

The Minister suggested we were making a mountain out of a molehill. That may be his opinion but it is certainly not the opinion of the railway unions or the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia. We on this side of the Chamber share the views of the people associated with the problem and the Royal Automobile Club which has no association with any individual member on this side of the Chamber.

The argument of the Minister regarding parking in other areas is not valid. We say there is a parking area available, so why not allow the public to utilise it free of charge? It would be a different matter if no area was available, but that is not the situation. The facility has been made available in other areas, so it should be made available at the East Perth terminal when it is completed.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 23 amended—

Mr DAVIES: The Minister said this is a simple proposition, but he did not explain the implications which could arise. The implications are that having established the right of the Government to charge for parking, the Government will charge wherever parking areas are established for employees; and probably it will also charge members of the public. It has found a ready avenue for raising finance.

This clause appears to give to the Railways Commission powers similar to those given to local authorities in regard to imposing parking charges and controlling parking, generally. I should imagine that in any regulations it may make the commission would be guided by what is happening in local government. As local governments increasingly find it necessary to raise their parking charges, we can imagine that the charges which might be thought to be applicable at the moment will be far greater by the time the Bill becomes an Act and the regulations are made; and we can assume that in future the charges levied by the Railways Commission will be controlled by the attitude of local government.

Another reason I do not like giving this power to the Railways Commission is that we seem increasingly to delegate to departments and instrumentalities the right to make regulations. It is true we have the right to challenge the regulations, but it is also true that the Government has not yet agreed to a committee of the Parliament to study what is generally referred to as minor legislation. Until we have such a committee I cannot be happy about giving Government departments the right to make regulations.

If I could be assured that I would have the time and the ability to read and understand every regulation that comes before the Parliament I might not be so distrustful—and I do not use that word

in its worst context—of what Government departments might do.

What will happen to those people who work in different locations at the moment? The situation will change dramatically because most of the railway offices are now located within the city limits, but they will be located in the future in areas further removed from the city than the offices of the Ministers, where parking is now free for employees. The locations will be more difficult to get to, and that is another reason I believe we should not even consider charging employees for parking at the new East Perth terminal.

We do not know how many employees do not go to work by train because of the inconvenience or the fact that there is no service which meets their need. However, I know a tremendous number of railway employees continue to patronise the railway service not only because they enjoy concessional rates, but also because they believe it is a very good service. Those people will be greatly inconvenienced by the shift to this near-city suburb. For those considerations, and the ones given earlier in the debate, and the fact that the Minister has not been able to give a substantial argument as to why the Bill is necessary, I oppose this clause.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 11.37 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 8th October, 1975

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

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. PRE-PRIMARY CENTRES

Letter to Press

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Are the comments made by the Rev. Keith Wilson in his letter to the Editor of *The West Australian* newspaper, published in this morning's copy, in respect of pre-primary centres, a true reflection of the situation?
- (2) If not, what is the situation in regard to pre-school and pre-primary centres, parents' committees, and funds for the pre-primary centres?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

I thank the honourable member for giving me some prior notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows—

- (1) Categorically, no.
- (2) The Rev. Keith Wilson and I have crossed verbal swords several times over pre-primary centres, and I thought that I had replied adequately to his various allegations.

Regarding pre-school centres, he persists in saying that I intend to take them over. Well, it is a matter of record that I have said on numerous occasions that no pre-school centre will be accepted by the Education Department unless the transfer is approved by the parents and the local authority concerned. I can, in fact, think of a particular political party in which the Rev. Wilson is reputedly interested that does not hesitate to take over State branches should they not bow to the wishes of the central authority.

Now, the Rev. Wilson knows I have said there will be no take-over. Yet, he persists in perpetuating what I shall charitably call a misconception.

The honourable member will realise that such a tack by the Rev. Wilson means that the rest of his comments are rather dubious. For instance, the reverend gentleman is trying to stir up fear among parents that if their centres are transferred to the Education Department they will be worse off.

Yet, I have said that I want to continue parent involvement. The only difference is that the parents will not be continually concerned with raising money.

It has been implied that we have shortchanged the pre-primary centres by not giving them sufficient equipment and basic materials.

The answer to that is the centres are well equipped as members of both sides of the Chamber who have inspected pre-primary centres can testify.

As for basic materials, there should be no shortage in any

Education Department pre-primary centre because material can be requisitioned whenever it is needed.

Now, I turn to what is probably the most vicious piece of the reverend gentleman's statement.

He said that the amount of money available to pre-primary centres from the Education Department is a meagre \$150 a year.

If, having found out the amount he had bothered to find out what it was for we could, perhaps, give some credence to him. But he obviously did not find out because the \$150 is at the rate of \$50 a term for the pre-primary teachers so that instead of having to requisition for, say, a kilogram of flour, a pot of glue, or a metre of material they can buy it locally. So much for the meagre \$150; it is a type of petty cash, nothing more.

Yet the Rev. Wilson would have liked everybody to believe that we are going to spend only \$150 a year on materials.

Perhaps, he should finally accept my invitation to inspect a pre-primary centre with me. Goodness knows I have asked him before but had no reply. If he looks at a centre he would find out that all the Education Department pre-primary centres are well furnished and well equipped and well stocked with basic materials, and they are ready to start full-scale programmes from the day they open.

2. PRE-PRIMARY CENTRES

Letter to Press

The Hon. R. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

Was the previous question without notice a "Dorothy Dix-er"?

The PRESIDENT: Order: I do not regard that as a question without notice.

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE

1. WATER SUPPLIES

Salmon Gums

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Have investigations been carried out and completed in the Esperance district to determine possible

underground water reserves that would be necessary for the supply of piped water to Salmon Gums and other places between there and Esperance?

- (2) If so—
- where are the areas;
 - what is the size of them; and
 - what possible water exists, and what amount would it be possible to draw off daily?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- Sufficient investigations have been completed to prove that there is adequate underground water to meet the foreseeable demand at Esperance. This source would be capable of providing a supply to Esperance and Salmon Gums and towns between.
- Immediately to the west of Esperance.
 - Answered by (1) above. Investigations will continue to delineate the groundwater source as the projected demand increases.
 - Answered by (1) above.

2.

POLICE

Female Officers

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Police:

- How many policewomen are employed—
 - in the metropolitan area; and
 - in the country?
- What percentage do these represent of the total Police Force?
- Are policewomen always available to accompany male policemen on cases where crimes against women have been reported, such as rape or physical assault?
- If not, will the Government consider appointing more women to the Police Force?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- 27.
 - 10.
- 1.7%.
- Not always, but are available to assist in investigations.
- It is considered there are sufficient women police at present to cope with requirements.

3.

RAILWAYS

Westrail Symbol

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Health representing the Minister for Transport:

What is the estimated cost of replacing the W.A.G.R. symbol with the new Westrail symbol for the

Railways in eliminating "W.A.G.R." and placing the new symbol and painting the adopted colours on—

- rolling stock;
- diesel locomotives;
- vehicles;
- railway stations;
- railway signs; and
- other necessary alterations?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

Very little indeed. In fact in the ultimate it may result in savings to the organisation.

Implementation of the Westrail corporate image, which includes the adoption of a logo, is being undertaken progressively under normal replacement and maintenance programmes. Completion is not envisaged for some years.

Only in exceptional cases where justified will additional expenditure be incurred.

The introduction of a corporate image with a Westrail symbol entails a review of all things that are seen, heard or used by the public and the staff. This co-ordinated and uniform approach permits a higher degree of standardisation, from which economies are obtainable.

The design and implementation is confined to the department's own resources.

4. *This question was postponed.*

5.

EDUCATION

Isolated Areas: Schools and Assistance

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Education:

- Would the Minister please advise the amounts expended in new school constructions and extensions in the following areas since March 1971—
 - North Province;
 - Lower North Province; and
 - Goldfields?
- What concessions and assistance have been granted to isolated students by the State since March 1971?
- How many high schools have been created in the following areas since March 1971—
 - North Province;
 - Lower North Province; and
 - Goldfields?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

(1) and (3) Statistical information is not compiled by the Education Department for individual electoral provinces. It will be necessary for research to be undertaken and the Member will be advised of the details.

(2) 1971 Boarding Away from Home Allowance—

Zone A—\$210-\$261;

Zone B—\$162-\$201;

Zone C—\$141-\$180;

Zone D—\$120-\$162.

1972 Boarding Away from Home Allowance—

Zone A—\$261-\$312;

Zone B—\$210-\$252.

Hostel Subsidy Rates—

1971—\$1.50 per week per term;

1972—\$1.50 per week per term;

1973—\$1.50 per week per term;

1974—First Term—

\$1.50 per week per term.

Second and Third Terms—

Esperance \$4 per week per term;

Carnarvon \$5 per week per term;

Port Hedland \$6 per week per term.

Others \$3 per week per term.

1975—Esperance \$4 per week per term;

Carnarvon \$5 per week per term;

Port Hedland \$6 per week per term.

Others \$3 per week per term.

FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Mr President, there was some comment I wished to make on the third reading on a subject in regard to which Mr Claughton raised a query.

The PRESIDENT: If the Minister wished to make a comment he should have done so immediately after he moved the third reading of the Bill.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I apologise, Mr President. I was anticipating further debate on the matter, and I thought I would reply to that, in which case the debate would then have been closed.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think you were going to give an explanation in reply to a query that was raised.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is right. The query was raised by Mr Claughton and I indicated I would endeavour to obtain more information for him. I was anticipating that the honourable member may have been initiating some further discussion by supplying information that is a little more explicit. However, that is not the case.

I want to convey to that honourable member and to the House—as I previously indicated—that there would be no disadvantage to persons living in this State as a consequence of the creation and the establishment of a State family court. The problem that was outlined by Mr Claughton, as we see it from our reading of the transcript, and from hearing Mr Claughton, could have arisen only from the exercise of a summary jurisdiction under State laws.

When the new family law Act comes into force—which we anticipate will be next January, as I previously indicated—there will be provision for matters arising under that Act to be transferred from one State to another as circumstances require, in the same way as has been happening between the State Supreme Courts since 1960 under the Matrimonial Causes Act. In other words, there will be a uniform Federal jurisdiction operative throughout the Commonwealth. In this State we shall have the benefit of having that jurisdiction exercised largely through our own State courts.

I hope that clarifies the matter for the benefit of Mr Claughton.

The PRESIDENT: I apologise to the Minister. When the Minister moved the third reading of the Bill and there was no response I failed to understand why the Minister wished to speak again.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. District Court of Western Australia Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and passed.

2. Door to Door (Sales) Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education), and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

RECORDING OF EVIDENCE BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

It became the practice in the Supreme Court from about 1960, and later in other courts, to record on magnetic tapes the evidence in selected cases. Where it is considered necessary by the court, or upon the request of the parties to an action, the evidence so taken has been transcribed for the court record.

Prior to this period the judge or other judicial officer made his own handwritten notes of the evidence before the court or tribunal. It was quite obvious, of course, to all concerned that such practice slowed down trial proceedings, and must have had some bearing on the backlog of cases from time to time.

It is considered desirable that the recording of evidence by magnetic tape should continue, and also that provision be made for the taking down of evidence by means of shorthand writing. As there is, however, presently no statutory sanction for such procedure, this Bill provides the requisite authority and procedures to be applied.

Members may be assured that adequate safeguards are provided in civil actions and in criminal trial to ensure that the subsequent transcripts will be an accurate record of the evidence before the court.

With statutory recognition being given to these practical methods of recording of evidence, court proceedings generally may be dealt with more expeditiously, but I would mention that these new provisions do not apply to committal proceedings under part V of the Justices Act, 1902.

The Bill, to give adequate control by the court, provides that every person recording shall be an officer of the court or tribunal in or for which he is required to record evidence or other matter in the legal proceeding.

There are comprehensive safeguards relating to the retention of the master record until all legal proceedings, including appeals, are heard and determined. The master record may not be destroyed within a period of 12 months from its making, for instance, if the master, registrar, clerk or other corresponding officer, for sufficient cause, thinks fit.

The tribunal concerned may also *inter alia* make orders for the retention of the master record. Important aspects regarding retention of the master record may be

further elucidated in Committee for the information of members should detailed clarification of the safeguards provided in the Bill be sought.

The Bill defines the offences under the Act, and provides penalties for commission of an offence.

I commend the Bill to the House.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.50 p.m.]: I support the legislation, but I would like to ask a few questions concerning it. We can cast our minds back to the situation in the services when shorthand typists or stenographers were sworn in for the purpose of recording court martial proceedings. That method was proved as being fair and it resulted in a rather more comprehensive recording of evidence than was the case when the presiding officers or counsel took their own minutes.

I have no objection to the provisions in the Bill provided a competent shorthand reporter is employed. This is one of the aspects I wish to question. On page 3 is the following—

“shorthand reporter” means a person who is approved as a shorthand reporter or is one of a class of persons approved as shorthand reporters;

Am I to take it that these shorthand reporters will have much the same qualifications as a C-II-3 stenographer employed by the Public Service at the present time?

My second query concerns the situation in courts outside the metropolitan area. Will shorthand reporters be used for the reporting of evidence in the circuit courts and, if so, what provision will be made in this regard? Will they be taken from Perth or be locally employed? Also, what guarantee regarding their competency would we have?

These are only queries I am making. I am not criticising the Bill, but am merely trying to obtain information as to the method of selection of these reporters outside the metropolitan area. Possibly they will be employed through the Public Service.

I understand that proceedings have been recorded in courts in Western Australia—Perth in particular—over a number of years by a private mother and son firm. I do not know whether it still operates, but the Minister may be able to tell us.

I have no objection to magnetic tapes being used, because they are a way of life now. Their acceptance is necessary because at least they do provide a true recording and, particularly in court proceedings, there would be no opportunity for the tapes to be doctored in any way, and therefore they would be of benefit in that regard.

I support the legislation.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.55 p.m.]: I am not able specifically to answer the query concerning the competency of the shorthand reporters. However, I am sure the Leader of the Opposition is aware of the fact that in clause 16 the Bill gives the power to make regulations.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I realise that.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: As I understand the position, the degree of competency required would be outlined in those regulations, but I regret I am not able to give the Leader of the Opposition any specific information regarding the matter. I do not know the number of words per minute which will be required, but in view of the considerable experience which has been gained by court officers in the supervision of persons engaged in this sort of work, I am sure we can have faith in their judgment.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I do not think you will have a problem in the city, but if these shorthand reporters are used on circuits you could run into a problem.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That may well be, but I am considering the matter from a practical point of view. The court would have to be satisfied concerning the competency of the approved reporter and his or her capacity to undertake the work in courts on the circuit. I think it is reasonable to assume that in the event of a competent reporter not being available on the circuit, the only alternative would be to have such a person attached to the entourage of the court.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is normal.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is so. They take their staff with them. If it is necessary to take one or more shorthand reporters with them this can be easily arranged because the court consists not only of the judge, but the complete entourage.

I am sorry I have not been able to be more specific, but I hope that what I have said has been sufficient to answer the queries raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I presume they would meet the requirements of the Public Service regarding efficiency.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I have no doubt that will be the situation. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his support of the Bill and also for the expedition with which he handled it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

AUCTION SALES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [5.00 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Auction Sales Act to allow firms and corporations that have multiple auctioneers' licenses to advertise conjointly.

The Act provides that auctioneers' licenses when granted are valid for 12 months, and then may be renewed for similar periods. Applications for a license to carry on the business of an auctioneer or renewal of existing licenses are made to the Clerk of the Court of Petty Sessions nearest to the place of business. The clerk appoints a day for the hearing of the application. The applicant is then required to advertise his intention in a local newspaper. The purpose of advertising is to provide any prospective objectors with notice of the hearing date so they may be heard.

At present, to comply with the Act, a firm or corporation with a number of auctioneers' licenses must advertise its intention to apply or renew each license in a separate advertisement. This is becoming an increasingly expensive procedure. The amendment contained in this Bill will permit the Clerk of the Court of Petty Sessions to authorise firms and corporations, where application is made on the same day, to group the names of their auctioneers in one joint advertisement. Thus the objective of the Act will be achieved, but with a considerable reduction in costs to the business organisations concerned with a number of auctioneers' licenses.

I commend the Bill to the House.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.02 p.m.]: We support the legislation.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 2nd October.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.04 p.m.]: I think members would know I have no intention of supporting this legislation, nor have members of my party.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Why spoil the good precedent you established with the previous Bill?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Had the Government brought in the right type of legislation I would have had a great deal of pleasure in supporting it, but when it brings in loaded legislation the Government would not expect me to rise in my place and say I supported such amendments to a very special piece of legislation which will have an effect on all the people in Western Australia.

During debate on the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill we canvassed all the reasons why we will not support this amendment to the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899-1975. Because of the side of the House on which they sit and because of their political views, I suppose members of the Government parties would say this is a fair and equitable Bill and a good formula has been adopted for putting into effect the legislation in the companion Bill. If I were sitting on the other side of the House I would be told I had to support this legislation, that it would not be subject to review in this Chamber, that voting would be along party lines, that the decisions would be made in the party room, that this would be what will happen, and that both Bills would come to this Chamber virtually for rubber-stamping because of the majority in this Chamber.

I express my total opposition to the Bill. I have made some Press statements in respect of the worth of this Chamber and its cost to the State. We see that at least another \$60 000 is to be added to that cost, which will give no benefit to the State. It might benefit one political party or another but that does not matter much. It cannot upset the balance, and I would not care if it did upset the balance because I do not think this House should be expanded in any way.

I consider it is time for this House to be disbanded. It serves no useful purpose, and when one looks back over the years—I have been in this House for some years—one finds it has ceased to be a House of Review. Perhaps it was a House of Review some 40 or 60 years ago, but it is certainly not a House of Review at the present time.

As far as the cost is concerned, nobody could ever find out just what is the cost to the State to maintain this Chamber. People come up with a figure of approximately \$30 000 a year for each member, and I suppose if we take into account the base salary, the electorate allowance, the secretarial allowance, the provision of offices, travelling, and so on, that would no doubt be a rather conservative figure. We could probably say the cost of this Chamber to the State runs between \$750 000 and \$1 million a year. I consider that is money poured down the drain. If the House were providing some particular benefit and service to the State I would probably have a different view, but I can speak only from my experience, and I cannot speak very highly of this Chamber.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Do you not think your contribution is of some value to the State?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I intended to make that point. Over the years I have been here, I think I could narrow it down to about five of the 30 members of this Chamber who have ever made any contribution.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Apart from you and me, who are the other three?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Strangely enough, I would agree with the honourable member. Over the years there have been only four or five really active members in this Chamber with the change of composition of the House from time to time.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You are including the time you were a Cabinet Minister.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If I were the ace politician in Western Australia, I would not consider that at a cost to the State of \$1 million the House should remain in existence to support me. If this House were abolished and I wanted to stay in politics, I feel confident I could win a seat in the Legislative Assembly. It is within the province of all members to do that if they consider themselves to be first-class members of Parliament and politicians, rather than third, fourth, or fifth-class members, as some of the contributions we have heard in this Chamber from time to time reveal them to be.

The PRESIDENT: Order; I must point out to the honourable member that this is a Bill to amend the Constitution Acts Amendment Act. As far as I can see, there is no mention in it of the capabilities of members of Parliament.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This was mentioned by way of interjection, otherwise I would not have got onto that train of thought.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is as good an excuse as any.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When people ask me questions I usually try to satisfy them.

I would say first of all this House does not review legislation, and secondly the cost of the House is a waste of money and members of the Legislative Council are a costly duplication of Assembly members. It is a fact that many members of all parties in the Legislative Council refer matters and problems to the Assembly members.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I do not because I have none.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is a fact of life.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: How can you prove that? You do not know what members do between themselves. You are just plucking things out of the air and making allegations which are not true.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I know it must be true when the Minister bites. The reason for referring matters in that way is that we are elected for a six-year term, and a member of the Council will refer a matter to an Assembly member, who is up for election every three years, in order to build him up by giving him most of the work to keep him in the public eye and in the hope that when he is elected both members will be carried through on the same ticket. I do not think that can be denied.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Is that the system you use in the Labor Party?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There are sufficient members of Parliament in the Legislative Assembly in Western Australia—currently, 51 members—without increasing the number to 55. I do not know of any member of the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly who is suffering from a nervous breakdown through overwork.

I think the work load of the members of this Chamber could be adequately carried by the members of the Legislative Assembly—the direct representatives of the people.

The Hon. T. Knight: I have an electorate you can walk around.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member says he has an electorate that we could walk around. That is not true either. I would like Mr Knight to justify his existence.

The Hon. T. Knight: I justify it every time I carry out my duties.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Let us have a look at his work load and see whether or not he is paid for the work he performs; whether he is being overpaid or underpaid.

The Hon. T. Knight: You can come down to my electorate any time you wish and see the work I am doing.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: In fairness to the taxpayer I think an examination should be made of the work load that is being carried by the members in this Chamber.

The Hon. T. Knight: You could come down any time you like.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member should prove his work load.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: If you had a single House how many members would you have to do the work?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Currently it could be covered by 51 members.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Your Government proposed to introduce a Bill suggesting 81 members.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That was to get the other Chamber to agree to a unicameral system of Government; to prevent members losing any of their benefits during their term of office.

The Hon. J. Heltman: It did not worry you at that time what it would cost the State.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Proposals have been put up in the past that this House should be abolished and that members should be placed on full salaries until the retiring age.

It would not matter if outside sources made that offer and relieved the State of this cost; it would never come about, because the Liberal-Country Party machine believes that while it has the Legislative Council in existence it will always be the Government. This is a fact of life; the Liberal-Country Party will always be the Government.

The Hon. T. Knight: That is why you wanted to introduce it when you did.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the honourable member wishes to introduce a unicameral system of Parliament—

The Hon. T. Knight: You said it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not say it at all; it was said by interjection; I made no mention of the fact. But if the honourable member wishes to introduce that type of system he should persuade his Government to introduce legislation to that effect and we will support it.

I believe the additional work load could be easily carried by members of the Legislative Assembly; they could quite easily do it in addition to the work they are carrying out at the moment.

One of the greatest exponents of retaining this Chamber has been the media, and I think it is the duty of the media now to examine and see just how much constructive work is done in this Chamber of the Legislative Council. The media should have a look at the number of Bills that are reviewed. I am not referring to the facade that was put up by members opposite the other night when a couple of them crossed the floor over the Fauna Conservation Bill.

The Hon. J. Heltman: That was a shock to your system.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They may have crossed the floor, but there was no intention of amending the Bill as it was desired to amend it. If members opposite call that reviewing legislation they do not know what they are talking about.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Of course it is. Why do not you cross the floor when you are reviewing legislation?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have done.

The Hon. J. Heltman: When? Certainly not over the last 12 sessions.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member should check past copies of *Hansard* and he will find that I have crossed the floor over local government matters and when town planning and metropolitan region schemes were being knocked into shape.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That must have been before J.H.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the honourable member means "before Jack Heitman", I would point out that he has not been here all that long.

The PRESIDENT: Would the honourable member say something about the Constitution Acts Amendment Bill?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Bill makes provision to increase the size of this Chamber from 30 to 32 members. This is what I object to. I also object to this Chamber staying in existence.

As the Bill seeks to amend that particular section of the Act, I think it gives me the right to make the points I am making about this Chamber; when I say I consider the Chamber is not fulfilling its purpose; that it is a drain on State finances; that it is not giving the representation necessary to the constituents; and that members should be made to justify how much work they do on behalf of their constituents; and how much of their time is taken up—when they are not in Parliament—by private excursions or private interests.

The Hon. N. McNeill: If your contention is correct then Mr Cloughton does not have any ground for representing 90 000 people.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is foisted onto us by the system. We have never pretended at any time that we believe the Legislative Council should be retained. We have been quite honest in our belief, as, I think, has the Minister in feeling that the Legislative Council should be retained. The difference is that we do not believe it should exist, because we do not think the members justify their existence.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Are you suggesting you do not do the work you should?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I do my work.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Then what are you talking about?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I still think the work load could be carried by the four Legislative Assembly members who represent the area I do. I have said previously that I do not know of any Legislative Assembly member who is suffering a breakdown or who is a nervous wreck because of the amount of work he is doing.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You mean Legislative Assembly members.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Obviously they are not overloaded because of you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They would not have an overload of work. For five years I carried out the work of an Assembly member while he was ill. At

that time my province was nearly twice the size it is now and I found I could cope quite adequately with all the problems with which I was confronted. I was working quite hard and I did not know all the short cuts at that time but, nevertheless, I coped quite adequately.

I think the Assembly members could cope adequately if they took on this extra work load, particularly now when we have these rigged boundaries before us; where there will be an equalisation of voters in each Assembly district which will be probably $2\frac{1}{2}$ times that in a country area. I think the Assembly members in the metropolitan area with $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the electors to worry about will be able to cope as should the country members with the small proportion that they will have by comparison.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Can you tell me your grounds for reflecting on the representative efforts of other Legislative Councillors?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not reflect on them.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: You said you did your job properly but you added that other Legislative Councillors should have to account for what they do.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am prepared to account for my work, but I would not do so because I want to get rid of this place. It is the members opposite who wish to retain this House; it is they who want it to be continued; it is they who feel it should be one of the institutions of our parliamentary system.

Since members opposite claim that they support the retention of the Legislative Council it is they who should justify its existence and tell us why it should continue to exist. It is not for me to do this, because I am trying to get rid of the place.

The Hon. J. Heitman: During the term of your Government no matter where I went I heard people say "Thank God for the Legislative Council, because it helps keep things straight."

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It was not any effort or contribution by the honourable member in this Chamber that brought about that circumstance.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I would dispute that.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Who do you suggest is not doing his work?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I said that members should justify the work they are doing; I should like to see their work load justified, as I would like to see justified the time they spend and for which they are paid when doing that work as against the other interests they represent.

The Hon. T. Knight: Apart from Mr Griffiths and myself and a couple of others you mentioned you are discrediting the remainder of the members of this Chamber.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If I am let them get up and justify their existence; let them tell us of their work load and the problems with which they are faced.

I stand for the abolition of the Legislative Council, but members opposite—the silent majority—do not get up and tell us the problems with which they are faced. During the debate on the other Bill I asked what were the problems involved; where was the remoteness and why should a loading be introduced, but I did not get any answers.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Yes you did.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: I am asking for a specific case of a member who is not doing his work.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Members opposite sit there and make their speeches by interjection; they never have the courage to stand up and make their speeches in this Chamber.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is only your opinion.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Accordingly it would be most interesting to hear the members on the Government side tell us just how many hours a week they work for their constituents.

The Hon. J. Heitman: How many do you work?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I work seven days a week.

The Hon. J. Heitman: How many hours a day?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Usually about 12.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I believe it is the role of the electors to prove the justification for their members; it is not for the members of this House.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is not the role of the electors to justify that aspect; but the Minister has hit the nail on the head.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I said to prove the justification for their members.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They cannot do this, because the electors cannot vote this House out of existence. The only body that can vote this House out of existence is the Legislative Council itself. So the Minister should not put forward any foolish arguments such as that, because even with a referendum the electors could not get rid of this place. It is the vote of the members of the Legislative Council alone which can destroy this House.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Surely it is for the electors, particularly if they were not satisfied that a vote for labor meant the end of the Legislative Council.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Half the electors would not know what are the functions of the Legislative Council and the other half do not care.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Why do you people in the Labor Party consistently reflect on the intelligence of the electors?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I spoke privately to the honourable member last week on this matter, and if he studies my polling figures for the last election he will find that every elector in the Cockburn area who voted was given two voting slips—a pink one and a white one—yet 1 000 people in Cockburn did not vote for Legislative Councillors, as against the Legislative Assembly where the figure in Fremantle was 980, in Melville about 1 000 and where it was about the same number in East Melville. What did they do with their electoral forms? They were the people who, in disgust at having to support a Legislative Council—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Has it crossed your mind that they might have been Labor Party supporters who were not prepared to vote for the candidate put before them?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I do not win by many votes, so I think that refutes Mr Griffiths' argument.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: On the contrary; it supports it.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It might reflect on your argument about the intelligence of voters.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They get more intelligent each year because each election I double my majority.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That merely shows how stupid they are.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You were lucky to start off with only a small majority.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I started with a majority of 669 and 14 months later I increased it to 2 500; six years later my majority had increased to 8 500 and, last election, it was 16 000 plus.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: No wonder you think the voters have no intelligence!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It shows members just how much intelligence they do have. However, I do not believe the argument related to the intelligence with which electors recorded their votes for the respective candidates; the argument was that even if people elected candidates with the instructions that they were to abolish the Upper House, the Liberal and Country Party members of the Legislative Council would not carry out their wish, but would come here and vote to retain this Chamber. That is the germ of the matter.

Members opposite stand for the policy of retaining this Chamber and are going to add insult to injury by increasing the number of elected members from 30 to 32. I suppose this legislation and when we reach the Committee stage I will be moving an amendment. So that members opposite may be aware of the terms of

my amendment, I will quote it now. It relates to clause 2, and proposes to delete the passage on page 2, line 1, commencing with the word, "and" and concluding with the word, "Act" in line 12.

The effect of my amendment would be to repeal section 5 of the principal Act; that is an issue we will debate at a later stage. I have outlined the terms of my amendment in order to prompt members opposite to stand and fight for the retention of this place; or, alternatively, if they have any justice in their hearts to vote for my amendment, while taking into consideration the taxpayers who pay about \$1 million each year to keep this House in existence. This Chamber could be replaced by a rubber stamp costing less than \$5. I do not intend to canvass all the arguments put forward on the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill. I oppose this legislation.

THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [5.34 p.m.]: This Bill is complementary to the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill which passed through all its stages in this Chamber a short while ago; naturally, as I opposed that Bill very strongly, so I intend to oppose this legislation.

The crux of this Bill is to be found in clauses 2 and 3, which provide for an increase in the number of members of the Legislative Council from 30 to 32 and for an increase in the number of provinces from 15 to 16, and also in clauses 5 and 6, which provide for an increase in the number of Legislative Assembly members and electorates from 51 to 55. As far as I can ascertain, the other clauses in the Bill are merely machinery clauses which will enable the additional electorates to be created.

Like Mr Thompson, who has just spoken, I take exception to the unnecessary expenditure of about \$200 000 a year which will be imposed upon the people of Western Australia in order to provide these extra parliamentarians. I believe such additional expenditure is completely unjustified and, indeed, has not been justified by members opposite.

It is interesting to note that, in proportion to electoral enrolments, Western Australia already has the highest number of members of Parliament of any of the mainland States.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: We have a little more space as well, you know—one million square miles of it.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Why did you say, "mainland States"?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The figure for Tasmania is lower than the figure for Western Australia; however, I believe we should compare like with like and compare Western Australia with the other mainland States.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It is obviously one of the advantages enjoyed by smaller States.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In New South Wales, there is one member of the Lower House for every 28 606 electors; in Victoria, the figure is one member for every 25 790; in Queensland, it is one for every 14 468; and, in South Australia, it is one member for every 16 000 electors.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why do you not give the size of each State at the same time; it would make the whole thing much more understandable?

The Hon. N. McNeill: Are any States contemplating an increase in the size of their Houses?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I am not aware of that.

The Hon. N. McNeill: They are, you know.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In comparison, Western Australia, with 51 electorates and an enrolment as at the 28th July this year of 647 393 has a ratio of one member of the Lower House to every 12 694 electors.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You are playing with figures now, are you not?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The closest State to our ratio of members to electors is Queensland, and there the ratio is 1:14 468. However, not satisfied with already having the lowest ratio, the Government has introduced legislation to increase the number of Assembly seats from 51 to 55, thereby creating a ratio of 1:11 771.

Instead of this quite unwarranted increase in the number of members of Parliament, why do we not just abolish the artificial metropolitan boundary which has been drawn by the Government and divide the State into 51 equal electorates?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: When did you change your mind about the figure? Two or three years ago you said it should be 81 electorates.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I am not talking about two or three years ago; I am talking about now.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Because the party says it should be 81, it does not mean that Miss Elliott should support it.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: That system would be far more preferable to the one perpetuated and made worse by this legislation. Instead of increasing the number of members of Parliament in a quite unnecessary fashion, and fiddling with the metropolitan boundary, we should do away with that boundary altogether and have an equal distribution throughout the State by dividing the State into 51 electorates, each containing approximately the same number of voters.

I have not heard members opposite give any justification for this legislation or for the Electoral Districts Act Amendment

Bill. About the only reason put forward to support this legislation was the feeble claim that distance makes it very difficult for members to get around their electorates.

If members opposite were sincere in using such an argument, why have they not done something about the very large electorate of Pilbara? I will concede that its member must experience some difficulty in travelling around his electorate.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It is more difficult in the Kimberley.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I imagine his problem would be reduced by modern means of transport and communication. However, if members opposite were genuine they would reduce the size of that electorate and split it up amongst other electorates.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: We do not do that because it is more difficult to get around the Kimberley.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The electorate of Pilbara has an enrolment of 11 885. If we divided the State into 51 equally populated electorates, there would be about 11 771 electors in each seat, which would be less than the current enrolment in the Pilbara electorate.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I do not want to interrupt the honourable member's train of thought, but these matters relate to the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill. The measure now under discussion proposes to amend the Constitution Acts Amendment Act.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: That is correct, Mr President, but the point I am making is that the Constitution Acts Amendment Act is to be amended to increase the number of members of Parliament elected to both Houses and this is what I am strongly opposed to; at the moment, I am giving the reasons for my opposition.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Would you like to say where the line should be drawn in order to reduce the size of the Pilbara electorate?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I think that matter should be left to the electoral commissioners.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why do you not leave the rest of it to the electoral commissioners and sit down?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Why does the Minister not remove the boundary and leave the whole thing to the electoral commissioners? If he did that, we might have a fairer electoral system.

I believe the Constitution of this State should act in the interests of all the people, not just some of them, just as the United States of America has a Constitution which has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to mean that all citizens shall be regarded as equal. This interpretation has

been used in relation to electoral apportionment in that country.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Did you hear Mr Kelso on the television programme "Monday Conference" last Monday?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I heard part of the discussion, but I could not really make much sense of it. However, I do not know what that has to do with this discussion.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I do not know why you are referring to Mr Kelso; he would be the last person you should refer to.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Do not disappoint me.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Surely he was dealing with economics, and not electoral boundaries. I believe our Constitution should be framed in such a way as to represent equality for all citizens whether they be male or female, black or white, or country or city dwellers. There should not be discrimination in electoral matters.

We should be ashamed of our electoral system. It does not matter what book written by a political commentator one may pick up; it will refer to this State as being one of the worst examples of malapportionment in Australia and I believe it is a disgrace that such a situation should be allowed to continue. Dr Crowley has described the Western Australian electoral system as—

...a nineteenth century electoral system which was designed to protect property and particularly country property, which considerably favours country districts in the Legislative Assembly and is carried to remarkable lengths in the Legislative Council.

Our electoral system needs major reform. We do not need the books to be fiddled any further. Only when the system is changed to provide equality for all people in Western Australia will we have real democracy in this State. I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [5.44 p.m.]: It is my intention at the outset to support the Bill.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What about your intention at the conclusion?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I think Mr Griffiths will find that at the conclusion of my remarks many members of this Chambers will be with me in that sentiment. This Bill proposes to alter the Constitution Acts Amendment Act to allow for an increase in representation in both Houses of the Western Australian Parliament.

Reference has already been made in the debate today to the role of the Legislative Council which currently comprises 30 members. Under the Bill it is proposed

to increase the number by two to bring the total to 32.

At this stage I would like to comment on one of the main arguments used by the Opposition against the measure, and that is the question of costs. It is interesting to note that members of the Opposition have dwelt on the question of costs. However, if the situation developed in Western Australia where a unicameral system of Parliament was adopted and there was only one House, I would be very surprised if the number of members in that House would be less than 80; therefore I believe the question of costs is not a valid one to use in argument against the measure, because the costs involved in a House of 80 members will be increased, whether or not the Legislative Council is retained.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: The costs would still be less than the costs of two Houses comprising 87 members.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: If there were only 51 members in a single House in this State, then undoubtedly greater costs would be involved in providing more secretarial staff to members because that would be required for greater representation. For that reason I do not think the increased costs can be used as a valid argument.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: In those circumstances the costs could be even greater than the costs involved at the present time.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Indeed the costs could be greater. Another point that has been raised in the course of this debate is the role of this Chamber as a House of Review. There can be only one reason for the projection of that view by members opposite; that is, they object to reviewing legislation. In fact, they are bound by the decision of their party not to review legislation as individuals.

It is on very rare occasions that members of the Labor Party will cross the floor of the House and vote against the decision of their party. In that respect that is one of the reasons this House fails to be a House of Review.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How many times have you crossed the floor of the House?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Many times.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell us the number.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The most recent occasion was during the vote on daylight saving. The result of a subsequent referendum showed that what I did on that occasion proved that I had been correct in interpreting the wishes of the people.

Whether there be 30 or 32 members in this House it matters not to the members of the Australian Labor Party, because

under a rule made by the Labor Caucus the Labor members are bound to obey the decisions arrived at in Caucus.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: What is wrong with that?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: That would nullify the role of this Chamber as a House of Review.

The Hon. R. Thompson: We do not have a Caucus any more.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: There is still the decision to which Labor members are bound. I would like to dwell on what could take place under a system where a political party made a decision which was binding on its members. If we had a unicameral system of Parliament in Western Australia and there were 51 members in the single House, then in order to gain office the Labor Party would need to win 26 seats. If the decisions of Caucus are binding on those members, then the majority vote—that is the vote of 14 members of the 26 belonging to its party—would carry the day. In those circumstances the other 12 members of that party would be bound by the Caucus rule to vote according to the decision of the majority of 14 members. Therefore, it is possible that the vote of 14 members of the 51 members in a single House of Parliament could carry the day, against the wishes of the other 37 members. Is that democracy?

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are saying there is no democracy in Queensland which has a unicameral system?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I shall deal with the position in Queensland shortly. What I have said could happen under a unicameral system of Parliament.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think Queensland is looking into the desirability of reintroducing the two-House system.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Some move is being made in Queensland to reinstate the Legislative Council. I would like to carry the exercise further. If under a unicameral system there are 81 members in the single House—assuming that the existing number of members in the Assembly and the Council is retained in the one House—then a party which gains 41 seats out of the 81 will be able to form a Government. Under the Labor Caucus system 21 of its 41 members can arrive at a party decision which is binding on the other 20 members. In other words, those 21 members would have the say, even against the wishes of the other 60 members. Such a system would apply to any party that adopted rules such as those adopted by the Labor Caucus.

In those circumstances we would have a democracy ruled by a minority; and this fact is not in dispute. I would like to refer to what happened in New South

Wales when a referendum was held on the 29th April, 1961, to enable the people of that State to decide whether they wished to retain or to abolish the upper House. The figures showed quite clearly that the people of New South Wales overwhelmingly voted for the retention of the Legislative Council.

Referring to the figures, on a percentage basis the people in the Sydney area who voted for the retention of the Legislative Council represented 55.9 per cent of the valid votes cast, and those who voted for the abolition of the Council represented 41.7 per cent of the votes. In the country areas the people voting for the abolition of the Council represented 40.9 per cent of the valid votes, while those voting against the abolition of the Council represented 56.3 per cent of the votes.

If we examine those figures closely we find that the percentage of people in the Sydney area voting for abolition represented 41.7 per cent of the votes cast, as against 40.9 per cent of the votes in respect of the people in the country areas. The difference in the two figures is 0.8 per cent. In the case of those voting against the abolition of the Council the proportion was 55.9 per cent for the Sydney area, and 56.3 per cent for the country areas. There was a difference of 0.4 per cent in the two figures for those who voted against the abolition of the Council.

This gives some weight to the view that the people of New South Wales knew what they were doing. It was not a question of the country people versus the city people. Furthermore, the result was not a close one, because there is a marked difference between those voting for retention and those voting against retention of the Council. It can be said that the people of New South Wales on that occasion voted for the retention of the upper House.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: The Labor Party in that State did not want the upper House to be abolished—

The PRESIDENT: There is no question before the Chair concerning the abolition of this Chamber. We are dealing with an amendment to the Constitution Acts Amendment Act that seeks to increase the number of seats in both Houses.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The Bill provides for an increase of two members for the Council to protect the rights of the people of the State. Apart from adopting the role of a House of Review, the consideration of legislation in this Chamber provides time for views to be exchanged between the parties; therefore, this provides a safeguard to the people.

A Government with a large majority in the Assembly could introduce legislation, for which it might not have a mandate from the people; therefore, the upper House can act as a brake against hasty or ill-conceived legislation.

The Hon. R. Thompson: When have the Liberal-Country Party members had a mandate in respect of the passing of legislation?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I think members of the Legislative Council have a mandate to operate as they will, because they are elected on adult franchise.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Whom do they represent after they are elected?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: They represent the people.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They do not. That shows how much you know about this matter.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The people voted for me but they might not have voted for the honourable member. The upper House acts as a bulwark against revolution. It safeguards the independence of the judiciary, the courts, the Auditor-General, the Public Service, and the like. That is laid down in the Constitution Act. If anyone disputes that I would like him to read the Act.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Do you reckon you are the only member who has read that Act?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I hope every member has read it. If any member has not he should do so. It is one of the functions of members of Parliament in this State to be familiar with the Constitution Act. Without the safeguard of an upper House, a Government not well disposed towards the judiciary, the Public Service, the Auditor-General, or other officers, could dismiss them. That cannot happen under our existing system, and this is a very strong point for the retention of this bulwark to protect the rights of the people under our Westminster type of Parliament.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Why do you not then place us on the same footing as the House of Lords?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: If the honourable member wishes to put that view forward it is up to him.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You reckon that Western Australia operates under the same system. That shows how wrong you are.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: As a final safeguard, this Chamber, together with the lower House, is subject to the will of the people. Their will is the safeguard in the last resort. The people have the say. If the people have a say in this way in democratically controlled elections then they will be able to elect the members they wish to represent them.

I recall the names of some very well respected members of the Australian Labor Party who represented the people in this House; they were good enough to win seats. It has been said more than once, but not necessarily in this debate, that even if

the Australian Labor Party won all the metropolitan seats it could not govern because of the weight of the votes in the country electorates. Such a viewpoint is rather insulting to many Labor Party members who held and who are still holding country seats.

I wonder what the Hon. F. J. S. Wise would think of this projection, because he was quite capable of winning a country seat. Indeed, the late Harry Strickland was also a very capable member, and he held a north-west seat. Mr Dellar was good enough to win the Lower North Province seat, and his father before him did the same. Surely the Labor Party should stand by such members and declare, "We can win seats anywhere, and if we are good enough we can gain control of this Chamber."

The Hon. R. Thompson: Do you think Mr Dellar is good enough to be re-elected?

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I am sure he is!

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: That is a matter for the electors and I play no part in voting in his electorate.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What percentage of the votes did Mr Dellar gain?

The PRESIDENT: I cannot find any reference in the Bill to the election prospects of Mr Dellar.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Regarding the situation in Queensland where there is only one House of Parliament at the present time, I should point out that a Labor Government in 1922 abolished the upper House. My understanding of the situation is that the members of the Legislative Council at that time were paid off for life. How they were actually paid off I do not know, but they were given some remuneration when they left Parliament. That is a rather reprehensible way to change a system. It is a matter of interest that in Queensland a Labor Government was in office for some 40 years or thereabouts.

The Labor Government had a one-House system. Under the Caucus system a minority can prevail upon a majority, and it is a fact that in Queensland for a number of years the Queensland central executive of the Australian Labor Party was the power behind the Government. That power behind the Government had no responsibility to the electors and the Labor Government—or a series of Labor Governments—was obliged to adhere to the will of the Queensland central executive.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must remind the honourable member that there is nothing in this Bill relating to what is happening in other States. This Bill is to amend the Constitution Acts Amendment Act to provide for an increase in the number of seats in both Houses.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I was endeavouring to relate that principle to the fact that the two-House system, with which we

are dealing through the Bill now before us, is a much better system indeed and worthy of support, and I am arguing against the proposal put forward by the Opposition that we should dispense with this Legislative Council.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must point out that the Bill in no way relates to this House being abolished. It is related to an increase in the number of seats for both Houses.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Thank you, Mr President. I thoroughly concur with the increase because I believe it will mean a greater representation for the people of this State and improve our democratic system.

The intention to increase the number of members in the Legislative Assembly by four is highly commendable, particularly as it relates to the metropolitan area. Obviously, the population of the metropolitan area is increasing and it is equitable that it should receive greater representation. I find it strange that the Australian Labor Party should be against this sort of proposition.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: There is nothing in the Bill about 51 seats in the Legislative Assembly.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I said the representation was to be increased by four; at the present time there are 51 members. The proposal is commendable and I find it strange that the Australian Labor Party should oppose the move. Similarly, the Australian Labor Party is opposed to an increase of two representatives in the Legislative Council. Again, the two additional members will represent the metropolitan area where the Australian Labor Party believes it has every chance of gaining strength.

As I said previously, if candidates are good enough they can win seats anywhere, whether they be metropolitan or country seats. Therefore, I find it strange that the Australian Labor Party should hedge the principle and oppose the legislation in that light. Surely, if members opposite were honest with themselves they would support this legislation.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: There is no doubt that we are always honest with ourselves.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Members opposite should support it as a move to gain electoral strength. With those remarks I have pleasure in supporting the Bill, as I set out to do.

Sitting suspended from 6.04 to 7.30 p.m.

THE HON. D. W. COOLEY (North-East Metropolitan) [7.32 p.m.]: It is in accordance with Australian Labor Party policy and my own principles that I oppose this Bill because it seeks to extend the membership of this House. Of course the policy of the ALP in respect of this matter is well

known to all members. It may well be that what we say here this evening cannot influence the Government in any way because it has its policies to maintain. The Government believes in the sustenance and maintenance of this House.

The Bill we have before us at the present time is an extension of and consequential to the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill. I suppose that measure would mean nothing without the Bill before us—it would not be operative. Nevertheless it is the policy of the Opposition to oppose principles outside our policy, and despite the fact that Government members could scarcely be blamed for not being influenced by our arguments, I feel many things need to be said in respect of this legislation.

When I speak of my opposition to an extension of the membership of this House, it is no wish of mine to cast any reflections on it, or on its traditions. They are remarkable and very good, and perhaps they were well suited to another period. However, from the point of view of the Labor Party, it is not a suitable institution in this day and age. I can understand that members opposite from a conservative party would support the attitude expressed in the measure because adherents of a Liberal-Country Party system adopt a *laissez-faire* attitude—they do not believe in any change or any reform.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Wait a minute—we are changing now.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Only because it suits you.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Does not Mr Wordsworth know the difference between change and reform?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: *Hansard* ought to record laughter.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The principal difference between Mr Wordsworth's party and mine is that his cannot tell the difference between change and reform and as long as it suits his personal interest to be a part-time member of Parliament—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Aren't you? You are always talking about the TLC.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Aren't you still President of the TLC?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You have two other jobs besides this one—three altogether.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This is a part-time job for you.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If I could just defend myself in regard to these interjections, my position as President of the TLC is a purely voluntary one. My position there does not impinge on my working time as a member of Parliament.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is your main occupation—you are more part-time at this job than is Mr Wordsworth.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is not strange that some people who regard their positions here as a very minor part of their activities should want to remain in a Chamber such as this.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Are you not also secretary of a union?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Members here have it very easy in their parliamentary obligations because the Legislative Assembly members take care of their responsibilities.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You speak for yourself.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Don't you trust your colleagues?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Leader of the Opposition hit the nail right on the head when he said that the interjections coming from the Government side of the House were appalling. Government members can kid their electors and other people outside, but for goodness sake, they should not kid themselves because they know exactly what the position is about the role they play in their electorates.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Exactly—that is why your words puzzle us.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That's why there are more of us here than there are Labor members.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are a three-job man.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That is not true, although I will let the member get away with it this time.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Who is in charge of the Alcohol and Drug Authority?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I will return to the Bill. Because of our policy, we oppose a measure which seeks to extend the membership of this House. It is really to extend a rubber stamp for the Liberal Party when it is in office; that is all it is. The actions of Government members over the last session of Parliament prove this. They want to extend the House so it will remain in its present form—not gerrymandered, but malapportioned as Mr MacKinnon said it is. The Government wishes to maintain this House so that the conservative parties are never removed from office.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is slightly twisting my words, but I will let it go.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr MacKinnon said it was malapportioned representation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I said that what you were talking about would be better described by using the word "malapportioned" than by the word "gerrymandered". The rest of your arguments are so silly.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Government wishes to extend the House with two more members to build a greater barrier for Labor Governments which will prevent them implementing their policy when they are in office.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think you ought to refer to the battle I had the other night when three of our members joined Miss Lyla Elliott.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That was merely a facade put up by members opposite.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That was the ring-tailed possum Bill!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is pious to say this House was acting as a House of Review when several Government members crossed the floor to vote for an inconsequential amendment. It had no meaning, and Mr Pratt said that if Roy Cloughton had not spoken two more members would have crossed the floor.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If they cross the floor it is inconsequential, and if they do not they are dictated to.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I want to say that it is not this House which is at fault but it is the people who sit here and the policy they espouse.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Even our own Minister bitterly attacked us.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not say that in a personal way at all, because Government members are bound to implement—I will not use the word “corrupt”—the misguided policies of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought it was your party members who had to sign a document.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I think this Chamber should be preserved for posterity.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: As a museum—add that.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: When the Labor Party comes to power—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think last time you spoke you said we did not have a policy.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: As Mr Dans said, it would make an excellent museum piece—perhaps a wax museum and Government members could all be preserved.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You would be bound to be standing on your feet.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: For a full-time union rep and a part-time politician, you are doing very well.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Whenever we get in front over here, Mr MacKinnon starts to get abusive.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Who is getting abusive?

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Tell me, Mr Cooley, do you have anything else that I have said

privately to one of your members outside the Chamber that you wish to quote?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I heard the honourable member say something in a denigrating way about Mr Cloughton and I had to defend him. The whole Government attitude to Mr Cloughton seems to indicate that members do not want him to express his views.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: He is the best man we have.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Will you tell me what words you have said to defend him? You have said nothing.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The highlight of the evening was Mr Ferry's speech when he said that this House is a bulwark against revolution and the rule of minorities.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Quite right—good speech that.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is a good quote.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is strange for a person like Mr Ferry—holding a leading position in his party as he does—to say that when he knows very well that in some instances this House is elected by a minority.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It is elected by the people.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: This House has blocked legislation from another place—

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Members exercise their judgment.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: No matter how wrong it may be.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —by its conservative majority, and legislation that had been approved by way of a mandate from the people. The action of Government members over the last 18 months since I have been here has proved this point—no legislation has been rejected to date, and yet during the Tonkin Administration, this House of Review rejected many Bills.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Don't lose heart!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr Ferry spoke of the rule of minority groups and a worry about revolution taking place if the membership of this Chamber is not extended.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I cannot imagine this little Chamber stopping a revolution.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I would possibly support a Bill such as this, and from my own personal point of view I might support the principle of a bicameral Parliament if it were possible under that bicameral system to take some remedy against people who act unwisely in the so-called House of Review. However, there is no remedy against this House of Review if its members do not act in a proper manner.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: The people have the say.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: No, the people do not have the say.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Of course they do.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Members are elected to this Chamber for six years. I could never support a measure to add two more members to this place under the conditions that they cannot be removed from office after they are elected.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Who is the judge of wisdom?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Do not tell me that the wisdom is all on the Government's side. The members in this House are no wiser than the members in another place. Legislative Assembly members have just as much wisdom and judgment as do members in this House. I will not support a Bill to increase the membership of this Chamber in the situation where its members cannot be removed from office.

During the debate on the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill the other night, the Minister for Justice used the example of the Senate in his argument against the one-vote-one-value system. However, at least when Bills are rejected in the Senate, that Senate can be abolished by an act of the lower House. But that is not the case in this particular House. Why should we on this side support a Bill to increase the membership of this Chamber to extend the present system?

The Hon. N. McNeill: What do you mean by the word "abolish"?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I did not use the word "abolish". I said I would not support a Bill to bring two more people into this Chamber to extend it.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I am talking about the Senate being abolished by the House of Representatives.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: This Chamber cannot be dissolved by anybody's act. We cannot go back to the people in a democratic way to have our actions justified.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: What about at elections? Are they not justified then?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: This would be unique in respect of parliamentary procedure. In the country the honourable member came from, such a situation was not tolerated, even in the ultra-conservative House of Lords.

The Hon. N. McNeill: It is not a question of tolerating.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Members are not even elected to the House of Lords.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: But they do not continually block legislation. If the honourable member would listen, I am talking about the principle of the bicameral system.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I am listening most intently.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I would support a bicameral system of Parliament if there were ways and means by which the people of the country could take some action to remedy a situation.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You will say that because it suits you at this time.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Despite the odds against us in this Chamber, I cannot remain silent when a measure is before the House to extend this Chamber and to allow the present situation to continue.

All members opposite, despite their interjections and their attempts at denigration, know well that they have been to the barrier 38 times and have been elected 38 times; and there has not been a change of Government in this Chamber for the last 85 years. If anybody can say that is democracy, then he does not believe in the same principles in which I believe. I think it is time the conservatives of this country—or perhaps the more trendy ones amongst them—initiated some change in respect of their electoral policies, because we are living in a democracy.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: What did we do in 1964-65?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Despite Mr Baxter's policies I have a great deal of personal regard for him and for many other members opposite; I have learnt to develop that in the past 18 months. I do not think that some members opposite could believe in a system in which democracy is denied in this way. The people of Western Australia have never had democratic government in the true sense.

To give an example, the excellent industrial legislation that was introduced by the Tonkin Government was blocked in this very House. Therefore I cannot agree with the proposition that this House should be extended under those conditions. That legislation was introduced by the Tonkin Government in the Legislative Assembly after being promised to the people of Western Australia in Mr Tonkin's policy speech. He made it clear that if his party became the Government he would pass legislation in the lower House to bring about much wanted industrial reforms. But what happened to the reforms?

The Hon. N. McNeill: What happened at the next election?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Despite the fact that the people had given the Labor Government a mandate to introduce the reforms, and despite the fact that the Government had a majority in the lower House, when the Bill came to this place it was rejected by members opposite on the ground that this is a House of Review. It was not proper for members opposite

to oppose that legislation against the wish of the people of Western Australia.

The Hon. N. McNeill: And as a consequence the Liberals were returned with a greater majority in this House.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I did not catch that interjection.

I do not support a proposition that will introduce two additional members to this Chamber, possibly of the same ilk as members opposite, for the purpose of allowing them to obtain a greater majority for a longer period to block legislation that has received a mandate from the people of this State at proper, democratic elections of Governments; and I stress that this House is not democratically composed.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Cut it out.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is not; if Mr Griffiths likes to look at the facts and figures in respect of this House he will find it is not democratically composed, because some members in this place represent something like 7 000 people while he represents 94 000. That is not fair; that is not reasonable; that is not just; and it is something I will not support.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The same type of people who elected me elected you.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I know that, but before I came to this Chamber I made it clear to the people in my province that I would not support a Bill such as this and that when I came to this place I would work as hard as I could for its abolition. If Mr Griffiths votes against this measure tonight and submits his resignation from this place I will be the first in the Chamber to follow suit.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I make plenty of mistakes, but resigning will not be one of them.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Perhaps Mr Cooley would like to set the example.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It does not matter what Mr Masters says in respect of this Bill; it will extend this House by two seats, and he knows as well as I do—

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Don't you think you have a chance of winning them?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —that it is not democratically elected. I have already given the figures and it would be trite of me to give them again; however, we know that only about 30 per cent of the electors are properly represented in this House.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Will you tell us what you have against two more metropolitan Legislative Councillors?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am telling Mr Pratt that in accordance with the policy of my party, I am opposed to the introduction of two additional members to this Chamber, because our policy is for the ultimate abolition of this Chamber, not for its extension.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We know what the Labor Party thinks; tell us what you think.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am sorry; Mr MacKinnon was not in his seat when I began. I said it is against my party's principles and against my personal principles to support a Bill that will enlarge the membership of this Chamber. I do not think Mr MacKinnon was present when I said that that is not said in any way to denigrate this Chamber, its history, or anything for which it stands. I believe it is not right for this Chamber to exist if by a democratic process given to the people it cannot be removed.

I appreciate, though, that my words are falling on deaf ears and that this Bill is the result of the wish of the Liberal Party to remain in office. I know the Liberal Party has an iron grip on its members, and none would dare cross the floor and vote against this measure, despite the fact that they put on a bit of an exhibition the other night in respect of a small amendment to another measure—

The Hon. N. McNeill: I rather suspect they wouldn't want to.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —and despite the fact that Mr Griffiths on one occasion might have voted against the extension of the freeway. But that is only a facade; we know members opposite are truly more disciplined in respect of these matters than are the members of the Labor Party.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Oh, come on!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not think Mr Masters was even in this country at the time when—and he can ask Mr Grayden about this—

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member please get back to the Bill. I have been very patient.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am sorry, Sir. I do not think you have been any more patient with me than you were with Mr Ferry.

The PRESIDENT: That is quite true; my patience has been extended to both sides. I think the honourable member should address the Chair and get back to the Bill.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, Sir. I have expressed the attitude of the Australian Labor Party. I do not think it could be suggested in our wildest dreams—

The Hon. N. McNeill: You have some pretty wild ones.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —as Mr Ferry suggested—that if we had a unicameral system in this State we could have foisted upon us a Government that would do away with the judiciary.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It could happen.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It could happen because the actions of the Government last year and of members opposite in this House last year would indicate that under some circumstances they would agree with that policy.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: What actions were they?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He is probably talking about the appointment of Lionel Murphy. He is mixed up.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am talking about the introduction of the most infamous Bill ever to be introduced in Western Australia—the Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Act Amendment Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member knows that Bill has no relevance whatsoever to the Bill before the Chair.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I know, Mr President; I should not have said that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is also a reflection on this House.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I said to the President previously that it is not my intention to reflect on this place; I reflect only on the attitude of some of the members who sit here and implement the policies of their party and who will not accept the principle of reform.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: This House has accepted reform at times.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I would like to know when that has happened.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The change from property franchise to universal franchise is a fairly notable one.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You thought in 1965 that as a result of the change made you would take control of this House, but your position has gradually deteriorated to the extent that after the next election you will be lucky to have three members.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I have previously told you that we did not think that at all.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I oppose this Bill on principle, although I know that, as usual, it will meet with the approval of the House.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) (7.55 p.m.): I am rather surprised in one sense to hear Mr Cooley speak as he did; but, of course, I am not surprised to hear him repeat the Labor Party policy in respect of this Bill.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are going to tell us the Liberal Party policy, are you? Have you got a policy?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: As far as I am concerned I will abide by Liberal

Party policy which, of course, encompasses freedom of speech: and that is what I am exercising right now on behalf of my electors—my right to freedom of speech. We all know that the policy of the Labor Party is to abolish this House.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Could I make an observation? You spoke very freely between 1971 and 1974.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Mr President, I would have thought that an extra two members in this House would help the Labor Party objective to abolish this place because an additional two members would have a chance to say that they object to this Chamber if they supported the Labor Party and if they were elected by a majority of the constituents in their province.

The people know that the Labor Party wishes to abolish this House. So if the people want this House abolished they will elect Labor Party members to do so. It is absolute rubbish when members opposite say that we are not democratically elected. It is rather strange that they thought the Hon. Frank Wise and the late Hon. Harry Strickland were democratically elected when they held the northern seats. However, they were very surprised to see, firstly, myself elected in 1971 in an area which had traditionally voted Labor and had never been held by a Liberal; and what is more, I won mining towns outright—and they traditionally vote Labor. It was then that members opposite started to think possibly the members in that area are not democratically elected.

It was then they started to look at the special legislation for which our President was initially responsible, which gave special considerations to the remote areas of the State. Then, of course, my colleague (the Hon. J. C. Tozer) won the second Legislative Council seat in the north. Horror of horrors! They found a person in another place—

The Hon. R. Thompson: They will get sick of him pretty soon, too.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: —and two members in this place representing an area which traditionally had been represented by the Labor Party, and which consists mainly of mining towns.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: But not the same type of mining towns, and you know it very well.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They are still mining towns.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I must first support this House before I can show my agreement to the provision for two extra seats.

In 1971 the people in the North Province had a choice of six candidates for two seats. One Lower North Province member was elected at the general election, and the other member for the same province was elected at the extraordinary election.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: No, the North Province.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Why don't you say something original?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Other people may have spoken in this vein, but I am speaking on this Bill for the first time in this fashion and I think I have the right to do so, because I am one of the members concerned. The other member who won the seat in the extraordinary election was the Hon. Jack Hunt, who was a Labor member. At the same time the very same people elected a Liberal member and that member was myself.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It was the North Province; you said the Lower North Province.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It was a slip of the tongue.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It must have been a slip of the tongue and I apologise.

The PRESIDENT: I am waiting for the honourable member to connect his remarks to the Bill.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I support the Bill because it will give us another two members in this House which is only right because of the expansion of this State. I consider that at some future time further members will be elected to this Chamber, because it is not logical that the population of the State should increase without the numbers of members of Parliament being increased to ensure that the people are truly represented. There are many ways of doing this. One is to increase services which, in themselves, are costly and the other is to increase the number of members of Parliament. I think this is necessary because of the expansion of the metropolitan area.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What about making the speech you made in 1972 and fulfilling all the promises you made at that time?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Members on the other side of the House have said, without being interrupted by too many interjections, that we put on little shows occasionally by crossing the floor of the House. To any member who makes such a statement I would like to say that this only tells a story about his own character. Every time I have crossed the floor of the house I have done so with conviction and not for the sake of putting on a show. As members will recall, when I was sitting on the other side of the House, and the Leader of the Opposition, when sitting on this side, presented a Bill on greyhounds I got publicity on the front page of the newspapers, because not only did I cross the floor of the House, but I opposed the Liberal Party at the State conference which, admittedly, caused a little stir.

The PRESIDENT: Will the honourable member please say something in connection with the Bill?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I certainly will, Mr President. I think the Bill is necessary. I think it is logical. I think it is democratic, and I support it.

THE HON. J. C. TOZER (North) [8.03 p.m.]: The Bill before us seeks to provide for the election of four additional Legislative Assembly members and two additional Legislative Council members. The Hon. Lyla Elliott, in developing her argument to oppose the Bill, quite properly presented what she considers a reasonable alternative. In fact, this is the same argument used fairly consistently by the Opposition during the debate on the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill the other day.

The alternative advanced is to have a Parliament with a single Chamber with 51 electorates. It is terribly important, of course, that, somehow or other, we should destroy this foolish concept. Argument put forward in opposition to this Bill has frequently referred to the Pilbara electorate. The fact of the matter is that there are about 11 500 electors in the Pilbara electorate and this is out of proportion with the number of electors in the neighbouring electorate.

The Hon. R. Thompson: And yet you supported this gerrymander on a division.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: At the weekend I was present at a meeting in Derby. It proved to be most interesting, because in attendance there were representatives from Wyndham, Kununurra, Halls Creek, Derby, Broome, and also a number of outlying areas. At that meeting I tried to describe to those present the nonsense and the arguments which had been put forward in trying to justify this so-called ideal of one-vote-one-value.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Your description would have been as loaded as the Liberal Party's Bill.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: To those present at that meeting I portrayed the arguments put forward by the Opposition as well as I was able. The reaction I received was fairly violent, because they wanted to ascertain what effect this would have on them. First of all, I pointed out that there are about 4 100 electors in the Kimberley electorate.

Miss Elliott has just described to us what we were told last week when debating the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill; that in the future she would like to see electorates containing about 12 500 electors. The size of the Kimberley electorate equals, roughly, the size of Victoria. In making that comparison I am only referring to the settled part of the Kimberley electorate. I would point out that there are about 4 000 electors in that district. The

nearest settlement in the Pilbara is separated by about 250 or 300 miles of desert. It has been suggested we could take some of the electors from the Pilbara electorate and add them to the Kimberley electorate. Can anyone think of a suggestion more stupid than that, because I cannot? The two electorates are separated by a great geographical barrier. There is absolutely no community of interest between those two areas. There is a great waterless swathe of land between the Pilbara electorate and the Kimberley electorate. Further, the pastoral industry based on the Kimberley electorate has no affinity with the mining industry of the Pilbara.

If such a suggestion were carried out, what would we have left? We would have about 4 000 electors in the Pilbara electorate and we would have to link them with the people in the Gascoyne electorate and the people in the Murchison-Eyre electorate *in toto* and, in addition, we would have to include half of the people in the present Greenough electorate to make up the total of 12 500 electors.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: To date that is two seats.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Yes, two seats. In this one electoral district what we would be doing would be to put the fishermen from Dongara in the same electorate as the ringer on Mt. Edgar Station near Marble Bar in the Pilbara, or put fettlers from Rawlinna in the same electorate as miners from Panawonica, or any other mining centre. There would be absolutely no community of interest between the people in these different areas who are situated in entirely different geographical regions, and it is quite ridiculous to suggest that one member could adequately represent all these people.

Again we would have the absolutely stupid situation of an industrial worker at Port Hedland being attached to a cotton farmer in Kununurra. This would be completely illogical.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There are fishermen at Shark Bay—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. Thompson: —who are—

The PRESIDENT: Order please! I should not have to call for order twice. The Leader of the Opposition should know better than to continue interjecting.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: It is so illogical to suggest that geographical considerations can be ignored and, in fact, that community of interests and many other factors should be ignored. We cannot base our electoral boundaries on one factor—numbers.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It is the numbers game in this House, though, is it not?

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Miss Lyla Elliott also said that she knew of many

commentators who criticised the distribution of electoral districts in the State of Western Australia. I can only suggest that those commentators know as little about the governing of a State which has an area of one million square miles, as Miss Elliott and other members of the Opposition do.

It disappointed me tremendously to hear the disparaging comments made by the Leader of the Opposition and by Mr Cooley on the work done by members of the Legislative Council and its value to the State. The only satisfactory feature about this matter is that it makes me proud to have known Mr Thompson, because he is one of those four or five members who have pulled their weight in the Legislative Council of Western Australia.

Point of Order

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Mr President. I did not imply that at any stage and I ask that those words be withdrawn. I accused the Government members of not pulling their weight.

The PRESIDENT: What were the words said to which you object?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That I was one of four or five members who did work in this House.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: I withdraw the words, Mr President, if they give offence.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: The fact of the matter is that I have been under a complete misapprehension, obviously, and it appears I have accepted a work load which it is not really necessary for me to carry. I find that I am busier now than I have ever been in my life, and it worries me considerably that I still have difficulty keeping up with my work. Many activities complement the work performed by the two Legislative Assembly members whose electorates are contained in my province, and I consider it desirable for both Mr Bill Withers and myself to take over many of the duties to which those two members might find themselves committed.

I do not know why it works out this way; that is, although I find myself so busy and that, despite many long hours of work and my inability to keep up to my task, apparently some members of the Legislative Council on the other side of the House do not have this problem. Either they are more efficient than I am or they do not have the same amount of work that I have. I believe that this task that I have taken on will continue. I cannot see how it will come to an end.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It will in another five years.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: The question of a bicameral system has entered into this debate and it does worry me that there is a deliberate misunderstanding of the functions of this House. As every member knows, occasionally an election can be lost

or won on some single highly emotive issue that happens to be extremely relevant and topical at the time. Such an emotive issue can bring down a Government although, in itself it might not be of great importance. Nevertheless, it could be featured in large headlines in the Press and, as a result, could prove to be a critical issue at the election.

Such an issue can bring changes in the Legislative Assembly and thus effect a change of Government. Therefore it is this upper House that can temper a violent swing that may occur by having half of the House going out at any one time and the other half of the members retaining their seats for another three years. Thus there is a degree of common sense retained in the total balance of the two Chambers.

For people to try to make capital of the fact that the Legislative Council has had a Liberal majority for 85 years and has been elected in an improper manner is complete rubbish. Only ten years have elapsed since we introduced adult franchise for the Legislative Council and, as is well known, that reform was introduced by a Liberal Government.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: They thought they might get a complete majority.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What an absurd interjection!

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: As Mr Bill Withers has pointed out, the same people on the same electoral roll elect the members of this House, and also elect members of another place at the same time.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is not a truthful statement. They did not elect them at the same time; half the members of this House go out every three years.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: Mr Heitman made the comment, "Thank God we had a Legislative Council in the time of the Tonkin Government". I can take that a stage further and remember back to May of 1974 when this nation of Australia went within an ace of having an ALP majority in the Senate in Canberra. That would have been a sad thing for Australia.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It would have been a disaster.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: We would have found ourselves a socialist republic in the life of this Parliament.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That matter has nothing to do with the Bill before the House.

The Hon. J. C. TOZER: I apologise if I infringed the rules of debate.

I support the Bill.

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [8.16 p.m.]: I rise to oppose the Bill, not because of its intrinsic content which appears innocuous enough if taken in isolation, but when considered

in conjunction with the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill, it will result in a further retreat for democracy and for democratic elections.

Had Government members at all been concentrating on what has been said by members of the Opposition they would at least have respect for some of the arguments submitted. It seems to me, from the number of interjections which have been made by members opposite that one could quote Shakespeare. The bard said, "The lady doth protest too much, methinks", because guilty people always make a great deal of noise when their reprehensible conduct is thrown in their faces. Quite often the giggles and loud remarks are an indication of very real guilt.

I should not have to give members a lesson in democracy and its history, but perhaps just for the record I will. When we are talking about increasing the number of people in the State who represent voters we should surely expect that as a result of more representatives we would have a more equitable representation than exists at the moment. This is not the case, however, because the situation is that we will have a worse representation. Not only must we consider the proposed balance between the country and city representation, but also what can happen because of the increase in the number of representatives and the way in which this increase will be used.

I know that what I am about to say is not exactly covered by the Bill, but Mr President because of your tolerance to other speakers, I am sure that you appreciate that this Bill and the electoral districts Bill are inseparable. With the boundaries having been established by Parliament and not the electoral commissioners, thus creating a gerrymandered area in the city and the possibility of a greater malapportionment, the magnitude of the violation of democratic principles being perpetuated by the two Bills should be evident to all including the members of the Government.

By quoting some figures, I wish to indicate that what appears to be a magnanimous gesture in giving extra representatives to the metropolitan area is a fallacy. The number of electors has been increased within the metropolitan boundary which has now been drawn by Parliament and can in future be drawn by Parliament in, as I said the other night, a most gerrymandered sort of way with narrow passages wandering off and gobbling up country towns. The danger is not so much in what the Bill does at present, or what members in this House at this moment may want, but in the way in which the legislation in future, when it becomes an Act, could be twisted. This is what the members on the Government benches should be thinking about.

I am quite disturbed about the cavalier attitude members opposite display towards

a matter which is so serious and which people on this side of the House are attempting to emphasise in order that the electors may be made aware of the danger to their democratic rights.

Of course democracy is Government by the people and the way in which this is done in modern society is to ensure that people have representation in the Parliament which is commensurate with themselves as people. People are people and together they are numbers of people, not areas of ground. As we pointed out when speaking to the other Bill, the obvious disadvantages may be overcome, but certainly not by giving some electoral advantages to people in certain areas. That is what is happening. Because there are more representatives from the country the value of the vote is being altered and this is to the disadvantage of the people in the metropolitan area, to the people in Western Australia, and to the people in Australia.

It has always worried me that we have only one newspaper and one attitude submitted in this State, and I think it will go down in history—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must remind the honourable member—and she quite obviously knows—that that has nothing to do with the Bill which is designed to amend the Constitution Acts Amendment Act. I am wondering how many more times it will be necessary to remind speakers of the contents of the Bill.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I am sorry, Mr President. It is a very difficult matter to speak to a Bill which appears to be innocuous enough, but when taken in conjunction with another assumes quite frightening proportions. It disturbs me that we cannot have some sort of a fight for the democratic rights of the people through the Press but, as usual, *The West Australian* is doing nothing to highlight this matter.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I asked the honourable member to refrain from making references not attached to the Bill, but she deliberately continues to do so. May I request you not to do that?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Yes, Mr President. This Bill proposes to alter the Constitution and to violate it, in my opinion. It is an attempt to change the Constitution in order to justify another Bill and, to my mind, that is a very serious matter indeed.

The words of Mr Ferry previously concerning the House of Review being a safeguard against some sort of dictatorial power seem to be hollow in view of the fact that we are now altering the Constitution in a manner which is foreign to the concept of Constitutions.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Not to the Constitution Acts Amendment Act.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: In this State it can be done, but it should be done in a serious vein.

I mentioned that I would quote some figures to indicate that the provision of extra members in this Parliament is not an improvement on the old system. Under the old boundary, with a 2 : 1 ratio voting power between the country and the city, we had in the metropolitan area an average of 17 600 electors with 9 100 in the agricultural, pastoral, and mining areas. This will be altered, assuming we are right in believing that some 30 000 new electors will be within the metropolitan boundary, to 16 100 in the city and 7 900 in the country. This ratio is no better than the old one. The new ratio is something in the vicinity of 27 : 13, which is about 2 : 1. Consequently, a Bill to increase the number of members in the Legislative Assembly will not give the metropolitan voters any better representation. It will give more representatives, but not better representation.

The same applies to the Legislative Council where, under the old arrangement, we have an average number of 81 000 electors in each province and the new average will be 72 500. In the agricultural, mining, and pastoral areas the old average is 27 400 and the new one will be 23 700, which is a ratio of about 3 : 1. There is so little difference that we can say that in effect the introduction of additional members to both Houses will not make any difference to the value of the vote in the metropolitan area.

If we really wanted to bring about equity in the representation we would have to increase the number of seats in the metropolitan area by 34 in the Legislative Assembly and by 31 in the Legislative Council, which would mean that instead of having six extra members we would have to alter the Constitution Acts to provide for 65 more politicians. That is what we would have to do if we were fair dinkum about the representation.

Really what is being asked for here is not more representation for the people. We are being asked to provide more representation for area. If the members who have spoken about the difficulty in country seats are to be believed, then surely they would not object to more representation in the city because, after all, the community of interests in regard to a fletcher at Bullamakanka or a fisherman at Shark Bay really has nothing to do with geography because we will find a university professor in one part of the province, and a deserted wife in another struggling along on welfare benefits. If we are to talk about community of interest, that argument can be taken to ridiculous lengths and made to appear very specious indeed.

I had to speak because I believe this is a very important milestone in Western Australian history. Once the Bill is passed we will find we have created a monster

and we will be sorry one day that we have done so because we will not be here to control it. Someone else will make our names very ugly in the history of the State.

THE HON. G. E. MASTERS (West) [8.30 p.m.]: Mr President, I would like to make a few remarks. I have been goaded into doing so by the honourable member for Trades Hall, whose speech could only be called entertaining.

Point of Order

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr President, I ask that those words be withdrawn. I am the member for the North-East Metropolitan Province. I am not here representing Trades Hall. I think it is quite improper for the member to make that remark.

The PRESIDENT: Was the Hon. Gordon Masters referring to Mr Cooley?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Yes, Mr President. I withdraw the remark. I might say it is about the first time the honourable member has mentioned the province he represents.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The comment was made that this House is a rubber stamp. That is ridiculous, as has been proved amply in the time I have been in the House. A few days ago there was an occasion when some members of the Liberal Party demonstrated their independence by crossing the floor.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is a scab vote. It was set up.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Regardless of whether or not the honourable member thinks it was set up, I was sincere in the action I took. We have seen the members of the Labor Party march backwards and forwards, but in the time I have been in this House I have never seen one of them vote against his or her own party or support the Government.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: We are supporting the community.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: On a number of occasions costs have been mentioned. In 1954 the Hawke Government tried to increase the number of members of Parliament from 50 to 52 at a time when the population was much smaller. At that time members of the Labor Party were in favour of an increase because it suited them; this time it does not suit them.

The Leader of the Opposition said if this House were phased out he would expect to be able to gain a seat elsewhere. I suggest if the Labor members voted this House out of existence they could well and truly expect to be given "cushy" seats in another place as a reward for service, which would result in increased costs because membership in the other House

would increase and I believe the costs would be much greater.

I think all members would agree with me that the more work one puts into the job the more work is loaded onto one, so the work load results from one's own efforts. If the honourable member does not have the necessary work load, I suggest seven times 12 hours is not enough and he had better work 13 hours a day—it might bring him a bit of luck.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley is always attacking Liberal members for having other jobs, but he has three jobs. He is the secretary of the brewery workers' union, a job he cannot be thrown out of because it has been set up to suit him, and that is a fact.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is a lie.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I ask the honourable member whether he can in fact lose that job. He cannot and he knows it. His second job is President of the Trades and Labor Council—again a very busy and high-ranking job, but we agree he does it well. In addition, he is of course a member of this House. On many occasions we see his seat empty, and we know why—because he is out on union business.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You should not be saying things like that because you are opening up a whole field.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I disagree with that.

Point of Order

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr President, it is not true that my seat is vacant for a large number of sittings. I dispute that very hotly. I think I am in attendance in this House for as many hours as most members, and I ask the honourable member to withdraw that remark.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I withdraw the remark.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The point was made in another speech that members of this House were not justifying their existence. I believe they justify their existence well and truly. If they were not returned by those who cast their votes obviously they would not have been justifying their existence; but if they are returned the people electing them are happy with the work they are doing. The important point we must bear in mind, regardless of numbers, is that the people vote in various areas, the mining, agricultural, and city areas, and they must be happy with their members or they would not return them.

It is all very well for members of the Opposition to set themselves up as martyrs; if they were sincere they would boycott the House. But they choose to stand for seats in this House, and they are not

likely to gain strength in this Chamber while they maintain their present attitude. I am amazed at the disparaging remarks made by the Hon. R. Thompson about the public understanding or intelligence and the wasted votes. I am surprised he is even able to talk about the people in his own electorate in that manner.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think you must appreciate they have to make those noises about abolishing the House for the sake of the party vote. So be fair.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The minister for ideology in the labour force has not read the latest platform.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They have to do this sort of thing and you must accept it.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I appreciate the comments of the Minister. With his tremendous background in this House and his knowledge, his advice is very sound. The Hon. V. J. Ferry pointed out that if there were one House and the Labor Party were in power, 51 per cent of the Labor members could control this State. I think that is a very fair and true comment.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That was in Queensland.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I was goaded into speaking by the remarks of the member on my right. I support the Bill.

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [8.37 p.m.]: I support the Bill. The addition of two Legislative Councillors and four Legislative Assembly members to the metropolitan area does in fact give the metropolitan area greater proportional representation in relation to the present situation. It also gives the Australian Labor Party the opportunity to increase its representation in both Houses.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It probably will, too.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: If members of the Labor Party work hard enough, they will have a chance to increase their representation.

The interesting aspect of tonight's debate is the attempt by the Opposition to denigrate this House in its activities and operation as a House of Review. Very often in debates we hear them criticise the House.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Surely to criticise members of the Liberal Party is not to denigrate the House. The two things are not identical.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Mr Cooley did. I was looking up Standing Order 82 while he was speaking.

The PRESIDENT: Order, please! The Hon. Mr. Pratt.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: If the honourable member has finished his speech, I will continue.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You stopped. We were trying to fill in.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I am being fair. I am sure members of the Opposition want to hear me speak because on a couple of occasions they invited me to do so.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are usually one of the silent majority, so it is a change to hear you.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There are far too many interjections in this debate.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: In their opposition to an increase in the numbers in this House, members opposite have endeavoured to put forward a case that the House does not act as a House of Review, a function it has always had and, I hope, always will have.

The Hon. R. Thompson: When is it practised?

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: In an endeavour to prove this unprovable case, they have made reference to the occasion last week when three members on this side of the House crossed the floor on a matter which they felt was important.

The Hon. R. Thompson: When your own Minister said you were ludicrous.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: When the Hon. Ron Thompson takes members of his party to task in the manner that I took the Minister handling this Bill to task, I will take off my hat to him. Until then I suggest he take note of the Australian adage, "Put up or shut up."

The Hon. R. Thompson: We have rational members on this side of the House.

The PRESIDENT: I wish those members would stop interjecting for a while.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: To suggest that was a facade is to cast a reflection on the integrity and character of the three members who did cross the House. I take exception to it. It was not a facade; it was a matter which we considered to be worth while and important.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: What has this to do with the Bill?

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: The Hon. Grace Vaughan is having difficulty in following it. Had she followed her side of the House in its attack on the Bill, she would know I am talking about some of the matters they mentioned. Perhaps she could have interjected that they were not speaking to the Bill. I am speaking to the Bill. I am referring to the fact that this House should be enlarged, and I am referring to the Opposition's argument against its being enlarged.

The Hon. Don Cooley in fact said that the point on which three members on this side of the House crossed the floor—and proved that this is a House of Review

and that we are prepared to vote against our party as our consciences dictate—was a small, unimportant, and insignificant matter. To us it was important. I gathered the impression that Miss Elliott thought it was important. She appeared to be taking the matter very seriously, and I am absolutely disgusted to find that in his endeavour to pursue this line the Hon. Don Cooley quoted from a private conversation I had with Miss Elliott when I expressed a personal view to her outside of the debate which took place in this House. I would have thought he would show more respect for a member of his own party. I am sure I would not have done the same thing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: When Mr Stubbs crossed the floor on one occasion and voted with me, they thought it was a dreadful thing for him to do.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I hold Miss Elliott in very high esteem. I do not always agree with her but I respect her for her opinions. This building up of an attitude, trying to prove this is not a House of Review, is part of the attack which we continually hear from the Opposition. The cold, hard fact is that members of the Opposition do not want it to be a House of Review, and as soon as it acts as one they do everything to denigrate the members who act according to their conscience. Tonight we heard Mr Cooley refer to a person who voted according to his conscience as a scab. If we wanted anything to show clearly the attitude of the Opposition to members of this House and members who vote according to their conscience, we got it then, and we got it very, very clearly.

This is a House of Review. Its activities will be enhanced by the addition of two extra members, who may belong to the Liberal, Labor, or some other party. They will be metropolitan seats. If they are members from the Opposition party, I hope they will use this free vote and right of review we hear the Opposition speak about so often and claim we do not possess. If for the good of the people to be represented the seats are won by members representing what the Hon. Don Cooley refers to as "the same ilk as the Liberals", I am sure the House will continue as a House of Review and carry out its proper function.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan) [8.45 p.m.]: I oppose the Bill because it is the policy of my party to abolish this House. I do not want to reflect on individual members—I do not oppose members as such in this Chamber—but we have always made our position clear that our policy is to abolish the Legislative Council; and, more recently, we have amended that policy to say, perhaps, we could look to some moderation of this House. It would not be quite fair or true

to my party—and I certainly would not be quite fair to the members of this Chamber—if I remained seated.

Let me say at the outset—and I have said this on a number of previous occasions, and I will continue to say so, because I believe it to be true—that this is not a House of Review. However, I believe that if it were constituted properly it could serve a very useful function in the difficult times which are building up around us, and which will continue to build up around us.

Because of those views I cannot agree with the provisions of the Constitution Acts Amendment Bill which seeks to increase by a further two the number of members in this House.

I cannot agree with this for a number of reasons, some of which have already been enumerated. For example I cannot agree to this on the basis of representation; I cannot agree to it on the basis of cost; and I cannot agree to it on the argument put forward that somehow or other it will make this Chamber work more effectively; because all these things are just not true.

The whole basis of this Bill, and the measure which is complementary to it, is not to enhance the prospects of the Labor Party. I recall a member on that side of the House saying on one occasion—and I agreed with him—that it was not the function of any Government to introduce into Parliament measures to make it easier for the Opposition to get into Government. Surely that is one of the first fundamentals of Australian politics.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of world politics.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Not particularly; I think the Minister should read more political history, because events change very quickly. If we are to have a House of Review, then this Chamber should be elected undoubtedly by proportionate representation. That would be a fair and proper way to elect an upper House which would really be a House of Review; and South Australia is proceeding very swiftly to this situation.

It is history and legend that unfortunately conservative parties all over the world hasten their own demise. They have never learnt from history. I have heard people say tonight, "Look at the House of Lords." Well, let us have a look at the House of Lords. I am fully *au fait* with the manner in which the House of Lords is elected; and I know enough about history to know that the House of Lords was the Government. I am also aware that the House of Lords was in that happy situation for practically centuries; but when the change came it was rapid and dramatic.

This Chamber has only been in existence for 60 or 70 years.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It was the only Chamber.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is the way Governments grew up in the early days of settlement, and no-one will deny that. I am sorry that in speaking in opposition to this Bill I did not bring with me some of the history and sayings connected with John Forrest when he argued vehemently against inserting in the then Constitution of this House provisions for breaking a deadlock. I also have some of the verses and jingles that were written by the wags in the colony at the time. Unfortunately, however, I left these at home. John Forrest saw, into the future and he made sure of the position. If we are to use the terrible word gerrymander, we should look at the activities of John Forrest in those early days when we find that a measure was introduced to provide a safe seat for one Alexander Forrest in an electorate with only 84 electors on the roll.

That, of course, is history, and that is how history proceeds. Those things are behind us and nobody would today think of doing anything like that. The fact remains, however, that we are living in a moment of history; people are being made aware of upper Houses and are taking more interest in them, because of the activity or inactivity taking place in Canberra.

This trend can be seen when one reads the national papers, including our own Press. I have recently had need to read a letter to *The Age* in Melbourne written by the late Sir Isaac Isaacs, who was Governor-General of Australia at one time and who was a man of some legal standing. As I have said, it could be seen from the expressions of opinion in the national Press the dangerous situation into which we are steering the country; and people of all political colours are getting worried about the role of the upper Houses in Australia.

I know very well that this Bill will be carried. I know that on the surface it looks all right and—while I cannot look into a crystal ball—I know things will continue as they have done previously. It will make no difference to the members of this Chamber and it will not alter one bit the consideration of legislation, because there will always be that brutal majority.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You could win other seats. Are you despairing?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am always very happy for the assistance given by Mr Ferry, no matter how misdirected his comments might be. Of course we may win other seats; but he will not suggest to me—because I know he is an intelligent person—that there are a whole number of seats which we could win even if we had the Angel Gabriel and others campaigning on our side.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I understand the Angel Gabriel is very discerning.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Even if we had him on our side, and even though the provisions of the Bill seek to create another

two seats in the upper House, it still would not be possible for us to gain a majority in this Chamber.

The Government has not come forward with the Bill to secure the Constitution; even though some of the previous speakers have tried to indicate that it has.

One of the disappointments of Australian politics is that the same parties have been in power too long in various parts of Australia. There is an awareness among the people that Governments are not leading them but are tending to mislead them. When I use the term "Governments", I must confess that people do not discern between Government members and Opposition members; to them they are all political representatives—not politicians, because I dislike that term—and there is a tendency amongst people to denigrate members of Parliament.

There is a role for the upper House at a time when it is becoming increasingly possible for extreme groups of either the right or the left to get into a position of authority and power.

These upper House Chambers, however, must have a fair representation. As the Hon. Grace Vaughan has said, we continue to fall into the trap—indeed we design the trap—to try to represent areas rather than give representation to people in those areas. The two things, of course, are widely separated, but there are situations in which representation could be given.

I do not think the Bill does a single thing. It does not enhance the standing of the Chamber, at least not in my opinion—and that is only my opinion. If the Bill had provided for four, 10, or 30 extra seats for this Chamber it would not have meant a thing, because of the present constitutional situation in this House.

I am against the concept of this Chamber and against the concept of this Bill. Let me make myself perfectly clear, I am not against the members who sit here, but against the total concept and against the way in which this House conducts its business. I am also against the manner in which its representatives are elected.

I said earlier in another debate that one of the unfortunate experiences of an exercise like this is that the Bill creates areas that make it fairly easy for representatives of one or another political party to get into an almost unassailable position and, if I may use the term, it increases the numbers of old party hacks and old party faithfuls, and encourages lazy and incompetent people to become entrenched in certain areas.

For those reasons and, as I have said, because of my party's attitude—which I do not disguise—I am opposed to the Bill. All it does is to wish on the people of Western Australia a further two members—with whom we could quite easily do

without—in the upper House chamber; and that is all I am talking about at this stage.

The Hon. R. Thompson: And whom we can ill afford.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And whom we can ill afford. When the changes do come they will be dramatic and sudden, because I think we, in Australia, are on the verge of a great revelation as people are starting to become politically alert.

I have said this before—and it tickled my ego—that people from what I consider to be a blue ribbon district have written to me and addressed me as “Dear Senator Dans.” When I have explained to them that I am not a Senator, but a member of the upper House in Western Australia they ask me “What is that.”

This situation may not obtain in country areas, because I am still convinced that the people in the rural areas probably have greater accessibility to their member of Parliament than have those in the metropolitan area, where there are many thousands in the electorate and who—because of the diversity of their work and the things they have to do—do not get many opportunities to contact their members.

I do not wish to continue speaking much longer, because the Hon. Grace Vaughan and other Labor members have given precise reasons for our opposition to the Bill. Given a different set of circumstances this Chamber could be elected in a different manner to serve a useful purpose, if not now, then certainly in the future.

Conservative parties have consistently made the tragic mistake of thinking that changes do not take place; that history rolls along slowly. History is like everything else; it rolls slowly, gathers speed, and slows down again.

I do not want to sound gloomy or morbid but there are problems we will have to face up to no matter which political party forms the Government, and in those circumstances we may have to review legislation here whether we want to or not. We may be forced to have a look at the situation regardless of our political philosophies or how we form them.

People now are looking forward to leadership with the morbid thought that there is more interest today in misleading people than in leading them. I cannot go along with a proposal that we should go to the people and say, “We are going to make things better for you by creating more members of Parliament.” I do not care whether the Labor Party wins the new seats; I do not care which party wins them. We are opposed to putting more people on the State payroll without the Government providing any indication of what benefits will flow to the people they will represent, or to the State as a whole. For those reasons, I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [9.01 p.m.]: Having so strongly opposed the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill, I would be inconsistent if I did not also oppose this legislation. Our reasons for opposing this Bill are the same as for opposing the previous legislation. One reason which had not been given previously was just mentioned by Mr Dans. What contribution will two further members in this Chamber make to the working of government in this State? I believe that question would be extremely difficult to answer. There is no doubt that two additional members in this Chamber and four additional members in the Legislative Assembly would add greatly to the financial burden of government because of the extra cost involved.

On that same theme, I should also emphasise that even if it meant there would be two additional Labor members in this Chamber, we would oppose this measure, despite the fact that it would result in a more even sharing of the work load on this side of the House, where we have only nine members of the Labor Party to deal with all matters which come before this House.

I can assure members opposite that a fairly heavy burden is thrown on members of my party, because no proposal can become law until it has passed through both Chambers of this Parliament. The Labor members, being responsible in their approach to their task in this Parliament, closely examine all legislation coming before this Chamber.

I think all members would be aware that a number of amendments are on the notice paper to one of the Bills for which I have been given responsibility. If I were not doing my job properly, those amendments would not be there. In fact, they were not suggested by members of my party in the other House. I do not blame them for that; it is just that further examination showed that the matters I raised should be considered by the Parliament.

In opposing this legislation on the grounds that we do not believe an increase in the number of members of Parliament is necessary, and would impose a further burden on the Government at a time when it is saying its burdens already are too great, and that we do not believe there is a necessity for this Chamber to be in existence, it does not mean that members of the Labor Party do not approach in a responsible way the duties imposed upon them. For that reason, I would discount some of the accusations and remarks levelled at my colleagues during this debate.

It is quite apparent, however, that the great majority of what is said and done in this Chamber is mere repetition of what has already been said and done in the Legislative Assembly. Those are the

principal grounds upon which we say this Chamber is redundant and an unnecessary financial burden on the people of this State.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Some members' speeches are repetitious, too.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have no doubt that this was the case when Mr Ferry was speaking. However, I do not believe any of the remarks I have made so far have been made by any other member to whom I have listened.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: They sound awfully familiar.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Bill itself proposes to increase the Legislative Council representation by two, and the Assembly by four. I do not want to travel the same ground I covered when speaking to the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill. However, it is relevant to say to the Government that there is no need to increase the number of members in this Chamber in order to ensure a fair and reasonable distribution between rural and metropolitan representation.

I have proposed that a province should be made up of four Assembly districts. By that sort of arrangement, we could leave the numbers in this Chamber exactly as they are, and achieve the same sort of ratio of 24 agricultural members to 27 metropolitan members which exists in the Legislative Assembly, at the same time also achieve a similar balance within this Chamber.

As I said during the previous debate, if the Government considers that ratio of representation as between the agricultural and metropolitan districts is a fair, reasonable and just distribution of representation for the Legislative Assembly, surely the same could be said of the representation in this Chamber. In those terms, we can say only that the proposals contained in this Bill are unfair and unjust and—even on the Government's terms—undemocratic.

Despite all that has been said by Government supporters in defence of this proposal, no attempt has been made to justify the Government's action; of course, it is unjustifiable. The Government cannot say that in the case of the Legislative Assembly it should have a ratio of 27 metropolitan members to 24 agricultural members, and then not apply the same sort of ratio to the Legislative Council.

Government supporters, in their attempts to rationalise the requirements placed upon them by their party to vote for this Bill have levelled accusations at members of the Labor Party and have raised the most extraneous side issues which could not be related to the subject matter of this Bill. I do not want to go into the speeches of Mr Pratt and Mr Masters.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: I spoke only about matters your colleagues raised. How is that extraneous?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is all you are capable of.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: I did not notice you doing too well when you spoke.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Masters was asked several times to keep to the subject matter of the Bill.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the honourable member to stick to the Bill instead of criticising other speakers.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have been attempting to refute and reply to matters so far raised in debate.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is all Government supporters have done—criticise what we have said. No member opposite has spoken about the Bill.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would hope to be allowed as much latitude as other members, but I am not seeking to have the same right.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! When I ask the honourable member to do something he should not argue with me. He should obey the rules of debate in this place.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is quite right, Mr Deputy President; I think that is a good rule for members to follow. If a ruling is made in relation to any remarks I may make, I would contest that ruling in the proper sort of way.

Government members have attempted to rationalise the requirement placed on them by their party to vote for this Bill by making attacks upon members of the Labor Party on matters which are quite extraneous to this legislation. That in itself is a condemnation not only of their attitude but also of the Government's attitude in bringing this sort of proposition before us.

Even if we compared it with the existing legislation, this amendment to the Constitution Acts Amendment Act is a step backward in time. The existing electoral laws provide that a quota shall be applied to the metropolitan voter as compared with the agricultural, pastoral, and mining voter. This sort of reasoning is quite unfair and unjust but at least it had a greater fairness about it than the proposal with which we are now dealing, because from now on the number of metropolitan members will be fixed. It cannot be increased beyond 27 members without a further amendment to the Act. If the Government had left the Electoral Districts Act and the Constitution Acts Amendment Act as they were, the increase in population of the metropolitan area automatically would have been reflected in an increasing number of members of Parliament. However, even that slight measure of fairness is to

be removed. I think the Government stands condemned for the action it is taking.

Already a loading in favour of country electors is provided in the country representation, and this takes the form of fewer Assembly seats. If we say that a country electoral district contains 7 000 to 8 000 electors, and a metropolitan electoral district contains 17 000 to 18 000 electors, we clearly see that weighting of votes in favour of the country already exists.

If it is determined that each Council province will comprise four Assembly districts, then the desire by the Government parties not only to have the heads but also the hectares represented will be satisfied.

If we take into account the figures which were presented by Mrs Vaughan in this debate that there are some 7 000 electors in a country electoral district, then four electoral districts comprising an electoral province would represent 28 000 electors in the country. She indicated that a metropolitan electoral district contains about 17 000 electors, and four metropolitan electoral districts would represent 68 000 electors in a metropolitan province.

I assume that would take care of the proposition put forward by Government members that some consideration should be given not only to the number of electors, but also to the area involved. However, that is not what the Government is proposing in the Bill.

The Government is saying that not only will metropolitan electors be disadvantaged by each metropolitan electoral district having two to three times the number of electors of a country electoral district, but that in the case of a metropolitan province the number of electors will be up to four times the number of electors in a country province.

A country province embraces three Assembly electoral districts, representing roughly 25 000 electors. In the case of the metropolitan area a province could embrace five Assembly electoral districts, representing 70 000 to 80 000 electors. That is the sort of electoral justice which this Government believes should be meted out to the people of the metropolitan area. To a large extent they are to be discounted, as compared with the country electors. I do not think the people in my electorate would agree with the attitude of the Government.

On those grounds I very strongly oppose the Bill. It provides not only for an increased number of members in the Assembly and the Council, but also for a system under which the seats will be decided. While in the adjustment of boundaries the country electorates will be almost undisturbed, there will be tremendous upheaval in the metropolitan electorates. Again that compounds the injustice involved in the

weighting of votes against the metropolitan electors.

In the proposed redistribution we find that members representing metropolitan seats are placed in a very difficult situation. Until the Boundaries Commission presents its recommendations next year we will have no idea where the boundaries of the metropolitan electorates will be set, or in which areas we should be exerting our efforts.

For instance, my province contains about 90 000 electors, and it comprises five Assembly electoral districts. Under the redistribution will it continue to embrace five electoral districts, or will it embrace only four? I cannot forecast the outcome.

Furthermore, under the changed boundaries will my province embrace Sorrento and new districts such as Whitfords, Koondoola, and others? Will the districts of Yokine and Inglewood be included?

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You should not allow your personal views to interfere with the Bill.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would be quite irresponsible if I were not concerned with these matters. The honourable member might feel quite comfortable, because his seat would be undisturbed.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: How do you know?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member's seat will also be undisturbed, and he might lose some of the Labor voters.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: That is rubbish.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member should look at the figures for the last election.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You have not been around the area; you have merely looked at the map.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I suggest I had been around that electorate before the honourable member came to this country.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I suggest you did that with your eyes closed.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member can feel quite comfortable, because his seat will be made safer for him. I do not expect him to become upset. The Government should explain the position of the metropolitan province which I represent. I will not know the boundaries before the recommendations are presented next year, and at that time we will be getting close to the next State election. I do not know what changes will be made or how great the changes are likely to be until the recommendations are presented. After they are presented I will have a fortnight in which to make a decision on which seat to apply for. These are matters related to the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: I beg to differ. The matters you are referring to relate to the

Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill. We are now dealing with the Constitution Acts Amendment Bill. I am telling you that you are a long way from the latter Bill.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would refer you to clause 4 of the Bill, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: I have been waiting for you to do that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: What I am talking about relates to the provisions in that case. This is a matter of concern not only to me, but to other members representing metropolitan provinces. The provision in clause 4 (4) states that where a province under the redistribution is made up of 50 per cent or more of the voters in an existing province, the existing member has the right to make application for that seat. The commissioners are responsible for allocating the seat to that member. This affects a province such as mine with a large number of electors. It is affected greatly by the inclusion of new electors at Wanneroo.

There could be several of the new provinces which contain 50 per cent or more of the existing voters of other provinces. After the recommendations are made I have only a fortnight in which to decide which province I should apply for.

Under a provision in clause 4 at page 6 of the Bill, a member may make application for more than one seat, but the allocation is decided by a draw. I would be making application for two seats, realising one of them is preferable to the other; but in order to protect myself from other applicants I could find myself in this sort of situation. What I have said applies not only to myself, but to all members representing metropolitan provinces.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: You do not think I would apply for one of those seats?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the honourable member has read the Bill he would know that his question is nonsensical. I presume he has read the Bill, and that his remark is facetious.

That outlines the sort of problems which metropolitan members face. I am not surprised to see smug looks on the faces of members representing agricultural seats. They have a right to be satisfied with the situation, but it is hardly just or democratic to metropolitan members. Nothing that members of the Government parties have said has justified what the Government is proposing.

What is laid down in the Act and in the conventions that go along with parliamentary democracy makes the system workable. One of the basic principles to make it work is that the electorates should comprise as nearly as possible an equal number of electors. Mr Ferry is not in his seat, but he has made reference to the party system.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I was not far away.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, I acknowledge that Mr Ferry; the system as it applied to the Labor Party. Of course, the sort of thing which he was referring to applies generally to the two-party system of Government which is part of the Westminster system. That is what we all at least give token adherence to. However, measures such as this do not demonstrate any intention that this Governments support that system.

A two-party system of Government will work only if the members within each party support the proposals which they collectively put forward. If members defect then instability is created in Government and the system breaks down. So, while Mr Ferry might make a great deal of noise about the way the system operates within the Labor Party it is, in fact, a system which operates within all parties which practise the Westminster system of parliamentary Government. I think if the honourable member were to be sincere he would acknowledge what I have said, and that is applies also within the Liberal Party in this State. We have observed it operating here, time after time, when divisions have taken place in this Chamber.

I will develop some of these themes further while debating the clauses during the Committee stage. I now indicate my opposition to the proposals.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [9.32 p.m.]: I think we on this side of the House can be excused for not being quite sure what those in Opposition wish to achieve from this debate. We do not know whether or not they want two extra members in this Chamber.

The debate seems to have hinged on whether we should have a Legislative Council at all. A lot has been said about this House being a House of Review, but nothing has been said about the fact that this House contributes to the Cabinet system of Government. Indeed, this House has traditionally supplied three Ministers for the Cabinet. At the moment it could almost be said that we supply 3½ Ministers for Cabinet, because we have an Honorary Minister.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are being very unfair to him.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I think the system of this House providing three Ministers for Cabinet applies whichever party is in Government which demonstrates that this House has played a great part in the government of this State.

Many people believe that the Parliament governs the country whereas, in actual fact, it would be more correct to say that Parliament changes and introduces new laws but Cabinet actually governs the country. Electors often refer to me as

being in Government and I have to explain that I am not in Government, I simply happen to belong to the party which is in Government.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think it will be very long before they wake up.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It must be an embarrassment to you.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would agree that we have supplied some very important Ministers from this Chamber.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have heard my view on Ministers sitting in this Chamber.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: If the Premier had to choose his full Cabinet from the members of the Legislative Assembly he could find himself in difficulty.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The Labor Party would have no trouble at all.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: This House supplies one Cabinet Minister from each six members, so the percentage of election from this Chamber is fairly high.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Fortunately.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The selection ratio in the Legislative Assembly is down to about one in three. Such a situation makes it difficult for a Premier to select a Cabinet because there is always a number of new members, and some of the older members do not wish to take on the arduous task of being a Minister. The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that some people are not capable of being Ministers but that, of course, applies whichever party is in power. So, it is very important for the Cabinet to be selected from as many people as possible.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I am pleased you are developing this theme because it has nothing to do with the debate before the House.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: We are debating whether the number of members of this Parliament should be increased. I have pointed out that this House plays a very important part in forming a Cabinet.

The Leader of the Opposition debated the matter of the cost to the people of maintaining this Chamber. I believe the number of members would have to be increased whether they be in the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council. Probably the only additional expense in maintaining this Chamber would be involved in having a few extra officers to handle our work, and the expense involved in cleaning and lighting. The cost would not be \$1 million; it would probably be well below \$100 000.

The argument was also raised that we members of the Legislative Council could pass our duties on to members of the Legislative Assembly. When I came to

this place my province included one Labor Party Legislative Assembly member and two Country Party Legislative Assembly members and I do not think those gentlemen would have appreciated having to do my parliamentary duties for me.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Do you have any work to do?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It has been said that Legislative Councillors have no work to do. I only wish I had more time available. Indeed, I presented my diary to the Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Tribunal outlining exactly what I did when I was not working in this Chamber.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Can't you remember?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: My diary showed that in a period of three months prior to and after this day of sitting I will have spent 12 days in my home.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think we have to convince each other of how hard we work.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am convinced that a member of this House is fully occupied. The idea that the few farmers on this side of the House could spend some time farming is wishful thinking. I wish I could devote some time to such matters.

I support the Bill. We have heard many arguments regarding the amount of work which country members have to do compared with the work done by metropolitan members. It has been proved that we have a need for an additional two country members rather than an additional two metropolitan members in the Legislative Council. If I had my personal choice, I would rather retain the present proportion. However, I am willing to support the proposal that this House should have an additional two representatives without any increase in country members at all.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [9.40 p.m.]: I must confess I am not greatly supplied with observations and notes on the matters which have been raised during the course of this debate. In fact as you, Mr President, have had occasion to observe, members have discussed subjects other than those specifically dealt with by this Bill. Therefore, even that in itself has placed some limitation on the matters and subjects which I would necessarily see it my duty to comment on in reply.

I think we ought to go back—as you have reminded members on many occasions—to the Bill and what it proposes to do. Members of this House ought to be aware—and I am sure they are—of its particular functions and what it is hoped to achieve.

Putting the Bill into three categories it will, firstly, provide for one addi-

tional province represented by two additional members, and the machinery by which those two members will be elected or appointed as the case may be.

Secondly, the measure provides for an increase from 51 to 55 in the number of members to represent Assembly electoral districts. Thirdly, the Bill sets out the machinery by which that will be done. A little difficulty arises because of the number of metropolitan province members to be elected inasmuch as there will not be just 15 positions to be filled at the next election, but 16 positions. Certain procedures have to be adopted and no doubt those procedures will come in for comment during the Committee stage.

That, in essence, is the purpose of this amending Bill. I can accept the reasons for the arguments put forward by the Leader of the Opposition and those who support him in contesting the Bill. They claim they do not like it. They go further and say it is unnecessary because of the added expense. They say it is unnecessary to have an additional two members and that it would be far preferable to abolish the whole Legislative Council.

What they have put forward happens to be their point of view. If that is the view they wish to maintain I am certainly not going to take time to contest it. I disagree with it. I would not have introduced a Bill of this nature if, in fact, I subscribed to the philosophy expressed by members of the Opposition during this debate.

Members opposite have not always had that point of view in terms of complete political realism. Had the measure been introduced in different circumstances the position may have been politically more advantageous to the Labor Party and they would have regarded the proposal a little more kindly. It has been said that the proposal by the Government to provide for two additional Legislative Council members and four additional Legislative Assembly members will enhance the prospects of the present Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I never said that.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition did not say it, but I think he will agree with the opinion. I maintain the point that the belief I have mentioned has been advanced in the course of this debate.

I am sure that members of the Opposition, in this Chamber, who have been here for a long time would appreciate that to be complacent in an attitude such as that is nothing but a forerunner to disaster for them. There is not a member who can be absolutely confident about his seat. Some may be in the happy position of being a little more confident than others, but no-one can be supremely confident of retaining his seat at the next or any election.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How true!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: We ought to bear this in mind, and I have it in mind myself as I am the Minister responsible for this legislation. I, as well as the Government collectively, may be considered in certain quarters as doing something dastardly by introducing a Bill of this sort. However, if I may proceed along that line, and as Mr Dans said, we find that the Liberal-Country Party Government is not in power after the next election, I will receive my fair share of abuse from certain quarters.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Unjustly, I would say.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is the name of the game. It is incorrect to make presumptions about the effect of the change. Of course, people want to make calculated estimates of what the situation will be, and certain members have—or one member in particular has—indicated the transfer of votes in particular provinces and electorates as a consequence of the passing of this legislation. They may be in the position to make fairly accurate calculations, but I have not been able to. I say this in all sincerity for the simple reason that my calculations may be wrong. As the Minister responsible for the legislation, I will not be regarded as one who gives incorrect figures.

Because members have a very special interest in knowing what the numbers will be, I hope that the figures will be available next week. I am sure it is appreciated that the electoral officers have had an onerous task to meet what I believe to be the wishes of members in the early production of these figures.

Lest we become too preoccupied with members of Parliament, we must remember that we really ought to be considering the electors. I note also that in the course of debate a little distinction has been drawn between the electors and the people. We may be elected by electors, but we are here to represent people. I am sure no members in this House, when asked to make representation on someone's behalf, says to that person, "Are you on the roll? If you are not on the roll, I will not do anything for you." No member of Parliament would dare to adopt such an attitude.

Let me come back to the need for an increase in the representation in this House. I use that word advisedly, because we are concerned with representation of people, and over a long period Governments have been roundly accused of malapportioned representation. The figures for the provinces have been quoted before, but I give them again to draw attention to the increase in numbers. In the metropolitan area there are now 435 232 electors whereas in 1961 there were 231 937. In the agricultural, mining, and pastoral area, there are now 219 737 electors to 134 110 electors in 1961. Believing as we do that the system provided under the Constitution is one we, as a Government, endorse, and wish to see perpetuated, on the ground

of numbers alone there are solid, sound, and valid reasons why the representation for those additional people ought to be recognised by way of an alteration to the Constitution Acts Amendment Act. That is precisely what we are trying to do. If it turns out that someone is advantaged by the provision of these additional seats, then that is the game of politics and of parliamentary representation.

I agree with Mr Dans—I do not disagree with him on many instances—when he says that it is a truism that no Government will necessarily take an action deliberately to improve the prospects of its opponents. Of course no Government will. By the same token, if we turn that round a little, Governments cannot always be sure when taking certain actions that such actions will not work to the advantage of their opponents.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is a punt, I admit.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: We come back to the fact that we do not know the consequences of this measure. We recognise that members representing large provinces, and therefore the people constituting these provinces, are at some disadvantage because of the increase in numbers. On the 12th August, 1975, I gave some information to a member in another place. I will repeat these figures, but I will round them off for the sake of clarity. The number of electors in the metropolitan provinces is as follows—

Metropolitan—79 000.
North Metropolitan—90 000.
North-East Metropolitan—70 000.
South Metropolitan—70 000.
South-East Metropolitan—94 000.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I have gone up 7 000, and I did not know it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That was on the 12th August—no doubt the figures had increased by the 30th September. Members will have these figures next week, if not earlier.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: No wonder it is costing me so much in postage.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: These are considerable numbers. If we were not providing for some change presently, and we went to another election without a redistribution, it is almost certain that in view of the number of seats that are presently out of balance and those that are almost certain to be out of balance by the next election, there would be an automatic redistribution. If in fact there were no alteration in the metropolitan boundary and no provision for an extra province, then I have no doubt that the figures I quoted would be considerably worsened—if by being increased the figures would be worsened.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I take that to mean the same.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: So, as a means of improving the situation, and certainly trying to minimise whatever imbalance there is considered to be, it is certainly not illogical to make provision for two extra members. Once again, this is not in the interests of members or necessarily the interests of this House, but it is in the interests of the people who comprise those provinces. They need this representation. We have heard it said many times that members just do not have the physical or any other capacity adequately to represent their constituents. I reject completely the argument that the Legislative Assembly members can represent those people adequately. Perhaps they can in terms of what happens in an electorate; I do not know, although I have serious reservations about it. If that were the case, the members in this House would have little work to do. From my experience and knowledge, most Legislative Councillors, if not all of them, are fairly hard-working people. They have their share of duties to perform, and my statement is no reflection on the capacity or ability of members in another place.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I wish you would relate that statement to some of the older members of all the parties in another place. Sometimes they do not believe it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am quite well aware of that. I am one of those who does not mind being accused—if that is the correct word—of being a conservative. I believe I espouse more the Liberal philosophy than the conservative philosophy, but if I can be accused of anything, I am prepared to be accused of believing in a basic principle that members of Parliament represent people. Therefore, the greater the opportunity for Parliament, as an institution, comprising its entire membership, to reflect fully all shades, colours, types, and descriptions of people, the more perfect that institution is.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think that to say someone is conservative is an accusation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have made it sound like that a few times.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I am sorry if I do that.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Mr MacKinnon's observation is quite accurate, because that is certainly the way in which the term is not infrequently used.

In providing for this increased membership, although the Opposition may claim it is an additional cost upon the electorate and the State, if the cost is shared between all the taxpayers it is a small price to pay for more effective representation.

I feel I ought to comment on some of the accusations that have been made. I think it is apparent from the manner in which I have been endeavouring to reply to the debate that it is not my intention to be provocative. However, Mr Cooley's

remarks deserve a little comment. I will not attempt to traverse all he said. In my view he accused us of being conservative in introducing this measure. He said we embraced the policy of *laissez-faire*. Of course I reject that because even in this instance we are prepared to change and make provision for reform. We have illustrated that already in a short period of 18 months in Government. There is no question of a *laissez-faire* policy. By the same token, I certainly do not subscribe to any philosophy that says that if we make a change it must be so completely radical as to cause a total upheaval in the whole structure of the country and its economics. I believe that is absolutely unnecessary. So while one is wrong, to go to the other extreme I believe is even worse. I think Mr Dans said we can have as much to fear from the extreme right as we have from the extreme left. I believe that can apply if we are too reactionary, too radical, or go too far in these measures.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is what I said.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Let us change by all means.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is what I mean.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is exactly what we are trying to do. We are trying to provide good, sound, and continuing government.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You are not sincere when you say that.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: In the circumstances I do not see the necessity to comment on matters raised. There has been considerable repetition throughout this debate. The purpose of the Bill is basically clear, it is understood by all members, subscribed to, I hope, by the majority, but obviously not subscribed to by the remaining members of the House. However that is the situation, I believe the House will do well to give its support to the second reading of this measure.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: In putting the question that the Bill be now read a second time, I point out that this Bill requires the concurrence of an absolute majority and, in accordance with Standing Order 308, a division must be taken.

Bells rung and House divided.

Ayes—17

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. M. McAleer
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. H. W. Gayfer	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. V. J. Ferry
Hon. G. E. Masters	(Teller)

Noes—8

Hon. R. F. Claughton	Hon. R. T. Leeson
Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. D. K. Dans
	(Teller)

The PRESIDENT: I declare the question passed with an absolute majority and the Bill will be read a second time.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (the Hon. J. Heitman) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 5 repealed and re-enacted—

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I move an amendment—

Page 2—Delete the passage commencing with the word "and" in line 1 down to and including the word "Act" in line 12.

I have circulated among members copies of this amendment. As I explained during my speech on the second reading the purpose of the amendment is to delete all words occurring after the word "repealed" in line one down to and including the word "Act" in line 12.

This is in line with the feeling of my party that this Chamber should go out of existence. Of course, by doing this we would be repealing that section of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act which allows any person to be elected to this Chamber. Perhaps it could be argued that we have already passed a companion Bill to this measure and that this amendment should not be moved. Before any argument can be adduced along those lines, it is not uncommon to adopt a practice such as this because the Bill is still in transit between the two Chambers. It has not been assented to and it has not been proclaimed, so it is quite in order to move this amendment.

If the companion Bill had been proclaimed I would not have been able to take the action I am now taking. I do not think I have to canvass all the arguments that we previously advanced on the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill, because it is obviously clear to all members what is the intention of this amendment.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Like the Leader of the Opposition I do not intend to canvass any argument in relation to the amendment because its purpose is completely clear, and I echo the honourable member's sentiments. I confirm, of course, that the ultimate effect of the amendment would be the abolition of the membership of this Chamber. Without going any further, obviously, I am completely opposed to the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—8

Hon. R. F. Claughton	Hon. R. T. Leeson
Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. D. K. Dans
	(Teller)

Noes—16

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. M. McAleer
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. H. W. Gayler	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. Cilve Griffiths	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. G. E. Masters	Hon. V. J. Ferry

(Teller)

Pair

Aye

No

Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs Hon. R. J. L. Williams

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 8B repealed and re-enacted—

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: This is quite a long clause and provides for the allocation of seats after a redistribution. It seeks to provide for many eventualities. In my second reading speech I made reference to a situation in which members such as myself might find themselves because of the reference to 50 per cent of the electors in one of the new provinces being common to one of the existing provinces. Under subsection (5) of proposed new section 8B, where a member would be entitled to be declared to sit and vote for more than one new metropolitan electoral province, the Governor shall cause notice to that effect to be sent to the member.

Paragraph (b) of proposed new section 8B (5) reads—

- (b) the member shall within fourteen days of receipt of the notice advise the Governor in writing for which of those new Metropolitan Electoral Provinces he desires to sit. . . .

According to that provision the member is entitled to make application and then the Governor will allot a seat to him. Proposed new subsection (8) stipulates that the member can apply for more than one seat. However, the member will not know what other existing members will apply and which seat will be allotted to him. So, to protect himself, he would very likely make an application for both seats. However, having done that, he would lay himself open to the possibility of a ballot. I simply put this to the Minister as a difficulty. I do not know if I have explained the matter sufficiently, although I do not know how I could explain it with greater clarity.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I must confess that the purpose of the inquiry is not absolutely clear to me. Perhaps I could explain the reasons behind the procedure, and in doing so I refer to the remark the honourable member made about a member having two areas with more than 50 per cent as a consequence of the rearrangement. I do not know how that could come about, because in the new province, one could not have more than two lots of more than 50 per cent of the province he

was previously representing as at the 30th September, 1975. In other words, the rolls were made up at the 30th September and this then becomes the basis on which the redistribution will take place.

The situation was studied for a long period in an attempt to arrive at the most equitable system which could possibly be conceived for the continuing member; that is, the member who will not be retiring until 1980. I think he has some prior claim. So the procedure is that the Chief Electoral Officer must supply information as to which of these areas includes more than 50 per cent of the previous province. That gives the continuing member immediately the opportunity to indicate which area he would prefer to represent. Not only will he have a prior right to claim that area, but he will have the prior right to represent that area.

In these circumstances I cannot visualise how a person could have two lots of more than 50 per cent. On the other hand, let us bear in mind that proposed new subsection (8) refers to subsection (3). I was not talking about subsection (3), but about subsection (4).

If a person has not established a prior claim, he has to take pot luck with anyone else who nominates for an area. What really happens is that a person must establish a prior claim by being the continuing member. It is then not a case of the Governor studying the situation and selecting a person to be the member. It is the other way around. Under proposed subsection (5) the Governor shall, as soon as practicable after receiving the advice of the member, declare that the member shall sit and vote for that province.

All the opportunities are there for the member to continue until 1980. So let us pass from that position. A member may not establish a prior claim for an area which contains more than 50 per cent of his province. He might decide that he knows enough about the area to realise that it would not be politically advantageous to him, so he does not have to put in a claim for it. However, the opportunity is there for him to do so should he so desire.

Once all the prior claims have been established and the continuing members are looked after, then, as previously there were only 15 members, we now have additional vacancies to fill. There is no way of knowing which of the provinces in the metropolitan area will be the new province. I do not know where the electoral commissioners will start their redistribution. There may be a complete reshuffle of the boundaries. I believe the commissioners would probably endeavour to minimise the change. There must be some big changes, but no-one can specify which will be the new province. Is Mr Claughton clear so far?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I want to illustrate how this will happen.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Then I will resume my seat.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not really like to cite my province because members might feel I am taking too personal an interest in it, but it is as good a seat as any to use as an illustration and I am familiar with the number of electors in it.

The largest area of population included in the new boundaries immediately adjoins my northern boundary. I have five districts in the province but there is nothing to indicate that the commissioners may not decide to create a province with four Assembly districts in that area. Does the Minister follow me?

The Hon. N. McNeill: Yes.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Let me take, for instance, Karrinyup and Balga. Karrinyup has about 23 000 voters, and Balga has about 17 000, making 40 000 in all. That could easily make up 50 per cent of the electors in a new province if it is a four-seat province. Of course, the new boundaries do not necessarily follow—in fact, I am certain they will not follow—the boundaries of the existing Assembly seats.

The four Assembly seats created there could very easily contain 50 per cent of the voters in my existing province. There are three other Assembly seats in my province, totalling almost 50 000 voters, so it could easily happen that two new provinces are created which contain 50 per cent or more of the voters in my existing province. Do I explain myself clearly?

The Hon. N. McNeill: Yes, I think so.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is the position in which a member such as I could find himself, and it could quite easily happen all around the metropolitan area because we do not know which will be four-seat provinces and which will be five-seat provinces. Under subclause (5), if I applied for only one of those provinces I could perhaps expect that the Government would allocate it to me as the continuing member, but because it could be balanced between several seats, and in order to protect myself, not knowing which other members might apply and be adjudged in the carve-up of the metropolitan area, I and other members like me could find ourselves having to undergo the ballot according to the succeeding provisions of this clause. There is a great deal of uncertainty about it. It requires some study to understand the Bill without going through all those clauses, but it is the totality which creates the problem and perhaps there is an aspect which the Government did not consider when it drew up the Bill.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: If other members are following this discussion, I would

like to hear their comments on what Mr Claughton is saying because perhaps I do not fully understand him. I am not by any means convinced there is any validity in his comments.

I think Mr Claughton could forget about whether his province will be a four or five-district province. I do not think that is relevant. We are concerned only about the 50 per cent of the electors who were in the old province; that is, the existing province. We have the two terms, the old province being as it exists up to the time of the 1977 election, when we will have the new provinces. So we cannot take into account any transferred people. Looking at the locality to which Mr Claughton is referring, we cannot say how many people will be transferred into what might become his new metropolitan province. The Bill does not propose to take those people into account. Subclause (4) refers to "fifty per centum of the electors within the old Metropolitan Electoral Province for which he is then sitting". Unless I am grossly misunderstanding what Mr Claughton is saying, he can nominate for the new province which contains more than 50 per cent of the electors of his old province.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The point I was making is that we must regard the metropolitan area as a total population and this is an entirely new distribution because four new Assembly seats are to be created, and there will be six provinces. We have a five-four arrangement now, but that does not mean that in the new arrangement my province, for instance, will contain five Assembly seats. The voters in my present province could well be distributed between three new provinces and my choice could be extremely difficult. The same situation could apply to all members, particularly where a five-seat province has been redrawn as a four-seat province.

It could well be that none of the new seats to be created will contain 50 per cent of the electors in the old seats. The decision to be made under subclause (5) would apply only if the member made application for one seat, but if his existing electors are distributed fairly evenly through more than one province, in order to protect himself he must make application for more than one. In that case he has to take the chance of the ballot. That seems to be a difficulty which should not be created for him. There should be another way to reallocate the seats. I am not suggesting what it is, but I suggest there is a real problem.

I leave that matter and refer now to subclause (9). Perhaps the Minister could explain what it means. For what eventualities does that subclause attempt to provide?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I think I now understand the first point Mr Claughton

was making. Perhaps we were putting too much emphasis on the 50 per cent rule. Perhaps we could have ignored that. In the breakup it could be that no portion of his or any other electoral province contains 50 per cent of the electors. The province could be split into three or four parts, with none of them containing more than 25 per cent. I do not know how we will cope with that situation. The intention was to give a prior right to a province which contained at least 50 per cent of the electors of a member's old province, but below that percentage three other members could be considered to have an equal right to claim the new seat.

Frankly, I think it is rather insoluble. It may seem to be inappropriate but it is not a new situation because in past redistributions there have been occasions when there has not been an increase in the number of members to be elected for the Legislative Council and the matter has been determined on the basis of ballot, with members taking the luck of the draw. In looking at this matter, we could see no way to resolve the situation which would do justice to all the parties concerned.

I will now deal with the second matter raised by Mr Cloughton. I refer to the wording at the top of page 8, where it says—

... if it appears to him to be necessary so to do by reason of there being a vacancy in the office of a member of the Legislative Council which office would have become vacant by effluxion of time on the twenty-first day of May, nineteen hundred and eighty.

This again refers to the continuing member, and provision has to be made for any unpremeditated vacancy caused by death or resignation. Something must be spelt out to provide an opportunity for the Governor to make an Order-in-Council to extend the period. We have to cover every possibility, however remote it might seem, because if we did not do so we could have the situation where a vacancy occurs in that critical period and there would be no means whereby the period could be extended to cover that situation. The subclause refers to an office becoming vacant by effluxion of time. In other words, it is the continuing member about whom we are concerned.

It does not matter, of course, in the case of the member who retires in 1977, because there will be a State election then and he will come up for re-election; however, there would otherwise be no provision for the continuing member.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 8 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Local Government Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), read a first time.

2. Government Railways Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education), read a first time.

EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 2nd October.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [10.49 p.m.]: I have no reason to complain about this amending Bill because it is bringing about a progressive change in that it makes provision for payments to witnesses and interpreters called upon by the Crown in criminal proceedings, petty sessional cases, and inquests held by a coroner.

In his second reading speech the Minister said that these payments had been made by administrative direction in the past. Of course, there has been no provision for payments to people from local government who may be called as witnesses; and there is always some doubt regarding who should receive payment and what the amount should be. I consider this is a progressive move, and I support it.

A scale of allowances will be laid down, and I would ask the Minister when regulations are being prepared for promulgation, that consideration be given to tying the payments to a percentage of the minimum or the average wage, or whatever other base may be used. This will ensure that the payments do not become outdated.

This happened in the case of fees paid to jurors some years ago. I know this only too well from personal experience. Many years ago before I entered this place I was called up for jury service a fortnight before Christmas. In my employment I could not simply go back to work the next day, but had to remain off for two days. I was called up again for service and not required, and then I had to wait a further two days. I finished up well and truly out of pocket. In those days jurors received fifteen shillings a day, which was only a fraction of the current wage.

I make this suggestion so that inflation does not reduce the payments, thereby requiring the regulations to be altered periodically. With those comments, I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.
Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. Lyla Elliott) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 119 added—

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I feel I should comment on the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. There are always difficulties imposed on people in instances such as the one to which Mr Thompson referred. Matters of this nature may be referred to me for guidance regarding whether a greater amount should be paid in certain circumstances where a person is severely out of pocket. We try to strike a reasonable scale, so that people receive at least some reimbursement for lost time. I do not necessarily subscribe to the view that the payment should be tied to a wage, because jury service has always been regarded as one of the obligations of members of the community.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I gave that as an illustration; we are not dealing with jurors now. I merely pointed out that in determining these payments they should be tied to some base to allow for escalation.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I take the point. In that case I acknowledge the remarks made by Mr Thompson and say that they are noted.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 2nd October.

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [10.58 p.m.]: We support this Bill. In so doing I would like to take the opportunity to express a few comments about the Health Education Council and the import of the changes mentioned by the Minister.

It is a matter of credit to the Health Education Council and the officers employed by it that the dissemination of material regarding health has been so effective. I think this is due to the fact that officers and members of the council are aware of the changing conditions in Australia that necessitate exploring different channels of communicating this information to the public; and this amendment to the Act signifies the alacrity with which they have recommended changes to the Minister.

It is rather significant that we find the ABC and also the Australian Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations feeling that they are not being very effective and that they may not have been helping the council with its work.

We also find included some of the new organisations which are beginning to make their presence felt in the community scene; I refer to the Alcohol and Drug Authority, the Teacher Education Authority, the Institute of Health Surveyors and the Australian Public Health Association.

It is also gratifying to note that the Western Australian Branch of the Royal Australian Nursing Federation has been included; this highlights the work being done by nurses, particularly by community health nurses who are getting out and doing their bit to co-operate with other organisations and voluntary agencies in order that there shall be some co-ordination of services within the community.

The work being done by the professional people in co-operating with the Health Education Council, hopefully, will mean that we will have a better informed and healthier public, and I could not let this opportunity pass without expressing some gratification at the work being done by the council, and wishing it further success. Hopefully, the organisations and people now to be included on the council will make a very real contribution to the health of the people of this State.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [11.02 p.m.]: I thank the Hon. Grace Vaughan for her comments on and support of the Bill, and I should like to add a few comments of my own. I believe I should not let this opportunity pass without expressing the Government's appreciation of the work done by Mr Jim Carr of the Health Education Council.

We also had another very capable officer, Mr Flood, who spent a lot of time with the council and worked hard to ensure its success. Unfortunately, not so long ago while travelling the other side of Wubin, towards Mt. Magnet, he suffered a heart attack and passed away. It was a very sad shock for his wife, who was travelling with him at the time. Mr Flood's death is a big loss to the State and to the Health Education Council; he was a dedicated officer, and will be sadly missed.

The Government would have liked to expand the Health Education Council much more than it has done; in fact, in the near future I hope to be able to appoint more officers, particularly in the field of venereal disease education; I hope to be able to make the appointments in the coming few months.

Restrictions on finance have made it very difficult to appoint extra officers, but I am endeavouring to find as much money as I can to enable me to appoint more officers

so that the scope of the Health Education Council can be expanded and we can try to open up additional centres in this way.

Although we have had to close a couple of centres over the last 12 months, we are trying to push ahead as quickly as possible. As the Hon. Grace Vaughan said, the recomposition of the council and the withdrawal from that body of some people and the addition of others will add strength to the council and it will move ahead in the future to the benefit of the health of the people.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

House adjourned at 11.05 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 8th October, 1975

The SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (52): ON NOTICE

1. LANCELIN-CLIFFHEAD ROAD

Environmental Review

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

Further to question on notice 32 asked on 8/5/75, and questions on notice 29 and 32 asked on 9/9/75, does the EPA or Department of Conservation and the Environment intend initiating an environmental review of proposals to develop a coastal highway between Lancelin and Cliffhead, including the preferred alignment south of Leeman which may pass through several conservation reserves including the Nambung National Park?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

A decision will be made if a proposal is confirmed.

2. MINERAL SANDS

Western Mining Project

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

- (1) Has the State yet signified acceptance of any of the proposals submitted to it since execution of the Allied Eneabba agreement?

- (2) Is WMC Mineral Sands a subsidiary company of Western Mining Corporation?
- (3) Are negotiations for execution of an agreement also proceeding with WMC Mineral Sands?
- (4) Has the Government discussed with any subsidiary or associate company of Western Mining Corporation, the possibility of establishing a synthetic rutile or titanium dioxide plant at either Perth or Geraldton?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Yes.
- (4) Yes, but only in very preliminary and general terms as part of agreement negotiations regarding processing commitments.

3. MINERAL SANDS

Allied Eneabba and Western Titanium: Draft Proposals

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

- (1) Has either Allied Eneabba or Western Titanium ever referred draft development and operational proposals to the Government prior to the execution of their agreements, and, if so, on what dates?
- (2) To which departments and instrumentalities were these referred, and on what dates?
- (3) Were they referred to the EPA for comment and, if not, why not?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) Excerpts of the draft development and operational proposals in the form of the "Approved Project" were received from time to time prior to the execution of the Mineral Sands (Allied Eneabba) Agreement and with the co-operation of relevant departments and instrumentalities a formal document was agreed for acceptance contemporaneously with execution of the agreement.

Proposals have not been received from Western Titanium to date.

- (2) In respect of Allied Eneabba a complete copy of the "Approved Project" was referred to the following departments and instrumentalities on 7th July, 1975—

Public Works Department,
Lands and Surveys Department,
Education Department,
Conservation and Environment
Department,
Main Roads Department,
Railways Commission,
State Housing Commission,
State Energy Commission and
Mines Department.