the voluminous provisions contained in it. This simple Bill is the one which determines what will be the rate in the dollar in respect of the taxable value of the land arrived at under the assessment legislation.

Also, the reference in my speech a little earlier about this Bill containing a saving provision for the legislation to be repealed so that the old rates may be applied where appropriate and necessary refers, of course, to provisions in the existing law which will be carried over for a transitional period.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

METROPOLITAN REGION TOWN PLANNING SCHEME ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [3.10 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This small measure is necessary because the metropolitan region improvement tax is assessed on the same basis as land tax and the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act authorises this mode of assessment.

Because we are proposing to repeal and re-enact the land tax legislation, we also have to make corresponding changes in the legislation governing the metropolitan region improvement tax.

The main amendment proposed in this Bill is to delete the old exemption provisions for primary production land which were originally inserted in the law when the first Bill for the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act was drafted. At that time this land was subject to land tax.

For some time this provision has not been necessary because primary production land exemptions are now fully covered in the land tax legislation and are, and will be, automatically applied to the metropolitan region improvement tax.

The other amendment is merely to update the reference to the title of the Land Tax Assessment Act because of the proposed change in that legislation. This Bill, which is consequential to the changes in the land tax law, I commend to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

METROPOLITAN REGION IMPROVEMENT TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [3.12 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This small amending Bill is also consequential on the land tax legislation already submitted to the House. Because the improvement tax is assessed on the same conditions as are contained in the Land Tax Assessment Act, it is necessary to update the references in the Metropolitan Region Improvement Tax Act to correspond with the proposed new land tax legislation.

This has been achieved by adding another section to the principal Act which operates from the 1st July, 1976, the same commencing date as the proposed new land tax law, and contains the updated references.

The rate of tax imposed on and after the 1st July, 1976, is the same as the existing rate, namely, $\frac{1}{2}$ c in the dollar. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

JETTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Works) [3.14 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Jetties Act to increase the maximum penalty which may be imposed under the regulations.

In the parent Act there are a number of sections authorising the making of regulations. Section 4 grants authority to regulate activities on jetties; section 9 grants authority to regulate in regard to buoys; and subsection (2) of section 12 authorises the making of regulations for the prevention of injury or damage to public jetties.

All these were incorporated in the Act when it was enacted in 1926 and the \$40 then provided as a penalty was reasonable, but today has no impact because of the depreciated value of money. The \$200 now proposed is more in keeping with today's money values.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Jamieson (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melbourne—Minister for Works) (3.16 p.m.): I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Western Australian Marine Act to provide for a maximum penalty of \$200 for a breach of regulations made under the parent Act.

At the present time there is provision for a maximum penalty of \$40. Regulations include: Prohibiting the navigation of vessels which cannot be safely navigated; prohibiting the use of any specified waters by any vessel; prescribing safety regulations in connection with navigation, mooring and berthing of vessels.

It can be seen that a \$40 maximum penalty is inadequate, having regard for present money values. Indeed the Harbour and Light Department has been advised on several occasions by the Crown Law Department that magistrates hearing charges against persons for breaches of the regulations have commented that a \$40 fine is farcical particularly when life has been endangered by non-observance by a boat owner of basic safety requirements.

Providing for a maximum penalty of \$200 gives magistrates a better opportunity to bring home to offenders the seriousness of any breach of the regulations, and I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Jamieson (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

EMPLOYMENT AGENTS BILL

Second Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) (3.19 p.m.): I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Employment Brokers Act was first introduced in Western Australia in 1909 to regulate the activities of employment brokers.

It was amended in 1912 and again in 1918 but for the past 58 years has functioned without change. It is therefore appropriate to propose some alteration in the format of the legislation, particularly as various parties connected with or affected by its operations have moved strongly in this direction.

The origin of protective Statutes on this matter in other places arose out of strongly held philosophical and pragmatic points of view that workers, particularly those on lower incomes, should be protected from exploitation by persons who chose to make a profit from the circumstances of unemployment.

Following the 1939-1945 World War, the Commonwealth Employment Service had its beginnings under the Commonwealth Re-establishment and Employment Act, 1945, and it followed the principles of the ILO Convention No. 88 (Employment Service) which Australia ratified in 1949. This ensured the maintenance of a free public employment service which comprises a network of local and regional offices sufficient in number to serve each geographical area of the nation and of this State conveniently located for employers and workers who are encouraged to use it on a voluntary basis.

Mr O'Connor: Where was the ILO Convention held?

Mr GRAYDEN: It was held in Geneva.

An ILO Convention No. 34 (Fee Charging Employment Agencies) was adopted at Geneva in 1933 but it was revised and superseded in 1949 by ILO Convention No. 96 on the same matter. Australia, however, has not ratified this convention. It provides for either the progressive abolition of fee-charging agencies in part II or the regulation of such in part III. It is optional to adopt either part when considering ratification of the convention. In common with Western Australia, other States of Australia, except Victoria and Tasmania, have had legislation over the years to license and regulate the activities of employment brokers who have operated in conjunction with the free Commonwealth service. The acceptance of this Bill should allow Western Australia to conform to the principles enunciated by Convention No. 96 which it could not do under the current Act.

Following the industrial expansion in Western Australia in the 1960s, there was some increase in the number of employment brokers licensed as shown in the following figures—

1962	....	....	....	....	21
1966	....	....	....	....	40
1968	....	....	....	....	72
1972	....	....	....	....	82
1975	....	....	....	....	99

Mr O'Connor: I would imagine a lot of those would have dropped out.

Mr GRAYDEN: Without any doubt that would be the situation.

Mr Thompson: The interjection is somewhat inaudible. I think the *Hansard* reporter is having difficulty in hearing.

Mr GRAYDEN: I am sure the reporting is in capable hands. This is not a question of my being stumped for an answer. I am trying to amplify on the information supplied in the notes.

Different agencies cover either a special category or a variety of employees varying through executive, professional, office and secretarial staff, rural workers, hotel and domestic staff, and the like.

A number of employment agents took the initiative early in 1969 to form the Employment Agents Association which was later changed to the Personnel Services Association which is affiliated with the Perth Chamber of Commerce.

It is understood that criticism of employment brokers was one of the main reasons which caused this step to be taken and this body was formed as a trade association pledged to a code of ethics and conduct designed to foster harmonious relations between their clients and the general public. Its membership since its formation seems to have varied between 20 and 30.

In September, 1970, a motion in the Legislative Assembly to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into and report upon the activities of employment brokers was defeated. It was suggested then that the Department of Labour and Industry should administer the Act in a more complete form. Some mention was also made of the qualifications of the licencees and their employees and the necessity for a person who is charged with the responsibility of selecting people for or of placing people in employment to have an understanding of the duties of the vacancies and of the qualifications required of the applicants. No doubt, requirements are misjudged by the agents from time to time which dissatisfies the employer or worker. However, these agents seem to develop a personalised service which retains a clientele for them although, obviously, they cannot match the back-up facilities of a national employment service with its full range of services and activities such as assessment and counselling services, professional and executive sections, and so on.

The Personnel Services Association is anxious to adapt the legislation to modern concepts and practices and the Western Australian Trades and Labor Council shares the same view. The professional musicians union was of the opinion that the entertainment industry has, over the years, been plagued by exploitation of performers causing every country to

grapple with the problem of preventing exploitation by those in the guise of managers, entrepreneurs, representatives, entertainment consultants, etc.

Mr O'Connor: Do you think it applies to any degree?

Mr GRAYDEN: Without doubt. It applies throughout the Commonwealth, and certainly in Western Australia. It is hoped that this Bill will be the means of successfully overcoming the problem.

Because of the ever-present lure of success and stardom in show business, the performer tends to be more gullible to the wiles of smooth operators and the annals of the history of that industry are filled with legendary cases of these cankerous practices.

The Bill contains basic principles and new provisions which have been developed in consultation with the interested parties and in the main seems to have their support. It endeavours to deal with those things which have caused concern in the past, such as excessive control of unemployed persons by virtue of access to employment opportunities, over charging of fees to either party, the use of agency provided circumstances to profit under cover of the agency whilst acting as employers, contractors, or subcontractors.

The definition of an employment agent is of primary concern and any person or business which obtains reward for securing engagements for persons seeking to be employed, or on the other hand for employers wishing to engage workers, should assess their position under this legislation in order to establish whether they are subject to licensing and other requirements under the Bill.

Some classes of business in the past may have had doubts as to their activities or a part of their activities coming within the scope of an employment agency; for example, management consultants or accountants operating on behalf of clients in staff recruitment. A business which services a client, who is to be the employer, in the procurement of an employee, even where a charge for service is made to the client only, is deemed to be an employment agency within the ambit of the Act and is required to conform to the obligations therein.

Those categories of managers or agents who obtain their livelihood by arranging artists' engagements by theatres, night clubs, hotels, etc., can be classed within the definition of "employment agent" even though they may have written contracts which literally give them *carte blanche* authority to organise engagements, collect or distribute earnings of the performer, or the like. Such contracts can be made irrespective of the Act but do not necessarily allow escape from its provisions.

Then again a true theatrical employer is not to be regarded as an employment agent. By that is meant a person, firm

or company, syndicate, society or association, which employs for its own theatrical enterprise a theatrical performer of any kind for the purpose of giving a performance or performances in any theatre, music hall or other place of public entertainment, the main purpose of which is the financial benefit of that theatrical employer and/or the theatrical performer. In New South Wales the Industrial Arbitration Act authorises the Department of Labour and Industry to control the theatrical employer to the extent of the issue of a permit to operate as such, but similar control in Western Australia is not contemplated in the Bill before the House.

A distinction exists in respect of what is commonly known as a temporary service contractor or temporary staff agent where the agent, as principal, is the employer who is fully responsible for the payment of wages or other lawful obligations; for example, pay-roll tax, and workers' compensation to an employee and who, as such an employer, provides to other persons the services of his employees to perform or to do work of a temporary nature, on the basis of predetermined rates agreed between those other persons and himself as such employer. Provided no fee or expense is charged to the employee, the service provided to the customer does not come within the meaning of an employment agency.

However, the placement by agencies of workers such as nurses, models, mannequins, typists, and cleaners in short-term jobs where the onus is on the other person as the actual employer to be responsible for wage payments and other lawful obligations of an employer has caused concern in the past. An agent who operates in this manner for reward from one or both parties for the service provided will be deemed to be an employment agent and clause 41 of the Bill will apply in this case.

Over the years employees in various occupations, in accepting these short-term placements, have often encountered difficulty in collecting their wages due because the terms and conditions of their engagement are unclear and there is uncertainty in establishing who is the person actually responsible to pay the wages.

I might mention that this Bill, if passed by both Houses will require a consequential Bill to amend section 178 of the Industrial Arbitration Act, but it would be of a minor nature only so as to alter the reference in that Act to the Employment Agents Act.

Some major changes in approach occur in the Employment Agents Bill and I will deal with those clauses in the Committee stage. In considering the new provisions, close study was given to the Auction Sales Act of Western Australia, and it was agreed that its provisions in regard to licensing and some other requirements were appropriate for the Employment Agents Bill and have been utilised accordingly.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Skidmore.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [3.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is consequential upon the introduction of the Employment Agents Bill, 1976, to repeal and replace the Employment Brokers Act.

Its only purpose is to change references in section 178 of the Industrial Arbitration Act so that the term "employment broker" will be substituted by "employment agent" and the title "Employment Brokers Act" to "Employment Agents Act".

It must be dealt with in conjunction with the Employment Agents Bill as its passing is dependent on the acceptance by both Houses of the Employment Agents Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Skidmore.

Sitting suspended from 3.40 to 4.03 p.m.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [4.03 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to insert into the Weights and Measures Act the power to make regulations in relation to the conversion to metric of across-the-counter weighing in retail stores in Western Australia.

The regulations will detail the units to be used and the progressive dates for conversion in various zones when all retailers in the prescribed zone will be required to mark, display, or advertise metric prices in stipulated units only. Additional unit prices in terms of Imperial units will be permitted provided the Imperial information is not more prominent than the metric.

Some shops in Western Australia are already trading in the new units, but some traders who have converted their scales continue to trade and advertise in Imperial units or adopt nonuniform metric pricing techniques because of a fear that going metric would put them at a disadvantage to their competitors who are still operating in Imperial units.

Experience in other States where the systematic conversion of across-the-counter weighing in retail stores has been proceeding since 1974 has shown the desirability

of carrying out the conversion under regulated programmes which achieved effective results without disadvantage to consumers or retailers; that is, better retailer co-operation and support; instrument conversion accelerated; and dual pricing quickly declined to be replaced with sole metric pricing.

Following a recent successful regulated programme in South Australia, the Metric Conversion Board fully supports the proposal to provide regulations to ensure a smooth and effective exercise in Western Australia.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Barnett.

PUBLIC AND BANK HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR GRAYDEN (South Perth—Minister for Labour and Industry) [4.07 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to correct an anomaly so that workers will not lose the benefit of a paid public holiday in lieu of Boxing Day which in 1977 falls on a Monday.

The standard awards of the Western Australian Industrial Commission make provision for a day to be observed as a holiday without deduction of pay in lieu of Boxing Day when that day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Monday.

This provision applies only to workers embraced by awards. To ensure that public holidays are uniformly observed the Public and Bank Holidays Act, 1972, is designed to provide parallel holidays to cover persons not included in awards.

The early draft proposals for the Public and Bank Holidays Act which came into operation on the 22nd June, 1973, provided the desired legislation. However, in the subsequent drafting of the Bill, provision to allow a day in lieu of Boxing Day when that day falls on a Monday was overlooked inadvertently.

Although the situation will not arise until December, 1977, early action to correct the anomaly is necessary because the Department of Labour and Industry which administers the Act has already received numerous requests for details of the holidays in 1977.

To correct the anomaly the Act would need to be amended by adding the words "or Monday" after the word "Sunday" in line 20 of the second schedule to the Act.

There is a further minor amendment to section 8 to correct a drafting error. This further amendment is to change the word "Act" to "section" in line 2 of subsection (2) of section 8.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Skidmore.

NATIONAL PARKS AUTHORITY BILL

Second Reading

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Conservation and the Environment) [4.11 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The introduction of this Bill marks a further very significant step forward in the Government's plans to consolidate and improve environmental and conservation management in Western Australia.

The major aspect of this legislation is the creation of the national parks authority with all necessary attendant powers. This national parks authority will take over from the existing National Parks Board which operates under the Parks and Reserves Act, 1895-1972. It is considered that the need for adequate management for national parks throughout the State, together with the technical capacity to manage them adequately, marks a milestone whereby it is desired to establish a special statutory body in its own right to operate under its own specific legislation.

I wish to record here, before discussing the Bill in total, the great appreciation which the Government, and I am sure, the community at large, feels for the work that is being carried out on behalf of the people of the State by the present and past National Parks Boards.

As a preamble to the legislation, it is important to establish an understanding of what is meant by a national park.

Too often in the community it has been felt that a national park is an area from which the public is likely to be excluded for some rather strict conservation reason. This Bill makes it quite clear that the first and foremost function of a national park is to provide an area set aside by virtue of its scenic, aesthetic, or recreational characteristics for much needed respite from the increasing pressures of modern-day life.

However, in addition, the areas of national parks have to be so managed that special features associated with conservation areas or scenic aspects will also be preserved.

The legislation proposes the establishment of a body corporate to be called the national parks authority of Western Australia. The principal ventures of this authority should be to maintain and manage national parks throughout the State and to take such other necessary action including dissemination of information and improvement of the parks as will enable these areas of land set aside in the State to fulfil their important role in activities of the community.

Furthermore, the national parks authority is to co-operate fully with appropriate planning bodies such as the Environmental Protection Authority and local government authorities to manage and improve national parks and to make submissions as to new areas which should be set aside for national parks.

It is appropriate at this point to mention that there are other reasons why this particular Bill is so timely. The major one is that the Environmental Protection Authority is presently compiling its submissions to the State Government as a result of a comprehensive four-year survey of desired national parks and nature reserves throughout the entire State.

With reference to the metropolitan region and its highly competitive land use demands, the Environmental Protection Authority has instigated a most comprehensive study of this region from the Moore River to Bunbury. The recommendations from all studies will be integrated with the concept of a statutory authority.

The technical appraisal of what should be national parks and nature reserves throughout Western Australia to the extent that it is accepted by this Government will serve as a "blue print" for national parks and nature reserve areas at least until the turn of the century.

In deciding upon the membership of the authority, the Government has sought to give due balance to the multiplicity of the Government instrumentalities involved as well as adequate representation from persons experienced in related fields such as primary industry, local government, conservation, and community affairs.

In addition to the formation of the authority *per se*, this legislation gives more immediate effect to the establishment of a professional staff to assist the authority in the management and direction of national parks areas.

The position of Director of National Parks is one of prime importance, and the Bill provides for the present Director of the National Parks Board to assume this appointment.

The Bill defines his duties, and gives him the clear responsibility to formulate policies for the care, control and management of national parks generally, and gives him a voice on the board and committees of the authority.

Such a clear definition and the protection it affords, is not in the existing legislation.

Subject to budgetary and manpower positions, it is also the intention of the Government to ensure he has such professional staff support in the preparation of these management plans. However, advice from other Government departments may be necessary in the interim.

There is provision, of course, for the uninterrupted carryover of all staff and functions of the present National Parks Board.

It is the Government's intention to utilise local experience and expertise in the day-to-day management affairs of national parks.

Some delegation of power to local government will ensure that in some cases the local authority will be the manager of its local national parks.

It is believed that more effective public utilisation of our national parks will be forthcoming by allowing local authority participation under the direction of the authority, although the Government believes that in a State as large as Western Australia overall management of national parks is best co-ordinated by a central body.

There is also provision for local authorities to make model by-laws for the management of their national parks.

The deliberate avoidance of Environmental Protection Authority representation on the national parks authority may need explanation.

It is my belief that the EPA should be in a position to maintain an overview of environmental management in the State and to assist in the co-ordination and planning of the same.

I believe that the EPA's objectivity in fulfilling this function could be clouded by being directly involved not only with the national parks authority but other service authorities also.

In summary, the national parks authority will be an important part of overall conservation and environmental protection and management in this State. It will ensure that areas of land are preserved for future generations, but it will also help ensure that the public demand for recreation space is met.

This legislation has been prepared in accordance with the Government's policy of maintaining and improving effective environmental management in Western Australia.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr A. R. Tonkin.

BILLS (4): MESSAGES

Appropriations.

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

1. Land Tax Assessment Bill.
2. Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act Amendment Bill.
3. Employment Agents Bill.
4. National Parks Authority Bill.

QUESTIONS (85): ON NOTICE**1. MENTAL HEALTH***Kareeba Nursing Home: Use*

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) When did the State Government officially assume ownership of Kareeba hospital?
- (2) When was the last patient transferred from Kareeba hospital?
- (3) Have any alterations been effected to the hospital building since the takeover by the State Government?
- (4) How long has the hospital been empty?
- (5) How does the State Government propose to use this hospital?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The transfer was registered on the 1st September, 1975.
- (2) It is understood the last person was transferred from Kareeba on the 18th September, 1975.

(3) No.

(4) Since the 19th September, 1975.

(5) Kareeba was purchased to provide accommodation for profoundly mentally and physically handicapped persons.

We would like to use it for this purpose as part of our programme to provide suitable accommodation for all of these unfortunate people but, as the honourable member knows, the local authority will not agree to this proposal.

2. MENTAL HEALTH*Tresillian Hospital: Transfer of Patients*

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

Is it the Government's intention to move the patients of Tresillian hospital to the Ross Memorial hospital in Forrestfield, or any other hospital; if so, will he explain—

- (a) why this action is to be taken;
- (b) when the transfer will occur?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Yes.

(a) Because the Tresillian Hospital has been sold to the City of Nedlands;

(b) When modifications to the Ross Memorial Hospital have been completed, a firm date for which cannot be given at this stage.

3.**EDUCATION***Learning Materials, and Free Books Scheme*

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

- (1) Has the Education Department conducted an investigation into the steep and increasing costs of providing learning materials for students in secondary schools; if so, will the Minister table the findings of the investigation?
- (2) Is the Government planning to introduce a free text book scheme for secondary school students?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) An investigation is being conducted by a joint committee of the Education Department and the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations.
- (2) No decision on any matter relating to secondary school text books will be made until the report of the investigating committee is received.

4.**SOCCER POOLS***Request for Introduction*

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Recreation:

- (1) Has the Minister received a request from Australian Soccer Pools Limited to allow soccer pools in Western Australia?
- (2) Has the Minister replied to their request?
- (3) If so, what was the nature of his reply?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Not applicable.

5.**RECREATION***National Sporting Bodies: Financial Assistance*

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Recreation:

Will the Minister make an approach to the Federal Government to reintroduce financial assistance to national sporting bodies?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Following an investigation by the Associated Sporting Committee and the Community Recreation Council a submission urging the

reinstatement of Federal Government assistance to overcome the disadvantage of distance suffered by Western Australian State teams travelling to national championships has been prepared. It must, however, be remembered that the election of the 13th December, 1975, was an absolutely devastating rejection of ALP spending policies. The Liberal and National Parties were returned to curb Government spending.

6. EDUCATION

Child Care Centres

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

- (1) How many out-of-school child care centres have been established in Western Australia?
- (2) Where have such centres been established?
- (3) How much financial assistance has the State Government provided for the establishment of these centres?
- (4) How many children are being catered for in the centres established to this date?
- (5) Which centres, if any, are open—
 - (a) prior to the commencement of school each day;
 - (b) during school vacations?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) 8 established centres at the 31st March, 1976.
- (2) Geraldton, Bayswater, Koongamia, Midvale, Balga, Subiaco, Belmay, Girrawheen.
- (3) \$5 500 plus assistance in kind through the Community Recreation Council.
- (4) The numbers vary from time to time and have been as high as 80 at individual centres; the average attendance is 30 children per centre per day.
- (5) (a) The Subiaco centre opens at 7.30 a.m. and the Belmay centre will commence opening at 7.00 a.m. after Easter.
- (b) Subiaco—May, August and January;
Belmay—August and January;
Bayswater and Balga—January.

7.

EDUCATION

Schools' Concert Band: Overseas Festivals

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

- (1) How many students and staff are involved in the decision to send the Western Australian schools' concert band overseas to participate in international music festivals in July?
- (2) What is the estimated total cost of the venture?
- (3) What contribution has the State Government made towards the costs involved?
- (4) What is the estimate of costs to be borne by individual student members of the band?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) The Western Australian Schools' Concert Band, which will participate in international music festivals in July, will consist of 68 students and five Education Department staff. Additionally a senior courier will be provided free of charge by the travel agents to facilitate customs formalities and to supervise the movement of all instruments and baggage.
- (2) \$108 410 for fares and accommodation.
- (3) \$15 000.
- (4) Individual student members have been asked to contribute \$600 towards the cost of fares and accommodation.
Clothing and outfitting, as selected by the students and parents, is estimated to cost \$208 for girls and \$261 for boys.

8.

ARTS COUNCIL

Private Loans and Grants

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

What action has he taken to encourage loans and grants from private individuals and companies for artistic ventures approved by the State Arts Council, as promised by him before the 1974 State election?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

We have just been through a period of depressed economic conditions and a period when the then Federal Government virtually declared war on private enterprise, and it has not been feasible to seek substantial private funds for arts purposes.

Our efforts to explore ways and means of achieving our objective made it clear that major success can only be achieved when there is a degree of economic buoyancy. The situation is now being reconsidered.

9. REGIONAL ART GALLERIES

Establishment

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

When is it proposed to establish regional galleries throughout the State in co-operation with local authorities, as promised by him before the 1974 State election?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The West Australian Art Gallery Board, on behalf of the State Government, is pursuing an active programme of assisting local authorities in the establishment of local art galleries, where desired.

The board is not aware of any specific financial request to build a major regional gallery having been made to it or any Government department, but should a request be made, it would obviously be investigated with regard to local financial and other support and the type of collection envisaged.

Over the past 10 years, country residents have not been neglected, as art gallery exhibitions are continually touring throughout the State.

Professional assistance has already been given to art galleries in Derby, Albany, Bunbury, Busselton and other country towns, and it is expected that the provision of expanded accommodation in the planned new Art Gallery will allow the gallery's extension service to provide greater assistance.

10. CREATIVE LEISURE CENTRES

Establishment

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) How many creative leisure centres have been built by the present Government, using only State funds, since its election to office?
- (2) What is the total cost of construction and annual running costs of these centres?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) It is State Government policy to combine with the Federal Government in giving assistance to local government to build creative leisure and recreation centres.

Since its election to office, the State Government has participated in the funding of seven such centres.

- (2) Estimated total cost of centres, both completed and currently under construction, is \$1 772 000. The running costs of such centres are the responsibility of the respective local authorities and community groups.

11.

EMPLOYMENT

Retraining Courses

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

When does he intend to provide retraining courses in all parts of the State, to enable people to take advantage of new employment opportunities in a changing economy, as promised by him prior to the 1974 State election?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The Technical Education Division of the Education Department has developed a comprehensive Technical Extension Service which enables students in both metropolitan and country areas to study a wide range of subjects using external study methods. Students in country areas have been assisted in the following ways—

- (a) A full time officer-in-charge was appointed in the Pilbara area in 1975 to assist and encourage students in their studies. This officer is stationed at Karratha.
- (b) A second such officer was appointed in 1976 and stationed at Hedland.
- (c) Tutors from the Technical Extension Service visited country regions in 1975 to meet with students and to assist in specific subject areas. This programme is being repeated in 1976.

- (2) Construction of student residential accommodation at the Bunbury Technical School was undertaken in 1975 and the project is nearing completion. This accommodation will allow students from surrounding and more remote areas to undertake studies in the well equipped technical school.
- (3) The Technical Education Division introduced special retraining courses in 1975 in those areas where industry indicated a need. A typical example is bricklaying. Similar courses will be conducted in the division in 1976.

- (4) In 1975 numbers of women enrolled in existing courses, e.g. commercial courses, to equip themselves for re-entry into the workforce and a similar situation exists in 1976.
- (5) New courses to meet emerging needs of industry and commerce have been developed for both full-time and part-time students. A typical example is marine engineering, 1st class, which operated for the first time in 1975.
- (6) In 1975 a number of selected staff returned to industry to renew their firsthand knowledge and a similar programme is planned for 1976. The programme embraced: Printing, baking, aviation, wool technology and numerically controlled machine tools.

12. LACROSSE TEAM

Overseas Competition: Financial Assistance

Mr BRYCE, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has he received a request for financial assistance for five Western Australian lacrosse players, who are members of a national team going overseas to represent Australia?
- (2) Has he replied to their request?
- (3) If so, what was the nature of his reply?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The W.A. Lacrosse Association was informed by way of letter dated the 5th March, 1976, that the limited financial resources of the State Government precludes assistance.

13. VOLLEY BALL TEAM

Interstate Competition: Financial Assistance

Mr BRYCE, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has he received a request for financial assistance from members of the Western Australian volley ball team, going interstate to represent Western Australia?
- (2) Has he replied to their request?
- (3) If so, what was the nature of his reply?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Not that I can recall, or that we can trace on Premier's Department files.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

14. LAPORTE TITANIUM

Effluent

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Has the investigation into effluent disposal from Laporte been completed?
- (2) If so, what conclusions have been reached and will he table a copy of the report?
- (3) What effect will the expected increased concentration of ferrous sulphate and sulphuric acid in the effluent waters have on the recipient area?
- (4) Has the increased concentration referred to above already taken place, and if so, since what date?
- (5) Has the problem been discussed by the Environmental Protection Authority and is it satisfied that there will be no deleterious effects as the result of the changed quality of the discharge?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) The increased concentration of ferrous sulphate and sulphuric acid would utilise the sand dune disposal area at a more rapid rate.
- (4) No.
- (5) Yes. The matter is kept under review by technical experts in liaison with the company, and the Environmental Protection Authority kept advised.

15. MURRAY RIVER

Water Usage: Environmental Study

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What have been the results of the environmental studies conducted into the likely effects if Murray River water is to be used for domestic, commercial and industrial purposes?
- (2) By whom were these environmental studies carried out and what were the possible environmental implications and conclusions reached by the study?
- (3) Will he table the report?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (3) The information acquired is still under review.

16. UNDERGROUND WATER RESOURCES

Environmental Studies

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Adverting to question 80 of 27th November, 1974, concerning underground water resources and effect on certain wetlands, what was the nature of the environmental studies made which are referred to in the answer to sub-question 2(a)?
- (2) By whom were these environmental studies carried out, and what were the possible environmental implications and conclusions reached by the study?
- (3) Will he table the report?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (3) Simulation studies of aquifer responses to water extractions and rainfall inputs have been made by the Metropolitan Water Board. The studies will be validated and refined by continued monitoring of groundwater levels before and after water abstraction. Likely further studies are currently under review.

17. BAUXITE MINING

Alcoa Project

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) How many hectares of land have been affected each calendar year by Alcoa's bauxite mining operation?
- (2) How many tonnes of bauxite have been produced in each of those calendar years?
- (3) How many personnel have been employed by Alcoa for each of those years in—
 - (a) mining operations;
 - (b) refinery operations?
- (4) Will he table a map indicating the areas which have been mined for bauxite?
- (5) What is the capacity of the refineries and what has their output been for each of the years referred to above?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) to (5) The specific information asked for will be compiled and presented as soon as possible.

18. HEALTH

Atmospheric Solid Pollutants

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have surveys been made of the fallout from the atmosphere of solid pollutants in any area of Western Australia in the form of monthly or weekly tonnages?
- (2) If so, what are the details?
- (3) If no such surveys have been undertaken, what is the reason for this neglect considering that this is a parameter often ascertained elsewhere in Australia and overseas?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) Yes. Surveys of fallout from the atmosphere of solid pollutants are no longer recorded in the form of monthly or weekly tonnages. The present form of recording fallout is in milligrams per square metre per day or total dirtiness.
- (2) Surveys have been conducted and are continuing in the following areas—

Perth metropolitan area,
Esperance,
Kalgoorlie-Boulder,
Port Hedland,
Dampier-Karratha,
Bunbury-Australind,
Cape Lambert-Wickham,
and several locations in the south-west. Results have been published in the annual reports of the Commissioner of Public Health.
- (3) Answered by (1).

19. WHITFORDS NODES

Environmental Authority Advice

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) What decision has the Government made with respect to the Whitfords nodes, in view of the advice tendered by the Environmental Protection Authority?
- (2) Will he table the full report made on the subject by the Environmental Protection Authority?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Following close liaison with the Shire of Wanneroo, a submission on the Whitfords nodes was received from council yesterday. I have called for a meeting of representatives of the Environmental Protection Authority, Government departments and the local authority to review with me all aspects of this issue.

(2) Yes, the report is tabled herewith.
The report was tabled (see paper No. 119).

20. TOWN PLANNING

*Mandurah-Bunbury Coastal
Area: Report*

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) Has a report been made on the proposals for the development or preservation of the coastal strip between Mandurah and Bunbury?
- (2) If so, will he table the report?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is "No" when is the report expected and will it be made public upon its presentation?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) The study has been largely completed and a report is being drafted.
- (2) Yes, when I am in a position to do so.
- (3) See answer to (2).

21. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Swan River: Discharges

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

What are the names and addresses of the corporations and other bodies which are permitted to discharge substances into the Swan River and what are the details of these substances in the various cases?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I hereby table the reply.

The reply was tabled (see paper No. 120).

22. SOIL CONSERVATION

Standing Committee Decisions

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What decisions were made by the standing committee on soil conservation at its 30th meeting in Melbourne on the "control of unwise clearing of land"?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr OLD) replied: The committee agreed to the preparation of an appropriate discussion paper including relative State legislation. This was not proceeded with however, it being considered that the issue was essentially a matter for specific determination by each State or Territory.

A complete review of the States and Territories' soil conservation legislation has now been included as one of the points in the joint Commonwealth-States' soil conservation study.

23. *This question was postponed.*

24. AGED PERSONS

Leisure Needs Study

Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

When does he intend to introduce his study of the leisure needs of elderly people as promised by him prior to the 1974 State election?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The study of the leisure needs of the aged has been in progress for some time, and should be completed in approximately 9 weeks.

25. PENSIONS

Delay on Increase

Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he protested to the Federal Government over their intention to delay the autumn rise in pensions till May of this year?
- (2) Is he aware that the move will cut an estimated \$29 million from the pensions outlay?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) I am advised that the present intention is to pay the higher pensions from the first pension pay day in May. I also understand that this procedure is closely in line with the operative date for the corresponding pension adjustment made by the Whitlam Government last year. Therefore in following the established pattern for payment of pension increases the Federal Government is doing no more or less than its predecessors.

26. PENSIONER CONCESSIONS

Implementation of Recommendations

Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) In view of his 1974 election policy statement that he was seriously concerned about the plight of retired people in an inflationary economy, will he implement those recommendations of the committee of enquiry into pensioners concessions which can be regarded solely as the responsibility of the State Government?
- (2) If not, why not?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) Consideration will be given to the implementation of further concessions to pensioners as the Government's financial resources allow. In this respect it must be realised that inflation, particularly of wage costs, is having a serious impact on the Government's financial position and has reduced our capacity to provide additional benefits without imposing higher taxation.

The committee's recommendations will be reviewed when the next Budget is being framed.

In the meantime, we hope to get some reaction to the report from the Commonwealth and other States as, in the final analysis, the best results can be achieved at that level.

the pension rates payable are inadequate for their needs. Typical cases are deserted husbands with children in their care, or large families on low incomes with special expenses.

27. NATIONAL COUNTRY PARTY

Election Promises on Welfare Payments

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Has the National Country Party taken steps to initiate its election promise to regularly review all forms of welfare payments so that people dependent on State help will not be disadvantaged by inflation?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr OLD) replied:

- (1) Monetary assistance rates paid under the provisions of the Welfare and Assistance Act have been regularly reviewed in order that parity with the Commonwealth Government pensions and benefits is maintained. The last State increase was on 5th November, 1975, following an increase in comparable Commonwealth pensions as from 4th November, 1975.
- (2) A further increase at the Commonwealth level is expected in May and an approach will then be made to the Treasurer to follow the usual practice of adjusting State pensions accordingly.
- (3) It is also significant that the Department for Community Welfare, through its branches, provides assistance to persons in need who either do not qualify for Commonwealth Government pension assistance or who, for various reasons, are in a situation where

28. WANDARRA SCHOOL

Replacement

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

- (1) Is it the Government's intention to use portion of the recently announced \$10 million of spending on schools to replace the sub-standard school buildings at the Wandarra school?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The \$10 million advance is to be used for the commencement of new schools, both primary and secondary, which will be needed to accommodate increasing enrolments for the 1977 school year.

29. QUAGLIA, MR

Police Offence: Pardon

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Attorney-General:

Will the Attorney-General state each of the policies and reasons relied upon to justify the granting of the pardon recently to Mr Quaglia?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

The Government has one policy in respect to recommending the exercise of the Royal Prerogative, which is that each case must be considered on its merits. In the case of Mr Quaglia, the Government was of the opinion after considering all the circumstances that human considerations justified the granting of a pardon, and made a recommendation to His Excellency, the Governor, accordingly.

30. TOWN HOUSES

Lynwood: Sale

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is the State Housing Commission engaged in final legal technicalities to permit the sale of 14 town houses at Lynwood?
- (2) When were these town houses completed by the builder?

- (3) Was it not possible to anticipate and obviate problems associated with obtaining strata titles for the units prior to their completion?
- (4) What steps will be taken to prevent a repetition of this problem in the future?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The 30th September, 1975.
- (3) There were no difficulties in obtaining strata titles. The problems were subsequent to the issue of titles and involved both preparation of by-laws and amendments to contract of sale documents. I am informed that the general manager of the commission has already written to the member in this vein.
- (4) There were no precedents in Western Australia for sale of strata title units under "Contract of Sale" conditions. Now the initial difficulties have been overcome, future projects on strata title would be handled more expeditiously.

31. BUILDING BLOCKS

Karrinyup: Auction

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What conditions were imposed at the auction of land owned by the State Housing Commission conducted on 21st February?
- (2) If no conditions were imposed, how does this comply with Government policy of imposing conditions to contain prices?
- (3) How many duplex sites were auctioned?
- (4) How many different purchasers successfully bid for the duplex sites offered?
- (5) How many sites were purchased by that buyer who bought the most number of duplex sites at the sale?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Conditions applied to the sale of the 21st February as follows—
 - (a) 10% deposit.
 - (b) balance within 28 days.
 - (c) House must be constructed within 4 years of sale.
 - (d) The lot cannot be sold until a house is constructed.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Fourteen duplex sites were offered at the sale.

- (4) Twelve different purchasers were successful in purchasing duplex sites.
- (5) The most duplex sites purchased by any one purchaser was two.

32. STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Management Fee: Purchasers Affected

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many purchasers are liable for the recently imposed State Housing Commission's management fee?
- (2) How many purchasers paid the \$5 fee during the months of January and February?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

	Janu- ary.	Febru- ary.
(1) 12 893.		
(2) Paid less than \$5	4	14
Paid \$5	1063	4724
Paid more than \$5	78	306
Total	1145	5044

The number of purchasers actually paying has probably been affected by adverse publicity and the advice from outside organisations, the Leader of the Opposition, and the member, to refrain from so doing until the matter had been debated by the Parliament.

33. HOT WATER SYSTEMS

Local Government By-laws

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Local Government:

Are there any regulations, by-laws or other controls restricting or dictating the capacity of hot water systems that can be installed in homes in relation to the size of homes or the number of bathrooms that the home contains?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

There is no such provision in any by-law made under legislation within the scope of my portfolios.

34. HOUSING

Parliamentary Liaison Officer: Representations

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

How many representations were processed by the Parliamentary liaison officer in each of the last six months of 1975 and each of the first two months of 1976?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

July	....	....	375
August	....	....	355
September	....	....	343
October	....	....	338
November	....	....	290
December	....	....	237
January	....	....	272
February	....	....	323

Total 2 533

All representations enumerated have been completed.

The above figures refer specifically to formal representations that require due processing. Numerable informal enquiries are received in which the information is readily available and are answered within the day, and are never recorded. No records are kept on this type of representation.

35. HOUSING

Applicants: Emergency Category

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

Is it true that those applicants classed as "emergency" by the State Housing Commission are satisfied according to the date on which they were classed as emergency?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

No. Each case is dealt with according to its particular circumstances, and the availability of a suitable unit for its particular needs.

36. HOUSING

Transfers of Occupancy

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

How many applications for transfer were received from residents of State Housing Commission—

- (a) flats;
- (b) town houses;
- (c) terrace houses;
- (d) duplexes,

in the 12 months prior to January 1976?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

As it will take some time to collate information from several sources within the commission, I will provide the answer by correspondence.

37.

HOUSING

Loans: Early Repayment

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Does he maintain the proposition he advanced at a meeting organised by the Australian living organisation in the civilian maimed and limbless hall that State Housing Commission purchase clients would assist the commission's revenue position by undertaking to repay their home loan over a shorter period?
- (2) Is he aware of the statement by the General Manager of the SHC at a public meeting at Coolbellup in which he said the commission's revenue position would not be assisted even if all purchase clients repaid their home loans immediately?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) The two statements were made in a different context. I referred to the total cash flow and overall financial position of the Housing Commission.

The general manager advises me he was referring in a strict accounting sense to the revenue or operating account as distinct from the capital account.

The two statements do not conflict when taken in the context in which they were made.

38.

HOUSING

Purchase Homes: Sales

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

How many purchase homes were sold to applicants in each month since 31st March, 1971?

Mr P. V. JONES replied.

This information is not readily available and will take time to research. I will write to the member when I have the required data.

39.

HOUSING

Applicants: Emergency Category

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

How many applicants classed as "emergency" are currently listed with the State Housing Commission?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

There are 180 current listings with emergent status.

40. HOUSING

Applicants: Needs Category

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

How many applicants classified as "needs" by the commission, when that classification was in use, are currently listed with the State Housing Commission?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

This information is not available without considerable research, which I do not consider is warranted as sufficiently important in the light of other more pressing matters in satisfying applicants' housing needs.

41. HOUSING

Members of Parliament: Representations

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many representations did he receive from members of Parliament in each of the last eight months?
- (2) In how many of these did he vary the decision previously made by the commission?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) There is no practical way of establishing this information short of calling for and examining each file involved. The time involved would not seem warranted and would only cause more delay in answering representations through the parliamentary liaison section.

42. GENERAL ELECTION

Scheduling in 1976

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Premier:

Has the Government considered or discussed the possibility of scheduling an election during 1976?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:
No.

43. MINISTER FOR HOUSING

Press Secretary

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Does he have, or have access to, a press secretary?
- (2) If "Yes" will he please outline full details of the assistance he has access to in the media field?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) In 1973 a Press liaison officer was appointed to jointly service the State Housing Commission and the Minister for Housing. This was subsequently extended to service the ministerial requirements of the other portfolios held by the Minister for Housing.

44. STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Management Fee: Percentage Impost

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

Is it true that the State Housing Commission's management fee represents a greater impost in percentage terms on some purchase clients than on others?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The arithmetic result is so in some cases.

45. HOUSING

Funds: Approaches to Commonwealth

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Premier:

- (1) In view of his statement with reference to the 1975-76 Federal budget allocation for housing that the effects on Western Australia could be severe and the State Housing Commission programme would clearly be down about 38%, which would mean less employment on Government housing programmes this year, will he please outline every approach he has made to the Federal Government seeking additional housing funds?
- (2) Will he table all files, correspondence, etc., relating to any approaches made?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) The Minister for Housing has had discussions with the then Federal Minister for Housing (Hon. J. Riordan) in Perth on 29 July, 1975; and with the present Federal Minister (Senator Greenwood) in Canberra on 15 January, 1976, and again in Perth on 11 February, 1976.

On each occasion, the matters under discussion included the operation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, funding under that agreement, and the total overview of funds for the housing industry.

There is no formal record of these meetings. 48.

The matter was also raised by me in Canberra in the course of the Premiers' Conference in February.

46. HOUSING

Extensions for Aged Parents: Assistance

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

What action has he taken to implement the Government's election promise to provide financial help to families to extend their homes to enable aged parents to live with them?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Foreshadowed legislation affecting building societies will assist in making such finance easier.

The State Housing Commission is also making progress with designs suitable for movable extensions and granny flats. When some remaining problems of building by-laws have been resolved, attention will be given to the financial terms under which public and private housing occupants could be assisted in the manner posed by this question.

47. HOUSING *Geraldton*

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many applicants are listed for accommodation in each category of State Housing Commission accommodation in Geraldton, including purchase homes?
- (2) What is the length of time listed for the longest waiting person in each category, presently waiting in Geraldton, including purchase homes?
- (3) How many homes are presently vacant in each category in Geraldton?
- (4) Will he provide details of—
 - (a) accommodation completed since his answer of 13th August, 1975;
 - (b) accommodation presently under construction;
 - (c) construction proposed during this calendar year?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

As it will take some time to obtain all this information I will answer by letter to the member.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Geraldton Region Study Group: Report

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Has the report of the Geraldton Region Study Group been completed?
 - (2) If "Yes" will he table a copy?
- Mr MENSAROS replied:
- (1) Yes.
 - (2) Yes, I will table a copy after consultation with relevant parties.

49. LAND

Geraldton: Development for Housing

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What plans does the State Housing Commission have for the development of its land in the Rangeway area of Geraldton?
- (2) Will he table any plans that are actually drawn up?
- (3) What is the time scale for implementing development of its Rangeway land?
- (4) What provision is provided for discussion before implementation with local interest groups in general and the Geraldton community forum in particular?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) As the Housing Commission is about to commence detailed discussion and negotiation with the two local authorities involved, it would be inappropriate to make any information public at this stage.
- (4) It is assumed by the commission that in relation to planning matters, the relevant local authorities do reflect and represent the views of local interest groups.

50. RAILWAYS *Derailments*

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Transport:

How many derailments have occurred on each of the following railway lines during each of the last ten years—

- (a) Midland line between Perth and Geraldton;
- (b) Wongan line between Perth and Geraldton;
- (c) Mullewa-Meekatharra line?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

	A	B	C
1966	6	—	1
1967	6	1	—
1968	5	1	2
1969	3	2	3
1970	1	3	5
1971	6	1	2
1972	8	5	3
1973	12	4	8
1974	6	2	7
1975	7	1	5
	60	20	36

It might be pertinent to mention that the two worst years were 1972

and 1973, when there were 16 and 24 derailments, respectively, on those lines and when the honourable member's party was in office.

51.

SCHOOLS

Geraldton: Enrolments

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

What is the enrolment in each year at each primary and secondary school in Geraldton?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

As at 1st March, 1976—

YEAR

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sp.	8	9	10	11	12
Allendale Primary	87	87	80	72	82	79	84						571
Bluff Point Primary	92	85	95	78	73	70	68						561
Geraldton Primary	72	85	71	75	55	69	63	11					501
Rangeway Primary	109	103	99	90	122	86	113						722
Beachlands Primary	35	27	32	28	31	27	26						206
Geraldton S.H.S.									241	274	352	199	89 1 155
John Willcock High									161	159			320
Geraldton Special School								40					40

52.

SCHOOLS

Waggrakine and South Rangeway: Planning

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

What progress has been made with planning towards new primary schools at Waggrakine and South Rangeway?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Primary school sites have been earmarked in the Waggrakine and South Rangeway areas.

Enrolment increases at the Bluff Point and Rangeway Primary Schools are being closely watched. Due consideration will be given to the establishment of new primary schools in the Geraldton area when the 1977-78 school building programme is being scheduled.

(2) What steps has the Minister taken to ensure that this stage will be completed in readiness for the commencement of the school year?

(3) What is the present position regarding the permanent access road to this school?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

(1) Documentation is well advanced.

(2) Tenders are expected to be called when a clearer indication of the full extent of loan funds available for 1976-77 comes to hand.

(3) The access road is to be undertaken as a part of the stage 2 building work.

53.

JOHN WILLCOCK HIGH SCHOOL

Stage 2 and Access Road

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

(1) What stage of planning has been reached with regard to stage 2 of John Willcock High School, due to be built for the 1977 school year?

54.

SCHOOLS

Geraldton: First Year Enrolments

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

(1) How many students are enrolled in year 1 in Geraldton, including those enrolled in non-Government schools?

(2) How many pre-school places are presently available in Geraldton?

- (3) Has the Government given further consideration to building a pre-primary centre at the Bluff Point School in readiness for the 1977 school year?
- (4) If (3) is "Yes" will the Minister indicate the conclusions of such consideration, and if "No" will he give urgent consideration to meeting this serious need?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) 524 at 1st March, 1976.
- (2) 334 places available, 1976, in five kindergartens. (Allendale—72, Geraldton—72, Meekaway—40, Mt. Tarcoola—50, Rangeway—100.)
- (3) No.
- (4) The Government's policy is to utilise the available funds to provide pre-primary centres at new schools. If any surplus funds become available pre-primary centres will be provided at existing schools.

55. EDUCATION

Pre-primary Centres: List

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

Will the Minister list all schools which have been provided with pre-primary centres, or which presently have these buildings under construction?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Constructed:

Allenswood.
Balingup.
Bentley.
Brookman.
Dudley Park.
Eneabba.
Girrawheen.
Greenbushes.
Jarrahdale.
Karratha.
Koondoola.
Montrose.
North Lake.
North Scarborough.
Nulsen.
Phoenix.
Queens Park.
South Kalgoorlie.
South Thornlie.
Southwell.
West Busselton.
Winterfold.

TOTAL 22

Under Construction:

Brookton.
Burrendah (South Willetton).
East Carnarvon.
Kardinya.
Narembeen.
Spearwood.
Warnbro.
Williams.

TOTAL 8

56. AID TO UNDERPRIVILEGED COUNTRIES

Representations to Commonwealth

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Federal Affairs:

What action, if any, and when has the Government taken to have the Fraser Liberal Government desist from its policy of substantially reducing Australia's aid to underprivileged countries?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The subject matter of this question, as the member well knows, is within the exclusive powers of the Commonwealth and, in any case, is not one that could reasonably be classified to come under the Federal Affairs portfolio.

57.

POLICE

Armed Robberies

Mr WATT, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many armed robberies and/or hold-ups have occurred during 1975, and how many so far in 1976 of—
 - (a) bank premises;
 - (b) other business premises;
 - (c) residential premises?
- (2) How many offenders have been apprehended by the police and how many successful prosecutions have resulted?
- (3) How many of those convicted were residents of—
 - (a) Western Australia;
 - (b) Eastern States?
- (4) On how many occasions have these offences been committed with actual physical violence, and have any serious injuries resulted?
- (5) Will the Government give consideration to increasing the penalties to a level more appropriate to the crime as a deterrent for these offences, and increasing the minimum prison sentences which must be served before those convicted become eligible for parole?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) 1975 nine.
1976 nil.
- (b) 1975 eighteen.
1976 seven.
- (c) 1975 nil.
1976 one.
- (2) 1975—22 offences cleared, 32 offenders—all convicted.
- (3) (a) Western Australia—21.
(b) Eastern States—11.
- (4) Actual violence—6.
Injured—3.
- (5) Present penalty for armed holdup is life imprisonment. A recent amendment to the criminal code gives the Crown right of appeal where a sentence is considered inadequate. This provision has already been successfully invoked on three occasions.
- (4) One approach to the Commonwealth Government through the then Council for the Arts (Australia Council), another through representatives of the Visual Arts Board of that council. Representatives of the Visual Arts Board and the Australia Council approached the then Premier (Hon. J. T. Tonkin). There have been several unofficial and exploratory approaches to various officers of the Visual Arts Board, and lastly, an approach to the Museum Commission.
- (5) Over the last five years.
- (6) A refusal from the Visual Arts Board, some encouragement from the Museum's commission.

60. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Construction Depot, Kewdale

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has construction commenced or alternatively been completed of a construction depot, Kewdale?
- (2) If not, when will work commence?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) The site has been levelled, fenced, surfaced, and some foundations for proposed depot buildings constructed. No further construction has been carried out since the end of 1974.
- (2) The programme for the depot construction has been deferred indefinitely. The site, however, is being utilised for the storage of plant and equipment.

61. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Relay Workshop, Belmont

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has construction commenced or alternatively been completed of a relay workshop, Belmont?
- (2) If not, when will work commence?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Construction of a relay workshop at Belmont has not commenced.
- (2) No firm decision has been made to construct a relay workshop.

62. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Apprentices Training Centre

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has construction commenced or alternatively been completed of an apprentice training centre?
- (2) If not, when will work commence?

58. LIBERAL PARTY

*Election Promises, 1974-1977:
Implementation*

Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

Will he table a copy of the Liberal Party booklet containing electoral promises for the 1974-1977 period and indicate which of the promises have been carried out?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

See reply to question 73 of 31-3-76.

59. ART GALLERY

New Structure

Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Have any firm decisions been taken regarding a public appeal for a new art gallery?
- (2) If so, what is proposed?
- (3) If not, when is a decision likely?
- (4) What approaches have been made to the Australian Government for financial assistance?
- (5) When were such approaches made?
- (6) What was the outcome?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A public appeal for a new art gallery.
- (3) Not applicable.

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Construction of an apprentice training centre has not commenced.
- (2) The commission is at present reviewing all training needs and a decision regarding an apprentice training centre and other training facilities will be made when this work is completed.

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) (a) 458;
(b) 268;
(c) 236;
(d) 259;
(e) 274;
- (2) The number of applications being processed at the Mines Department, Perth, as at 26th March, 1976, was 4 835.

63. **ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES**
Additional Major Substation

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has construction commenced or alternatively been completed of a second major city substation rear of medical building, Hay Street, Perth?
- (2) If not, when will work commence?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Civil construction work has commenced, late March, 1976.
- (2) Not applicable.

64. **ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES**
Perth-Eneabba Power Line

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) Has construction commenced on the proposed 132kV transmission line to Eneabba?
- (2) If not, when will construction commence?
- (3) What is the anticipated cost of constructing the transmission line?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) to (3) Surveying and pole carting has commenced.
\$2.3 million (over a three-year period) and subject to escalation.

65. **MINING TENEMENTS**
Applications

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What was the number of mining tenement applications received by the Mines Department for processing for the months of—
(a) November 1975;
(b) December 1975;
(c) January 1976;
(d) February 1976;
(e) March 1976?
- (2) What is the current backlog of applications for mining tenement applications waiting to be processed?

66. *This question was postponed.*

67. **TRAFFIC OFFENCES**

Presentation of Driver's Licence

Mr FLETCHER, to the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) Is it customary for a police or traffic officer to request a minor traffic offender, who is not at the time in possession of his driver's licence, to present his licence within a certain period of hours, to a convenient police or traffic authority, station or office?
- (2) If it is customary, why would a member of the community, in conformity with (1) be recently told to take his licence elsewhere, when he took his driver's licence to headquarters of the Road Traffic Authority, at 22 Mount Street, Perth?
- (3) Is it not a fact that No. 22 Mount Street houses traffic authority, administration and records of vehicle and drivers' licences?
- (4) If so, what regulation or tangle of red tape prevents the sighting of a driver's licence at the address mentioned?
- (5) If provision has not been provided for circumstances above—as would be reasonably assumed by many in the community—will he ensure that members of the public can present their driver's licence to headquarters on the same basis as to any suburban or country branch of the traffic office or police station?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) In conformity with the Road Traffic Act, offenders are requested to present their driver's licence within a reasonable time.
- (2) Prior to the introduction of the Road Traffic Act, production was restricted to an officer in charge of a Police station. The civil servant advising a person to produce his licence elsewhere was unaware of the present provisions of the Act allowing production to him.

(3) Yes.

(4) and (5) Action has been taken to accept production of a motor driver's licence at 22 Mount Street, Perth.

68. EDUCATION

School Cleaning and Lawn Mowing

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

- (1) Is it a fact that schools in the metropolitan area have their lawns mowed and windows cleaned by the Public Works Department or some other body at no expense to the individual school and in addition to the normal provision of a school gardener and caretaker?
- (2) Is it a fact that in country schools these matters must either be attended to by gardening or caretaking staff to the detriment of their normal work, or be paid for by the parents and citizens' association?
- (3) (a) If (1) and (2) do not correctly reflect the position, will the Minister please detail the correct position;
(b) if they do correctly reflect the position, how is this apparent inequity justified?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) (a) and (b) In addition to the twice yearly contract window cleaning in the metropolitan area, departmental cleaning staff are still required to clean windows in both metropolitan and country schools as required.

The appointment of school gardeners is dependent on the size of the school site and the areas under lawn and gardens. Where a mower is supplied in country schools, due consideration is made for mowing lawns when allocating gardening staff.

In some country schools, mowing of ovals is done by contract and in some others all gardening and mowing is done under contract to the shire. The school and Parents & Citizens' Association is not required to pay for any of these services to a school.

69. BOTTLE COLLECTORS

Geraldton

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) What permit or franchise is required for a person or group of people to collect empty bottles?
- (2) What persons hold such permits or franchises in the Geraldton area?
- (3) Is it proper for groups conducting "bottle drives" to sell beer bottles directly to the Swan Brewery or are they required to deal through a local marine dealer?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) A marine collector's licence in the form in the second schedule to the Marine Stores Act is required to collect bottles in which intoxicating beverages are ordinarily sold.
- (2) The following persons are the holders of current marine collector's licences in the Geraldton and nearby areas—
 - (a) Evans, Douglas John, 235 Durlacher Street, Geraldton, licence No. 7109.
 - (b) Evans, Leonard Douglas, 235 Durlacher Street, Geraldton, licence No. 7110.
 - (c) Woodcock, Wilfred John Charles, Northampton, licence No. 7133.
 - (d) Cornell, Edward Ainsley, Kalbarri, licence No. 7131.
- (3) It is not permitted for "groups" to conduct "bottle drives" within the meaning of the Marine Stores Act, allow any person other than a licensed collector or allow more than one licensed collector to accompany him when using a truck in the business of collecting marine stores—section 6 subsection (5)—or sell or otherwise dispose of any marine stores other than bones or glass bottles, to any person other than a licensed dealer—section 6 subsection (2).

70. SMALL BORE RIFLE TEAM

Participation in Championships: Finance

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

- (1) Did the State Government provide any financial assistance to the State small bore rifle team which attended the national championships in Brisbane last year; if "Yes", how much?
- (2) Is the Minister able to advise of the extent of Federal assistance to that team?

- (3) Will the State Government be providing any financial assistance to this years' team to attend the national championships in Geelong?
- (4) Is the Minister in a position to advise whether Federal Government assistance will again be forthcoming or whether it will be cut out under the Fraser cut-back?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) No. It has not been State Government policy to provide travel assistance to sporting teams.
- (2) No.
- (3) and (4) State funds are not available for this purpose during the current financial year, and future decisions to some degree will be dependent on the amount of assistance forthcoming from the Federal programme. At this point in time the Minister is not aware of the intentions of the Federal Government in the area of sports assistance.

71. FISHING BOAT HARBOURS

Reports

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Is any document available which details the provision of safe fishing boat harbours in Western Australia and discusses the needs of various centres for further harbour developments?
- (2) If "Yes" will he please provide me with a copy of such a document?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.

The document was tabled (see paper No. 121).

72. CONSUMER PROTECTION

Tranter Group; Inquiry

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) What stage has the Consumer Affairs Bureau reached with its inquiry into the actions of the Tranter group of companies?
- (2) Is he aware that Tranters are presently proceeding with proposals for a Drummond Cove estate development north of Geraldton?
- (3) Will he take what initiatives he can to see that this development is not proceeded with until after the consumer affairs inquiry has been completed and its results made public?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) The inquiry is well advanced but this is a complex matter and it may be some time yet before investigations are completed.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No positive action can be taken unless the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs is provided with evidence that salesmen employed by or working in conjunction with the Tranter Group are selling undivided shares in Drummond Cove Estate contrary to the Sale of Land Act.

73.

GREYHOUND RACING

Letter from Goldfields Group

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has he received and considered a letter from me dated 10th February, 1976 on behalf of the "Goldfields Greyhounds" group?
- (2) May I impress upon him that the group is becoming anxious for a reply and ask when may a reply be expected?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) The letter has been received and is being considered. I expect a reply will be available in the next few days.

74.

TOURISM

Hainault Mine: Financial Assistance

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What State Government financial assistance has been afforded the Kalgoorlie Hainault tourist mine since it was developed as a tourist attraction?
- (2) When was such assistance given?
- (3) What additional amount of money is estimated to be required to develop further the museum character of the mine?
- (4) Would he please clarify specifically what his statement as reported in the Press on Monday of this week meant, when he was quoted as saying: "He was convinced that a measure of support from the Government could ensure the development of the museum character of the mine", particularly in terms of what financial assistance the State will make available?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Although direct financial assistance has not at this stage been afforded to the proprietors by the Department of Tourism, the value

of promotion through the department's publicity programme and travel centres would be of considerable value.

- (2) It has continued since the tourist mine was opened to the public in mid-1973.

- (3) and (4) No detailed estimates have been prepared, but officers of the WA Museum have been discussing with officers of the Treasury the likely staff requirements in Kalgoorlie to allow the initial stages of a museum facility to be established on the surface workings of the Hainault Mine.

Furthermore, as a result of discussions in Kalgoorlie by the Minister for Tourism and the Director of Tourism recently and my own discussion in Kalgoorlie last weekend, I have given instructions for negotiations to proceed with the partners to determine how best the State Government can assist to enable certain developments to be undertaken which would further improve the role of the mine.

75. TOURISM

Kalgoorlie-Boulder Railway Loop

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) What action has been taken by the Government—
 (a) from its own resources; and
 (b) by its initiative,
 to enlist financial support from the Australian Government for bringing to fruition the Kalgoorlie-Boulder railway loop proposal?
- (2) In respect of (b) with what results?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) Departmental officers have had discussions in Kalgoorlie and Perth in relation to the operation of the line for tourist purposes. A tentative basis was formulated for the retention of the permanent way and arrangements for its operation by a local group subject to participation by the appropriate local governing bodies and finance being forthcoming. The projected cost of rehabilitation and necessary additions, etc., in 1975 terms was \$184 500.

Discussions were on the basis of—

- (a) the State making available the *in situ* line, etc., and rolling stock at scrap value and the land on a suitable tenure;

- (b) the Commonwealth making a tourism grant of \$166 000 over a suitable term; and
 (c) local interests raising \$18 500.

The submission to the Commonwealth Government was given second priority in the 1976-77 programme after the Hainault Tourist Mine, Kalgoorlie.

- (2) Advice has been received that the Commonwealth Government considers that the financing of projects of this type falls more appropriately within the role of the States and local governing bodies and that it has been decided to discontinue the programme of grants for the development of tourist attractions.

As the department does not have a grant allocation sufficient to finance projects of this magnitude, it has informed the town of Kalgoorlie that it is unable to indicate an alternative source of funds.

76.

TOWN PLANNING

Mundaring Scheme No. 9

Mr MOILER, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

Reference is made to the Mundaring Town Planning Scheme No. 9 Glen Forrest Guided Development Scheme:

- (1) Would he list the obstacles which would prevent the Mundaring Council declaring the area bounded by Bilgomen, Marnie and McGlew Roads and Great Eastern Highway a special rural zone—rural homes zone?
- (2) If after the adoption of the special rural zones—rural homes zone policy by the Mundaring Council they were to decide to declare the area referred to in (1) as such a rural zone, would he advise whether the council, or residents desiring the zoning, would be liable to pay compensation of any sort?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2) would he explain the position?
- (4) Would he be prepared to receive a deputation from residents of the area listed in (1) and who are opposed to the proposed guided development scheme?
- (5) Is it correct that under a guided development scheme there is no compulsion to subdivide?

- (6) Is it possible for a council to resume land within a guided development scheme area, if the owner of such land refused to subdivide or in the opinion of the council would not co-operate with the development scheme?
- (7) Would he explain the resumption powers of the Mundaring Shire Council under the proposed Glen Forrest Guided Development Scheme?
- (8) Has a plan for preliminary approval of the proposed guided development scheme been submitted to the MRPA?
- (9) If (8) is "No" would he indicate whether such a plan needs to be submitted to the MRPA?
- (10) In view of the MRPA stated intention to carry out an eastern corridor development study this year, does he agree that the Glen Forrest guided development scheme should be deferred at this time and included for consideration in the overall plan for the eastern corridor?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) The obstacles, if any, are not known. The area is the subject of a proposed town planning scheme which council has not yet adopted. Therefore, it has not been submitted to me for preliminary approval.
- (2) Compensation is not payable in respect of a change of zoning if, in fact, this is contemplated.
- (3) Answered by (2).
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Normally landowners can subdivide in their own time unless the scheme specifically provides otherwise.
- (6) Yes.
- (7) The proposed provisions of the scheme are not known to me for the reasons given in (1).
- (8) No.
- (9) The plan would not need to be submitted to the MRPA.
- (10) Not necessarily. If and when the scheme is submitted, this will be easier to assess in the light of what is proposed by it.

77.

WATER SUPPLIES

Carnarvon

Mr JAMIESON, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he prepared and sent a submission to the Australian Government for funds to consolidate Carnarvon's water supply?
- (2) Has he discussed the matter with the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser?
- (3) Has he received a reply to his representations?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) A copy of the original submission has been given to Mr Fraser, and the case discussed with him by me.

An amended submission, incorporating a review of water availability, aquifer recovery and updated cost estimate to complete the project as a result of work already done, is being prepared, and will be sent forward most probably before the end of this month.

78.

WATER SUPPLIES

Desalination: Investigation

Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

In accordance with his party's election promise to investigate desalination of sea and brackish water, what progress has been achieved?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr OLD) replied:

Through technical journals the Public Works Department is kept informed on desalination development around the world. Within Western Australia contact is maintained with organisations which have desalination plants in operation. Recently, engineers visited the Agnew Nickel Mine to discuss results from the trials with two reverse osmosis units.

The department is presently evaluating tenders for a desalination plant for Denham. This plant will provide additional data on the performance of desalination units under normal operating conditions.

79 and 80. *These questions were postponed.*

81.

HOUSING

Costs Escalation

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Premier:

Is he aware that the costs within the housing industry are currently rising at a rate of 1.3% per month and if so, what actions has

the Government taken or intends to take to arrest this percentage rise and thus assist the working people of Western Australia to secure a home of their own at a reasonable cost?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

My Government is very conscious of rising costs in many areas, including the housing industry.

We are taking every possible measure as a Government, and in concert with the Commonwealth Government, to contain inflation.

Specifically relating to the housing industry, we have taken action on two broad fronts relating to residential land, and to housing finance and construction.

On the land side, vigorous action is in hand to ensure an adequate supply of serviced residential lots and so contain rising prices.

Simultaneously, we are looking closer at development standards and procedures in an endeavour to achieve some economies in land development costs.

In regard to housing construction, there have been two main lines of attack.

The State Housing Commission has made significant changes in contract procedure, such as design and construct contracts to builders' own specification, a cost adjustment clause to minimise contractor risk against rising material and labour prices, and a basic minimum programme to be awarded in annual contracts of larger size so as to minimise overheads, and provide continuity of work.

As to the private sector, the Minister for Housing is in constant touch with the housing and home finance industries to ensure, as far as possible, any bottlenecks are obviated and that there is no undue strain and consequent cost increases because of a too high level of activity.

We will also be introducing new building society legislation which will allow a wider participation of building societies' funds in the total housing arena with consequential beneficial effects on cost levels.

82.

SEWERAGE

South Guildford

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Can he tell me as to whether any plans are being developed for the purpose of providing sewerage for people living in Kidman Avenue, South Guildford?
- (2) If "Yes" when is it envisaged that the work will be programmed to commence?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) No, the provision of sewerage for Kidman Avenue will depend on future extensions to the existing sewered area to the south. The present level of development would indicate that an early extension of this area is unlikely.

83.

POLICE

Drugs: Convictions

Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) What has been the number of convictions for drug offenders since 30th June, 1975 in each category, i.e., cannabis, opium, heroin, lsd.?
- (2) As there appears to be a dramatic increase in the number of convictions over comparable figures from previous years, would he indicate whether the recently increased penalties are considered adequate?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Cannabis, 618 persons convicted; Opium, 78 persons convicted; Heroin, 11 persons convicted; LSD, 2 persons convicted.
- (2) Penalties for drug offences were last increased in 1971. In view of the continuing escalation of drug abuse the National Standing Control Committee on Drugs of Dependence is meeting this month in Canberra to discuss, on a national basis, the need for penalty increase. This committee consists of representatives from law enforcement and health authorities from all of the States and also the Commonwealth. The recommendations of the committee will then be available as a basis for consideration of any change in penalties.

84. MILK

Licensed Producers, and Solids-not-fat Content

Mr BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the total per day gallonage of milk allocated to licensed consumer milk producers?
- (2) Since 1st November, 1975 would he indicate the number of occasions and the amount by which there has been either—
 - (a) shortfall;
 - (b) oversupply,
 of milk for human consumption?
- (3) Would he give details of the number of licensed producers incurring solids-not-fat penalties since 1st February, 1976?
- (4) Can he advise whether the solids-not-fat problem is indicative to any particular area of the State or is it a general dairy industry problem?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr OLD) replied:

- (1) and (2) Under vesting there is no accumulation of "shortfall" or "oversupply" on an industry basis. Dairymen are paid monthly according to market requirements. Their quota represents their proportionate entitlement to that market.

	Dairymen's daily quota entitlement litres	Average daily sale litres
November 1 1975	315 558	317 845
December 1 1975	315 328	321 274
January 1, 1976	280 970	324 628
February 1, 1976	281 181	313 934
		(preliminary)

- (3) 127 quota holders incurred solids-not-fat penalties in February 1976. Figures for March are not available.
- (4) The figures indicate that the problem occurs throughout all areas.

85. MENTAL HEALTH

Tresillian Hospital: Transfer of Patients

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) When will patients be shifted from Tresillian hospital?
- (2) How many will be moved?
- (3) To where will they be moved?
- (4) What staff movements will be involved?
- (5) What discussions have been had with local authorities concerned?
- (6) What is the future of Tresillian hospital?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) When modifications to the Ross Memorial Hospital have been completed—prior to mid-August 1976.
- (2) All residents will be moved.
- (3) It is proposed to remove the residents to the Ross Memorial Hospital, Forrestfield.
- (4) Some staff will transfer from Tresillian. Some Ross Memorial Hospital staff will be retained. Others required will be recruited.
- (5) Full discussions have been held with the Kalamunda Shire Council.
- (6) This is a matter for decision by the Nedlands City Council, which has purchased Tresillian Hospital.

QUESTIONS (6): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. DANDARAGAN SCHOOL
Water Cooling Unit

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

- (1) Is the Minister aware of repeated requests for a water cooling unit to be provided at the Dandaragan school over a long period?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that it is intended to provide taps and a trough at Dandaragan school instead of a water cooling unit because the Public Works Department has funds available for this purpose but has no funds available for water cooling units?
- (3) Would the Minister please indicate if both these funds are provided from the same source?
- (4) If so, why cannot a water cooling unit be provided in accordance with the needs of the school and approval of the Public Health Department?
- (5) Will the Minister please arrange to have this unit provided as requested?
- (6) Would the Minister please indicate the difference in cost between a water cooling unit and tap and troughs, taking into consideration that Dandaragan school is wired for the fitting of a water cooling unit?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

I thank the member for notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The provision of a stainless steel drinking fountain is being investigated and a cost estimate has been prepared.

- (3) All finance is derived from the Consolidated Revenue Fund but different items are involved.
- (4) Limited funds are made available for the installation of cool water drinking units in schools and these are allocated according to geographic and climatological locations. Those schools furthest north and inland in the State receive priority.
- (5) The school is listed for cool water drinking units as funds become available.
- (6) A stainless steel drinking fountain would cost \$750. Two cool water drinking units would be required at the school at a cost of \$1 000.

2. ROBE RIVER LTD.

Shares: Sale by Bond Corporation

Mr MAY, to the Premier:

I apologise to the Premier for the short notice of my question, which is as follows—

- (1) Having regard for the Federal Government's announced policy of major Australian financial participation in Australian projects, has he perused the article on the front page of today's issue of *The West Australian* regarding the Robe River Ltd. shares offer?
- (2) As the accepted amended \$22.1 million offer from Burns Philp & Co. Ltd. and Engelhard Minerals and Chemical Corporation by the Bond Corporation appears to be one of expediency, will he contact the Federal Government immediately to ensure that the alternative offer made by the Hancock family is given urgent consideration prior to a final decision being given?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Had I had a little more notice, I could have brought with me a copy of the Press release I made this afternoon, and made it available to the honourable member, or tabled it. The answer to his question is as follows—

- (1) Yes, I have seen the article which appeared on the front page of *The West Australian* today regarding Robe River Ltd. shares.

- (2) I think it should be understood by all members of this House that Burns Philp & Co. Ltd. is not only a truly Australian company—there seems to be a misconception around the place; for some extraordinary reason, many people seem to regard Burns Philp as being an overseas company—but, on the last figures, also has a higher percentage of Australian shareholders than BHP. It was also one of the original shareholders that made the Australian participation in the Robe River project possible. So, I think it is important to realise that when we are talking about this offer, we must remember that Burns Philp in fact is an Australian company of repute and long standing, and was a pioneer in the project. Therefore, I cannot agree with the honourable member that the acceptance of this offer by Bond Corporation, no doubt in consultation with the liquidator, Mr Jamieson, was one of expediency.

In addition, I know that the Commonwealth Government has an established machinery, as did its predecessor, which reviews this type of matter, where there is a major change in the Australian component. But even on this occasion, whilst there will be the advent of a very reputable and experienced company into Robe River Ltd. in partnership with Burns Philp, in my understanding of the situation—I do not have the exact figures—the Australian component will still be very high. I should also like to say, as I said in my Press statement, that the State Government has not been a participant in the actual negotiations, as was to be expected, because it is a matter between companies, not so much between a Government and companies. However, we are available for consultation, and that is where it ended—apart, of course, from a number of queries being asked by some of the parties about the Government's attitude towards the Robe River project. I made it very clear to the people concerned that the Government regarded it as a very important project, it being the pioneer project in

mining and processing lower grade ores. My own view is that the partners which have gone into the project will be able to obtain the necessary finance and expertise, and give the project the strength we require. As to the prospective merits of the two propositions, I would not express a view because I do not know the content of either of the two offers, other than what I have read in the newspaper.

3. COCKBURN SOUND

Environmental Protection: Tabling of Scott Report

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Premier:

I preface my question by saying that it adverts to question 28 of yesterday, which requested the tabling of the Scott report which, as the Minister for Conservation and the Environment stated, had already been made public. However a copy was not made available to the Opposition. I believe it is a courtesy that copies should be made available to the Opposition, otherwise the Opposition—the alternative Government—is seriously disadvantaged. My question is as follows—

Will the Premier request Ministers and departments to provide the Leader of the Opposition with a copy of similar reports as they are made public?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I do not have the details of the specific question, and I would not hazard a guess beyond the fact that I understand a copy of this report is available in the Parliamentary Library.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: It is a question of general principle.

Sir CHARLES COURT: As a matter of form, normally when an important report that is of general interest to members of Parliament is made public, a copy goes to the Leader of the Opposition. However, I would not give a categorical answer in respect of reports of a technical and other nature without reading the honourable member's question, at which time I will be able to give him a considered answer. As a general rule, when reports are released from my office, my staff are told to send a copy to the Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to be

specific in regard to the report referred to by the member for Morley.

4. KALGOORLIE SCHOOL

Land for Playground Area

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

In referring to question 40 answered yesterday, would the Minister advise when the additional land, formerly part of Forrest Street, Kalgoorlie, incorporated into Kalgoorlie Primary School Reserve, will be fenced to make it more properly part of the school area, and to prevent its use by others in the interests of the safety of the children?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

On behalf of the Minister for Education, I thank the honourable member for notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows—

The Public Works Department has issued an authority for the proposed fencing work to proceed. The construction of the fencing, however, is dependent on the relocation of the electricity lines which is the responsibility of the Town of Kalgoorlie.

5. INCOME TAX

Mortgage Interest Deduction

Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Federal Affairs:

(1) Is he aware of the Fraser Government's intention to cut the heart out of the mortgage interest tax deduction scheme?

If "Yes"—

(a) When, and in what circumstances, did he learn of it?

(b) Does he approve of it, and if so, why?

(2) Has he received a copy of the statement announcing the new home savings scheme in which is buried, at page 13, the announcement of the massive changes to the mortgage interest tax deduction scheme?

If not, why has the Fraser Government denied him this courtesy as Minister for Federal Affairs, and what action does he propose to take, or has he taken, in respect of it?

(3) Is he of the belief that the Fraser Government will now take steps consistent with its policy to cut

the heart out of the mortgage interest tax deduction scheme to reduce the amount of deductions which may be claimed in respect of life insurance premiums? If "Yes", what is he doing about this? If "No", why not?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I must admit when I first read this question, my temptation was not to answer it. However, on reflection, and in consultation with the Minister for Federal Affairs, I reply as follows—

- (1) to (3) The subject matter of this question, as the member well knows, concerns alleged amendments of the Commonwealth income tax legislation, and other legislation, which is the prerogative of the Commonwealth Parliament. No question involving Federal affairs arises, although the Western Australian Government is naturally interested in the overall question of tax benefits which affect housing finance, and will inform itself fully on the new Commonwealth tax and home savings grants proposals.

It is significant that the honourable member in his efforts to dramatise the matter—I wish him well with his headlines in the morning—chooses to use words coined by the Press in respect of mortgage interest tax deduction announcements; and that he ignores reference to the important decision to reintroduce and expand the home savings grants scheme.

(2) Not applicable.

(3) The Mines Department inspects any reported finds which may appear to be of economic significance and reported occurrences of uneconomic mineralisation when convenient.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FOURTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 31st March, on the following motion by Mr Tubby—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to—

May it please Your Excellency:

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MRS CRAIG (Wellington) [5.20 p.m.]: I should like to preface my remarks this evening by adding my congratulations to those of my colleagues to the member for Greenough for his considered speech when he moved the Address-in-Reply. I add also my congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition who today, I believe, has been a member of this place for 43 years less seven days.

The House will be aware that last night I addressed a question to the Minister for Works in regard to an article that had appeared in the *South Western Times* and was later reprinted in the *Daily News*. It was an article that caused many people a lot of concern and I consider it was irresponsible for it to have been printed in the way in which it was printed. The Minister favoured me with a categorical denial of the fact that the Public Works Department was considering such a scheme. But despite that I should like to indicate to the House exactly where the information came from and how irresponsible the reporting was in that the report did not mention at any time that the paper concerned was one of seven papers given at a symposium in Perth in August, 1974. So it seems strange that it should become a headline case yesterday.

The symposium was jointly organised by the Western Australian branch of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and the Western Australian Chapter, Hydrology Branch, of the Institution of Engineers of Australia. It was held at the University of WA in August, 1974, and it was to discuss the water requirements for agriculture, industry and urban supply for

6. URANIUM

Exploration by Overseas Companies

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Have any overseas companies exploring for uranium in Western Australia reported to the Mines Department successful discoveries of uranium?
- (2) If so, will he advise the names and countries of origin of the companies concerned?
- (3) Does the Mines Department investigate all reported discoveries of uranium?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No economically viable discoveries of uranium in Western Australia have been reported to the Mines Department by overseas companies.

a metropolis of two million in the south-west of Western Australia. I will concede that Dr Davidson stated in his paper the matters which were printed in the newspaper reports to which I have referred. But a summing up of proceedings was done by Mr Abbott, an engineer with the Public Works Department, whose job was to analyse the figures that had been put forward by Dr Davidson and to indicate to the symposium whether he thought the suggestions had merit.

With the approval of the House I shall read a few of the extracts from this summing up of Mr Abbott to indicate to members the differences in thoughts that there were concerning the subject matter of the paper. Mr Abbott said—

The analysis only takes account of farming costs and transport to Perth. It does not take into account the advantage of irrigation in concentrating the industry around the milk factories or in reducing the relative magnitude of the spring flush and thus reducing the manufacturing costs for the surplus milk as outlined in another paper by Langdon.

He was able to analyse the figures put forward by Dr Davidson and to prove that they were in fact not correct and that other compensating factors had to be taken into account to arrive at a factual figure. The actual figure at which he arrived in the end was 9.8c as compared with 8.68c about which Dr Davidson was talking. In concluding his remarks Mr Abbott said—

Is the human suffering, ghost towns and farms created by following such a policy warranted by a saving of this magnitude?

I believe not, and fortunately I know that this Government believes not. I hope that persons in my electorate will cease to worry about this because, human nature being what it is, many of them begin to believe there is no smoke without fire and wonder how much truth there is in the allegation and whether in fact they will be faced with such a situation in the not-too-distant future.

I am afraid that water plays a very great part in my electorate and although I am conscious of the fact that I have spoken previously in this place about the Wellington Dam and the rising salinity rate of that dam, I feel it incumbent upon me to speak again of this matter so that members can realise the seriousness of the situation that faces the farming community in the south-west. Nobody denies that the rate of salinity is increasing. I know that the problem is well known and has been widely canvassed and that monitoring of the water in the dam has been going

on since 1940. Since that time the escalation of the salinity rate has been approximately five milligrams per litre per annum, which is a fair sort of escalation over a long period of time.

Mr Jamieson: That has not been consistent, though.

Mrs CRAIG: It has not been consistent.

Mr Jamieson: It is variable.

Mrs CRAIG: The member for Welshpool is quite right because at the end of summer when the level of the dam is lowest the salinity is at its highest. If we get a really wet winter that flushes out the dam there is a drop in the salinity rate. If one wishes to take the argument further, there is a different rate of salinity at the top of the dam than at the bottom.

I shall quote some figures now from an answer to a question asked in this House by the member for Warren in August, 1974. The highest reading that had occurred was 680 milligrams per litre and the lowest reading in that year was 500 milligrams per litre total soluble salts. I ask the House to bear in mind that it is at the 500 milligrams per litre level when pastures begin to be affected. Whilst the member for Welshpool has indicated that the rate of salinity is not constant, I think it is important to bear in mind that 500 milligrams per litre is a rate that applies quite often. Indeed, in some areas there is an indication already of a deterioration in pasture.

In 1974 a Farmers' Union branch in Brunswick Junction addressed some questions to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. I have here some of the answers that came back from the CSIRO. The Farmers' Union asked—

Does clearing accentuate the problem?

The simple answer, of course, is "Yes". The Farmers' Union asked—

Does reforestation alleviate the problem?

Mr Williamson replied—

A practical step to reduce stream salinity in a farmed catchment would be to introduce crops, pastures and other plants which use more water than do the plants sown now. The increased use of water by plants would allow the water table to fall and reduce the seepage of saline groundwater into the streams. However, two comments must be made—

- (1) We do not know, and at present it is difficult to calculate, how soon after planting of trees into a cleared area would there be a satisfactory reduction in the salinity of the stream leaving that catchment;

- (2) There could be plants, useful to the farmer, and management methods which could be applied to achieve a similar reduction in stream salinity. This is obviously much less disruptive of the current situation.

In other words, reafforestation is one answer, but must not be considered to be the only answer.

A further question asked by this branch was whether the salt was coming from forestry areas or cultivated areas. The answer to that question was fairly lengthy, but I think it is pertinent to indicate the following part of the answer—

For areas where the average rainfall exceeds 40 inches (100 mm) per year, the quantity of salt in the soil is about 70 tons per acre (170 tonnes per hectare). However, for areas receiving less than 30 inches (800 mm) per year, the soil salt is about 350 tons per acre (880 tonnes per hectare). These quantities of salt are held in soil which has an average depth of 70 feet (21 metres) to bedrock. This shows that there is a huge reservoir of salt in the soils of the Darling Range irrespective of whether it is forested or farmed.

Further on in this letter from the CSIRO the following is stated—

The most important issue being faced at the moment is related to the continuation of clearing. Solutions to the salinity problem need research which takes time to be carried out. In the meantime some rational decisions can be made to pursue short term management proposals to avoid further deterioration of the problem.

I am well aware that any moves which are taken to implement a policy of banning the clearing of land in the catchment area will not be well received in the area affected. Likewise I am aware of the fact that such a ban would prove to have a most beneficial effect on persons who are at present engaged in irrigation farming.

I hope this Government will make a decision during the time I am a member of this House, and hopefully in the fairly near future. I do realise the decision is not an easy one, because the Department of Agriculture, the Public Works Department, and the CSIRO have all been studying and monitoring the problem for a long time. I know full well that they will not be unanimous in any decision that may be taken. Some of them believe the answer lies one way; and some of them believe the answer lies in another way.

Recently I had a booklet, written by Mr Whittington, presented to me. He tells of a battle for survival against salt encroachment at Spring Hill. This gentleman had land that was badly affected by salt encroachment, and he undertook a very

lengthy battle against the problem. He built a series of interceptor banks which stopped the water running off as quickly as it had hitherto. In fact, he did far more than that.

It has been suggested to me by somebody that this might well be the answer to the problem in the Wellington Dam catchment area. I am afraid I do not know whether that is so; and I do not know whether the soil types are similar to the soil types at Spring Hill, therefore I am unable to comment on that aspect. This might well be another area to be looked at in the fight against salt encroachment.

As I said before, water does seem to play a large part in my electorate and before I leave the subject of water I think I must mention the Yarloop water supply.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: Hear, hear!

Mrs CRAIG: Yarloop is in an unusual position. It was established as a mill town, and the mill provided the water that was used by the residents of the town. However, as the town grew an extraordinary situation arose. Water is being supplied to some homes by the Public Works Department, and to other homes by Millars. We have the extraordinary situation that three houses in the street are supplied by Millars, then two houses are supplied by the Public Works Department, and then another four houses are supplied by Millars. The whole set-up is inexplicably complicated.

To complicate the issue further, the water supply is not very good. On an inspection of the water supply in company with the local engineer I felt it was one of the most ingenious contrivances I had ever seen. Heath Robinson could not have dreamt up anything as good. The filtration plants had been devised entirely by this engineer, and the chlorination plant dates back to, I think, at least 50 years.

These men with considerable devotion have made sure that the citizens of Yarloop are provided with a water supply which is as pure as it could be, even if it is not as plentiful as it might be. I realise the Government faces a problem in respect of water supplies at Yarloop; and I also realise that at the moment negotiations are taking place between Millars and the Public Works Department in an endeavour to bring about some sharing of the expenses. I do hope it will not be too long before this problem is resolved.

A further complication in respect of water in my electorate concerns Leschenault Inlet. In this regard I have received complaints, and I have also seen the area under discussion. The reclamation bund wall that was erected by the Harbour and Light Department in Bunbury has been placed much further out than was anticipated in the first place by the residents of the area. Whilst I believe the people

there do not find this altogether unacceptable, I do know they feel that in the future if the harbour develops further the spoil should be placed elsewhere, and not take up another part of the precious wetlands of the Leschenault Estuary.

No discussion on the Wellington electorate can leave out the dairying industry, neither can I fail to mention the problem of solids-not-fat in milk, which is very prevalent today. I realise this has been a continuing problem in the dairying industry, but I do believe there is evidence to show that it is, in fact, getting worse.

As we are all aware, this year we have seen great changes in the dairying industry in Western Australia. The dairy assistance plan was devised to provide assistance to one section of the industry. In order that the manufacturing-milk farmers could receive that assistance and would be able to start producing market milk, the older producers of market milk had to be prepared to give a little; and, indeed, I believe they have given a little. I hope they will not have to go on giving, because their situation is not as rosy as some people might think.

If we look at this problem of solids-not-fat content in milk, we are told the consumer expects to drink milk with 8.5 per cent of solids-not-fat content; therefore this is the accepted standard which producers have to provide to the processing factory.

The Dairy Industry Authority has introduced premium and penalty payments, so that if the solids-not-fat content level dropped below a certain mark the producer would incur a penalty, but if it rose above 8.5 per cent the producer would receive a premium payment. Various research has been undertaken into the problem of solids-not-fat content. I believe that none of this research has been sufficiently comprehensive; and it is my hope that in the not-too-distant future perhaps the CSIRO will take up this problem and see what can be done to overcome it.

Now we have all heard that when milk is produced in an area which enjoys a special type of climate—let us say, a cool climate—this problem does not occur. Indeed, for some time it was thought it did not occur, but as soon as cows are subjected to the stress of milking for 365 days a year the problem becomes apparent. This is not so in the first season, but usually by the end of the third season it does become apparent.

Research has been carried out indicating that not only one breed of cow is involved in this problem of solids-not-fat. Originally people said that the Friesians were responsible and that we must get

more Guernseys. However, in my electorate I know of an entire Jersey herd which has been milked for some years. The factory figures indicate that over the years the solids-not-fat content from the milk from that dairy has indeed been following a slow decline and that is with the introduction of no Friesian blood at all to the herd.

It is clearly shown that temperature has an effect on the solids-not-fat content of milk and some farmers have gone to an enormous amount of trouble to fit sprays outside their dairies in order that the cows are cooled down before they are milked. This does not overcome the problem altogether.

The Department of Agriculture has been called to a number of farms and asked to map out feeding programmes for cows, because some people contend that incorrect feeding causes the problem. One farmer in my electorate battled on with the department for a season and the solids-not-fat continued to drop and he went on feeding the cows more and more. I am afraid that the end result was that two cows died of protein poisoning, so the problem was not overcome by special feeding.

The processing factories have been assisting farmers to try to overcome the problem, too. They also have had varying degrees of success. Members may consider that I make a big thing of this solids-not-fat problem, but the penalty payments which farmers incur because the milk they produce is below the required standard make an enormous difference to the economics of their operations. With escalating costs, they just cannot afford to incur this penalty payment.

Fodder costs have increased enormously as have labour costs, although few farmers employ labour now. The cost of everything has increased. Surprisingly enough milk is one of the products which is becoming cheaper. In fact I suppose I have some distinction in that I represent an electorate in which is produced two rural items which are becoming cheaper to the consumer, one being milk and the other beef. Mr Fred Moroney has written an article on milk becoming cheaper. He said—

Twenty years ago milk cost 9½d a pint. Next month it will cost 20c for a 600 ml bottle.

That is not an accurate cost for now, but it is still a comparative argument. There have been rises in both products since this was written so probably that is fair enough.

What concerns the producer is the fact that the amount he receives from the sale of a pint of milk is reducing all the time and indeed the farmer now gets only 14.7

per cent of the return for the milk he produces. The rest is eaten up by the vendor, the treatment plant, cartage from the farm to the depot, and transport from the depot to the metropolitan area, as well as administration expenses of the dairy industry authority. He cannot go on under these conditions for much longer.

I have heard it said often in this House that those persons who produce market milk really are on a good thing. In fact, they are likened to being the owners of geese which lay the golden eggs. Perhaps some of the figures Mr Moroney quotes in this article would indicate quite clearly that this is not so. In 1973-74 the average farmer with a dairy quota of 273 litres or less had a net cash income of \$12 248 which represented a loss of 1 per cent on capital in the total farm operation. These facts are contained in the article to which I have referred and I have not picked out the worst one. I picked that one because I felt it was a fairly relevant figure in this argument.

This situation cannot be allowed to continue for much longer. A heavy capital structure is involved in a whole-milk farm. It has long been so and it will continue to be so whether the farm is in an irrigated area or in a dry area.

I turn now from rural problems to social problems. There is no time for me to canvass all of those with which I am concerned, but I would like to say a word about the problems which exist for those people who are presently all over the State, but specifically in my electorate, domiciled next door to Aboriginal families. I have no wish to denigrate Aborigines in any way whatsoever and many in my electorate have proved themselves to be extraordinarily satisfactory tenants. They have adapted to the life style of those around them, and I realise the difficulties under which they exist when they move into such a situation.

I fully support all the facilities that are made available to them to help them overcome the problems associated with their settling into a different life style. However, I am conscious of the fact that we have concentrated very much on the problems which beset the Aboriginal people in the community and have concentrated less on the problems which are evident concerning the people who live next door to these Aborigines.

Numbers of elderly people are living in homes which they own. These homes represent their life savings, and then one day next door to them an Aboriginal family moves in. The family is constantly entertaining its friends to the disadvantage of the elderly people next door. There are drunken brawls; there is foul language; and I must admit that it all arises

from alcohol, because when these Aborigines are not drinking they are the most pleasant neighbours. Many people have made a great effort to get on with them and enjoy good social contact with them except when too much alcohol has been consumed by too many persons in the one house. I do not have to tell any member in this House about this problem because each one of us has faced it in various areas of our electorates.

Mr Skidmore: It is very close personally at times, too.

Mrs CRAIG: I raise the matter because I believe there is more need to be conscious of the problems of those living next door to these Aboriginal families.

Mr Sibson: Every second Wednesday.

Mrs CRAIG: I am conscious, too, of an increasing noise pollution in my electorate. It would be no secret to those in this House who have heard me speak before that I am an ardent advocate of decentralisation and I recognise the need for industries to be established in order that we might keep in our rural areas a greater proportion of the population.

The people on the fringes of Bunbury through which the railway runs are, I am afraid, being disadvantaged at the moment by the amount of freight transported through the town during the night. We know there is a solution and we hope it will be put into effect within the next 12 to 18 months, and that another railway line will be established from Picton across to the new harbour development.

In the meantime those people are disadvantaged. Many of them are finding the situation is having a bad effect on their nerves and I wonder whether we pay enough attention to the overall planning before we start projects of this sort, allowing for the fact that funds are always short, and until development generates some funds it is difficult to provide services.

I do not believe the situation of country pensioners has been sufficiently canvassed in this House. Country pensioners who need to come to the metropolitan area for treatment find it enormously difficult, if not impossible, to obtain accommodation overnight at a rate which they can afford to pay. This matter was the subject of a letter which I wrote to the previous Federal Minister, but I regret to say I have not received a reply. It has also been the subject of another letter which I have written because I believe there should be established a hostel, or some type of subsidised accommodation should be made available to those who have to stay overnight in order to have further tests carried out. Most of these people face the high cost of accommodation if they do not have any family in the metropolitan area.

I suppose my electorate is no different from any other electorate in that the schools within it enjoy varying fortunes in so far as the facilities which are available to them are concerned. However, I am pleased to be able to say that this year in particular I have only 15 schools in my electorate. All my schools are reported to be in a pretty happy situation, although I do not say that there were not some small problems. However, most of those problems are in the course of being ironed out.

The Carey Park School qualified as a disadvantaged school—a title which I hate. Because that school qualified, it received a Commonwealth grant to enable it to upgrade facilities. Whilst that should have happened last year, and did not, I am pleased—not nearly as pleased as the headmaster—to be able to tell the House that a sum of money has now been made available.

Mr Laurance: Do you have any schools which are not disadvantaged?

Mrs CRAIG: Only one is classified as being disadvantaged.

Mr Laurance: I have none that are not disadvantaged.

Mrs CRAIG: A recent trend in the country is the tendency for parents to send their children to small schools. A few years ago small schools seemed to be in danger of closing. Now, parents are taking their children away from the larger centres and sending them back to the small schools. The parents find that the children take a more responsible attitude when they attend a one-teacher school where up to seven grades are taught in the one classroom. I am pleased with the number of people who have taken advantage of this tendency and I hope the trend will continue. I would be very sad to see the smaller schools closed.

Whilst I am not very enthusiastic about one-teacher schools, I believe that if two teachers were provided a most advantageous situation would be created whereby the children would have access to personalised education. Under those circumstances they form a very good relationship with the other children in the classroom, and with their teacher. The smaller schools also have particularly good parent co-operation, and the parents are usually involved very much with the school. That is the case in my electorate.

I am disappointed that my electorate, and Bunbury, will not be afforded the facility by the ABC of a youth concert. I have made repeated inquiries in an endeavour to have a concert conducted in

my electorate. To my consternation I was told by the Superintendent of Music, of the department, that there was no way by which the orchestra could be sent to the south-west this year because he was too busy arranging 66 concerts in the metropolitan area. Surely there should be a little more rationalisation so that the children in the country can enjoy at least one visit from the orchestra. This applies especially in centres where we can accommodate 1 000 children, and where the children can have some sort of musical experience.

I will conclude on a brighter note. Within my electorate I have two hospitals—and perhaps some members would not consider that to be a brighter note. However, the brighter note is that the Yarloop Hospital—which was part of the original establishment of the mill town—is to receive a grant for alterations. I believe that in small hospitals, such as Yarloop, real medicine is practiced. The friends and relatives of those admitted to the hospital have easy access and, as a result, recovery of the patients is usually more quickly effected. The hospital is a most important asset in the community.

The Yarloop Hospital is about the only avenue in the area for women to be employed, so there is no problem with regard to employees. There are two resident doctors who have not the slightest intention of leaving and there is no shortage of skilled staff.

The SPEAKER: The member has five more minutes.

Mrs CRAIG: So, for a country hospital it is, indeed, in a remarkable situation..

Mr Hartrey: Very remarkable!

Mrs CRAIG: I am very pleased that this Government has seen fit to accept the fact that the hospital is an important asset in the community, and is prepared to spend some money on it.

On a less bright note, the Harvey Hospital also requires some expenditure on alterations, but the money is not available.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Skidmore.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.