

Legislative Council

Thursday, 22 November 1984

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

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths): I have received a notification from the Clerk of the Writs which I shall now ask the Clerk at the Table to read.

The Clerk of the Council read the writ.

Hon. Eric James Charlton took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance and signed the Roll.

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEADLOCKS

Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths): I wish to make a statement in regard to the Royal Commission into Deadlocks.

On Tuesday, 13 November the Minister for Parliamentary and Electoral Reform made a statement in the Legislative Assembly and tabled certain documents at the conclusion of his statement. I have considered very carefully the content of that statement and the Crown Solicitor's opinion cited by the Minister.

Much of the statement lies in the area of the Minister's opinion and, as such, is debating material. I do not propose to enter into political debate from this Chair but there are some points in the statement to which I feel obliged to respond.

I repeat that I have absolutely no objection to a properly authorised inquiry into the method of resolving deadlocks between the Houses, whether the inquiry is conducted by a parliamentary committee or by someone else.

It is true, as the Minister states, that I held discussions with him in an effort to overcome the objections that I had raised in my statement to the Council on 31 July. I had those discussions in my capacity as the President and alone, and put certain proposals to him. As yet, he has not given me the courtesy of a reply.

At no stage did my discussions with the Minister involve any other member of either House and I did not consult any member before I made my statement or at any time thereafter. I therefore reject any implication in what the Minister has said that I have somehow been responsible for the Opposition's attitude towards the commission. That responsibility lies squarely with the Opposition and at all times it has been free to decide

what its attitude will be without any help or suggestions from me.

It is patently obvious that "... only Parliament can legislate ..." in the context of the subject matter of the commission's inquiry, but the Minister's advisers appear to have missed one of the points I was trying to make: namely, that any inquiry must take existing procedures into account. That, in itself, brings the inquiry within the framework of article 9 of the Bill of Rights unless it were to be held that the article is always to be retroactive in its application.

I am not persuaded that such is the case and I would have thought that, in the absence of judicial opinion on that issue, the Crown's adviser might have been somewhat more tentative in the view that he is entitled to express.

I am not willing to enter into legal argument from the Chair, but I will say that the law is not nearly as settled as the Minister appears to believe.

I regret that the Minister has failed to distinguish between the President of the Council and the members of the Opposition. As President, I am charged with upholding the rules, traditions, and dignity of this House. If that causes disquiet in some quarters from time to time, so be it, but it is totally incorrect to say that any statement I make from this Chair is in any way influenced by partisan views expressed by members of the Opposition.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Extension of Time

On motion by Hon. John Williams, resolved—

That the date fixed for the presentation of the report of the Standing Committee on the Urban Lands Council be extended from 30 November 1984 to 1 May 1985, and that the report do lie upon the Table and be adopted and agreed to.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 319).

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

Select Committee: Interim Report and Extension of Time

HON. P. H. LOCKYER (Lower North) [2.43 p.m.]: I seek leave to present an interim report of the Select Committee inquiring into the fruit and vegetable industry.

Leave granted.

HON. P. H. LOCKYER: I am directed to move—

That the date fixed for the presentation of the Committee's report be extended from 30

November 1984 to 13 December 1984, and that the report do lie upon the Table and be adopted and agreed to.

Question put and passed.

The report was tabled (see paper No. 377).

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Consideration of Tabled Paper

Debate resumed from 21 November.

HON. P. H. WELLS (North Metropolitan) [2.44 p.m.]: I support the motion. Before commencing my speech, I would like to congratulate Hon. Eric Charlton, the member for Central Province, on having taken his seat in this House today. Although the member is not known to me personally, I hope he has an enjoyable time while representing Central Province and that he holds that position for some years to come. I look forward to the contribution he will make in this House.

In my contribution to this debate, I would like to raise what I think is a major issue; that is, the funding of schools. I believe that the Government should make an approach to the Federal Government to seek special funds. In fact, I would suggest that we have a bicentennial education fund in order to clean up the mess that has been made by the current State and Federal Governments in terms of the school building programme in this State.

I suggest a bicentennial fund because I believe that education should have a higher priority than many of the other issues that are considered in terms of special funding.

Education should be available to more people and I believe that two factors are preventing this from occurring in Western Australia. I am not in a position to say what happens in other States, but I suspect that if a proper study were carried out in all the States of Australia, it would reveal similar problems in each State.

The problem is that proper planning is not being carried out in regard to schools. In fact, it is so far behind in this State that the State Government creates a problem by overcrowding our schools. As a result there is an outcry in the community and the Government then makes promises in the Budget to make people think that it is doing something about their problems.

I will refer to the problem that exists in Wanneroo and point out to the House that the area has been shortchanged as far as the Budget is

concerned. If one looks at the Budget he will see that \$5.5 million has been allocated to primary and secondary schools in the Wanneroo Shire Council area. We should probably feel some joy in the fact that the money will provide another high school and it will allow for the opening of the Beldon school. Planning will also commence for two other primary schools in the area and a number of renovations will be carried out to existing schools. Members in this Chamber might say, "Mr Wells, \$5.5 million is not a bad contribution". I suspect that when people take into account the fact that \$5.5 million will be spent in the Wanneroo area for the upgrading and building of schools they will say that the Government has made a reasonable commitment.

I continually hear complaints about the lack of schools in the faster growing areas of Western Australia. I know that the planning department of the Education Department does not plan primary schools for 700 children and that it would rather look towards schools with enrolments of 400 to 500 children. It does not plan high schools for 1 200 children or more. I am told by the department that the optimum size for a high school is 700 or 800 children.

The \$5.5 million represents a 45 per cent increase on the previous Budget and people will say that the Government has met the needs of the area and that I should not take up the issue. Despite the fact of the allocation, the problem caused by the pressure of growth in my area will remain.

In talking to the planning department of the Education Department I found out that its benchmark is that each dwelling represents 0.6 of a child. I draw to the attention of the House that in recent times there has been a massive increase in the number of dwellings that have been approved in my area and as a result a number of families will move into the area. Taking as a comparison the three years prior to this Government's coming into office approximately \$12.4 million was spent on primary and secondary education buildings during that time. If we look for a reasonable benchmark in determining what additional schools will be required we could say that 1 000 additional homes will be erected in my area and on that basis and on the planning department's figure of 0.6 we will have 600 children. That figure would be sufficient for the establishment of a new primary school.

In the period 1981-82 in the Shire of Wanneroo, 7 260 residential dwellings were approved; in 1981-82 6 225 were approved; and in 1982-83 5 425 were approved. The total for the period was 18 910 residential dwellings.

This can be related to the 1980-82 figures which represent a benchmark achieved by the Court Government. During the Court-O'Connor Governments' term, the expenditure on primary and secondary school buildings was \$600 for each residential dwelling approved during the period based on 1980 dollar terms. The figures for the Burke Government indicate that it has spent just over \$3.6 million in 1983-84 and during that time 6 240 dwellings were approved. In 1984-85 the Government allocated \$5.5 million and during that 12 months 8 235 dwellings were approved. Therefore, a total number of 14 475 dwellings were approved, or an average of 7 237 for each year of the Burke Government. That should be compared with the average each year of 6 303 approvals during the Court-O'Connor Governments. It can be seen that there has been a marked increase in the number of residential dwellings approved in Wanneroo.

I am not giving information of which no other people are aware. At a meeting held in the offices of the Joondalup Development Corporation to brief councillors and members of the board, a Shire officer referred to 2 500 dwellings being approved each year; that is, the annual average number of approvals given for dwellings would be equivalent to the number of houses in a suburb the size of Duncraig. The figures indicate the extent of growth.

If we compare the 1984-85 allocation of \$5.5 million with the amount spent in 1980—and in 1984-85 the value of the dollar is much less—it can be seen that there has not been an increase in terms of money expended on education in the Wanneroo Shire. In fact, there has been a 25 per cent decrease because the average amount spent for each residential dwelling in the shire is \$476.90.

One cannot discuss this subject purely in terms of money. It could be said that the allocation had been increased, but if the size of the population in a given area increases dramatically additional schools are obviously required in that area to cope with the extra demands placed on it by the increase in population. In real and absolute terms, the expenditure in the Wanneroo Shire—that is the capital cost funding per dwelling unit—has decreased markedly under the Burke Government. The outer metropolitan area, and particularly the Wanneroo area, has been short-changed in terms of capital funding for primary schools and high schools. This state of affairs will continue for some years and unless it is rectified we shall get further behind in mopping up the pressures created by schools with too many students.

I have received a copy of a letter from the president of the Lake Goollelal Primary School PCA. It was written to the Minister and it outlines

some of the problems that schools face in this growing area. The letter was addressed to the Minister for Education and it read as follows—

Dear Sir,

As the parents of Goollelal Primary School we wish to express our concern at the present and anticipated enrolments at our school. As a result of this concern the Goollelal P & C Association urges the Department to give every consideration for development of the remaining schools for the Kingsley area. To substantiate our claim the following points are offered.

In 1981 the Goollelal Primary School was constructed to accommodate approx 400 students. The school actually opened with an enrolment of 435 students. By the end of 1982 this had grown to nearly 770. With the opening of Kingsley's other primary school, Creaney, in 1983 enrolments dropped only slightly to 630. At the commencement of 1984 the school opened with 700 students, necessitating five demountable classrooms. As of the start of second term enrolments are now 727.

Our neighbouring school Creaney has also suffered the same rapid increase in enrolments and requires four demountable classrooms to house excess students.

Due to the obvious increase in building activity during 1983/84 and the attractiveness of Kingsley as a family community, the Wanneroo Shire predicts that the population of Kingsley will increase at double the rate this year, than it has in the past three years. We assess conservatively this population increase will see numbers at our school approaching 750 by the end of 1984 with steep increases to follow in 1985.

These excessive numbers cause many and varied problems for our school, ie library and resource facilities, toilets, seating, sports equipment, play areas, class sizes, teacher student relations and traffic congestion around the school.

As the P & C Association we are proud of our schools achievements, by pupils and teachers alike, and additionally are satisfied with our own efforts in assisting to maintain the high standard at our school.

Therefore we press you to give prompt and favourable consideration to future primary school development in the Kingsley area. We look forward to receiving your detailed response at an early date.

The Minister replied to that letter on 10 July 1984 and stated the following—

There is an alternative site in Halidon Road, Kingsley, and the school there is intended to relieve the pressure on Goollelal. Soon I will be making decisions about the schools building programme for 1984/85 and the timing of the building of the additional school will be considered.

Looking at the Budget this year one finds that an allocation of \$10 000 has been made for this area. I gather that that might pay for some plans to be drawn up! It certainly will not make any inroads in terms of relieving the pressure on the schools. The letter from the school typifies the problems faced by schools in outer metropolitan areas and in Wanneroo particularly.

Last year, for the first time in many years, not one new school was opened in the State. If in any given year the Government does not open schools to take account of the increase in population, it will remain behind for ever.

Hon. Graham Edwards: What about Ocean Reef? The school there was opened last year.

Hon. P. H. WELLS: The Ocean Reef High School was designed—

Hon. Graham Edwards: When was it opened?

Hon. P. H. WELLS: It was built under the Court-O'Connor Governments, and the school became operational under the O'Connor Government. However, it was officially opened under the Burke Government. The Budget allocation for the school was made under the Court-O'Connor Governments.

I have no arguments about next year, because the Woodvale High School will be opened, so the Government is keeping pace in that area. However, it is not even keeping pace with the amount of money allocated by the Court-O'Connor Governments in my province. In money terms, the Government is spending 25 per cent less; but the reality is that everyone who has anything to do with the Wanneroo Shire knows that it is the fastest growing local government area in Australia.

Hon. Graham Edwards: The second fastest.

Hon. P. H. WELLS: I will bow to that suggestion. However, the Wanneroo shire is growing quickly.

That growth was encouraged by the Federal Government's scheme to provide \$7 000 for first home buyers. I am not decrying that scheme, but it created additional growth in the northern suburbs; and that additional growth has created problems.

If a scheme is created at the Federal level and it creates pressure at the State level, the State Government needs to put up more money to cover that area. That is why I hope my colleague supports my argument. The Government should make an approach to the Federal Government for a one-off special bicentennial education grant for primary and secondary school buildings.

Although I am using the Wanneroo Shire as an example, I am not suggesting that it is the only part of the State experiencing growth. I was speaking to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in another place (Barry MacKinnon) only recently, and he talked about the problems he has with a school in his electorate. It has 700 pupils and much overcrowding. I suspect that Hon. Phillip Pental has a number of primary schools in his area that are bursting at the seams.

Hon. P. G. Pental: There is a lot of neglect by the Government over our way.

Hon. P. H. WELLS: I am talking about the expenditure of money and the provision of buildings.

I will give credit to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services (Mr Carr). When he opened the Wangara Fire Station, he had the courtesy to acknowledge that it did not just grow up or land there, but that the money had been provided by the previous Government's allocation.

I hope my colleague, Hon. Graham Edwards, is not suggesting that because the Ocean Reef High School was opened physically, in terms of the actual ceremony, during the time of the Labor Government, that it was not planned and budgeted for under the O'Connor Government. The previous Budgets belie that.

I do not decry the fact that the Government is continuing with the development of the Ocean Reef High School and opening a large new high school at Woodvale next year. I have no argument with that. However, I suggest that in the Wanneroo area the expenditure should be related to the growth patterns. The Government's expenditure should keep pace with the number of dwellings being constructed, as was done under the Court-O'Connor Governments. However, the Government's expenditure is 25 per cent less this year. That situation must be redressed because it is creating problems.

I am certain that Hon. Graham Edwards has had expressed to him the concern of schools about the pressure being placed on them because of this growth. We cannot have changes in patterns of growth and massive increases in the number of houses built and just go sailing along with the same level of expenditure commitment.

The expenditure on education must be related to the growth in population; and the reality is that in the Wanneroo area and the northern suburbs we have a large number of young families moving in. In fact, many of the Federal Government's first home buyer grants are given to people moving into the area. That scheme will allow large numbers of young people to shift in; and that will put pressure on the planning division of the Education Department.

It is time that the Government assessed the educational needs of Wanneroo and did something about them. I give the Government advice on how it might be able to obtain some money. The Government should have a deputation to the Federal Government with the suggestion of a bicentennial grant. It could mount a very good argument for an allocation.

Hon. Graham MacKinnon was the Minister for Education at one stage, and I am sure he is familiar with the importance of education in the State. If we measure the size of the education budget as compared with the total money expended, every Government has given education a certain amount of importance. However, the State Government has not kept pace with population growth, but it is just a matter of the reallocation of priorities, I suspect. The Government cannot have expensive offices and an expensive system of advisers and keep pace with the other demands in the community. Something must give, and the reality is that the children in the northern suburbs and Wanneroo area are being deprived; they are being squashed into demountable school buildings and unnecessary substandard arrangements. That is as a result of the Government's having advisers and expensive office space, and wasting money in those areas.

First of all, the Government must put its own house in order. It must give education a high priority and allocate more money for the Wanneroo area and areas like it, and it must bring the building programme forward. It must recognise that it has a financial problem, and it should put a very good argument to the Federal Government for an Australian bicentennial education grant.

I noted last week that the South Australian Government accepted a private member's Bill relating to the penalties for the sale of tobacco to young people. Our Government has left on the Table a Bill with the same purpose, despite the fact that the Labor Government in South Australia accepted the legislation and increased the penalties. I cannot understand the attitude of the Western Australian Government, because the measure presented to it is virtually the same, word for word—apart from three clauses—with what

the Government proposed itself. I reckon that at least one of the other clauses would be acceptable to the Government; yet a letter I received from the Minister for Health indicated that the Government is thumbing its nose at my Bill in political spite, and it will do nothing about this problem.

If the Government is to be consistent, it should take action and make an effort in terms of the sale of tobacco to young people. The Government's argument is that I am opposing punitive measures for young people; but I point out that the punitive measures in the Bill are the same as the ones the Government suggested relating to vending machines.

The Government should reconsider its stand on this subject, particularly as it relates to the sale of tobacco to children. It is a farcical situation that the Government should be claiming it is attempting to stop young people smoking when it is unwilling to make any effort in terms of the supply area. This area involves considerable problems and no magical wand can be waved to overcome them. The Government considered it worthwhile to put a measure before this House, but withdrew it when it did not get everything it wanted. It should now consider the Bill that has been placed before this House of Parliament.

A problem that has developed in the northern suburbs relates to the Government's actions of introducing sessional orders for the Osborne Park and Wanneroo Hospitals. In the long term, the new arrangement will present the community there with a service less than that provided previously. Sadly, because most people do not visit hospitals every week or every year, it will take a long time before the people of the region come to realise that they have been deprived of a first-class hospital service that provided them with the top specialists in the State visiting those hospitals. The present scheme allows only for a selected range of specialists to operate in those hospitals concerned, so today only on the rare occasion will they visit those hospitals. The community will be the poorer for not having a choice of specialist. The residents of the area will have to accept the specialist provided under the sessional arrangement at the hospital concerned.

It is interesting to compare this arrangement with arguments presented recently during debate on another Bill where it was indicated that a number of doctors who have remained on a sessional basis were told that certain procedures they once carried out would no longer be allowed to be carried out by them. For instance, some of them who did the work of an anaesthetist must now use the services of the hospital anaesthetist.

This will mean that those doctors will lose those skills. When they were using those skills consistently they were providing a service to patients. It may well be that the Government had good reason to say that those doctors should not any longer carry out those procedures, but this has increased the cost of treatment in hospitals because now the hospital specialist will have to be used.

I think the worst privation the people in the region will suffer will not be apparent to them for a long time, but it will be that the doctor of their choice will now be battling to get the specialist of their choice to one of those hospitals. The people of this community in this way will be deprived of the best hospital service which they believe they should have for their families and themselves. Their community will be the poorer. It will take a long time before people come to realise that they have lost this service, but eventually they will make their protest, although I suspect it will then be a little too late.

Perhaps the most urgent problem facing the area I represent and the State generally is the number of youth unemployed. Despite the efforts made by past Governments and this Government to institute all sorts of schemes to provide work for young people, the reality is that large numbers of young people are still unemployed.

One of the problems is that over the years young people have not been taken into consideration and asked to comment on discussions on wage structures. This has meant that many employers have not been able to afford to employ young people. Our young people have been saddled with a system where adults and the unions generally have decided what is best suited for youth. The reality is that we have ended up with a large number of young people being continually unemployed.

One of our highest priorities must be to take young people into our confidence in discussions on youth unemployment. If members were to discuss with the youth of our State what they thought about this problem, I am sure they would find that these young people would tell them that they would prefer to gain some sort of experience of holding down a job without necessarily receiving 100 per cent of the adult wage. This has been expressed to me by a number of young people. A number of employers have indicated that they would be happy to have a young person in training except that they cannot afford to do so. When employers are faced with having to pay an adult wage to a young person, they prefer to take on someone with experience. This means therefore that many young people cannot gain experience and so remain unemployed.

The young of today will soon be leading our nation, so if we do not attack the problem with a great deal more gusto and find a system that provides them with worthwhile jobs rather than just temporary jobs, we will find a situation developing where young people will not be bothering to look for jobs because having been out of work for so long they will lose the desire to have a job. This will be the fault of the community generally because it has not catered for young people and has not taken them into consideration.

An area that needs further attention by the Government, although I believe it is addressing the matter already in a minor way, concerns the Marriage Guidance Council in this State. The council makes a very worthwhile contribution in a very delicate area of human relations. However, it is confronted with a problem trying to find funds to run its operation.

In terms of holding families together, it saves the Government money, because broken families create single people who must look after children and this places great strains on our social welfare system and on the security of our social structures in this country. Besides the trauma which affects the lives of the children and adults involved, many costs are involved.

I trust that the Government will give this a higher priority by allocating sufficient funds to ensure that it can run an adequate operation in this State. I would hate it to reach the situation in New South Wales where the Marriage Guidance Council in that State asks people to pay, I understand, \$50 for its service. Although I am a great believer in the "user pays" concept, in this area the system would break down if families had to find this sort of money to prevent their splitting up, with the individual members facing all this trauma. If the required counselling is not available to these families, certainly the State will be the poorer.

Allowance has been made in the Budget for funds to be made available under a bicentennial programme. Councils in my area have been anxious to find out what funds the State Government will make available so that they can make preparations for that event.

It seems that this Government was a little slow in indicating to the Commonwealth Government the amount of funds it requires which would be made available to local Government projects planned for the bicentennial celebration. It is reasonably important, if that celebration is to receive support right across Australia, that funding be made available as early as possible so that

various committees can make best use of those funds in terms of planning.

I hope that the committee which was set up by the Government to make recommendations in relation to that funding will speed up its work to ensure that the money goes to the people who need it.

In conclusion, I wish to repeat my concern that the area which I represent, the northern metropolitan area, has been short-changed in real and absolute terms. It received 25 per cent less funds for school buildings this year than it received under the Court-O'Connor Governments. There is an urgent need for increased building to go on in that area. To enable that to happen, the State Government has to provide significant funds. I suggest also that the Government approach Canberra in order for it to approve funds from the bicentennial education building grant as quickly as possible so that those funds will benefit this State.

HON. MARGARET McALEER (Upper West) [3.23 p.m.]: I want to take this opportunity to add my voice to the voices of other country members and urge the Government to continue with the efforts it has already made and to add to and expand those efforts in dealing with the problems of the farming and rural communities. While the Government can point to some efforts it has made and which I must applaud, it could address itself to the farming community's problems in a far more vigorous and wide-ranging way.

The Government has pointed to the fact that it accepted, with good grace, the motion for the setting up of a Select Committee into rural hardship moved by the member for Moore, Mr Bert Crane. The committee was chaired by a Government member, Mr Ian Taylor. Its report has been commended. The Government also, on its own initiative, conducted a survey through the Department of Agriculture into farm indebtedness. Those two measures told us a great deal about the problems of the farming community. The survey was important in highlighting the amount of indebtedness which exists within the farming industry. On the other hand, the Select Committee has more importantly pointed to the problems which beset agriculture through Government economic management. Those problems, generally, were already known to us. Those problems, however, more particularly come within the province of the Federal Government; and when I refer to the Government's economic management I am not simply referring to the present Federal Government, but I am also referring to the Governments which preceded it.

In these matters, the Western Australian Government can only present a case to the Federal Government in order that matters pertaining to costs which are bearing down so hard on farmers should be rectified and relieved. While it is important that the State Government should press its case for its rural areas with the Federal Government with all its might, there are many things that can still be done much nearer home. However, before I leave the Federal sphere I wish to say that I noted that the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, promised the National Farmers' Federation that, if he won the next election, he would be willing to meet the federation and discuss farm costs.

The federation expressed its gratefulness to the Prime Minister. Certainly, anything which contributes to an understanding of the problem is welcome. I must say, however, that there must be enough material already available to the Federal Government for it to work on the problem of farm costs and the need to alter economic management if that problem is to be truly addressed. It seems to be rather early for the Federal Government to say that it will hold a meeting next year about matters which have been thoroughly canvassed. The Commonwealth Government has at its disposal those very fine instrumentalities, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. For it to say to the National Farmers' Federation that it will meet it and discuss costs is only a piece of window-dressing.

I am concerned, however, with the problems of our own State and the way in which the State Government can assist in solving those problems. There are very important issues such as freight and port charges which bear down very heavily on farmers and are ingredients in the cost-price squeeze. They also bear down heavily on sand miners who, I think, are more affected than farmers because the price of their product per tonne is so much less and the charges they incur are exactly the same. I am concerned about the sand miners because they are important people in the Eneabba area. The State Government should get these matters into perspective and set its priorities. It is fine to broaden the base of our economy and to invest in high technology and tourism; I agree with that. However, neither of those things will be an immediate substitute for the two most important supports of our economy, agriculture and mining. If agriculture collapses, and mining is already in a depressed state we are going to be flying on one rather ragged wing.

I know that the Government can say that it has had to take the necessary first steps in setting up the Select Committee and taking a survey of in-

debtedness, but the real test of the Government's attitude can be found in this Budget in the sums of money allocated to agriculture. An increase of 8 or 9 per cent is only maintaining the status quo. There is no real increase in funds for agriculture and more especially in relation to agricultural research. The need for it is well recognised in all agricultural circles whether they are scientific, departmental, farming, or business. I believe the Department of Agriculture has been doing its best. It has been trying to squeeze a little money from here and a little money from there to follow up important problems. Work is being undertaken on increased yields in the northern sand plains and certainly the farmers in my Province are very grateful for this. Other work is being done to increase the variety of crops in the outer drier areas.

A lot of work that the department is doing can be done only sketchily. It proceeds for a while and then gets dropped because of the lack of funds and Government support. I think of work that has been done in the past—and this has nothing to do with the present Government—on snails. This had particular relevance in the Dongara area. I think again of the work which was later done on the insect problem on the Ord. The cotton industry unfortunately had failed by the time the solution for the insect problem was discovered. Very little, if anything, has been done to put that work to use and follow it up. Increasingly, over the drought years, there has been a great problem in the northern agricultural areas with the weed called double gee. To some extent, the people in the northern agricultural areas are used to double gee, but since its spread down towards the great southern, towards Katanning, it has caused a great deal of concern. I heard the other day that the double gee of the Gascoyne area is in fact bigger and more formidable than any other double gee seen in Western Australia. So it is obviously spreading north as well as south.

Some time ago, the department was able to start work on the biological control of double gee, and imported a weevil from South Africa, but unfortunately the weevil was unable to survive our summer. It expired in the very first summer and the department had no money at that time to follow up the experiment. Now I am very glad to know that, jointly with the CSIRO, research is to be carried out by a Dr Scott who will spend three years in South Africa tracking down more suitable weevils.

This is a very small contribution to the overall problem and everything has been done in a piecemeal manner. Some things do fare better than others. There has been a great deal of talk about

rye-grass toxicity; it is probably due largely to the pressure of people in the southern agricultural areas that that has been followed up fairly continuously over the years. As the rye-grass toxicity is spreading northwards it concerns the whole of the wheatbelt. What has not been done is to try to breed a grass as an alternative. Rye-grass is in fact the only nutritious grass, I think I am correct in saying, which is available to farmers in the wheatbelt. We all planted it all those years ago with a great deal of enthusiasm, encouraged by the department.

We now have paddocks and fields of waving rye-grass in October. Unfortunately, it also waves in the crops unless it is very heavily sprayed. It has become a menace, not only because it is toxic, but because it is adding to the cost of cereal growing. For all the years that this has been a problem there has been absolutely no work done on an alternative grass and probably what we need is two or three grasses. Again, it is simply a question of lack of funds. The department has been given so little funds that it is very hard for it to set its priorities and to follow up long-term programmes.

As I am on the subject of pests, I mention the subject of wingless grasshoppers which are a problem in the Esperance and Gingin areas, which areas are not large enough to command the attention or priority for funds. Yet, there is nothing to say that the wingless grasshopper will not spread. If we were able to work on it now, and if funds were available, instead of the department having to scrounge \$1 000 here or there or raise \$1 000 from the local farmers, we might do away with the pest before it becomes a serious matter for the whole of the wheatbelt.

Finally, when dealing with the lack of money which is allocated to the Department of Agriculture I mention the lack of people, not only for research purposes, but also in dealing with the farmers and the public themselves for extension work. Certainly, I am about to generalise about the situation at Three Springs where there is a sub-branch of the Department of Agriculture. The Shire of Three Springs, supported by all the neighbouring shires, has been appealing to the department for over a year for an additional officer to be stationed at Three Springs. The problem is that the work the department has undertaken, which includes a great deal of soil conservation work east of Perenjori takes up the time of the available officers who are specialists in sheep and wheat, and they are unavailable for farmers to consult. I do not suppose the department's acceptance by farmers could be higher or better than it is now. I do not suppose farmers' need for good advice about new sprays and chemicals and fertiliser in-

put has ever been greater. While some may say it would be better for them to pay the fees of agricultural consultants, and this would be a more truly free enterprise approach, there is no doubt that many of them are not in a position to do that. They are heavily reliant on the department for advice, and if the department is not able to find enough staff to give that advice there is a further hindrance to the well-being of agriculture.

I would like to stress to the Government again that if farming is to continue to underpin the economy it needs not just temporary rescue measures for disasters such as droughts or costly palliatives for excessive costs, but it needs, on the part of both Federal and State Governments, a coherent plan which will address such problems as costs and also the problems of increased yields and a range of products and the markets to be available to them. It needs a concerted effort, certainly not just by Government, but by farmers and private agriculture businesses. It needs to be healthy and maintain its position in the economy and therefore to maintain the economy itself; to make, in the years ahead of us, a real and genuine leap forward.

Before I sit down I would like to return to one or two problems which relate to specific places in the Upper West Province. A week or two ago I questioned the Minister responsible for national parks about the state of the roads in the Kalbarri National Park which had been allowed to deteriorate to such a bad condition. The roads led to the beauty spots in the gorges in the Murchison River and had been allowed to deteriorate to such a condition that large tourist buses could no longer travel over them. When the tourist buses arrived at Kalbarri they had to make other arrangements for the passengers to visit the gorges, thereby incurring additional unexpected costs for themselves.

My friend, the member for Greenough, asked the same question on the same day in another place. I simply received a reply to refer to his reply. The Premier himself dealt with the matter and said it was regrettable that the roads had deteriorated. In order to save them from being further damaged, they had been closed to large buses, and efforts were being made to improve them.

While this is not unsatisfactory for the future, it does not really solve the difficulty which had already occurred, because a great number of tourist companies had already struck Kalbarri off their itineraries saying they would not be coming back next year. They could not take that sort of risk. The damage tourist-wise was already done.

There is nothing unexpected about roads deteriorating. It can be foreseen, so it is something which should never be allowed to happen in the first place. If the Government is serious about tourism, it is not sufficient to have large conferences to make a lot of publicity for their concern, but it really must be made to work. Kalbarri with its gorges is one of the genuine beauty spots in Western Australia; one of the greatest tourist attractions. It is ridiculous that this situation could have been allowed to occur.

Turning to tourist roads, I wish to speak about the road between Cervantes and the Pinnacles. The Pinnacles are of great natural interest. They are also very fragile. To visit the Pinnacles the only way for a tourist—or anybody travelling in a normal vehicle—is to go from Cervantes along a limestone road which is extremely rough with jagged bits of limestone all along it. It has been in this state at least for the last six years to my knowledge, and probably well before that.

While representations have been made year after year to have this road improved, it has always been put off to a future date. Generally, it has been said the National Parks Authority is thinking about it, or looking into the matter, but it will be realised there is always some good reason that it is not done. Some locals say the Government will not do up the road because it is supposed to be a protection for the Pinnacles to prevent people from pouring in and doing irreparable damage to the area. In fact people are pouring into the Pinnacles. They are doing as little damage as people can do, but the very fact people walk around the Pinnacles must do damage because of the extreme fragility of the limestone formation.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.00 p.m.

[Questions taken.]

Hon. MARGARET McALEER: Prior to the afternoon tea suspension I was talking about the fragility of the Pinnacles area. Naturally, whenever people are allowed into such a fragile area a certain amount of damage occurs. It cannot be prevented, even if we had rangers stationed at 100-yard intervals which, of course, is impractical, because we do not have enough rangers anyway.

There is a local rumour that the road is not being improved, because it is seen as a protection for the area, but that is false. The numbers of tourists visiting the area grows daily and now two buses travel from Perth to the Pinnacles every day. However, in the meantime, the road is in a shocking condition and nobody in his right mind would take an ordinary motor car over it. It is suitable only for four-wheel drive vehicles. People in fact do take in ordinary vehicles which should travel

only as fast as the road allows, although many travel faster than that and it is a dangerous place to be. The Main Roads Department and the National Parks Authority should improve the road before a fatality occurs.

Finally I refer briefly to a topic raised by Hon. Bob Hetherington. He congratulated the Minister for Education on the initiative the Government was taking in integrating intellectually handicapped children into the ordinary school situation. Such a proposition has been mooted for a number of years and it is now being put into effect by the Minister.

However, I point out that some schools have had no choice but to accept children who are severely intellectually handicapped. That has been the case for a number of years, because, if these children were to attend school, there was no other alternative for them. One such school, Rangeway, is situated in Geraldton in my Province.

Because of its situation in the town, Rangeway draws a great number of children from different economic and ethnic backgrounds. It has Aboriginal children, Vietnamese children, children from the Cocos Islands, as well as children who are not as intellectually advanced as others. While the teachers have learnt to cope admirably and some support staff have been provided, there is no doubt that they would be able to cope a great deal better if they were given more support staff to deal with the different groups of children.

I make a plea to the Government that, as far as possible, more support staff be given to schools such as Rangeway, because it is no good having theories of integrating children of this nature into schools in a normal manner, if one cannot in fact put those theories into practice. The results will simply be disappointing for the children, the parents, and the school.

Many matters in my Province require attention, but most of them can be dealt with in other ways, so I shall leave it at that.

Debate adjourned to a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Hon. D. J. Wordsworth.

(Continued on page 4560)

WHEAT MARKETING BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 21 November.

HON. C. J. BELL (Lower West) [4.07 p.m.]: The Opposition supports the Bill. It is a welcome Bill to the wheat industry and carries on a long tradition within that industry. Undoubtedly a couple of other wheat producers may wish to make

comments later, but I shall make a few comments now.

The Bill seeks to make several changes in the existing situation. Two of those changes are of particular importance. One is the segregation of various grades of wheat with those grades being underwritten so that the guaranteed minimum delivery price is applied. That provision will be of significant benefit to producers of premium wheat and also, to some extent, to those who produce stockfeed.

The second significant area of change is the introduction of the permit system for the delivery of stockfeed wheat, which will enable direct purchases of stockfeed from growers. This is a contentious matter. Some concern has been expressed by certain people in the industry that it may place in jeopardy the marketing arrangements for wheat. However, agreement has been reached between the producers and the Government, and the handling authority understands this measure will be introduced. It contains the potential for savings to be made by the users of stockfeed wheat which, I hope, is not at the expense of the incomes of producers.

The other important matter to bear in mind is the need to have this legislation passed expeditiously. The harvest is flowing into the bins in the northern areas already and until this Bill is proclaimed, the Australian Wheat Board cannot pay those producers for their delivered product. I would think the Opposition would be very keen to see the arrangement come into place as soon as possible to ensure that money will flow to those rural areas because some of these fellows work on very large borrowings with the bank for their crops and the sooner they get the receipt for their product the sooner they will feel a little more comfortable with their bank manager when they see him in town, at his place of work, in the street or at social functions. It is very important that we immediately pass this Bill.

With those few comments, we support the Bill.

HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [4.12 p.m.]: As a wheat grower and as a representative of a very productive wheat growing area, it is with considerable interest that I view this Bill which will provide for the continuation of orderly marketing of wheat.

The previous speaker alluded to various aspects of this Bill. He dealt with the permit system. He dealt with the fact that speed is necessary in order for this legislation to come to fruition as soon as possible so that growers can be paid. The holding legislation, the Wheat Marketing Act, introduced

in October, would have no power to operate and it is necessary that we get a move on with this Bill.

However, I must say at this stage that I am still very concerned at the introduction of the permit sale system. To use an oft-quoted term, I still believe that they know not what they do. If this is what they want collectively, I would be very silly indeed to try to convince growers that they are doing the wrong thing. However, we will see the results as time goes on.

Dealing with the orderly marketing of wheat, it is 45 years since the Australian Wheat Board commenced its operations. It was formed in 1939 and early operations were brought about due to wartime emergencies and the need for the Commonwealth to marshal its resources. It drew into that association men who were well-versed in the field of grain marketing with many years of commercial experience behind them, both internationally and on the Australian scene. Western Australia contributed in a remarkable way to the early formulative stages of the board. In fact, its initial general manager, general inspector, and accountant, all came from WA together, with a number of other very notable persons connected with the Australian Wheat Board. It is interesting to note that even in those days, as long ago as it was, the general manager's secretary-typist travelled with him to the Eastern States to set up this organisation.

I make these comments because the Australian Wheat Board is an organisation which over the years has operated a pooling system. In its early days a member of the Australian Wheat Board who had joined from WA and who was a member of the WA Wheat Pool prior to joining, consequently had a great deal of experience in the principles involved with grain pooling.

Indeed, the Wheat Pool, now known as the Grain Pool of Western Australia, and other Western Australian co-operatives, were jointly the largest exporters of wheat in WA before World War II. Following the war the growers of wheat in Australia approached the Government requesting that the Australian Wheat Board continue its operations and that a price stabilisation system be introduced. The majority of growers preferred this rather than to return to the free marketing of wheat with its uncertain prices and returns to growers as was experienced in that period during the war. The Government of the day, both at Federal and State levels, responded to the growers' requests with a price stabilisation scheme and from the mid-1940s we have seen a series of legislative enactments at approximately five year intervals and these have allowed the Australian Wheat

Board to continue in its role and to be the marketer of the Australian wheat crop.

I refer to these facts because many of today's growers are not aware of the early developments of this solid, organised industry. It behoves some of us to remind those who follow, of the reasons for and the principles involved in the organisation of the industry in the manner in which it has been done. For this reason I worry and show concern over the permit system, and over the proposal that perhaps now only one member will represent each State on the Australian Wheat Board, in lieu of two as at present. I see many other dangerous giveaways creeping into both Federal and State supportive legislation which makes me wonder where we are going. Like the wheel, however, it will turn. We must face up to the fact that tightening up legislation is not as easy as relaxing legislation, though that will happen in due course. It is a fact that once we tend to alter legislation it is very difficult to put back into the legislation that which was previously in it.

Over the years the Australian Wheat Board has continued with the basic principle of pooling. There has been a considerable change in the price guarantee arrangements. Moreover, as the international trade in wheat and other grains has increased and has become more sophisticated, particularly since the early 1960's when there was a tremendous upsurge in the international marketing of grain, it was necessary for the Australian Wheat Board to seek powers enabling it to compete in international markets against the international traders in a very keen area.

We can no longer say "wheat is wheat" as does the fellow on the television commercial who says "oil is oil".

There are many grades of wheat, and the average person would not understand that. Indeed, it is a very complicated process to delve into, particularly from outside. Wheat is used for industrial purposes as well as being a staple of life, and the qualities required vary considerably. The variety of products for human consumption also require different qualities in the wheat depending on whether it is to be used for making biscuits, noodles, or a range of breads. This means the marketers of the Australian wheat crop must have the ability to arrange for the different classes of wheat to be available for the markets to which I referred previously.

The purpose of this brief summary is to put in perspective the Wheat Board's role in relation to its marketing responsibilities and the growers whom it serves. On the whole, it appears to have given reasonable service over the years in market-

ing the crop. However, having gained those powers for that purpose, its increasing attempts to become involved in other areas such as receiving, storing and movement of grain are viewed with some concern by myself and others. This is the province of a specialist organisation in much the same way as the Australian Wheat Board is a specialist organisation in the marketing field.

In certain areas the powers given to the Wheat Board appear to overlap those on the handling and storing side. It is of concern to many growers, as well as to me, that the board is tending to increasingly use those powers in areas which are basically foreign to it. It should be borne in mind that the handling and storing operation in this State is owned and managed by growers and handles considerable quantities of other grains. In the 1984-85 season they amounted to about 1.7 million tonnes. I feel the Wheat Board must use restraint and be reasonable in the use of its powers and activities. It should be very closely monitored, bearing in mind the wheat handling authority has a power vested in it by the growers to deal on an equitable basis with all growers no matter which grain they may elect to deliver into the handling system.

Having expressed that concern, I do not propose—although it had been otherwise in my mind—to move any major amendment to the Bill. However, in keeping with what I have said I would like to refer to one part of the Bill which relates to standards. It had been my intention to put forward some lengthy argument and to move an amendment to insert the word "reasonable" before the word "standards" in clause 8 (3)(a). I could put forward very good reasons for doing so, but as I do not now intend to promote that amendment in this place it would be rather futile of me to talk any further on the subject.

With those comments I support the passage of the legislation. It is a major Bill and it will last for probably five years. It will cover many negotiations that will take place between the Australian Wheat Board and the various State grain handling organisations. Each agreement and each piece of legislation is paramount. If agreement is reached, the people who make those agreements must be careful not to rock the boat too much because they have a pretty good set-up at present. To break it would put them back where they were in the 1930s. Unfortunately there are too few people around now who can remember that period and the suffering which was caused.

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

HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.28 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. C. J. BELL (Lower West) [4.29 p.m.]: Before we conclude the passage of this Bill I would like to make another point which was not raised earlier with regard to the transport of wheat to Tasmania. A substantial change has occurred in the arrangement which applied. This subsidy is common with some agricultural commodities.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The member should understand that on the third reading stage of the Bill he may only make reference to reasons that the Bill should or should not be read a third time. He cannot start another second reading debate.

Hon. C. J. BELL: I have made the point I wished to make, and I indicate my support for the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

HOUSING AGREEMENT (COMMONWEALTH AND STATE) BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. Peter Dowding (Minister for Planning), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON. PETER DOWDING (North—Minister for Planning) [4.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Housing Agreement (Commonwealth and State) Act 1984 will authorise the State to formally endorse the 1984 Commonwealth-State housing agreement. This will set the seal on more than a year's intensive negotiation between the States and the Commonwealth.

Immediately after being elected to office early in 1983, the Commonwealth Government set about revitalising the 1981 agreement. All States, at all levels, have participated in this exercise. Local governments and community groups have also been extensively consulted.

This housing agreement Bill before this House today opens the way for a 10-year attack on housing-related poverty. Over the 10-year life of the Commonwealth-State agreement we will have the

opportunity to raise both the scale and the scope of public housing to a level commensurate with community demand.

I see this agreement as a benchmark in the history of public housing in Australia. Gone is the concept of welfare housing. In its place is public housing.

Our operation under the 1984 Commonwealth-State housing agreement will be guided by the primary principle of the agreement which is to "ensure that every person in Australia has access to adequate and appropriate housing at a price within his or her capacity to pay by seeking to—

alleviate housing related poverty; and

ensure that housing assistance is, as far as possible, delivered equitably to persons resident in different forms of housing tenure".

To help the States achieve this goal, the Commonwealth has guaranteed a base funding level of \$500 million for each of the next three years. Base funding in 1984-85 is \$530 million, an increase of \$50 million on last year's funding. This compares with base funding of \$200 million per annum under the 1981 agreement. All funds this year will be in the form of grants.

Additional funds will be provided for specific programmes. Such funds total \$96 million nationally in 1984-85.

Western Australia's share of Commonwealth funding in 1984-85 will total \$60.8 million of which \$44.2 million will be untied grants. Further, States have the right to nominate General Loan Funds for housing at concessional rates. It is now a matter of history that this Government has nominated all its General Loan Funds this year for public housing.

I believe that some of the innovative aspects of this agreement are worthy of mention.

Home purchase provisions in the agreement are structured to allow States the maximum degree of flexibility to put home ownership within the reach of most Australians. Western Australia is already setting in place a number of loan schemes aimed at achieving this goal. Rental housing is being opened up to all Australians irrespective of age or marital status. The only discriminating factor will be income. The immediate consequence of this is that single people over the age of 18 may now be housed in public housing.

I should mention that the expanded housing eligibility applies to all programmes. This is especially important when applied to other new programmes under the agreement. The expanded mortgage and rent relief scheme will increase the choice to tenants both to enter and remain in

private rental accommodation if they so wish. This is achieved by the new rental support and bond assistance schemes. Mortgage relief, will of course continue to be provided.

The local government and community housing programme is one in which we are particularly interested. Co-operative housing is one of the key elements in this programme. It is intended to use Government funds as seeding funds only for co-operative housing. The bulk of funds should be obtained from private financial sources. This will give a high multiplier effect to our own limited funds in this area.

Community housing will be funded, thus giving private organisations additional scope to assist people into suitable housing.

I hope that local government will seize the opportunity to become involved in these forms of housing. As the third tier of Government, local authorities are perhaps best placed to understand and service the housing needs of their citizens.

A co-ordinated approach to the provision of crisis accommodation will be enhanced by the crisis accommodation programme under the agreement. We have the opportunity now to dovetail capital assistance with recurrent assistance under the Department of Social Security's supported accommodation assistance programme.

I would like to thank the Federal and other State Ministers and their staff for the effort they have applied to produce the 1984 agreement. I thank also the officers of the State Housing Commission for their support and advice in this matter.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. Neil Oliver.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Consideration of Tabled Paper

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [4.36 p.m.]: I congratulate His Excellency the Governor upon his appointment. I am confident that he will uphold the traditions, importance and dignity of the position. We are all well aware that the position of Governor is significant in our democratic Westminster system as well as in the federation of Australian States.

I congratulate the new member for Central Province, Hon. Eric Charlton. He follows in the footsteps of Hon. Gordon Atkinson whose term

was regrettably cut short. Nevertheless his contribution to this Parliament was of consequence.

Hon. Tom Knight has covered the problems of South Province in his address and I do not wish to go over them once more. However, I cannot let this debate pass without commenting on the vulnerability of the electorate's major industry, and the State's largest employer and most important income earner—the primary producer. It is very disturbing to note that the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has estimated that in 1984-85 the average income of Australia's 170 000 farmers will be \$8 200. That figure is down 29 per cent on last year's figure. The net value of rural production in 1984-85 is expected to be \$3.680 million, which is down 25 per cent on the figure for the previous year, or 29 per cent in real terms.

Everyone is seemingly basking in the fact that we are having a good season, but crop production is expected to be down nine per cent this year. The difficulties faced by Australian farmers are brought about by the fact that prices received for farmers' produce have risen by one per cent, but their costs have risen by 7.5 per cent. Much of the blame for this must be sheeted home to the Government because taxes and charges, both Federal and State, have led to a sharp jump in farm sector costs. For the past four years farm costs have increased three and a half times as much as the increases which the farmers have received for their farm produce.

What will happen if we have a capital gains tax or a wealth tax? Let us face it; both taxes are being mentioned freely, be it by way of a summit on taxation or otherwise. What effect will they have on a primary producer?

If we have a one per cent wealth tax—most people would consider a one per cent wealth tax would not be a very high amount—that would add a further cost of \$4 200 a year for the average Australian farmer. In other words, it would cut his expected income this year from \$8 200 to \$4 000. However, one could say, "But a capital gains tax or a wealth tax would not be imposed other than when the property was sold". One must admit that when one is buying into a business or carrying on a business, one looks on such taxes and costs as annual items and amortises them over a period.

Not only would a capital gains tax have a drastic effect upon the viability of the farmer's budget, but also the consequences on the sale of properties would be quite disastrous. We have already had reported to us in this debate the evidence of the indebtedness of Western Australian farmers. The Western Australian Department of Agriculture points out that possibly 15 per cent of growers in

1984-85 will be unable to service their debts. The average farm debt is \$171 034, an increase of 11 per cent over the previous 12 months.

There is no doubt that more farmers will be forced off the land. That will apply not only to the small farmers; regrettably, it will apply also to the good farmers. What will happen to the people who move off the farms if we have a capital gains tax? I know the Labor Party has a great theory that it does not matter if a farmer goes broke because another one will take his place. Hon. Graeme Campbell, when he was with the Minister for Primary Industry in Esperance, said that he thought it would be a bit of a giggle. I assure members of this House that it is not a bit of a giggle.

Hon. Mark Nevill: Rubbish!

Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Is Hon. Mark Nevill denying that is what Mr Campbell said?

Hon. Mark Nevill: This "giggle" bit—what is that?

Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The Labor Party has the remarkable theory that another farmer takes a broke farmer's place and it is not any great loss. However, if we have a capital gains tax, no other farmers will take their places. We will have the situation that we saw recently in the Esperance region when it was quite obvious that a number of properties should have gone on the market, but the mortgagees decided not to put them on the market because there just were not enough buyers. The mortgagees preferred to allow the present farmers to carry on in spite of their indebtedness and the impossibility of continuing otherwise.

We must look at the Australian situation as a whole to find out why farmers are in such difficulties. One of the major aspects must be the state of Australian indebtedness. As at 30 June 1984, the Commonwealth had a public debt of \$30.1 billion, most of it repayable in Australian dollars. The States had an indebtedness of \$16.8 billion, almost completely repayable in Australian dollars. That gives a total of \$47 billion, and there was an overseas debt through Government securities of a further \$7.2 billion. To service the Australian debt, the public sector borrowing will require seven per cent of Australia's gross domestic product. In the past 10 years, the public sector borrowing in Australia has taken 5.4 per cent.

We should look at the indebtedness of other countries to make a comparison. In the United States of America, it takes 3.5 per cent. In other words, twice the quantity of our gross domestic product services the overseas debts than is the case in the United States.

The problem is that farmers are being priced out of the overseas markets. As members would be

aware, they are competing with such countries as the United States. One finds that while farm inflation in Australia runs at seven per cent, in America it is 2.5 per cent. It is little wonder that the farmers in the United States can outproduce us and outbid us on world markets.

When one looks back at the servicing of Australia's debts, one of the frightening things is the worry about whether our Budget will turn out as well as the Federal Government hoped. In its Budget figures, the Government assumed that the gross domestic product will increase by four per cent, with a Consumer Price Index increase of 5.25 per cent, and an increase of 5.5 per cent in average weekly earnings. However, people say that the Budget is a little bit rubbery and anything could happen. If we have a decrease in the gross domestic product or an increase in salaries, we will see an even greater deficit than the one predicted.

To cover our debts, Australia must borrow \$4 billion on the domestic market. The consequences of high cost borrowings to service the debts, let alone anything else, are frightening. By going into the marketplace to borrow \$4 billion, undoubtedly the Government will force up interest rates. As the interest rates rise, so overseas funds will flow into Australia because the investors will be assured of a good return from their money. The investors will receive higher interest rates in Australia than they would get on the market.

This will put pressure on Australia's dollar, and its value will rise. What effect will this have on the primary producer, as the value of the Australian dollar rises and the value of the farmer's primary produce decreases?

It is of crucial significance to know how high is Australia's deficit each year. One finds that the Federal Government goes to the unions and lets them decide what will be the Budget deficit in the coming year.

I gather that an amount of \$1.3 billion extra was allowed in our deficit this year so that certain policies of the unions could be imposed on everybody. This will have dire consequences to the rural economy.

Where is that taking Australia, and in particular the rural economy and the viability of Australia's finance and, more particularly, the Western Australian farmers? Unfortunately, we are becoming very much like Mexico or Argentina.

In closing, I quote from *The West Australian* of 11 October as follows—

Australians living on foreign money

CANBERRA: Australians, we are now living beyond our means, on money borrowed from foreigners.

Indeed, things have now gone so far, that there must be "serious question" about how much longer the process can be sustained.

These grim warnings were tucked away in a report that an expert committee has produced, on Australia's trade in so-called "invisible items".

The committee, headed by Dr Susan Bambrick, identified a very disturbing trend.

That report was pointing out that had that money borrowed from overseas been invested in income earning businesses whether they be agricultural or mining ventures where Australia could sell more produce overseas, perhaps there might have been more benefit to Australia, but the money was borrowed to prop up social services.

While Mr Dans can have his accords and can assure the Australian worker that his wages will be secure and his average weekly earnings will grow by five per cent, members have only to look at the figures I presented to realise the dire consequences for the rural economy. And on this matter of accords, I will quote from an article entitled "National Farm Talk" written by Mr Ian McLachlan, the President of the National Farmers' Federation, as follows—

Confidential accords in the shipping industry have concerned exporters for some time now, because they have suspected that these agreements have resulted in higher shipping charges from Australia.

Their suspicions were confirmed at the July meeting of the Australian Shipping Council in Sydney when a confidential report showed that freight increases of up to 35 per cent have resulted from the accords.

This is where these accords are taking our economy. I reluctantly support the motion.

HON. FRED MCKENZIE (North-East Metropolitan) [4.52 p.m.]: In spite of what Opposition members have said about the Budget, I believe it to be a good one. We have heard a number of groans, and I myself am not fully happy with the Budget; nevertheless, we must all suffer our disappointments.

We have only so much money in the kitty and the Budget has to balance revenues gained by way of taxes and charges against expenditures. The Minister for Budget Management (Hon. Joe Berinson) has done an excellent job in bringing about a balance between the charges the community can bear on the one hand and the capital

works programmes and other outgoings necessary on the other hand.

I do not want members opposite to think that any disappointment is confined to rural areas. I know the problems rural people are suffering, but I hope they are prepared to consider the problems suffered by underprivileged people in my electorate.

The Minister for Budget Management has endeavoured to spread around the good and the not so good aspects of the Budget across the board. He deserves to be congratulated for his efforts.

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Minister for Budget Management) [4.54 p.m.]: We have had a lengthy debate on this motion and many members have contributed to it. I thank them all, but none more than Hon. Fred McKenzie.

The subject matter of the debate has been unlimited and that is in keeping with well-understood practice. No-one complains about that. On the other hand, the procedure has the effect of making it impractical to attempt any detailed response to the many subject matters raised. I believe that position is well-understood as well.

In closing this debate I therefore restrict myself to a single comment which is to endorse the congratulations and the welcome Hon. Peter Wells expressed a little earlier to Hon. Eric Charlton. We look forward to Mr Charlton's contribution to the affairs of the House, and even with the limits imposed by our inevitable future disagreements, we wish him well in the important career on which he has now embarked.

I commend the motion to the House.

Question put and passed.

PAY-ROLL TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 21 November.

HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [4.56 p.m.]: I support this measure because I really have no option. It is interesting to refer briefly to the history of payroll tax in Australia. It was first introduced by the Commonwealth in 1941 and for the past 30-odd years it has been a very unpopular tax. As time passed the States began to clamour for a greater share of taxing availability in the community. I can remember the stamp duty receipts tax which was introduced by the Brand Government in this State. At the time a lot of Western Australians, including me, thought this would be the answer to the State's desire to have a growth tax to help meet the State's needs to pro-

vide various services to the community. Unfortunately a High Court decision negated that move and that source of tax was no longer available.

Negotiations continued between the States and the Commonwealth culminating in a Premiers' Conference which resolved eventually that payroll tax would be passed from the Commonwealth to the States for use as a growth tax. Members might find it fascinating to learn that at that Premiers' Conference the Commonwealth indicated that it believed there were only two areas of taxation that could possibly be transferred: Payroll tax and personal income tax. One can well imagine that the Commonwealth was reluctant to give up personal income tax as an avenue for collecting money from Australian citizens. So it was decided that the States would take over the role of inflicting payroll tax on the community. As I have said, there is no question that it was—and still is—an unpopular tax.

Payroll tax is inflationary in its application on wages and salaries. The larger an employer's payroll, the more payroll tax he must meet. It is therefore a tax on employment, and this is well-recognised. While we need funds to run the State's affairs, we must get them from somewhere, but this tax certainly inhibits employment opportunities and the progress of the commercial world.

In recognising that disability, successive Governments, and this Government, have continued with some relief and the rate of assessment has been altered from time to time. This was done under the previous Government and now this Government is extending that system.

The current proposal really comes in four parts. Those firms or employers paying under \$200 000 in wages will be exempt. Those paying from \$200 000 to \$800 000 will pay a variable tax of up to 4.75c. In the third proposition those paying over \$800 000 will have the full rate applied.

Of course the fourth category, which deals with exemptions can be found in section 10 of the parent Act. There are a number of circumstances whereby exemptions may be granted to certain undertakings that would normally be liable for the payment of payroll tax.

I do not propose to go through all those exemptions, because it is not necessary, however, I am bound to comment on one particular aspect. A number of exemptions were granted recently under section 10(1)(k). For the record that section states "be a body or organisation exempted under subsection (3) of this section".

That is a wide power of exemption which allows Government the discretion as to whom it should exempt and it comes under the portfolio of the Minister for Budget Management.

I have perused issues of the *Government Gazette* and I wish to make particular reference to the *Government Gazette* of 3 August 1984 when an exemption was made to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Western Australia, (Incorporated). In the *Government Gazette* of 23 September 1984, exemption was granted to the Balgo Hills Aboriginal Community. The same exemption was granted to the Bidiyadanga Community La Grange (Incorporated).

Another exemption was granted to the Jaycee Community Foundation (Inc.). On 12 October 1984 the *Government Gazette* again listed two other exemptions to the Upuil-Upurilil Ngurratja Community Incorporated and the Ngangganawili Community Incorporated. I gather those two communities are Aboriginal organisations which have been favoured with exemptions.

In the *Government Gazette* of 26 October 1984 an exemption was granted to the Lombardina Community Incorporated. On 2 November 1984 exemption was granted to the Warburton Community Incorporated and to the Irrunytju Community Incorporated. Other exemptions were made also. I have mentioned these groups by way of example. They may be perfectly legitimate exemptions and worthy, but I wonder whether the Government is making a minefield for itself in using this power of discretion to grant exemptions to those communities not spelt out in other provisions in the Act.

When one extends this privilege by way of discretion to communities then of course there is a grey area as to whether other organisations could be granted the same privilege. There is a difficult line of demarcation, as I see it, and I would be very unhappy if I were placed in the situation where I had to make a determination as an administrator.

I will be interested to hear the Minister's response, because I think these exemptions seem to be unusual. I have not raised them because they are Aboriginal organisations as such, but it seems that in granting payroll tax exemptions to these organisations, one wonders what income they may have. Indeed, they must be fairly substantial organisations, but they wish to be exempted. If they qualify then they must be notable charitable organisations. One would hope they are not strictly free organisations. There are plenty of other exemptions allowed in the Act. Charity organis-

ations may be another example, and it seems the Government is creating problems for itself and for successive Governments.

I commend the Government for its easing of the exemptions by varying the rates that apply. This is an extension of what has been done by previous Governments, but I make the point that the Government has only been able to make this reduction in the light of the massive income tax increases it has imposed upon the people of Western Australia since it came to office.

These figures are well-known; they have been published in public documents. The Government has helped small businesses, and I give it credit for that, but it has done that in a back-handed way. Might I say that the published figures are in the Western Australian Budget papers and in the publications of the Bureau of Statistics.

In 1983-84 the Burke Government imposed a severe increase of 14.3 per cent per annum on State taxation collections on the community. As far as *per capita* is concerned, in the same year the Burke Government imposed an average increase of 12.4 per cent per annum.

With departmental charges collections, in 1983-84 the Burke Government imposed an average increase per annum on the community of 21.4 per cent. As far as *per capita* per annum charges in the same period, the average increase was 19.37 per cent.

I mention these figures because they are pertinent to the Bill before the House. This legislation would not be in the form it is if there had not been increased taxes. However, this Government has gone further; it is the first Government in Australia to reduce the rate of payroll tax, but it has only been possible because in the first instance the Government imposed very great charges upon the community and therefore has money in hand and is able to make these concessions to the system of payroll tax.

Having made those remarks, I have no intention of opposing the measure. However, I believe my comments are very relevant to the Bill and to the administration of Government in Western Australia. I support the Bill.

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Minister for Budget Management) [5.11 p.m.]: Hon. Vic Ferry raised two main questions. The first related to the area of exemptions under the Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act. The second goes to his rather reluctant praise—if it was praise at all—of the Government's very generous approach to the relieving of payroll tax liability.

Turning to the question of exemptions, Mr Ferry pointed out to this House, that most of the

State taxation Acts provide exemptions for both public benevolent and charitable organisations. The Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act was rather peculiar in that, until an amendment earlier this year, it provided, only under section 10(1)(b), for exemptions to religious or public benevolent institutions. There is a well-understood difference in taxation law between organisations that come within the descriptions of "public benevolent" and those that come within the description of "charitable". The first of these is a much narrower concept than the second.

In moving to the amendment to allow exemptions to charitable organisations, it is true that the Bill was expressed to empower the Minister, rather than the department, to exempt charitable organisations and, not only that, but also the Minister's power was put on a discretionary basis rather than on a mandatory basis. Section 10(3) says simply that the Minister may, on the application from an organisation which has any charitable object, provide an exemption.

I make it clear to the House that, although the Act empowers the Minister to provide those exemptions to charitable organisations on a discretionary basis, I have adopted the practice, and have informed the Commissioner of Taxation accordingly, that exemptions should be granted to all charitable organisations.

As to the definition of the word "charitable" for these purposes, I rely on the advice of the commissioner. He approaches this matter in respect of payroll tax on exactly the same basis as he does when making similar decisions within his own authority in relation to stamp duty and financial institutions duty, for example.

If I can make that much clear: Firstly, the determination as to the relevance of the charitable description to any organisation is a matter for which I rely on the commissioner; secondly, the standards by which he makes that judgment are the same as those which he applies in other taxation Acts; and thirdly, I have adopted the practice of allowing such exemptions to all organisations which come within the description.

I do not have with me the details of the incorporated Aboriginal communities to which Hon. Vic Ferry referred. However, I am satisfied that the advice of the commissioner that they are appropriate for charitable exemptions is correct. In passing, I mention that the fact that these communities are incorporated is itself an indication of their non-profit and non-trading nature.

The second matter raised by the member goes to the cost of the payroll tax relief which is provided by this Bill and the means by which the

Government is funding it. The member was good enough to agree that the reductions in payroll taxes were desirable. I guess he did not have much option in that respect as I think there would hardly be anyone in the State who would think otherwise. I think it is fair to say that the twofold reduction of payroll tax which this Bill provides by the way of the reduced rate and the combination of increased exemptions level, together with its extended taper range, constitutes a very important measure—even a dramatic measure would not be putting it too high—in terms of State taxation. It is the first time that any State has done anything with payroll tax except to increase it. It is also the first time that this State has advanced the exemption level and the taper range to anything like the extent that has been done in this Bill.

In its pre-Budget discussions with industry, the Government had nothing put to it so often as the proposition that a reduction in payroll tax ought to be its first priority in stimulating industry in general and in providing encouragement and impetus to small business in particular.

We have reflected the views of the business community in our approach to this Bill. The measure has been universally recognised as an important measure and has been universally welcomed. I am glad to see that Hon. Vic Ferry and his colleagues in the Opposition are happy enough to join with the general opinion.

In spite of his acceptance of the desirability of this relief, Hon. Vic Ferry was rather grudging in his description of how it would be funded. This relief is not being funded by way of increased taxes elsewhere. It is certainly not being funded by increases in past years which were the basis of the figures which he quoted. The fact is to the contrary, that, together with the reduction of payroll tax have come very significant reductions in the other main areas of State taxation. The reduction in FID is very costly and there are reductions in stamp duty as well.

Let there be no misunderstanding about the source of these funds. They have not come through extra burdens being imposed elsewhere. The cost of the relief measures in this financial year and the cost of our undertaking in advance to retain lower rates in the next financial year is to be met out of the State development fund.

I do no more than mention in passing that the funds which are available from the State development fund are only available because the Government has been prepared to show initiative in areas which the Opposition has condemned.

Hon. G. E. Masters: We were upset with FID when you introduced it.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: We were also upset with FID and we were upset even more with the deficit which the previous Government—

Several members interjected.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: —of which Mr Masters was a member—

Hon. G. E. Masters: A proud member.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: —bequeathed to us, and with the responsibility we then had to bring the financial affairs of the State into order.

Several members interjected.

Hon. A. A. Lewis: The Minister continues to stonewall his own Bill.

Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Straight bat all the way, Mr Lewis, and I am really pleased to have the member's recognition on the way we play.

The Government has a great deal of satisfaction in its being able to take the initiative which this Bill represents. It is designed to encourage and stimulate private industry. From the reception which industry has given to it we have every reason to believe it will achieve its goal. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

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

PAY-ROLL TAX AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 21 November.

HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [5.23 p.m.]: This is a consequential Bill to the one the House has just passed. The Bill before the House allows for a reduction of 0.25 per cent in the rate applicable to payroll tax and, as indicated in the previous debate, the Opposition supports this move.

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 (Minister for Budget Management), and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [5.24 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 4 December 1984 at 11.00 a.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.25 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

LAND

Squatters

444. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Lands and Surveys:

What is the Government's policy with respect to squatters along the coast north of Perth?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

The Government is aware of the inherited, but continuing problem of squatters on the coast north of Perth.

The Minister for Lands and Surveys has had discussions with some of the local authorities concerned and has personally acquainted himself with the problem by inspecting several of the settlements.

Through the co-operation of the Ministers for Planning and the Environment the reports from two current committees will assist the Government in determining an integral State-wide policy. The report from the West Midlands coastal townsites advisory committee is nearing finalisation but the West Coast Working Group is unlikely to complete its task until possibly mid-1985.

It is necessary to thoroughly assess this long-standing problem to assist in the evaluation of solutions and obviously, to project the budgetary effect of any policy determined.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Department: Investigation

446. Hon. FRED McKENZIE, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Have Michael Hughes and Associates of 8b Spotted Gum Way, Willetton, ever been the subject of investigation by the Consumer Affairs Department?
- (2) If so, what was the basis of such investigation?
- (3) What was the result of such investigation?
- (4) Did the Consumer Affairs Department take any action to curtail the activities of the firm?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) Only in terms of a single request from the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs, South Australia concerning advertisements published in that State.
- (2) To discuss and require substantiation of claims made in the advertisements.
- (3) A report to South Australia concerning the interview with the proprietor of Michael Hughes and Associates.
- (4) No, because there was no evidence received by the department of similar advertising by the same firm in Western Australia.

COMMUNITY SERVICES: CHILDREN

Ngal-a Mothercraft Home

447. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Planning representing the Minister for Youth and Community Services:

- (1) Is it correct that State Government funds to Ngal-a Mothercraft Home have been substantially reduced on the grounds that "Ngal-a has quite a substantial amount of accumulated funds" amounting to nearly \$1 million in its number 2 account, as suggested by the Minister for Transport, Mr Grill, in the Legislative Assembly on 15 November?
- (2) Is it also correct that Ngal-a has now issued notices to some staff to finish by Christmas?
- (3) If so, how many employees are involved?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) The actual grant made to Ngal-a Mothercraft Home in the Financial Year 1983-84 was \$1.816 million.
The estimate which has been included for Ngal-a in the 1984-85 Treasury miscellaneous services vote is \$1.600 million. The accumulated funds in the Ngal-a No. 2 account was a factor which was taken into consideration when determining funding for Ngal-a this financial year.
- (2) This question should be directed to the board of management.
- (3) As in (2) above.

GAMBLING: CASINO*Burswood Island: Environmental Studies*

448. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Administrative Services:

- (1) What steps has he now taken or have now been taken to seek the advice of the Environmental Protection Authority, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, the Waterways Commission and other relevant Government departments and agencies on the choice of Burswood Island as a casino site?
- (2) When does he expect construction of the casino project to begin?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) The developers chosen by the Government have been informed that it is their responsibility to obtain the necessary approvals from Government and statutory bodies to enable the development on Burswood Island to proceed.
- (2) As soon as the necessary clearances have been obtained and the agreement between the Minister and the developers has been ratified by Parliament.

GAMBLING: CASINO*Burswood Park Trust*

449. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Administrative Services:

- (1) Is it correct that the Perth City Council will be invited to be a member of the Burswood Park Trust?
- (2) If so, why is the PCC to be included on this occasion when its opinion on the Burswood Island as a site was not sought until after a decision was announced in April this year?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is desirable for the Perth City Council to be represented on Burswood Park Trust to ensure that it is involved in expenditure of the annual income derived from one per cent of gross casino profit payable to the trust.

GAMBLING: CASINO*Burswood Island: MRPA*

450. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Has the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority yet come to a decision on whether it favours a casino on Burswood Island?
- (2) Why has the Minister not asked for the MRPA view, especially given the MRPA's own categorisation of the land within the metropolitan region scheme?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) and (2) The answers to question 36 are still applicable.

451. *Postponed.*

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS*Leonora Aboriginal Reserve*

452. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Planning representing the Minister with special responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Has a decision been made as to the distribution of funds provided by Esso to compensate for disturbance of the Leonora Aboriginal Reserve?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If so, what is the decision, and which Aboriginal people will benefit from the expenditure of the funds?

Hon. PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Submissions have been requested from local Aboriginal groups by the Aboriginal Lands Trust. These are being considered and will enable a decision to be made in the near future.
- (3) As above.

WATER RESOURCES*Leonora*

453. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What is the capacity of the water supply holding tanks at Leonora?
- (2) How long will these reserves last, at peak usage, in the event of a breakdown at the water source?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) 1 308 cubic metres.
- (2) Approximately 20 hours.

454. *Postponed.*

LAND

Management

455. Hon. W. N. STRETCH, to the Attorney General:

Further to the Minister's speech on the Conservation and Land Management Bill made on 7 November could he provide the following information—

- (1) Table copies of the two letters sent by the Premier to local authorities (*Hansard* page 3620)?
- (2) List the titles and dates of publication of the 13 reports on land use planning or management made over the past 9-10 years (*Hansard* page 3622)?
- (3) (a) List the titles, classification and principal duties of each of the three representatives of the component agencies situated at Karratha (*Hansard* page 3623); and
(b) list other departmental barriers, apart from having incompatible radio systems (*Hansard* page 3623)?
- (4) (a) For what reasons have the Forests Department aircraft not been relocated to northern parts of the State in recent years for fire control and other duties (*Hansard* page 3623);
(b) what plans have since been made to allocate some of these aircraft to northern fire control duties during the winter;
(c) during 1983, how many flying hours has each of the aircraft logged for the periods November-April, and May-October; and
(d) what use is generally made of the aircraft during the period May-October?
- (5) (a) How many training officers does the Forests Department employ and what are the titles and classifications of each; and

(b) how many wages staff does the Forests Department employ?

(6) (a) To what extent did the Forests Department mapping and inventory facilities contribute to the following Department of Agriculture 1:250 000 vegetation maps—

- (i) Collie;
- (ii) Busselton/Augusta;
- (iii) Pemberton/Irwin; and

(b) to what extent did the Forests Department mapping and inventory facilities contribute to the several System 6 maps covering geology, soils, vegetation and land use in Department of Conservation and Environment bulletins?

(7) What are the titles, classifications and principal functions of each of the Forests Department staff at—

- (a) Kununurra;
- (b) Broome;
- (c) Narrogin;
- (d) Kalgoorlie; and
- (e) Esperance?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

(1) to (7) I will provide the information to the member in writing in due course.

LAND: RESERVES

Environmental Protection Authority

456. Hon. W. N. STRETCH, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for the Environment:

Further to the Acting Premier's introduction to the Conservation and Land Management Bill (*Hansard* page 855), regarding the formation of a comprehensive State system of nature reserves and national parks—

- (1) What action has the Minister taken regarding the implementation of endorsed EPA Red Book proposals for System 7, and in particular—
 - (a) Point Coulomb Nature Reserve;
 - (b) Walcott Inlet;
 - (c) Prince Regent River Nature Reserve;
 - (d) Cape Londonderry;

- (e) Lake Argyle; and
- (f) King Leopold Ranges?
- (2) (a) What action has been taken with regard to the proposed Ningaloo Reef Marine Park since publication of a draft management plan;
- (b) when is a decision likely to be made on the reservation and management of this area;
- (c) which Government agencies co-operated in the preparation of the draft management plan, and were fisheries staff from the Department of Fisheries involved; and
- (d) to what extent was the Forests Department involved in the preparation of the draft management plan?
- (3) What action has been taken to create a national park in the Kennedy Ranges by the present Government?
- (4) Has the present Government halted the intended reservation, extension, or improvement in security of any of the above areas?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

- (1) (a) to (f) Government has not progressed proposals relating to these areas in view of the possible implications of the Aboriginal land inquiry.
- (2) (a) Public submissions invited on the report of the marine park working group have been reviewed by the Department of Conservation and Environment. The report was not prepared as a draft management plan neither has a draft management plan been prepared at this stage.

The summary of public submissions and the report were subsequently reviewed by the Environmental Protection Authority as requested by Cabinet in November 1983.

The EPA submitted its report and recommendations to me in September 1984.

A Cabinet minute has been prepared by me in order to proceed further with the proposal for the Ningaloo Marine Park.

- (b) Unknown, as various administrative arrangements have to be made be-

fore the proposed marine park can be reviewed. No draft management plan has been prepared.

- (c) The National Parks Authority convened the marine park working group which included representatives from the authority, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Western Australian Museum. Many other Government and non-government agencies assisted in various ways in the preparation of the report. As stated above, no draft management plan has been prepared.
- (d) The Forests Department was not involved in the preparation of the report.
- (3) No action has been taken by the present Government to alter the moratorium placed on the reservation of the proposed Kennedy Range National Park by the previous Government.
- (4) See above.

CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

Raffles: Licensed Premises

- 457. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Administrative Services:

I refer to his answer to my question 46 of Thursday, 2 August 1984, and ask—

- (1) Is it still intended that legislation will be introduced this session to overcome the long-standing prohibition on selling raffle tickets on licensed premises?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) If not, why not?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Difficulties are being experienced in drafting the detailed legislation necessary to provide for the sale of so-called "beer tickets" on licensed premises.

The legislation will also provide for the sale of raffle tickets on licensed premises.

458 and 459. *Postponed.*

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

LIQUOR: LICENCES

Applications

203. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Leader of the House:

I refer to a question without notice which I asked the Leader of the House on 23 October 1984. Does the Minister recall that I asked him about liquor licences and he said he understood there had been 21 applications for such licences?

Hon. D. K. Dans: Didn't I send you a letter?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: No. I am simply asking whether that information is forthcoming and when it will be available.

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

I am sure I either answered the member's query by a question on notice or in a letter. I shall check the position. If the letter has not been sent, I shall send the member a copy of it.

