

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, 27 March 1985

**THE PRESIDENT** (Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### **TOURISM COMMISSION: PRICE WATERHOUSE REPORT**

*Consideration of Tabled Paper: Motion*

**HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West) [4.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the House take note of the Price Waterhouse Report on the function of the Western Australian Tourism Commission laid on the Table of the Legislative Council on Thursday, 21 March 1985.

The other night the Leader of the House generously gave us the opportunity to make some statements with regard to the tourist industry and in particular to put a case for those officers of the original department who have been so badly maligned over the last two years. It is my intention to take advantage of that opportunity made available by Mr Dans when he tabled the Price Waterhouse report.

One cannot say that Mr Dans' statement is a pack of falsehoods, because one section on the fourth page states that tourism has been badly funded for a number of years. That is a God-given truth and, therefore, it prevents the total statement by Mr Dans from being described in the way I mentioned earlier. I will refer to that aspect of criticism of the department and the commission, which is contained in the Price Waterhouse report, at a later stage.

First of all we should ask ourselves exactly what the Price Waterhouse report is: it is a report about an organisation set up to replace the Tourism Department on 1 January 1984. Having read Mr Dans' speech carefully I am of the opinion that one could be excused for going away with the idea that the report was a criticism by the Price Waterhouse group of the Tourism Department which existed prior to that date. However, it was nothing of the sort. This points out the shortcomings of the child fathered by Mr Brian Burke and mothered by Mr Brett Goodridge, known as the Tourism Commission.

The Price Waterhouse report is a criticism and an examination of the commission. It was requested by the commission, as Mr Dans quite correctly said, to inquire into the activities of the commission. Mr Dans twisted it around to make

it appear as though it were an examination of the department in existence before 1 January 1984.

We should ask ourselves why the report was tabled. Mr Dans went into that at some length, but the report was tabled because it had been leaked. Any experienced politician—and I know the present Government is short of those—knows that once a report is commissioned the Government either has to release the report or expect it to be leaked, because the document will be leaked as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow morning.

Labor was in Opposition for a long time. During 21 years of my term in this place, Labor has been in Opposition. Over those many years, the only way in which the Opposition could obtain information was to ensure that it was leaked from departments. The Labor Party developed a very good technique to obtain information. Indeed, one of the first examples I had of that was when Mr Arthur Tonkin had an officer from the State Housing Commission obtain a file improperly, if not illegally.

Although the Labor Party has moved from Opposition to Government, the technique which it developed so assiduously did not move with it. It remained, and documents will continue to be leaked, because the technique was developed by the ALP in Opposition and those lessons have been well learnt. Documents and all sorts of things fall off trucks.

The other night when speaking on a subject akin to this, I was inhibited, because although I had the Price Waterhouse report in my possession, I was unable to quote from it, because I had said I would not do so.

Indeed, as I have mentioned several times in this House, some years ago I was the recipient of a report signed by none other than Mr Berinson. That report related to the ALP's expert view on the fluoridation of water supplies in Western Australia. One of the main signatories to that report was Mr Berinson. That report was in my possession before it was quashed at the instigation of Mr John Tonkin at the State council meeting of the ALP.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Do you still have a copy of that report? I have often looked for it without success.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am very sorry that I do not have a copy of it, because, among other things, one of the matters panned by Mr Berinson, Mr Fletcher, and Mr Stubbs was the referendum. They pointed out that referendums were really the coward's way out, but now the ALP has changed its tune.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Not at all.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The Attorney General has not changed his tune, but the ALP has tended to change its tune.

The Price Waterhouse report was suddenly tabled because it had been leaked and it was an embarrassment. This occurred as a result of the technique developed by the Labor Party.

I was interested to see in tonight's edition of the *Daily News* reference to awarding an Oscar to Mr Dans for his performance in the tourism classic, "One great slay after another". I am delighted that, in Mr Dans, presentation of "One great slay after another" he has given me the opportunity to make a few comments on behalf of those members of the Tourism Commission who have been so viciously maligned by means of innuendo by a number of people, without being given the opportunity of a fair hearing.

However, this has been the trend since the Labor Party has come into office. We have seen it happen in the Public Works Department, the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, in respect of national parks, and in the Forests Department. Everyone is aware of the way in which morale has been alienated.

Let me say from bitter experience that, when one loses a position and one believes that loss is not one's fault, it is very difficult to overcome psychologically. It haunts one in the wee small hours of the morning. Many men in this State are haunted in that way despite years of good and loyal service. The reason they are haunted is not that they were inefficient, but rather it stems purely from the ruthless cruelty of the ALP in Western Australia. I shall explain that in a moment, because Mr Dans has given me the opportunity to do so.

Belatedly the Government is making a virtue of necessity and is releasing the document.

Hon. Fred McKenzie interjected.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not put Mr McKenzie in that group. He is a proper Labor man. He comes from the working class, and he joined the Labor Party when it was made up of people who were the cream of the working class of this country, not the left over academics. Therefore, I do not put Mr McKenzie in that class. He is a socialist and a man whose opposition I can understand. However, I cannot understand the opposition of some of the members of the Labor Party. They are not broken down capitalists; they are extremely successful capitalists posing as experts in the ALP.

People have tried to blame the Opposition for causing this document to be tabled. I do not know why anyone should be blamed for it, but the

Government cannot, with any credibility, blame the Opposition for the tabling of this report. It was tabled because it was leaked. The ALP developed the techniques for leaking and it knew this document would be leaked.

The Opposition did not commission the report. Indeed, the Tourism Commission ordered the report to be prepared and the Government allowed that to occur; therefore, the Government is responsible for it. The inquiry into the Tourism Commission has not brought out the truth. The truth has been skilfully clouded by the experts.

The Price Waterhouse report was transmitted to the Government under the signature of R. P. Webb. We are entitled to ask who is R. P. Webb. To establish that I suggest members look at the statements of the Chief Justice of the Northern Territory, Sir William Forster, who, in some rather scathing criticism of Mr Webb, said that the Northern Territory's Attorney General should consider cancelling his registration as a liquidator. Incidentally, later Mr Webb admitted reluctantly that his action clearly amounted to an attempt to defraud creditors. No wonder Mr Webb and his colleagues claimed, "We have enjoyed working with the commissioners and staff".

We are now told that Mr Barrie, having identified a suitable position for himself during the inquiry, secured it at a rather satisfactory salary. I would like to see Government members explain that away while keeping straight faces. The position found by Mr Barrie is listed here and it might be interesting to look at it.

Members may ask: Who is Mr Webb? I direct them to look at the phrases used by the judge which included, "deceptive and dishonest, an attempted fraud on creditors, various accounting and procedural errors, the impertinent and entirely improper charging of penalty fees". That is who Mr Webb is.

According to my reading of the paper by Mr Tony Thomas, these remarks were directed about Price Waterhouse and the partner, Mr R. Webb. I do not believe they have been denied and, indeed, according to my information, they have been accepted.

Without any experience in tourism matters, the report of these men has been accepted. In that report it was claimed that seven senior, long-serving officers of the commission were useless and should be replaced. However, none of those officers was given the opportunity to explain his situation and prove himself.

The suggestion has even been written and published that Coopers Lybrand, which also tendered for the job of reporting on the com-

mission, offered to do it for \$100 000. I am advised that the cost of the Price Waterhouse report was \$231 000. This has incited some comment and it is no wonder the company has acquired the nickname of "Price Slaughterhouse".

The position to which I referred earlier was that of a professional director of human resources who was capable of practicing appropriate personnel procedures. According to several critics I have read, Mr Barrie quite improperly secured this job for himself at a salary of, I believe, \$47 000, although members should not hold me to that figure. All of this was done on the recommendation of a man whom the Chief Justice of the Northern Territory labelled as being deceptive and dishonest.

Two months after the Burke Government took office, rumour has it that Mr Goodridge claimed that within a short time he would assume control of the Department of Tourism as it was then known. That is a reported statement purported to have originated from him. Of course, the department's problems with low morale and very serious concerns, started then.

Those members who are reasonable enough to look at this matter fairly should ask themselves this question: How could anyone in the Tourism Department from the director downwards complain or talk to his Minister, the Premier (Mr Brian Burke), when the Minister's adviser was the man about whom they wished to talk? That is an incestuous sort of situation if ever there was one in regard to a Government departmental activity. The department was in almost total confusion and disarray because of the rumours, and as it turned out the people were quite entitled to be upset because the rumours were only the half of it.

I remind the House that the Price Waterhouse report deals with the Tourism Commission and not with the Tourist Department. Mr Dans introduced this matter and he implied that the reputation of the department was one of non-performance. It is a fabrication of gross proportions to suggest that the department was under-performing. He was wrong. The Price Waterhouse report labels the commission as an under-performer and that report in that aspect was strictly accurate. It is correct that the commission was a failure. As I mentioned before, it is a baby which was fathered by Brian Burke and mothered by Brett Goodridge, and which should have been strangled at birth. Now the Price Waterhouse report strangles it virtually at birth, does it not, after a little over 12 months' work?

I mentioned underfunding. It is correct that the department was underfunded. At best it received

\$5.6 million. Mr Goodridge in his report to the Premier claimed that the department spent most of that money on administration. That was a great discovery which must have taken a genius to work out. Of course it did! How did the department fund all the publicity drives over the years in an effort to win the America's Cup? I will tell members how—by absolute efficiency, by great collaboration with private industry, by topping every outside resource possible; in short, by being the most efficient department of its kind in Australia, and it was recognised as such. Anyone who was around at the time in Qantas, Ansett, MMA or the other bodies would verify that statement. If anyone wants to do the research on this matter, I have no doubt at all that he will be told the truth, and that fact will be verified. Mr Dans was quite right; the department was underfunded. Year after year, the Premier and Treasurer, from John Tonkin onwards, would make the same speeches that Mr Dans makes now. I quote from the Price Waterhouse report as follows—

The tourism industry has the potential to create jobs and prosperity for Western Australia. It is a young industry in the State but one which, with strong leadership, can quickly achieve major industry status.

Everyone makes those speeches and members have been doing so for years now; the body of the speeches remained essentially the same, but sometimes they were cut. Members made speeches about potential moneymaking ventures and about the future, and they received no money. But all of a sudden Mr Dans is not only making speeches; he is also getting the money—\$12 million! Despite that, the commission is a failure. The commission is regarded as a failure by the Price Waterhouse report. What is the result, if we believe the Price Waterhouse report? I tell the ALP that we are left with even money; we are left with only the speeches; as yet there are no results.

Let us look at the statement made about a succession of junior Ministers. John Tonkin, the Premier at the time, took over from Herb Graham. Was he a junior Minister? No. He was too busy to give that portfolio much attention, and I know that to be a fact. He certainly was not a junior Minister and he did not treat the subject lightly. Alan Ridge again might fit the description of a junior Minister, yet he achieved a lot in his short time in this Parliament. Look at what Mr Dans and Mr Burke have done. Mr Ridge suggested the setting up of the committee with Bob Cotton, now Sir Robert Cotton. Also on the committee was Mike Bernard of Tasmania—none of the ALP members will know of Mike Bernard—and me. The committee was to examine

the elimination of anomalies in the hospitality industry. That is an important subject which is often discussed. Everyone talks about this matter now, but some people have forgotten that Alan Ridge started the whole thing. He was correct, and it really was a step in the right direction for the hospitality industry. He gave the matter a lot of thought. The industry needs some success in regard to the contract arrangements which flow from it.

As an aside, I remember when Sir Robert Cotton attended a meeting with Mike Bernard and myself. The unions came to see us in Canberra. We asked them to come and join us for a cup of coffee. They said, "Yes, we will do that but we are not allowed to talk to you". We were thunderstruck, of course. We had a cup of coffee. We said, "What do you mean?" They said, "We are authorised to come to the meeting but we are not allowed to talk to you". That was a most ludicrous situation which only arose with that sort of organisation. Of course, after a little while they talked to us and they finished up being reasonably productive; but they were quite frightened of the repercussions which would flow to them from talking to us. We had to keep it very quiet. Indeed, Mike Bernard was quite concerned about his position on the committee. He had to be extremely certain because of the vicious attitude of certain members of some factions of the ALP. However, that is a side issue and is not related to the matter we are discussing.

Alan Ridge did more for tourism than has any Premier or Mr Dans, the two Ministers for the Labor Party who are in charge of tourism today. I was a junior Minister. Barry MacKinnon was once Minister for Tourism and is now Deputy Leader of the Opposition; so all those people are not junior.

The real point about having so many Ministers is that the department should be given credit for coping with that. The matter of the multiplicity of Ministers was often discussed in the various departments it affected. Under the Tonkin Administration—Mr President will recall this—the Education Department had three Ministers in three years, and it continued to be an efficient department. I give great credit to that department. The Tourism Department faced the same situation.

The Tourism Commission has been a failure, despite the fact that it has had only one Minister and it has been in receipt of ample funds—more funds, indeed, than any of its predecessor organisations. The fact that it has produced so few tangible results is the fault of the Government. It left an organisation with money, but with no experi-

ence or morale, and that is clear from the Price Waterhouse report.

Mr Hales is well known to anyone in the tourist or travel industry. Why was he not brought in from the Bank of New South Wales travel section? He is one of the most efficient men in the nation. I mention that because Ian Adams who was then in charge of the Bank of New South Wales travel section in WA was president of AFTA and was a very competent fellow, and he subsequently moved to the east. That bank has efficient people who are knowledgeable in the travel industry. Where are people like Tony Norton, who is a very skillful fellow and who is well versed in the hospitality industry and other aspects of tourism? George Booth is still running the travel section of that bank and he was on the advisory committee on a big land deal. He certainly has not got a place in this new commission.

They have all been replaced by political appointees in the main. Rumour has it that Eddie Watling is on the list for replacement. His only fault is that he is the only fellow who is qualified in tourism. He is the only chap I know from Western Australia who attended the University of Hawaii and obtained a degree in tourism.

#### *Questions without Notice: Postponement*

**THE PRESIDENT:** Order! It being 5.00 o'clock, in accordance with the Standing Orders, I will take questions without notice.

**HON. J. M. BERINSON** (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [5.00 p.m.]: I move—

That questions without notice be taken at 7.30 p.m.

**HON. G. E. MASTERS** (West—Leader of the Opposition) [5.01 p.m.]: The Opposition will not oppose the motion. However, Mr President, I draw the attention of the House to the problem we seem to have with questions without notice being taken at 5.00 o'clock. Frequently the time is changed for one reason or another. I am not suggesting Ministers do not have commitments and cannot be here at times; however, I believe the Standing Orders Committee, when considering these matters in the future, should look at the operation of the Standing Orders as they relate to questions without notice being taken at 5.00 o'clock.

Often, speeches are interrupted, but I guess that should be anticipated. The Opposition is not very happy with the arrangement for questions being taken at 5.00 o'clock unless they are taken fairly strictly at that time.

Question put and passed.

*Debate (on motion) Resumed*

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The whole history of tourism since the advent of the Labor Party is strewn with misstatements, none of which has been answered by those people about whom they have been made.

On 29 August 1983 a Press release stated that a major overhaul of tourism was to take place. It said the Department of Tourism was to be abolished and replaced with a Tourism Commission which was reported on by Price Waterhouse. It said that the seven-member Tourism Commission would comprise experts from tourist-related fields outside of Government. This is the group the Price Waterhouse report said was inept. However, much worse than anything else, that Press release confirmed these paragraphs which I now quote—

The department was also spending too great a proportion of the funds available to it on overheads and basic operating costs. This left only \$1.54 million for marketing activities, of which less than \$1 million was spent on media and promotional work.

It goes on—

The government expected that the commission would devote a much greater proportion of its resources to marketing Western Australia, and that after initial establishment costs, management restructuring and rationalisation would enable savings in operating costs, conservatively estimated at \$600 000 over 12 months.

What is the truth?

Hon. P. G. Pandal: They have been proven to be at fault.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes. Only \$1 million was spent on media releases that were authorised by the Government. This was not the fault of the department as claimed by Mr Goodridge, but was the fault of the Treasury which set the Budget. I hope that sinks in. Here is a group of men working for a department, under a Minister, doing the job honestly and efficiently, and obeying the guidelines set by the Treasury. If they had not, they would have been hauled over the coals by the Audit Department. They have been blamed by a person who knows nothing about tourism or Government and whose only claim to fame is his favouritism with the Premier. He has been employed by the Premier because of a chance conversation on an aeroplane. It is all written up in last week's paper if anyone wants to read it. It is headed, "Turmoil on tourism". There are articles about the Price Waterhouse report and tourism in every paper one picks up. As I said, this was not

the fault of the officers. It was set in the Budget. Many efforts were made to obtain more money and I spearheaded several attempts, but was unsuccessful.

Mr Goodridge blamed the department for the sins of the Treasury. However, that is not all the story. So efficient was the department, that many more dollars were spent by private industry on tourism because departmental officers were able to persuade industry to help. I have mentioned that before. A tremendous amount of money was spent through conference associations and through other avenues by private industry. A claim that the commission could save \$600 000 was treacherous. The staff of the commission is larger than that of the department and, in some of those matters, the Price Waterhouse report's claim to the Government has some merit, bearing in mind that, in trying to save money, it spent more.

I was Minister for Tourism long enough to appreciate that the Department of Tourism, though inadequately funded, was an aggressive, commercially-oriented marketing organisation. Morale was high and vacancies always attracted many applicants. Morale today is not high. It is low and Mr Goodridge is very much to blame for that.

In my 29 years in Parliament, I have done very little but praise public servants. I have berated those who have knocked bureaucrats. However, I find I am now in the position where people, through plain unvarnished political preferment, have pushed hard-working Government officers aside. I feel no loyalty or obligation to protect them whatsoever.

The Government has politicised department after department and treated hard-working Government officers shamelessly and cruelly. It has not given them an opportunity to do anything in their own defence. I wrote to an expert in political affairs in Canada explaining the current set-up and was interested to receive his answer describing the position under the Labor Government in New Brunswick of a few years ago. The same pattern developed there because of this fundamental basic distrust of anyone who might have worked for the Opposition.

I have been sidetracked. We are talking about what happened to tourism officers. The Department of Tourism was the nearest thing to a private organisation in the State Public Service. It was involved in the advertising field and had done a lot for tourism. Any member who wants to check on what I say should do so remembering that the whole department has been markedly politicised. He should be careful in his inquiries. I have no hesitation in saying that the department was

recognised, before the changes, throughout Australia and in many parts of the world as a leader. Let me list a few of its firsts.

The Western Australian department was the first to become a member of the Australian Federation of Travel Associations, and it moved in with the travel people. Now every organisation in Australia belongs to the federation, but Western Australia was the first.

Western Australia was the first State to introduce field sales staff dealing with agents, and all the other States have followed suit. According to the report, it is expected that each of the holiday centres will be the sort of organisation which attracts people into the doors. There is no mention that I can find of a field sales staff set-up in any other State Department of Tourism; but our department actually went out and sold the travel agents in their various towns, and worked in close co-operation with private enterprise. That was the method used, and Western Australia was the first State to start that.

We were the first Government agency to implement a national and international network of accredited travel agents; but that has become almost universal.

We were the first Government agency to produce a multi-image audiovisual programme. Mr Deputy President (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth), you have probably seen that programme, and I can recall the enthusiasm of our President for the latest of the audiovisuals. He liked it very much indeed. In fact, it was so popular that it was translated into four foreign languages. A number of members might actually have seen that audiovisual. It was used in America, on the Continent, and in many other places. The Western Australian department was the first Government agency to be awarded an international television award for that same programme. It has been shown in places overseas where it has been accorded a standing ovation.

Let us turn our attention to the America's Cup. In 1974, the department set up an association with the Royal Perth Yacht Club. A most successful promotional programme was conducted in the USA. In 1977 it was repeated; in 1980 it was repeated; and it was repeated in 1983. The industry acknowledged the series of promotions as very pleasing, but it was all done with a lack of funding. The department really did it properly. It was done through collaboration with Qantas, the Avis rent-a-car system, hotel chains and the like, in order to spin the money out and get 120 or 150c out of every dollar. That was done with skilful

marketing and selling to the organisations to increase their funds.

In those days, the promotional budget of the department was less than 30 per cent of today's budget, and today's budget has been most ineffective. The Price Waterhouse report says that the organisation set up by the Government was ineffective. Incidentally, the America's Cup promotion was done in the face of continued and carping criticism by the Labor Party. Members can refer to *Hansard* to learn how the then Opposition viewed the America's Cup. It was said that such activity was a waste of time because we would never see the America's Cup in Perth. It was said that such activity by the department was wasteful and unnecessary, and we saw the shades of Frank Wise, Arthur Bickerton, and those fellows talking about our original discussions on the establishment of the iron ore industry in the Pilbara—the same sort of carping, crying, whining criticism.

Now, this Government and the Commonwealth Government have jumped on the bandwagon of the America's Cup, but it is a travesty of justice that the people who showed initiative, foresight, and faith are not permitted to build upon it.

We have heard about chance meetings on an aeroplane and people being given positions of authority in a department with which they have had nothing to do. These are the people Mr Goodridge and the Government, presumably, would have us believe are a group of non-helpful bureaucrats. Goodridge made an understandable comment when he realised what his ambition was. He has now achieved it as managing director of the commission; but members opposite ought to ask themselves, "Is it right? Is it fair? Above all, is it decent?" I wonder if the Premier is proud of what has happened, or is it just a shabby spectacle of political opportunism and vindictiveness? A year or so ago, the staff were a highly motivated team of professional officers who were respected worldwide for their performance. Now they are a disorganised and totally demoralised group of confused and disenchanted people. One only has to talk to them to realise that. Since 1984, the organisation has become self-destructive, and it has achieved very little.

The commission has only two commissioners with any background in tourism or properly related industries. The acting chairman, Mr Stephen Hales, is an officer of the Commonwealth Banking Corporation.

I know there was criticism the other day about some of the stories that have been circulated. One of them is that the commission purchased \$3 000

worth of south-west honey plus packaging for \$27 000 from an organisation in which one of the commissioners was involved. The commission overruled the strong recommendation of its own marketing division—a division, incidentally, which was panned by Mr Webb. Now the commission has non-saleable honey because it was stored and it started to candy. It is all stored somewhere in the blue building downtown. I would imagine anyone as smart as Mr Piantadosi or Mr McKenzie could go down there and find that honey, and they could come back and tell us whether the story is true. The story was told to me by some pretty authoritative people.

Is this another example of criminal irresponsibility? What about the story about the deputy chairman, which is apparently quite true, accepting a sitting fee, plus a retainer of \$30 000, plus \$50 an hour for every hour over a minimum basis? Is that another example of the misuse of funds? Stories like this are legion.

People never heard stories like that before. I had a few years with the department, and I think I came out without any of those stories hanging on my coat-tails. It is a bit like Pooh Bear—the members of the commission roll in the sand, and go home taking so much honey with them that they are covered with grit.

Early in 1983, the commission advertised the position of chairman, and the qualifications were heavily orientated to marketing expertise and a good track record. Applications were received from all over Australia and overseas, but I understand that no applicant was interviewed. The deputy chairman of the department was appointed, despite the fact that he did not have much experience. He had been employed by me as an administrator; all I can say is that he got the job.

Let us have a look at the history of the matter. I wonder if, in fact, it was a move carefully worked out by Mr Goodridge. Can the Minister for Tourism explain this expensive and unusual decision? This fellow was put into the job, and the Premier and Minister for Tourism were quick to leap to the defence of Mr Goodridge; but no opportunity has been given to the discarded officers.

What happened? I will tell the House what happened in this case. I will quote each of the steps. In March 1983, Mr Goodridge was appointed ministerial adviser to Mr Burke. In the next six months, he drew up a plan for the commission. Each of the commissioners given the job during that time was recommended by Mr Goodridge.

As I mentioned before, the commission advertised worldwide for a chairman, and there were about 100 applicants. No-one was interviewed. Mr Hitchen applied and was given the job. The report by Price Waterhouse was commissioned subsequently.

Goodridge was appointed managing director—to a non-existent position I might add, not provided for in the Act, but appointed by the commissioners, all of whom he recommended. Despite the fact that there was no such position and he had no qualifications, he got the job. What happened to Hitchen? He was pushed out.

Could the Minister explain that to me and keep a straight face so we are not rolling around on the floor laughing at the explanation?

To corroborate this, another odd thing happened. There was an applicant from England, a Mr Warren Bateman, who came back to Western Australia. I understand he has many qualifications. He asked many questions and got a bit close to the bone.

A member: It has not done him much good.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It has done him some good. He has been appointed to the America's Cup unit as general manager inside the commission. It is a straw in the wind. There are so many straws in the wind down there that there is almost a gale blowing. I have just recounted a few of the stories. It is no good saying that I am muckraking because I am not by nature a muckraker; but I have felt so affronted at the way in which the Western Australian Government has dealt with these people that I have taken this opportunity to say something about it. It is not the only case. It has happened in other departments.

A couple of weeks ago I attended a wake openly put on by the Fisheries and Wildlife Department. Those present wore armbands and were dressed as though they were going to a funeral. That department, for 16 years, has led Australia. If Western Australia had not been the venue for the fishing conference, the conference might not have been held. Those members who have been associated with this Parliament for any length of time will know that is true.

It was a wake for the destruction of a department—"dismemberment" of a department would be a better word.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: How?

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: By breaking up the Fisheries and Wildlife Department and all those groups.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: They have nothing in common.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is utter and complete rubbish. We will argue that at a different time.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: That is convenient for you.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is not convenient. It is exactly the same basic scientific operation to exploit a population of crustaceans—*Parlinuridae Signus*—as it is to exploit a population of macropods. Any scientist the members would like to ask would tell them that. One has to know the life cycle and the history of the creature; and the sorts of scientists that deal with that are blood brothers in their brains. They talk to one another about the same sorts of things. The dismembering of that department was a very sad occasion. I was there and so were two of the Government Ministers and we were all sad together.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: Breaking up an empire!

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Empire be blown! I am no more an empire builder than Mr McKenzie is. He is trying to defend the indefensible. The only way he can do that is by making loud and inane noises. Mr McKenzie is out of character.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon. D. J. Wordsworth): Mr McKenzie, you are out of order.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The statement I mentioned before that the commission inherited a legacy, a non-performing past, is absurd. The statement does not even reconcile with earlier statements by Mr Dans in this House the day after *Australia II* won the cup. In *Hansard* on page 2475 on 22 September 1983 he said—

As I have previously remarked, the Department of Tourism's performance in the past, considering the total lack of support and finance it received from the previous Government, has been creditable.

Equally the performance of the department up until 1983 as revealed by statistics cannot be described by the Minister or Mr Goodridge as a legacy of non-performance.

Who are these people trying to fool, if not themselves? They are trying to justify their utter heartlessness and cruelty.

A couple of weeks ago the Premier announced in the "Political Notes" in *The West Australian*, page 59, some details of a special report commissioned by the Government and relating to tourism traffic. However, what was not announced was that the report was by Admark, an

internationally recognised tourism transport consultancy. The report stated that the growth of tourism and transport in WA is the highest of any destination in Australia, and possibly one of the best in the world.

Does the Premier, the Minister, the commissioner or Mr Goodridge claim credit for this? If they do, they are downright dishonest. One does not get that type of immediate response in the travel business. This is the result of highly efficient Department of Tourism work over the last decade. It is not a year's work. It could not have been that successful in that time. In the interests of all concerned should not the Government have the commissioners revert to their bank, real estate, radio station, and honey marketing professions and allow those with a true track record to get on with their work?

I sincerely hope that in some small respect I have set the record straight.

I have just been sent a note telling me that one of the members of the commission is a very active member of the Australian Labor Party. I do not need to be told that. If someone gets a job and has no real qualifications for it, of course he is a very active voting member of the Australian Labor Party. We are all well aware of that, because it happens so frequently.

What has happened to the Western Australian Tourism Department? Its failure as reported by Price Waterhouse is not an isolated case. This is a heartless reorganisation just to keep in tune with some dreamt-up pipedream of ALP policy. It is not an isolated instance. It has happened from such ordinary mundane occupations as driving motorcars through to the Public Works Department, the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Forests Department. The Forests Department, in the area of Hon. Sandy Lewis and Hon. Bill Stretch, has been thrown into turmoil through a pipedream of the ALP conference, at which I have sat in the audience and heard the Premier say that he disagreed with the policy violently and apologising for the fact that it was carried out and he could do nothing about it.

I have heard the Premier explain to forestry officers that he has no option but to go along with the policy, erroneous though it may be. I am paraphrasing his words, but only slightly; he said that he would make it good by prostituting the rest of the forestry; that is, mining out the road verges and creeks. This sort of attitude is running not like a thread but like a broadening stream through all the departments currently under the control of the Labor Government in Western Australia. I hope it leads to their undoing but more than anything else



I hope it preys on their conscience because more than one good man has been ruined by their ruthless behaviour and by the cruel action of throwing out hard working people who were doing the job as they were being asked to do it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. Fred McKenzie.

## ACTS AMENDMENT (LOTTERIES) BILL

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), read a first time.

### *Second Reading*

**HON. J. M. BERINSON** (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [5.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of the Bill before the House is to amend several Acts to empower the Lotteries Commission to grant permits to religious and charitable institutions, which include sporting bodies, to conduct continuing lotteries. These lotteries are more commonly known as “beer” or “bingo tickets” and are conducted by way of break-open tickets which expose details indicating a failure or success in winning a prize.

These types of tickets are presently sold by sporting bodies by hand, and either by hand or vending machine on licensed club premises as part of their fundraising activities.

This Bill will allow religious, charitable and sporting bodies holding a permit granted by the Lotteries Commission to sell tickets in continuing lotteries. However, their sale by way of vending machines will be restricted to those classes of licensed premises, being hotels, taverns, limited hotels, winchouses, canteens and licensed clubs. This does not prohibit the sale of break-open tickets by hand in unlicensed clubs and elsewhere.

Religious bodies, charitable bodies or clubs will be able to apply for a permit to sell break-open tickets from the Lotteries Commission for a period not exceeding 12 months.

A permit holder is required to purchase tickets from a supplier licensed by the Commissioner of State Taxation and, where the tickets are dispensed by vending machines on licensed premises, pay the licensee for the value of prizes and retain the profit.

Where tickets are sold by vending machine on those licensed premises specified in the Bill, prizes may only be given in goods or services normally

sold on those premises to the value of the winning ticket.

An amendment to the Police Act will ensure that machines for dispensing tickets in continuing lotteries conducted under a permit will not be treated as prohibited slot machines within the meaning of section 89A of that Act.

An important effect of this Bill, resulting from an amendment to the Liquor Act, is the removal of the prohibition on the conduct of lotteries on licensed premises.

The longstanding problem, whereby licensees could not utilise their premises for the drawing of raffles, will be overcome. It will also allow a licensee to permit the conduct of raffles on his premises, provided a permit has been issued by the Lotteries Commission.

The Bill also contains amendments to the Stamp Act to impose a duty of 5 per cent upon the face value of all tickets to be used in a continuing lottery.

For that purpose, persons who are in the business of supplying tickets to the clubs or charities will be required to obtain a licence from the Commissioner of State Taxation.

Ticket suppliers will be prohibited from supplying tickets unless they hold a licence, and clubs and charities holding permits will be prohibited from obtaining tickets other than from a licensed supplier.

The licensed supplier will sell the tickets to the permit holders at a price which includes the duty component. The duty will then be paid by the licensed supplier by way of a monthly return to the commissioner.

In order to provide a period to enable the licensing of ticket suppliers and the printing by them of duty endorsements on tickets prior to the imposition of the duty, the Bill provides for the licensing provisions to become effective from the date of assent. The liability for duty will then come into effect from an “appointed day”.

It is proposed that all applications for a licence as a supplier of tickets will be made to the commissioner, who will have the power to refuse any application, having regard to such things as financial stability, whether the applicant has previously held a licence which had been cancelled by the commissioner, or whether an applicant has an interest in a business already holding a licence.

It is not proposed to limit the number of licences issued. However, trading in licences will be prohibited by making them non-transferable.

Provision has also been made for a licence to be cancelled should the holder breach any of the pro-

visions as contained in the Bill, or should the licensed supplier cease to carry on business.

There will be rights of appeal through the Local Court against the commissioner's decision to refuse an application for a licence or to cancel a licence.

As previously mentioned, the duty will be paid by the licensed suppliers by means of a monthly return to the commissioner.

In this respect, the Bill provides that the return, together with payment of the duty, will not be due until three months after the month of the sale.

It became clear during consultation with suppliers, that any requirement to pay the duty in the month immediately following the sale of the tickets would create severe financial burdens, as sales are predominantly made on extended credit terms running into two or three months.

Accordingly, the proposal contained in the Bill will give the suppliers adequate time to collect the duty from permit holders.

For the purpose of identification and control, it has been necessary to make a number of provisions for the printing and movement of tickets. The Bill also contains certain stringent controls on the surrender, cancellation and destruction of tickets, as well as requiring licensed suppliers to take precautions to secure and protect ticket stocks.

All these provisions are designed to protect the revenue from schemes to evade the duty.

As a deterrent to such schemes, a penalty of \$10 000 has been set for offences with power for the commissioner to cancel the licence of a supplier who contravenes any of the provisions.

There is one final matter I wish to mention in respect of the tickets presently being sold in small clubs and in licensed clubs. It has been acknowledged that a transitional provision is necessary to exclude from duty those tickets which have been purchased prior to the operation of this legislation.

Accordingly, the Bill provides that such tickets may be sold free of duty by those clubs which will become permit holders under the provisions of this Bill for a period of three months after the day appointed for the introduction of the duty.

These transitional provisions will apply only to tickets in the hands of permit holders. No such provisions apply to licensed suppliers and all tickets sold by them after the appointed day will be subject to duty and liable to bear the endorsements as proposed in the Bill.

The Western Australian Hotels Association has sought the introduction of ticket dispensing machines in licensed premises for some time. The Bill

now before the House will fulfil that request and provide funds for sporting clubs and charitable organisations and also provide revenue to the State.

The proposal to introduce the licensing provisions first, and then impose the duty liability from an appointed day, will mean that the first duty payment will not be due until three months after the introduction of the duty.

For example, the duty payable on tickets sold during the month of June would be due in a return to be lodged with the commissioner no later than 30 September.

As a result, it is expected that no revenue will be collected this year, with only 10 months of collections in the next financial year.

Revenue collections from this source for 1985-86 are expected to be approximately \$850 000, with \$1 million being collected in a full year.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. G. E. Masters (Leader of the Opposition).

#### **FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DUTY ACT (REVIVAL OF SECTION 76) BILL**

##### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 19 March.

**HON. P. G. PENDAL** (South Central Metropolitan) [5.38 p.m.]: The Opposition supports the amending Bill before us. A few minutes ago a member of the Opposition, Hon. Graham MacKinnon, was making some reference to the conception and the birth of the Tourism Commission Act, and he went on in a somewhat colourful way to outline the growth of that body. If Mr MacKinnon's analogy is at all helpful, it might also be worth trying for a parallel with the Government's creation of the financial institutions duty, because if ever there was a sickly child born out of this Government, this is it.

I made the point last year when we had an amending Bill before the House that the Act had been amended in its short life span more times than any other Act, possibly in the history of an Australian Parliament. The financial institutions duty has been part of Western Australia's taxing scene for a little over 15 months and in that time we have had no fewer than six amending Bills before the House. If a woman gave birth to a child who, in its first 15 months of life, was submitted to six operations, one would suggest indeed that we were dealing with the sickliest of children.

It need never have occurred had the Government been prepared to take more notice of some of the remarks made by Opposition members both in

this House and in another place when the FID Bill was originally debated in, I think, December 1983. Most of the amendments that have come back to the House since that time have been in some way or other connected with suggestions that were put by the Opposition during that major debate 15 months ago. It is a great shame that we have seen so often amending Bills, and one could even say "offending Bills", coming back to patch up what was at the time a disastrous piece of legislation.

Having said that, I understand the amendment now before us provides a six months' extension of time during which charities which have previously paid their FID can seek a refund of that duty. It will be remembered that in the major debate on the FID Bill in 1983 it was the contention of the Opposition parties that charities, among others, should be exempted altogether. The Government took another course and suggested to us that we should not automatically exempt them but instead charities along with churches and other similar bodies should pay the tax and be granted an exemption over and above the first \$20 they would be paying.

The Government rejected that despite a reasonable case being made by the Opposition which even presented to the House the precedent set in South Australia and possibly other States which had fully exempted the charities from paying the tax and therefore from having to seek refunds at a later time. That was not the end of the story or the foul-up because in May last year the Government again changed its tune.

At that stage it introduced an amendment, No. 19 of 1984, which amended section 76 of the principal Act to allow refunds to be made and for those refunds to be paid at any time between the Act being assented to and the end of the last calendar year, 31 December 1984. I do not know what has happened in the meantime to require the Parliament to extend that period of refund. I venture to suggest no-one else in the Chamber knows either because the Minister for Budget Management who is normally a fairly precise legislator really has not told us much at all as to why the extra six months is needed.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Excuse me, I have told you precisely in my second last paragraph where I indicated 80 applications were received too late and we are trying to cover that position.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I thank the Minister for coming in because he only digs his grave a little deeper and helps me make my point. The Minister did not do anything of the kind. I will read the alleged reason for the additional six-month period

for charities to be awarded their refunds of the FID already paid. The Minister told us this—

Over 80 applications for refunds were received after 31 December 1984 and, consistent with the statutory requirements, a refund by the Commissioner of State Taxation is not possible.

That tells us some facts but not why it was necessary.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Why was what necessary?

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: It does not tell us why it was that the charities concerned were unable to comply with the law from some time late in May last year until 31 December last year, a period of seven months.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Surely that is self-evident. It was a problem in their own administration and all of them overlooked it until it was too late.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: We are told by the Minister it is self-evident.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Of course, it is.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Five minutes ago the Minister was telling us the reason was in the second reading speech.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: So it is.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Now he is telling us that it is self-evident and by implication that it does not need to be in the second reading speech.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: It is in the speech. It would be helpful to know where you get your supply of longbows.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: The Minister is telling the Parliament that over 80 applications for refunds were received after 31 December 1984.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: That was not our fault; it was their fault.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: The Minister has not told us why it was not possible for the charities to comply with the law.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: It was, but they did not.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Why not?

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Because they overlooked it.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: We know they did not do it and presumably therefore the same extension of time and the same generosity of treatment the Government is extending here will be extended to other taxpayers who cannot get around to paying their tax bills in time.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: This is not a demand provision; it is a refund provision.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: That is correct. Mr Berinson has failed to make any adequate expla-

nation of his Bill. That is not surprising because the six Bills he has brought in relating to FID, other than the first in December 1983, have been the same. They have either been contradictory or have done things which we were told three or four months before were impossible despite the fact that requests were made by the Opposition. The Minister knows that.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: It is strange that they have all been welcomed so widely.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Had it been done in December 1983 we would not have wasted the Parliament's time—that is my point—with no fewer than six amending Bills. The way the Government is handling its legislative programme, goodness knows what it would have done to fill it up had it not been able to block up the gaps with otherwise faulty and ill thought out legislation relating to the FID.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Do you support the Bill?

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I have already said we support the Bill, but it is the job presumably of an Opposition even if it supports legislation to try to draw some public attention to the inadequacies, if not of the legislation then of the way it has been introduced.

We accept that apparently more than 80 charitable bodies in Western Australia for some reason unbeknown to the Parliament, because we have not been told, have been unable to attend to the paperwork involved in seeking a refund between May and 31 December last year when section 76 of the Act was to take effect and die a natural death. To the extent therefore that the Act is now to be extended in that respect to 1 June this year, the Opposition welcomes it. Of course, we do because the Opposition suggested in the first place there was no place whatever for the imposition of FID on bodies of this kind, and it has unfortunately taken the Government 15 months, a lot of paperwork, and much frustration on the part of charitable bodies to wake up to that fact.

We support the Bill.

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Minister for Budget Management) [5.50 p.m.]: This really has not been one of Mr Pental's better days and his effort to find something to criticise is really an effort misplaced.

Let us go back to the origin of the financial institutions duty legislation. In the first place, the Government had no ambition to introduce FID into Western Australia and nothing would have suited the Government better than to have avoided that course altogether.

Without going over the complete history of the state of the finances and the state of the economy

which the present Government found when it came into office, the fact is that in the short-term, between this Government's election to office and the need to prepare its first Budget, it became apparent that the Budget was in a state of disarray. It was not balanced as the outgoing Liberal Government had assured us, to the death-knock, that it was.

Hon. P. G. Pental: You were spending too much.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: It is not a matter of our spending too much. I am talking about the expenditure proposals already in place when the present Government came to office.

As well as the unexpected deficit already on the books when we came to office, we found quite surprising projections looming in the 1984-85 financial year. It was in that context that attention had to be given, at short notice, to the introduction of FID into Western Australia. At that time, and because of the pressures for early action, the Government relied very heavily on the experience of the three States which had introduced FID before we did.

Mr Pental complains that since the introduction of the Act we have had no less than six amendments. I have not checked the number, but whatever I disagree with in his comments, I will accept that the number he has nominated is correct. What I point out about all six amendments is that every one of them constitutes a provision providing the public with relief from FID. In turn, the Government excluded charities and local Government from FID and it reduced the prime rate and the burden of FID on roll-overs. It also reduced the burden of FID on telegraphic transfers. Western Australia is the only State that has done that. The burden we have imposed on the public of Western Australia is the least of all States, and we look forward to reducing it further.

The Opposition's complaint appears to be that the Government has been too generous in its anxiety to relieve the original burden. That is the complaint, and, Mr President, we reject that complaint.

Hon. P. G. Pental: This is better than your performance last week over John O'Connor!

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I ask Mr Pental if I can rely on the same applause that I received last week!

The long and short of the complaint is that the Government has amended this Act often and in the course of doing so has reduced the State's revenue and the burden on the public. If that is the worst criticism to be made about the FID legislation, I am prepared to wear it.

During the time I have been Minister for Budget Management and have had something to do with the FID legislation, I have been anxious at every point to discuss with the financial institutions and the various bodies affected by FID all reasonable opportunities to reduce this tax. From start to finish I have described it as an undesirable tax—a tax we would rather do without—but it is a tax into which we were forced by unavoidable economic conditions.

To the extent we are able to pull back from the burden of FID on the community, then I am happy to be associated with it, and that is no cause for complaint.

Finally, there is a strange complaint that I kept the House in the dark as to the reasons for this Bill; that is, the reasons for extending the date during which applications for refunds will be accepted. By way of the mildest sort of friendly interjection I drew Mr Pendal's attention to the paragraph of my second reading speech which pointed to the reason.

The reason is that on 31 December 1984 over 80 applications were apparently in the course of being prepared, but had not been lodged. They were submitted after 31 December. Mr Pendal complains that I did not explain the reason the organisations did not lodge their applications before 31 December. I say to Mr Pendal that the reason I did not specify in each of those 80 cases why the application had not been lodged in due time is that I do not know.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: You said it in the second reading debate. You are a disaster as Attorney General and you are worse as the Minister for Budget Management.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: What I said in the course of the interjection was that every reason that needed to be given was in my second reading speech.

Mr Pendal wants to go further down the line and wants to know why the 80 organisations did not apply in time. I do not know, and I do not care. The point is that whatever the reason for the late lodgment of those applications for refund the Government is anxious to ensure that the charitable organisations in question do not suffer. Whether it was their inability or oversight, the Government says it does not matter. These are charitable organisations and the Government does not want them or the work which they perform to suffer by the failure to lodge an application in due time, whatever that reason was.

Having made that brief response to Mr Pendal's determined efforts to criticise this highly desirable Bill, I commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee*

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon. John Williams) in the Chair; Hon. J. M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management) in charge of the Bill.

### **Clause 1: Short title—**

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Arising from the comments made during the second reading debate the Opposition has made it quite clear that, if the Opposition is returned to Government at the next election, it will abolish FID.

Hon. Mark Nevill: You will not have to honour that promise.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Tell me how much that will cost?

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: By way of interjection the Attorney General told the Chamber that FID had been introduced because the state of the Treasury at the last election was such that it needed to balance the Budget. I invited the Minister, by way of interjection, to tell the Chamber what the suggested Budget deficit was when this Government took office. He would not do so.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: I did not hear the interjection.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Now that the Attorney General has heard the question I ask him what the suggested deficit was when his Government took office.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: From memory the first suggestion was in the order of \$25 to \$30 million.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: The final point I was attempting to make prior to the tea suspension was this: We are told by the Minister for Budget Management and others that the introduction of the financial institutions duty was necessary because of the state of the Treasury as found in March 1983 upon the Burke Government coming into office, which was that of a substantial deficit.

I know we cannot canvass that in detail, but that has been the justification for the introduction of FID. The first-up propaganda was that this deficit was going to be \$24 million. Then it got a bit rubbery and it went up to \$30 million. By some miraculous occurrence, according to the Government we ended the financial year with a deficit of something in the order of \$14.2 million.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: As a result of excellent management.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: For a start, the Opposition rejects that notion, but, for the purposes of argument for the next few minutes, let us accept that that was the position and in fact a deficit of \$14.2 million occurred. I repeat that I do not accept it, but let us go along with it for the sake of the argument. That was used as the justification for the introduction of FID.

It ought to be remembered by members that, in the first year of operation of FID under this Government when, in July, it had to repay a deficit of \$14.2 million, the amount raised by FID was in fact \$16.2 million. Therefore, we find ourselves in a position that, even if we accept that the Government took office with a deficit of \$14.2 million, one year later the Government was able to write off that deficit with \$2 million to spare, because of the limited amount of money raised by FID in the last six months of the financial year.

The point is this: If there was any truth in the argument that FID was only going to be used to fix up the state of the Treasury as it was left by the O'Connor Government, that argument had worked itself out one year later, because by then the Minister for Budget Management had raised a bit more than the amount that the O'Connor Government had allegedly left as a deficit in the Treasury. From there on the Opposition's argument becomes valid that, for example, the \$35.2 million which is being raised in the current financial year—

Hon. J. M. Berinson: On what do you base that?

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I base that on the Minister's figures.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: You are making a small error.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: It is in the Minister's Budget figures, not ours.

Therefore, the Government is in surplus this year to the tune of the whole of the FID income for that financial year. The Government cannot have it both ways. We could have accepted that, to make up a deficit, the Government intended to raise a certain amount, and having raised that amount and erased it from the record book, there would be no need, based on the Government's argument, to continue FID beyond that first six months of operation. However, the Government has done what any socialist Government in Australia has done this century; that is, having found a lucrative form of income to the tune of \$35.2 million, it now wants to keep it and, I suggest, it will increase it in years to come if it gets a chance.

If that does not underline the point that we, as an Opposition have attempted to make so often in this Chamber in regard to this tax, perhaps this last point will. In the two financial years that this Government has been in charge of the Treasury, the income from State taxation alone has risen by a staggering 40 per cent at a time when, based on the Government's own admission, the economy is improving. Those are not my words and, if Mr Berinson wants to dispute them, I shall quote briefly from Mr Burke's speech in the other place when he introduced the last Budget. He said—

This year, the budget is framed in markedly different circumstances.

The Treasurer was saying the circumstances were markedly different from those he inherited from the O'Connor Government. He went on to say—

There has been a remarkable turnaround in the economy.

Profitability has improved.

Interest rates have generally declined.

There has been significant easing of inflation.

Those are the Treasurer's words, not mine. At the very time that we have such a wonderful improvement in the economy, the Government is prepared to rip off the people of Western Australia not only to the tune of the extra \$35.2 million which, by its own records, it will raise from FID, but also at the expense of contributing to a staggering 40 per cent increase in State revenue from taxation in the last two years. That 40 per cent increase is not added to in any way as a result of Commonwealth contributions; that is a 40 per cent increase in taxation raised by this Government in Western Australia.

Those two matters alone are sufficient to make the point which has been made many times and, indeed, which was made earlier tonight; that is, there is no need to have FID. If it remains on the Statute book much longer, it will be impossible to get rid of, because it will be built into the system.

The Government has become bloated and, instead of fiddling around with minor but albeit welcome changes in respect of the exemptions and refunds with which we are dealing tonight, the Government would be far better placed to introduce a Bill to abolish FID and to let people get on with the extra \$35.2 million in their own pockets and not in the Government's pocket.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I speak briefly for the sole purpose of reminding the Chamber that before us is a Bill to extend the time for lodgment by charitable organisations of claims for refunds. This is not a Bill to impose FID. It is not a Bill about the Government's Budget strategy and it is

not a Bill about the philosophy of life. I did not want to call a point of order on Hon. Phil Pental, but I do have to encourage the Chamber not to use such narrow pieces of legislation for such wide and general discussion. I am happy to debate the Budget and the Government's economic strategy and achievements at any time but, with due respect, this is not the time. The Bill has a very limited scope and would best serve the proper processing of the legislation which the Chamber has to deal with if we restricted ourselves to the actual framework of the Bill before us.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): I take that as a direct reflection on the Chair. It was my opinion that the honourable member was within the confines of the short title and he was given remarkable latitude. However, if it is the Attorney General's wish that the Chair should not give members that latitude, I will bear that in mind.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Mr Deputy Chairman, I indicate to you that I am not reflecting on the Chair. Indeed, had I felt that the matter was improper to that extent I would have called a point of order. It is really a matter of encouraging members in this Chamber to show some restraint and bring themselves within the real subject matter of the debate, which was the purpose of my earlier comment.

Hon. N. F. Moore: That remark may be quoted back to you at some time in the future.

Hon. I. G. PRATT: I rise to speak to clause 1, the short title of the Bill, because if we fail to pass this clause, of course, there is no short title and without the short title we have no Bill; so it is very important that we consider this clause carefully. I can understand that the Minister for Budget Management wants to stifle debate on this matter because of his own arrogance in his reply to the second reading speech which has caused him the difficulty he now has. He wished to hit the Opposition speaker during his reply and now he wants to cry for protection under the Standing Orders by suggesting that the speeches so far are not within the Standing Orders.

One has to wonder whether this Government deserves to have a Bill when it is presented in such a manner as that in which this Minister presents it. Unfortunately, the Opposition is placed in a position that we want this legislation to pass. This provision should have been included when the original Bill was presented. We have told the Government this time and time again; yet this Minister has the arrogance to stand up during his second reading reply and suggest that the only thing the Opposition is upset about is that the Government

is being generous. If ever we wanted a classic misrepresentation of the facts in this Chamber, we could have had it then. This Minister has been paraded as "Mr Honesty" by the Government for the past several weeks, yet he stands up in this Chamber on a Bill which is agreed to by both the Government and the Opposition, and speaks that sort of nonsense.

The only reservation the Opposition has about this Bill is that it is too late. The Government should not have introduced the text of this Bill in the first place, and it was told this by the Opposition. Who the Minister thinks he is fooling, I do not know. He might be able to convince his own people behind him—the members of his party who stand behind him—that what Mr Pental said was not said, or that he said something else; but they can all read *Hansard* and they will see what Hon. Phillip Pental said. He said nothing about criticising the Government for being generous. This Government is not generous. It should have done it in the first place. The Government is a bunch of slow learners. It is 18 months too late, and that is what we are upset about. The Government is not generous enough and, in any case, it is not a matter of generosity; it is a matter of commonsense that this should have been done 18 months ago. He was trying to fool his own people, but he definitely was not fooling us.

The Minister for Budget Management was trying to fool the Press. He indicated his attitude to the Press the other day. He does not think much of the Press in regard to its reporting of his affairs. Who else could he try to influence? He tried to convince the Press that Mr Pental did not complain about the fact that this should have been done 18 months ago.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Who was Mr Pental trying to impress if you are saying all he was doing was agreeing with the Bill?

Hon. P. G. Pental: The public, because they need to be impressed.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. I. G. PRATT: One would think someone so concerned with Standing Orders as is Hon. Joe Berinson, would be able to control himself for a while. If he wants to convince the Press that the Opposition was not concerned about the welfare of the people concerned in this Bill and was concerned only about the Government being penalised for dishing out taxpayers' funds, I do not think he will succeed because the Press heard Mr Pental speak just as they heard Mr Berinson's misleading reply—the sort of story we are coming to expect from this Minister. If he wants to get his Bills agreed to by the Opposition and wants them to

pass through this Chamber he had better start lifting his game and not misleading members.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: You are scaring me to death.

Hon. Peter Dowding: You have got a mouth you should wash out with soap and water.

Hon. Tom Stephens: You are a vicious blighter.

#### *Withdrawal of Remark*

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): Order! Hon. Tom Stephens will withdraw that remark, which I consider to be unparliamentary. The remark the member used was "You are a vicious blighter".

Hon. TOM STEPHENS: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Chairman.

#### *Committee Resumed*

Hon. I. G. PRATT: I am prepared to support this clause, but I want to go on record as saying to Hon. Joe Berinson that if he wants my support and that of members of the Opposition on this Bill he should not try out that sort of nonsense in his replies or try to put a misleading interpretation on things the Opposition says. What Mr Pendal said was quite clear and had nothing to do with Hon. Joe Berinson's answer. He should lift his game.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Just as his comments had nothing to do with the Bill.

Hon. P. G. Pendal: I was answering the interjections.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: I draw particular attention to the wording of the short title because it is pertinent to the whole debate on the Bill. The whole crux of this Bill is that section 76, to which the short title refers, is contained in the parent Act. The Opposition's contention is that had section 76 not been included in the original Bill which is now the parent Act, we would not be sitting here tonight debating this Bill; because the Bill before the Chamber is in fact reinstating a section which was deleted from the parent Act by Act No. 19 of 1984. Section 76 was amended on that occasion to allow charitable bodies to be exempted from the financial institutions duty. It has also allowed time for those charitable bodies which had paid their tax to the Government to seek a refund. That Bill was assented to on 23 May 1984.

Many charitable bodies by their nature are voluntary organisations and very good, well-meaning people do their best to look after the affairs of the particular body. I give full marks to them. We all applaud that type of contribution within the community, but this Government has made the charitable organisations' lives more miserable by im-

posing unnecessary workloads and taxes upon them and causing this Parliament unnecessary time in bringing in amending Bills. Now we are being asked by the Bill before the House to extend the time limit to enable those 80-odd charitable bodies which are late in their request for remission of duty paid by them, to have their applications processed by the Government.

The Minister for Budget Management has set out to be benevolent in this regard. He portrays this Government as a benevolent one, giving back to the charitable organisations funds which they need not have contributed in the first place, and funds which they should not have contributed. This Bill is a charade. It is a deceitful action against well-meaning people and charitable organisations. That is what it is all about.

The Government has introduced this legislation because of the mismanagement of its financial affairs. The Minister has been in enough trouble with his portfolio of Attorney General without getting into more trouble with financial affairs. Today, in this Chamber, he gave an Oscar-like performance in trying to snow the community into thinking that he is kind-hearted in giving the people back some of their money. It is their money. It is no wonder that the people of Western Australia are getting heartily sick of this Government.

Hon. Peter Dowding: Rubbish!

Hon. V. J. FERRY: It is not rubbish. The Minister ought to get out of his office and talk to people.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: We have not received one complaint from one organisation.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: Just because they are too good-natured and they realise they will get their money back, anyway. The Minister says they do not mind because they are not complaining. Of course they mind. I know people associated with charitable organisations who have spent considerable time in trying to compose figures that will enable them to obtain refunds. I have had first-hand experience of that. It is deplorable for the Minister to say that.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 2 put and passed.**

**Title put and passed.**

#### *Report*

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.



*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), and transmitted to the Assembly.

# MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS (VALIDATION) BILL

*Second Reading*

**HON. J. M. BERINSON** (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [7.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill proposes to validate a number of legislative instruments which inadvertently were not tabled in the legislative Assembly as required by law.

Members will be aware that the Interpretation Act requires that regulations and by-laws are published in the *Government Gazette* and then tabled in both Houses of Parliament within six sitting days. If they are not so tabled they cease to have effect.

The instruments, which are listed in the schedule to the Bill, have previously been tabled in the Legislative Council, but not in the Legislative Assembly. That failure was due to an administrative oversight at Parliament House. Parliamentary staff have been unable to locate the relevant papers, or to ascertain the reason for the failure of the usual procedures.

This explanation of events is on my understanding of the position. However, it has also been drawn to my attention that this version of events has been disputed by the parliamentary officers.

Crown Law Department officers were made aware of the oversight on about Friday of the week before last. The Government has responded immediately to restore the position.

The Bill will give effect to the instruments as if all proper procedures had occurred, and will allow members of the Legislative Assembly the opportunity to consider the instruments in the same manner as this House has done already. It is proposed to table the instruments in the Assembly on the same day as the Bill is introduced into that House.

Clause 3 of the Bill affects the validation. The Government is most concerned at the situation which has arisen. I am sure that parliamentary staff and Parliamentary Counsel will be vigilant to ensure there is no repetition of this unfortunate occurrence.

I commend the Bill to the House and thank the Opposition in anticipation of its agreement to expedite the processing of it.

**HON. I. G. MEDCALF** (Metropolitan) [8.02 p.m.]: I was given a copy of the second reading speech last week, so I am familiar with it and the Bill. The Bill deals with a very strange and unusual problem, and one which I have never heard of before. I suppose that new problems arise all the time, but this is a strange situation in which papers have apparently been sent by the Crown Law Department to be filed and tabled in both Houses. Although they were filed and tabled in this House, they were not tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It is usually the other way around.

Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I have never heard of a situation in which they have not been tabled in either House on the due date, at the appropriate time. I do not know why this has happened.

I have read carefully through the second reading speech and the Bill, including six pages of the descriptions of regulations which have been listed in the schedule, and I am puzzled at this situation. In his second reading speech, the Attorney said that the instruments which are listed in the schedule to the Bill had previously been tabled in the Legislative Council, but not in the Legislative Assembly, and immediately the question springs to mind why they were not tabled in the Legislative Assembly. What are the details? Who submitted them to the Legislative Assembly? When were they submitted? These are the questions I would have asked and to which I would have required answers. I would have wanted to know who sent them to the Legislative Assembly; how they were sent; whether they were sent by courier, by safe hand, or by mail, registered or otherwise; or how they arrived here or were supposed to have arrived here. The fact that the papers arrived in the Legislative Council leads one to the assumption that the copies for the Assembly probably arrived in Parliament House.

The further comment is made that the failure was due to an administrative oversight at Parliament House. Now, I would like to know where the oversight occurred. It appears it could not have been in the Legislative Council because the papers have been tabled here, and they are on the Table before us. They are available, and members can move for their disallowance. However, the copies for the Assembly were not tabled. What happened to them? Apparently they have disappeared off the face of the earth.

The Attorney is unable to provide any explanation except to say that it was an administrative oversight at Parliament House; so apparently the oversight has been located to Parliament House.

Parliamentary staff have been unable to locate the relevant papers or ascertain the reason for the failure of the relevant procedures.

This is a reasonably serious matter when we find that papers have simply disappeared off the face of the earth in Parliament House. We are not accustomed to papers disappearing from Parliament House. There is an unwritten rule that people do not go into other people's rooms and take papers; and I cannot think of any reason why anyone would want to steal these papers. I never have any hesitation in leaving my door unlocked.

It is incredible that these papers should disappear. Why has not anyone been able to locate their whereabouts? It may be that they were destroyed. I made inquiries the other day about sending some highly confidential papers to be destroyed in the shredding machine; and after I found out what happens in the shredding machine room, I changed my mind because I discovered that if one wishes to send highly confidential papers to be destroyed in the shredding machine, they must stay there for a week before they are shredded. I do not know who made the rule, but they must remain in the room for a week, and presumably anyone who happens to be walking through can see them. The reason given is that in case the person changes his mind and does not want them shredded after all, they are still available. I am sure people do change their minds about these things; and I would be as guilty as anyone about deciding to destroy something and then wanting it back again.

However, there are some procedures in this House which need to be changed drastically. I do not know who is responsible for these procedures, but I suggest a drastic overhaul of the procedures which apply in Parliament House. This loss is an illustration of the danger we are in.

Apparently the loss was discovered by Parliament House staff, and the Crown Law Department officers were made aware of it and then immediately tried to rectify the position, which is the reason for this Bill. It is really a very serious situation because, as I mentioned, six pages of regulations, rules, and by-laws dating back to 1984 when they were gazetted, are listed in the schedule. Indeed, it includes everything gazetted after the last time we met prior to Christmas. There are many important regulations dealing with the Water Authority, road traffic, the Totalisator Agency Board, the Education Act, the Electoral Act, and fire brigades; but the papers have just disappeared from the face of the earth in Parliament House.

I cannot understand that. They must have made a very sizeable heap! Perhaps they went to the shredding room, and unfortunately no-one noticed them during the week they were kept there before they were shredded. However, I am speculating.

The reason I have made these comments is that I am really concerned that this can happen. As I say, I have never known it to happen before. I have never known of anything like this; but I have become aware of strange rules and procedures that apply to Parliament House, and I suggest that whoever is responsible for the administration of Parliament House should start to overhaul some of these procedures. It is appalling that such a situation should arise.

I notice that the Attorney General placed the blame at Parliament House.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Could I just intrude for a moment? Although you have my written speech, I do not know whether you caught the qualification that I interpolated, indicating that the parliamentary officers had disputed that version of the events, and I was not in a position to adjudicate between the two versions.

Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I was not aware of that. Perhaps I am being a little unfair to Parliament House staff. If they dispute it, it may well be that the blame lies somewhere else. However, if it lies somewhere else, I hope that the Attorney General will go into this matter very carefully and ensure that it is inquired into properly, and not glossed over.

If it is glossed over it will happen again and other things could happen which are just as serious. I take back any reflection I have made on the Parliament House staff because it is not fair of me to judge them if they are disputing that this happened at all and that they ever received the papers. Clearly something needs to be done.

The only other comment I wish to make is to say that I am a little concerned in case anybody may have been prejudiced by the fact that he has acted on the assumption that these regulations do not apply. In other words, if somebody took some action or failed to take some action because the regulations were thought not to apply, he should not be prejudiced. I had written a suggested amendment for the Attorney General to consider to the effect that—

This Act shall not invalidate any act or omission occurring prior to the tabling of the regulations in the Legislative Assembly by any person in good faith in the honest belief that any of the regulations referred to in Schedule 1 had ceased to have effect by

reason of the failure to comply with section 42 of the Interpretation Act 1984.

If someone was prejudiced by reason of the fact that he was aware that the regulations did not apply because they had not been tabled and did some act which was contrary to the regulations, he should not be penalised by our backdating the regulations, which is what is happening. We are backdating them only to the sixth day allowed for them to be tabled, which means probably a couple of weeks. It is a fairly technical and pedantic point as it is very unlikely that anyone was aware that these regulations were not in force because they had not been tabled.

However, if someone has been prejudiced he or she should be accommodated by the Government and given special consideration.

In the circumstances I doubt that I should move that amendment. I commend it to the Government for its consideration but I would be satisfied to receive an assurance from the Government that anyone who is prejudiced as a result of this decision would be adequately dealt with or compensated, if necessary, by the Government. That is probably the right solution, because it would have been a little technical to determine whether anyone was in fact aware that these regulations had not been tabled, since this has come as a great surprise to members. It would be a little technical to think that anyone else was aware that this had happened. In those circumstances I do not believe my suggested amendment is necessarily the correct solution. However, I expect that the Government should give an unqualified undertaking that if anyone is prejudiced as a result of the situation to which I have referred, adequate action will be taken to overcome this prejudice, whether by way of endeavouring to rectify his situation or even in some cases compensating him for any loss or injury suffered.

Apart from that I can see no alternative to going along with this Bill. We do not like this sort of thing happening but it is no good our pointing the bone when we do not know who is responsible.

We ask the Attorney General to conduct the most searching inquiry to ascertain the cause and to ensure that nothing like it occurs in the future. We also ask him to give an undertaking that no-one will be prejudiced as a result of the action he is asking Parliament to take.

HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West) [8.15 p.m.]: The Deputy President (Hon. Robert Hetherington) and I were having a philosophical discussion which touched on the problem with which we are faced tonight; that is, the question of trust. For some peculiar reason we seem to have

got ourselves into a position of overwhelming suspicion. I think it is because we try to cut too many corners.

As Mr Medcalf has pointed out, genuine mistakes in this place can have the effect of rebounding on good, worthwhile citizens in a most deleterious way. That is the point the honourable erstwhile Attorney General is making: The law is the law and we make the law. Mistakes like this are inexcusable. It may be that we have been called together too early in the year when it is too hot and maybe we have come to rely too much on mechanical devices. I did not hear the first part of the proceedings, I was listening, but perhaps somebody forgot to turn on a switch or something. I do not know the reason I could not hear. How much longer do we have to put up with mistake after mistake? I do not know how many members have had the chance to pick up their book *Acts and Other Information Relating to Parliament* and to read the reference to section 42(2) of the Interpretation Act on page 208 which relates to the 14 sitting days and the disallowance of regulations. I hope that sufficient members to influence the vote have looked at that section, because it is pertinent to the argument. I wonder how many members have the book in their hands and are looking at it.

This is a most unusual situation. These sorts of problems have come upon us since the advent of the electorate offices. We no longer meet in the corridors but conduct our business quite separately as though we were different nationalities who speak different languages. We no longer talk to one another and discuss mutual problems. One no longer hears expressions such as, "Listen mate, I made a blue"—which is good Australian parlance—"Will you help us to get out of it?" We are so busy in our electorate offices there is no time to discuss matters. We get no thanks for it because the general acceptance of members of Parliament has never been lower, despite the fact that all members work harder than they did when I first came to this place. Therein lies the tragedy not just for us but also for the people of Western Australia. Why can we not say to one another, "I made a blue" as we did when we were all Australians together?

This has been sprung upon us as an Act of Parliament and for the first 10 minutes of the debate on the Bill we were not sure what was going on. It alarms me and I am concerned for the citizens who are involved with the Acts and regulations dealing with education, industrial training, town planning, dangerous goods, road traffic, the Dog Act, local government by-laws—the list goes on and on, for page after page.

Members should bear in mind that the ability of Governments to control the people of the nation through administrative Acts and regulations is more all-pervading than their ability to pass laws.

Here we have six pages of items apparently requiring a Bill to be passed because all these matters were not laid before the Legislative Assembly. This provides us with a serious lesson on our apparent lack of ability to communicate with one another, our lack of trust in one another and our inability to control the future of the people whose care is supposed to be in our hands. This is one of the most serious mishaps ever to have come to my notice.

Perhaps we are all rushing too much; perhaps we do not have enough time; perhaps our limited resources are stretched too thinly; perhaps we are not able to talk to one another properly. Whatever the problem, I suggest that those members here who are being paid to look after the affairs of the State should give thought to what I say, because I for one am tremendously concerned about this matter.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. A. A. Lewis.

## STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

### *Report: Consideration*

Report of Standing Orders Committee now considered.

### *In Committee*

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon. John Williams) in the Chair.

The Standing Orders Committee recommended that the following sessional order supersede Standing Order No. 170 for the remainder of the session—

1. Subject to SO's 49 and 173, a motion for disallowance of a regulation takes precedence of all other business from the time that it is moved but the debate thereon may be adjourned or otherwise interrupted pursuant to a rule or practice of the House.
2. If a debate is adjourned or interrupted its resumption shall be made an order of the day for the next sitting and similar provision shall be made in respect of any subsequent adjournment or interruption of the debate until the question is resolved.

### 3. Where the question remains unresolved:

- (a) upon a prorogation of Parliament; or
- (b) at the expiration of 10 sitting days (exclusive of the day on which the motion was first moved):

then, in case (a) the regulations shall thereupon be disallowed and the question deemed to be resolved in the affirmative and, in case (b), the President shall put the question on the sitting day immediately following that expiration and, notwithstanding any rule or order to the contrary, the question shall be resolved without further adjournment.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I move—

That for the remainder of this Session, the rules proposed by the Standing Orders Committee in its report of 6 March 1985 relating to Motions for Disallowance supersede Standing Order 170.

Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I second the motion moved by the Attorney General. On 7 November last year, the Standing Orders Committee presented a report recommending that a sessional order replace Standing Order No. 170.

The primary recommendation was to remove the precedence accorded motions for disallowance and replace that aspect with a provision having the effect of deeming the regulations to be disallowed where the question remained unresolved at the expiration of 10 sitting days.

Following the publication of its report, the Attorney General forwarded advice he had received from Parliamentary Counsel to the effect that he doubted whether that would be legally effective. He has indicated that the power of the Council to disallow regulations stems from section 42(2) of the Interpretation Act 1984, which provides that "if either House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing..." However, the Parliamentary Counsel suggested that the proposed deeming provision would not be sufficient for the purpose.

While it might be argued that as a matter of procedure it is open to the Council by Standing Order to regulate how and when a resolution shall be deemed to be passed, the Parliamentary Counsel feels that when an Act talks of the House passing a resolution, that is what is required.

Accordingly, the Attorney General has moved the sessional order contained in the report of the Standing Orders Committee to supersede Standing Order No. 170 for the remainder of the

session, and your committee believes that the detail meets the objectives voiced by the Attorney General while preserving the element of certainty.

Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I am in accord with the rules proposed, but I want to draw attention to one point and suggest that we could improve the rules in one small way. The position always has been that motions for disallowance of regulations—which is what this deals with—are given special precedence. They have been in a special category in the Parliament. Ever since I came to the Parliament they have been treated as having a certain priority. While I am not disputing that although the practice may have changed a little and the change may be right, I still believe that priority should be accorded to these motions, but without disturbing the right of the Government to change that priority should it require to do so.

I draw the attention of members to rules Nos. 1 and 2 which are referred to in the middle of the page we have before us. The first one, which is to be a sessional order, reads—

Subject to SO's 49 and 173, a motion for disallowance of a regulation takes precedence of all other business from the time that it is moved but the debate thereon may be adjourned or otherwise interrupted pursuant to a rule or practice of the House.

That means that a motion to disallow regulations takes precedence in terms of the motions so that that motion has a certain priority.

The second sessional order reads—

If a debate is adjourned or interrupted its resumption shall be made an order of the day for the next sitting and similar provision shall be made in respect of any subsequent adjournment or interruption of the debate until the question is resolved.

I suggest that it would be an advantage were we to make the resumption the first order of the day for the next day of sitting. We would then be giving to the motion for disallowance, which would now be an order of the day, the right degree of priority by making it the first order of the day for the next day of sitting.

That would not prevent the Government from moving that Order of the Day No. 1 be taken after Order of the Day No. 7 or No. 8, or making other arrangements to suit its convenience. I do not wish to take away from the Government the right to change the order by request or by agreement of the Chair and, I suppose, in the long run of the House.

I am suggesting that a motion for disallowance of a regulation is more important than an ordinary motion. The reason is, as I am sure members will agree, that the law applies from the minute that the regulation is made, as by being in the *Government Gazette* people have to act in accordance with it. If, for example, the regulation is under the Road Traffic Act and says that all trucks will have kangaroo bars fitted to them, owners have to start acting in accordance with the regulation as soon as it is gazetted. Parliament has a specified time after the tabling of the regulations; they must be tabled within six sitting days, as we discussed in the debate on the previous Bill. A member may move to disallow within the time stipulated in the particular Act, usually 14 days.

My amendment does not affect the right of members to disallow motions. These motions are more important than others because the public have to act on the regulations. They are law from the date they are gazetted and therefore I believe we should give to a motion to disallow the priority we think it should have by saying it should become the first Order of the Day. That means that it appears first on the Notice Paper each day. If the Government wishes to move it down it can do so, but it is easier for the Government to move it down than for a private member who may be interested in it to move it up on the Notice Paper.

I move an amendment—

Sessional Order 2, line 2—To delete the word “an” with a view to substituting the words “the first”.

Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I can see nothing wrong with the amendment proposed by Hon. Ian Medcalf. If anything it takes the rule back to where it was in the first place. As I read it before there was always a precedence for motions to disallow Standing Orders. Mr Medcalf's amendment will bring back that precedence so that every day the motion will appear at the top of the Notice Paper. It does not have to be spoken to; the Government if it desires can move it down, but it takes a physical action to do so. If need be, one of the Government members can speak to it and adjourn it and still get over the problem, if it is found to be a problem. There are plenty of ways of dealing with it. At least it will be on the top of the Notice Paper and not at the bottom.

Hon. ROBERT HETHERINGTON: I note Hon. Ian Medcalf's amendment with some interest. In my recollection in the last two Parliaments when we had motions for disallowance of regulations, some of which I moved, it was not then the practice to put them on top of the Notice

Paper next day, so I do not know what situation we are going back to. It may be desirable that this amendment be carried but it does not seem to me that if we carry it we will be reverting to any custom which has applied since 1977 when I first came here. Many was the time I moved disallowance of a regulation and watched my motion go to the bottom of the Notice Paper and sit there until the Government in its own good time moved it up. There is no reformer like a reformed "error", if that is the term, so I note the amendment with interest.

**Amendment put and a division called for.**

**Bells rung and the Committee divided.**

#### *Point of Order*

Hon. V. J. FERRY: One of the members appeared to be out of his seat when he voted.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): I will put the question again and I remind members they can only vote or voice an opinion from their seats.

#### *Result of Division*

**Division resulted as follows—**

##### *Ayes 18*

Hon. C. J. Bell	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. E. J. Charlton	Hon. N. F. Moore
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. Neil Oliver
Hon. H. W. Gayfer	Hon. P. G. Pendal
Hon. A. A. Lewis	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. P. H. Lockyer	Hon. W. N. Stretch
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. P. H. Wells
Hon. G. E. Masters	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. Tom McNeil	Hon. Margaret McAleer

(Teller)

##### *Noes 10*

Hon. J. M. Berinson	Hon. Robert Hetherington
Hon. J. M. Brown	Hon. Mark Nevill
Hon. Peter Dowding	Hon. S. M. Piantadosi
Hon. Graham Edwards	Hon. Tom Stephens
Hon. Kay Hallahan	Hon. Fred McKenzie

(Teller)

**Amendment thus passed.**

Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I move an amendment—

Sessional Order 2, line 2—To substitute for the word deleted the words "the first".

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): The question now before the Chair is that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Hon. Robert Hetherington raised a matter of whether a precedent had been set by motions for disallowance being at the top of the Notice Paper. I believe that he said it with tongue-in-cheek. However, for the information of the Chamber, previous Standing Order No. 170 reads as follows—

170. A Motion for the disallowance of a regulation shall take precedence of Government and Private business except in the case of Motions provided for in Standing Orders 49 (leave of absence), and 173 (condolence or thanks).

I admit that different interpretations can be placed on that Standing Order. Someone might argue that once the introduction of a motion has been dealt with it need no longer stay on top of the Notice Paper. Once it is adjourned it could be moved further down the Notice Paper. A member moving a motion under Standing Order No. 170 could argue that a precedent had not been satisfied and that the motion for disallowance should remain at the top of the Notice Paper.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I understand the import of the amendment moved by Hon. Ian Medcalf and that perhaps it has been misunderstood. As I understand it, the position which is intended by the amendment is to enhance the position in this Chamber of the private member as against the supposed power of the frontbench or of the Government of the day. Given that historically the Australian Labor Party has been in Opposition more often than it has been in Government and given that it frequently complains that it has never been able to have a majority in this House, I would have thought that it would have been to its advantage to support what Hon. Ian Medcalf is suggesting. If I am wrong in my understanding of his amendment, no doubt he, or someone else, will tell me. However, the process of permitting a disallowance motion to be the first Order of the Day on the Notice Paper each day is not intended to interfere with the Government's right to determine the Notice Paper for the day.

I understood Mr Medcalf to make it clear that there would perhaps be many occasions on which the Government of the day would want to move that Orders of the Day Nos. 2 to 7 be dealt with before Order of the Day No. 1. There is no impediment to that occurring in the amendment moved by Mr Medcalf.

If I am right in my understanding of what Mr Medcalf has spoken about, I can only say that the Government has misunderstood what he said. Without being uncharitable, half the members of

the Government were not in their seats when Mr Medcalf explained the situation. As one who has been involved on two occasions, when my party was in Government, for moves to disallow regulations, I suggest it is to the enhancement of the private members' position in this Chamber for the motion to disallow to be at the top of the Notice Paper. The practice is that such motions end up at the bottom of the Notice Paper and the private member has the devil's own job to wait patiently until the day arrives for his motion to be debated. There is virtually no chance of his motion going to the top of the Notice Paper and then debated if the Government of the day decides to make things difficult for him.

The Government of the day could make things difficult for him under Mr Medcalf's amendment, because it could say that it is in charge of the Notice Paper and it will proceed to Order of the Day No. 2. However, it will give the member concerned a chance to get to his feet when Order of the Day No. 1 is called and say, "Mr President, the Government is doing wrong; it is trying to trample over me and make things difficult for me".

I can see nothing sinister in the amendment. I suggest that the Government has misunderstood it if the position is as I have related it to the Chamber. No-one has told me anything to the contrary by way of interjection.

I suggest that the Chamber endorse the amendment, because it will enhance the prerogative of members of this Chamber. I support the amendment.

Hon. J. M. BROWN: I was loath to make a response until Hon. P. G. Pendal had made his denigrating remarks in reference to the Government.

Hon. P. G. Pendal: That was not intended.

Hon. J. M. BROWN: That is the way it was presented. In regard to the amendment, and as one who has sat in his seat and listened to the debate with a great deal of interest, I was quick to respond to the former Attorney General when he said it required six days for the motion to lay on the Table of the House. By way of interjection, which Hon. P. G. Pendal will read in *Hansard*, I said to the former Attorney General that he meant six sitting days. Mr Medcalf made the point that it was six sitting days and that should be made clear in the minds of members.

The question has been put and the Government understands the result. As a backbencher I acknowledge that the Government of the day will

take into account the regulations presented to it and act accordingly.

I also make it clear, as a backbencher who sat and listened to the debate by the former Attorney General, that while the Government disagrees with the amendment it must abide by the result. It recognises what the final deliberation will be.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): Order! I want to correct what might be a misapprehension on the part of the member. Mr Medcalf referred to six sitting days in regard to the previous Order of the Day we were debating. In relation to this debate, it has been centred on 10 sitting days. I advise the member of this in order that what we are debating is clear in his mind.

Hon. J. M. BROWN: I thank you, Mr Deputy Chairman, for that clarification but it still reverts to what Mr Medcalf said—it is six days instead of six sitting days.

Hon. ROBERT HETHERINGTON: Perhaps I am getting unduly jaundiced and cynical after sitting in this Parliament for nearly eight years, but I think this is a cosmetic amendment. I do not object to it, but I rise to point out that whatever Hon. David Wordsworth might have said, under the previous regime certainly he has moved to disallow a regulation and then it has disappeared to the bottom of the Notice Paper to sit there until the Government dragged it out in the still small hours of the session, by use of the Government's superior numbers. If we go into Opposition I do not expect the situation to be much different.

I do not want to oppose this amendment, but voice my cynicism about the practices of the past when Mr Medcalf was Leader of the House and Mr Graham MacKinnon was Leader of the House. I thought that as a backbench Opposition member I was treated disgracefully when I moved to disallow a regulation. Be that as it may, I do not want to discuss the subject any further.

#### *Point of Order*

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: My memory is getting a little hazy as members would understand, but I recall that in the past when we moved into the Committee of the whole to consider a Standing Orders Committee report the proceedings were usually chaired by the President. If the President was absent, the Chairman of Committees would normally take the Chair but if he does not wish to do so I take it that you, Mr Deputy Chairman (Hon. John Williams) take that position.

I wonder whether any rules have been transgressed and whether the whole proceedings may be out of order because of that transgression.

Perhaps I might have the opportunity to answer Mr Hetherington's comments when it has been decided whether my memory is serving me right.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells.

*Sitting suspended from 8.54 to 9.00 p.m.*

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon. John Williams): The situation has now resolved itself quite simply. It is customary for the President to take the Chair during Standing Orders debates. However, due to a misunderstanding, the President did not take the Chair. There is nothing improper about what we have done; it is perfectly constitutional to have a Deputy Chairman in the Chair, because there is nothing in our Standing Orders or rules which demands that the President be in the Chair; it is merely custom. The debate therefore continues from where I left the Chair.

#### *Committee Resumed*

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I think the point should be made, in answer to Hon. Bob Hetherington, that because it has been seen fit by members tonight to take some action with regard to the way in which the previous Leaders of the House may have taken advantage of private members, it is to the credit of those members who are here now and to the detriment of those who were so treated in the past.

I happen to think private members should be protected against overbearing Executives. A very famous Lord Chief Justice in the United Kingdom pointed out that it had been necessary on one occasion to behead a King of England, and it could well be necessary on another occasion to behead the Executive of the nation. That might include people like Mr Berinson and Mr Burke.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Only if they deserve it.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Provided it is done while the ALP is in power, I am in favour of it.

Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: The Hon. Phillip Pendal made an inquiry as to whether this amendment was designed to protect a private member against the power of the Executive. It most certainly was, and that is the object. It provides a limited degree of protection. It merely means that the Government is able to move the particular order down if it wishes to. It is very difficult for a

private member on his own to have an order moved up.

The Hon. Robert Hetherington has indicated the experience he has in this chamber in two Parliaments. I would have thought he appreciated the point I have made. I am disappointed that he has been unable to appreciate it.

I have noticed on previous occasions he has been unable to appreciate matters of great importance to private members. It has always disappointed me because I have felt that he should have been a champion of private members.

As to his comment that he received no courtesy when he moved to disallow regulations, all I can say is that I have spent many hours in this Chamber patiently arguing with Hon. Robert Hetherington about all manner of amendments, both major and minor. If he cannot remember that, then I am surprised.

Hon. ROBERT HETHERINGTON: I want to put on record my remarks, which, as Hon. I. G. Medcalf should realise, refer to motions for disallowance only. That is where I said the Government treated me with scant respect. I have had plenty of courtesy from him in other areas.

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Sessional Orders, as amended, put and passed.**

**Resolutions reported and the report adopted.**

#### **POSEIDON NICKEL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT BILL**

##### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 21 March.

HON. N. F. MOORE (Lower North) [9.06 p.m.]: The Bill before the House seeks to amend the agreement between the Government and the Poseidon nickel operation, which is the nickel mine at Laverton operated by Western Mining Corporation Ltd.

The Bill proposes first to update the leases held under the agreement so that they will now conform with the provisions of the 1978 Mining Act, and the Opposition has no qualms about that.

The second provision of the Bill is to provide for exemptions from expenditure conditions in place of the exemption from labour conditions contained in the agreement. This is in line with the new provisions of the 1978 Mining Act and is accepted by the Opposition. The third aspect of the Bill is to remove a long-standing anomaly with respect to the water supply at the Windarra mine. My understanding is that this problem has been outstanding for a long time, but it has not caused any difficulty. This amendment is designed to over-



come that anomaly and make the original agreement correct in all respects.

The fourth variation to the agreement is to include a small area within the lease which is not covered by the agreement. Apparently this small area was left out when the agreement was first written, and this Bill includes that area within the area covered by the agreement between the Government and the Poseidon nickel mine.

The Opposition supports the legislation. It is in a sense bringing up to date the agreement between the company and the Government, and it overcomes the anomaly with respect to water supplies in the mining area.

May I mention, for the information of the Government, while it is resolving problems about water supply at the Windarra mine, that there are many problems about the water supply to the Laverton township which was rebuilt to service the mine. There have been water restrictions there for 18 months. While I know the Government is conducting drilling operations to find a better water supply, they have yet to be successful. A greater effort must be made to overcome this problem which most places in the eastern gold-fields experience, and that is a lack of water. One must have water in towns like Laverton, so I commend to the Government a continuation of its programme to find more water, and if necessary allocate further funds for this exploration.

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.

#### *Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), and passed.

### **RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE BILL**

#### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 20 March.

**HON. V. J. FERRY** (South-West) [9.12 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill.

It is recognised, of course, that railways have played a very important part in the development of Western Australia as we know it and in servicing the needs of many communities scattered through so many country areas. The railways' importance remains, but during the evolutionary changes of Western Australian society in some cases railway land—land formerly used for rail-

way purposes—is no longer considered necessary and it is customary for that land to be set aside for railway purposes, and for that action to be brought to the Parliament and approved by Statute. Similarly, when land is relinquished for the purposes of railway use it is customary for this Parliament to consider the relinquishing of that land, dealing with it as the Parliament sees fit. This is one of those occasions.

There is a slight difference, because in the Bill before us we are dealing mainly with two classes of land. One area is situated near Collie. The land that is being relinquished will be used to address pressing housing needs. The town of Collie over the years has experienced some difficulty in providing sufficient land for subdivision for urban development. This restriction has occurred because the town of Collie has been surrounded by Crown land and State forests. However, in this case it is agreed it is right and proper that the land should be relinquished under this Bill. The railway is no longer needed. Indeed, the legislation will help the town of Collie to cater for its pressing need for residential land.

I refer to another parcel of land at Busselton. Some 440 metres of railway at Busselton is being closed to allow the reversion in the Crown of railway reserve No. 3364. This railway from Busselton played a very important part in industry in the south-west. We all know, of course, that the timber industry in the early days was a very important industry. I remember that it was the first export industry of this State. One of the outlets for the produce was the Busselton jetty and the railway served this industry by transporting timber from the mills to the ship's side. It was along those 440 metres of track that all this produce passed and went out onto the quite famous Busselton jetty. This jetty, being over one mile in length, has suffered considerably from the ravages of time, the ravages of the sea, and especially the ravages of cyclone "Alby" which occurred on 4 April 1978. Notwithstanding that, a railway track remains on the jetty, but is no longer used for railway purposes.

I have been aware for some time that the Busselton Shire Council has been seeking the redevelopment of the land now under review by this House and I thoroughly agree that the land should be vested for this new purpose to allow redevelopment of that area of land which really is right in the centre of Busselton itself.

In agreeing to this change of land use in the Busselton area, I make a plea for attention to the railway line from Boyanup to Busselton. The Boyanup-Busselton line currently is part of the line to which we are now referring. It is not neces-

ary to retain this parcel of 440 metres of land to ensure the Boyanup-Busselton railway line will continue to exist, but in speaking to this Bill I take the opportunity of making the plea that this somewhat unique section of railway be retained, particularly for the tourist industry.

Only one freight train per week uses the line because of the changed nature of industry but, nevertheless, once the railway is removed, it is gone for all time. There is an increasing desire within the Western Australian community, especially among visitors to this State—whether they be tourists or people visiting friends—to take advantage of railway journeys. At least two historical trains operate in this State, the Hotham Valley Tourist Railway Inc. and the train that runs around the Busselton area, the *Leschenault Lady*. Indeed, a railway transport museum is being constructed at Boyanup to cater for railway history. That museum is supported by the Government and indeed by citizens generally. It is all part of this general scene. Whereas that main railway

line is not mentioned in the legislation before us, it certainly is part of the railway network operating at the present time.

I thoroughly support the measure before the House, but I again refer to the great contribution the railway system has made to the welfare of Western Australia and the servicing of its 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.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. Peter Dowding (Minister for Employment and Training), and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.18 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### HORTICULTURE: GRAPE GROWING

#### *Investigation: Report*

663. Hon. NEIL OLIVER, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) When will final or interim results of the continued investigation of the 18-point package of support for the grape growing industry be advised to grape growers?
- (2) What organisations have been involved in these investigations, and have individual inputs been considered?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) The Government has already advised grape growers through Mr Gavan Troy, MLA that it will provide assistance equal to that initially made available for the establishment of a distillery in the Swan Valley in response to the assistance package proposed by the WA Grape Growers Association.

Details of that assistance will be provided in the near future.

- (2) The Grape Growers Association of WA, the Departments of Agriculture, Industrial Development, Treasury, the Water Authority, and the State Energy Commission.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT: SWAN SHIRE COUNCIL

#### *Rates: Grape Growers*

664. Hon. NEIL OLIVER, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

What discussions have been undertaken with the Shire of Swan in regard to rating of grape growing properties?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

No formal discussions have taken place at this stage.

The matter referred to by the member is one element of an assistance package proposed by the WA Grape Growers Association currently being considered by the Government.

## PLANNING: SUBDIVISIONS

### *Grape Growers*

665. Hon. NEIL OLIVER, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Have proposals been submitted to the Shire of Swan in regard to further subdivision or amalgamation of properties utilised for grape growing?
- (2) If "Yes", are any further proposals being submitted for those owners who are engaged in activities other than grape growing?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) and (2) I am advised that the Shire of Swan, following an initiative supported by the Government from Mr Gavan Troy, MLA, has formed a working party to consider the matters referred to in parts (1) and (2) of the member's question.

688. *Postponed.*

### MR BARRY WALDECK

#### *Glasshouse: Government Assistance*

692. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

Has the Government provided assistance either financial or otherwise to Barry Waldeck or any of his associated companies to build a glasshouse on his property at Wanneroo?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

Assistance has not been provided by the Department of Industrial Development.

## COMMISSIONERS FOR DECLARATIONS

### *Applications: Outstanding*

708. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many applications for appointments as Commissioner for Declarations were outstanding when the Crown Law Department became responsible for handling the applications?
- (2) How many applications are currently awaiting or being processed?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) 43.
- (2) 144.

## CRIME: ATTACK ON WOMAN

*Sentence: Appeal*

711. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Attorney General:

I refer to my letter to him of 28 January 1985—which he has acknowledged—relating to a brutal attack on a woman during an eight-hour period on 21-22 April 1984 which later resulted in Mr Justice Kennedy handing down a minimum sentence of three years and two months, and ask—

- (1) Has the investigation into this matter been concluded and, if so, with what result?
- (2) Has any decision been made by the law officers to appeal against this sentence?
- (3) Is it correct, as stated by the woman victim, that the sentencing judge was never informed of the convicted man's previous conviction in South Australia involving offences against a female?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A decision has been made not to appeal.
- (3) No.

712 to 716. *Postponed.*

## ABORIGINAL LAND BILL

*Survey*

717. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister with special responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Has a survey been undertaken by the Government in which questions on attitudes towards the Government's Land Rights Bill were included?
- (2) If so—
  - (i) who conducted the survey;
  - (ii) what was the cost of the survey; and
  - (iii) what were the questions asked in relation to land rights?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) and (2) As per response to question 672; i.e. No survey has been conducted specifically in relation to the proposed Aboriginal Land Bill.

718 to 722. *Postponed.*

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

*Children's Services Bureau: Establishment*

723. Hon. TOM KNIGHT, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Does the Government intend to establish a children's services bureau similar to the Children's Services Office being set up in South Australia?
- (2) If so, when is it expected to be created?
- (3) After its creation, will the Government continue to fund other children's groups such as the Playgroup Association of Western Australia (Inc.)?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) to (3) No, the Government does not intend to establish a children's services bureau similar to the Children's Service Office being set up in South Australia.

724. *Postponed.*

## POLICE STATION

*Scarborough: Crime Statistics*

725. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Further to question 700 of Thursday, 21 March 1985—

- (1) Will the Minister provide crime figures for other suburbs serviced by the Scarborough Police Station in—
  - (a) 1982;
  - (b) 1983; and
  - (c) 1984?
- (2) Are there any plans to increase the number of police personnel working out of the Scarborough Police Station?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) Reported crime figures prior to 1 July, 1982 for North Beach and Trigg areas are not available.

The following are recorded since that date—

	1982	1983	1984
North Beach	101	230	241
Trigg	57	140	135

- (2) No, however State-wide priorities are being constantly updated.

726. *Postponed.*

# HOUSING: RENTAL

## *Rent Relief Scheme: Review*

727. Hon. P. H. WELLS, to the Minister for Employment and Training representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) Has there been a review of rent relief schemes?
- (2) What effect has this review had on the rate of relief provided?
- (3) What other criterion or eligibility requirements have been changed?
- (4) When and why were these changes made?
- (5) How many existing recipients of these benefits were or will be affected by these changes?
- (6) How many new applicants will be eligible for some relief because of the changes?
- (7) Will the Minister provide me with a copy of the review recommending the changes?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Yes. A review did occur in December 1984.
- (2) The maximum amount payable under the scheme remains at \$20 per week per household.
- (3) The policy changes were—  
 The name be changed to "Rental Support Scheme".  
 De facto relationships be treated as that of married couples.  
 Eligibility be extended to include single people 18 years of age and over.  
 Liquid assets limits be \$1 500 single and \$3 000 couples or singles with dependents.  
 Property not readily available for use of realisation, be not a bar to granting assistance.

Committee to have flexibility to consider question of suitable accommodation when assessing need for assistance.

Six months residency in Australia—deleted.

In case of people sharing, total assistance to any household be \$20 maximum per week.

Committee structure be—

- (a) senior representative of SHC;
- (b) member from nominated panel of REIWA representatives;
- (c) member from panel of names nominated by WACOSS.

Supplementary assistance be taken into account when assessing rent support payable.

Payments to be made two weeks after application and at four weekly periods.

Minimum payment to be \$2.50 per week—amount assessed below this be raised to \$2.50 per week.

- (4) The changes were made December 1984 and reflected the experience gained in operation of the scheme to that time, and the evident need to assist single people in difficulties.
- (5) and (6) In view of the extent of the changes it is not possible to accurately quantify the number of people affected and the monetary result. However, the results to date do not indicate any major increase in expenditure is likely to occur.
- (7) No. The papers are of an internal departmental nature and are not available for general distribution.

728. *Postponed.*