of Education, the most highly-paid man in the department, is serving on 27 committees. It is time the Minister for Education told the director-general that he should delegate some of these duties to the deputy director, or even to high school teachers who could perform such duties probably more effectively than the director-general. That is all I wish to say on the Appropriation Bill at this stage. I will have something to say about abattoirs on another occasion next week, I believe.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Cash.

House adjourned at 11.25 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 30th October, 1969

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. CLOSING DAYS OF SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Sittings of the House

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of the fact that the first part of the session is drawing to its closing stages, I wonder whether the Leader of the House could acquaint us with the times at which he contemplates the House shall sit during the coming week. I realise that the information could not be perfectly accurate at this stage, and we would not hold him to it; but I would be grateful if he could indicate to the best of his ability what is contemplated.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The objective is to complete by next Friday as much of the legislation on the notice papers of both Houses of Parliament as is required to be completed. With this in mind the House will sit this evening, as I have already indicated. The House will sit at normal time on Tuesday; namely, at 4.30 p.m. We will sit at 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday; 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, as Standing Orders already provide; and earlier on Friday. Whether we finish on Friday depends on the progress we make until that time. If it becomes obvious that we will not finish on Friday I think it would be the wish of the Premier—and certainly it would be a wish I would share—not to sit until the early hours on Saturday morning but to come back and finish the following week. A good deal depends on the Leader of the Opposition himself and upon other members in the Chamber.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And in another place.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, over whom we have no control whatever. So far as this House is concerned, a good deal depends upon ourselves with respect to how quickly or slowly we deal with legislation.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the manner in which he couched his question and I have explained my intention to the best of my ability.

2. CLOSE OF SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

Legislation Left on Notice Paper

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Minister for Mines:

At the close of the first period last year two very interesting pieces of legislation were carried over on the notice paper until the March period. This gave the Opposition an opportunity to study the legislation and the commencement of the second period was much more interesting as a consequence.

Can the Minister foreshadow whether any legislation will be left on the notice paper for the Opposition to study and digest before the March period?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

I think I can foreshadow that some legislation will be left on the notice paper. However, I am not able to comment as to whether the items will need a long time to be digested.

The Leader of the Opposition is referring, in particular, to one Bill which was carried over at a comparable time last year. This was the sort of Bill that required considerable study and it was brought forward at that time for that very reason.

I, personally, may have a couple of Bills—if I may use that expression—that could come into this category. I am trying to complete them in time and members would accept them, I feel sure, even if I give the first and second readings on the last day, in the certain knowledge that the debate would not be continued until the March period.

QUESTIONS (2): ON NOTICE

1. *This question was postponed.*

2. WHEAT

Quotas

The Hon. E. C. HOUSE asked the Minister for Mines:

How many complaints by letter, telephone or personal interview, have been received by the Wheat Quota Committee in respect of the wheat quotas issued up to and including Wednesday, the 29th October, 1969?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Since the 9,145 wheat quota certificates were mailed, 135 letters, 200 telephone enquiries and 210 interviews have been dealt with by the Wheat Quota Committee. These have been concerned with varied aspects of the issue of quota certificates.

ROAD CLOSURE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th October.

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East) [2.40 p.m.]: The long title of this Bill is—

A Bill for an Act to provide for the closure of portion of Mount Street and Rights of way and for incidental and other purposes.

It is certainly a mini-Bill; nevertheless it reveals an outline of things to come, because it seeks to close a portion of Mount Street, Perth. I have been able to peruse a plan of the area, because the Clerk was good enough to obtain one for me. I thought the Minister would have provided one for the information of members.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I would have done had I known at the time that I had one. I have the plan in my possession now.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I was fortunate enough to be able to study a plan of the area. Whilst I am not as familiar as some members are with Perth roads—I am more familiar with country roads—I have taken the opportunity to obtain as much information as I possibly could. I have looked at maps of the city, road maps, and I even inspected the area so that I may be fully conversant with the position.

Further, in the corridor of the Legislative Council there is Map No. 27 of the 1963 metropolitan region scheme, and I also consulted that. With the closure of Mount Street, Malcolm Street will become the main traffic road, access being from Elder Street, Harvest Terrace, and King's Park Road. All traffic feeding into these streets will proceed to St. George's Terrace, or *vice versa*. Those people who desire to enter Mount Street from the King's Park end will have to use Harvest Terrace, Malcolm Street, or King's Park Road, proceeding down Cliff Street, and then into Mount Street. From the Terrace end access will have to be made along Elder Street and St. George's Terrace. Mount Street will thus become a cul-de-sac for vehicular traffic.

The use of Mount Street by vehicular traffic has been restricted since July, 1966, when it became virtually a one-way street. Since that time I have ascertained that traffic counts have shown that the number of vehicles using this street is dwindling. The Legislative Assembly member who represents the district in which Mount Street is situated has canvassed the residents in the area affected to find out their reactions to the closure. Almost all of those he interviewed were quite happy with the proposal, claiming that much discomfort will be removed, such as noise, dust, and the fumes from cars. They will certainly appreciate the quiet atmosphere that will be created by fewer cars using the street with a resultant lessening of the noise and fumes. Whilst the construction of the freeway was proceeding the residents of that area had to put up with a great deal of noise created by vehicular traffic and the construction work.

The provision of a footway across the freeway is certainly essential and will be appreciated by those pedestrians who will use it. Those residents of the area who are not too old, who do not suffer from physical handicaps, and who enjoy reasonably good health will, I am sure, find that the walk to town will improve their health, because there is no doubt that nowadays people do not walk enough. Therefore I cannot see anything detrimental in people taking a little walk.

At times, the traffic flowing along Malcolm Street, King's Park Road, Harvest Terrace, and Elder Street will be extremely heavy, and it may be necessary to provide pedestrian lights, or "Walk" lights at a point near the Mount Hospital, or to restrict the speed of the traffic in that area; but no doubt the Main Roads Department will be closely watching the position. If some action along those lines is not taken, some people may have trouble crossing St. George's Terrace from many of the medical suites in that area to the Mount Hospital.

My research discloses that the first Road Closure Act was 32 Victoria, No. 7, in 1868, which sought to provide room for new public offices in Albany. There have been 397 Road Closure Acts in all, the last one being No. 79 of 1964, when several shire councils and districts were involved, and the road closures were consolidated in the one Act.

In reading some of the old Road Closure Acts it is interesting to note the names of old goldfields towns. Those towns have

long since gone and now are names only. It is also interesting to note that at one time or another they must have been big enough to warrant a Road Closure Act being introduced. With those few remarks, I support the Bill.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan) [2.45 p.m.]: I support the Bill. This is a street that I have used over a number of years, both coming to Parliament House and on making my way home again. The name of the street indicates that it refers to Mt. Eliza. It was a way that was used to get up to Mt. Eliza, which is now King's Park. I am a little concerned as to whether the residents in that area will be as happy as they think they might be. Mount Street is one of the steepest in the metropolitan area, and if tradesmen travel down it in their vehicles to deliver goods, and then have to travel back the same way, I can imagine that their vehicles will be in second gear most of the way—particularly if it is the milkman's vehicle first thing in the morning—and there will be much revving of engines which will be likely to upset some of the residents.

The extra traffic will be directed down Malcolm Street. I am a little concerned whether it may increase to a considerable extent at Milligan Street, which is the next cross street and where traffic lights are situated. When we have been discussing traffic matters over the last few years we have been warned about traffic at that spot, and therefore I hope that the extra traffic that will use the intersection will not cause bottlenecks, because if it does there will be trouble.

I was pleased, to a certain extent, when I heard that Mount Street is to be closed, because on several occasions I have been held up behind large trucks carrying liquid sugar, and I found that the best course to follow was to remain stationary until they got off the road and I had free access to travel up the hill. I do not think the closure of the road will cause any inconvenience either to traffic or to the local residents, because it will be their own personal grizzle. I support the Bill.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) [2.47 p.m.]: I discussed this Bill in private with the Minister for Traffic yesterday evening. I raised the point with him of the number of vehicles which, particularly in the peak periods around about 4.30 to 5.30 p.m., now travel down Mount Street from Kings Park Road. A good deal of this traffic turns right down Spring Street.

When the proposals in the Bill are put into operation, that traffic will not be able to travel down Mount Street, but will have to continue down St. George's Terrace to Milligan Street and then turn right at the traffic lights. This will create a bottleneck and cause the traffic to bank up along St. George's Terrace to Malcolm Street. The drivers of vehicles who travel down Spring Street are those who desire to travel to the east or west of the city along Mounts Bay Road, and they turn at the traffic lights at the foot of Spring Street near the Emu Brewery. Therefore, to avoid bottlenecks, I feel that the traffic will have to be separated in some way.

I often travel along the roads I have mentioned and I have found that those motorists who wish to turn right into that short length of Mount Street before turning left into Spring Street often cause traffic to bank up right back to the lights. When this road closure takes place it will add to such congestion and I do not know what the end result will be. The Minister for Traffic has told me that there is an answer to this problem and it will be resolved, but action should be taken fairly quickly, because we do not wish to make another mistake in the same way as a mistake was made on the freeway itself.

The need for traffic travelling along George Street to cross over Hay Street is a bad feature of planning. The number of vehicles which will be entering St. George's Terrace in the peak period—where there is only one lane to turn right, out of St. George's Terrace into Mount Street and Spring Street—will be so great that there will be traffic congestion in this area, unless there is a plan for some diversion of the traffic of which we have not been told. With those reservations, I support the Bill.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [2.51 p.m.]: I regret that I did not make available to members last night copies of the map which I now have before me. I would point out that I received the second reading notes only a second before I stood up to speak. However, they are available for any member who cares to look at them.

I appreciate the amount of time which Mr. Stubbs has put into studying the Bill. Once the route of the freeway had been decided, Mount Street at the point mentioned could not exist because of the contour of the land. Since this project was mooted, I have, as Minister for Local Government, had many discussions with the property owners concerned, and I think they have become reconciled to the situation.

The point that has been raised by Mr. Lavery in regard to traffic congestion is a very real one, but there is one redeeming feature. At the peak hour in the afternoon when the traffic comes down Mount Street it faces traffic coming in three directions. Under the proposal in the Bill this conflict of traffic will be overcome, because vehicles reaching the intersection from Milligan Street will have to make a left-hand turn, while traffic going up Spring Street will have to make a right-hand turn. At the moment traffic coming

from Milligan Street has to make a left-hand turn into Spring Street; traffic coming down Mount Street has to make a right-hand turn; and traffic coming up Spring Street has also to make a right-hand turn. This results in some conflict.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: But that is not a point in St. George's Terrace.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There will not be the conflict of traffic from Mount Street and Spring Street, so the traffic will be able to flow more freely. That is my appreciation of the situation after a quick study of the points raised.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: It is the St. George's Terrace-Milligan Street intersection that creates a conflict.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is a little confusion at the moment at the Spring Street-Mount Street intersection. I do not think it will get any worse; I think it will improve a little. I am pleased with the reception of this Bill.

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 The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), and passed.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENTS PTY. LIMITED AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th October.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [2.55 p.m.]: This Bill for an Act to amend the agreement made with Northern Developments Pty. Limited has been brought before us because of the need to amend the original agreement contained in the 1969 Act as the result of changed circumstances. The Bill affects an area on the Fitzroy River which was the subject of much attention, and of an agreement made by the Hawke Labor Government with Northern Developments Pty. Limited in 1957, in Act No. 65 of 1957.

The project was being sponsored by a gentleman named Farley, a very prominent Australian businessman who was associated with the milling of many agricultural products, but primarily rice. He had strong interests in such companies as Clifford Love Pty. Limited, Robert Harper, Parsons Bros., and Australian Rice Pty. Limited. Members will immediately get the reaction that those companies were associated with the production of edible seeds, corn, and rice; and with the milling of those commodities. Mr. Farley thought he saw an oportunity to produce rice in the tropical lands of Western Australia at a reasonable cost and with the prospect of high yields, to increase Australia's production in competition with the Murrumbidgee and other rice-growing areas of Australia. The area for the commencement of the scheme consisted of 20,000 acres of plain country which was intersected by billabongs and a creek—this being a portion of Liveringa Station, not far removed from the Fitzroy River, but sufficiently far from that river to render it less susceptible to heavy floodings in the wet season.

The prospect of the Camballin area being used for agricultural purposes had been known for a long time, and an artesian bore was put down in that region adjoining spinifex country in about 1920. The first artesian bore off the Fitzroy River was put down in that region, in an area which was held by interests comprising the scions of old families of this State.

The property was owned, in the main, by the Forrest family—John Forrest in particular. Sir Ross McLarty also had an interest in it. The Liveringa Pastoral Company raised no objection to the excision from its lease of the 20,000 acres and, in 1957, the land was surrendered to the Crown for the development of agriculture in the growing of irrigable crops in the area.

Under the provisions of the 1957 agreement, to which the present Act and this amending agreement relate, the company had the right to apply for a license to use parcels of land of 5,000 acres for the cultivation of rice—and for the cultivation of rice alone. This was to apply after the company had complied with certain conditions; in particular, proving that rice could be economically grown. The company had to prove that the rice could be produced economically before the freehold would be granted for the separate parcels of 5,000 acres.

In its endeavour to prove that rice could be successfully and economically grown the company met with many serious problems. Almost from the inception of the scheme it was clearly shown that high yields could be expected in average seasons under irrigation conditions. Much of the work was done by the late Kimberley Durack, one of the great young men of that famous family which did much for agriculture in our north.

Kim Durack raised more than one crop returning two tons to the acre. That was after allowing for the depredation caused by birds and native game, which are dominant in the area. I can recall seeing in a crop which Kim had grown in 1956, a flock of native companions which have a wing span of seven to eight feet. Those birds are not very easily airborne, and

when they took off as a flock they cut a swath through the crop chains wide and chains long.

Geese, too, were a problem when they got into a paddock containing 100 acres of rice. It was a queer sight to see about six or eight inches of the head and neck of the magpie geese wandering through the rice crops. Those birds eat tons of seed, and not only along the edges of the crops. Those were merely two of the problems which existed.

Under the provisions of the 1957 agreement the State accepted a big responsibility. It undertook the construction of a barrage dam in an offshoot, or a sidestream, of the Fitzroy River and spent large sums of money on irrigation channels, roads, bridges, and many buildings including houses. To date, that work has cost a lot of money and in the Auditor-General's report it is shown that the Camballin irrigation scheme cost $2,084,000 under loan capital indebtedness, and $64,500 in capital expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. That is a large sum of money to spend on a project which prior to the 1957 period had not been tested.

The company, for its part, was not lagging in any way in giving to the project every possible prospect of success. In spite of the fact that in some years there were meagre returns, and in other years there were no returns at all, it pursued its objective. I have no knowledge of the exact sum of money which the company expended, but an examination of the company returns shows that it spent in excess of $600,000 on the project. That is also a lot of money. The pioneering stage of any agricultural pursuit in our somewhat difficult north is surely not an easy matter.

I have already outlined to this House some of the difficulties faced in establishing agricultural industries in the Northern Territory. Perhaps the best illustration is that in the first attempt to promote an agricultural research station at Batchelor, right on the site of the Rum Jungle operation, the only return in five years, was one pumpkin, which cost $20,000. That is regarded as an illustration of the difficulties associated with promoting agriculture in our wet and dry tropics.

The sum of money involved in the Camballin project does appear to be colossal. However, I always think it is difficult to assess what proportion of such expenditure should be regarded as costs, and what proportion should be regarded as an investment to establish agricultural settlements. For example, the group settlements in Western Australia cost about $25,000,000—which had to be written off. However, in my view that expenditure was one of the best investments, ultimately, that this State ever made.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right; I agree with you.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: So we cannot count the cost only, especially with the difficult circumstances associated with agriculture in the tropics. The State is not wasting money in an endeavour to promote something, and not merely carrying out an effective operation, but is showing that we, as Australians, are doing something to develop country which will be an invitation to others if we leave it vacant and idle.

Northern Developments Pty. Limited has taken the opportunity to buy from the Liveringa Pastoral Company the shares of that company. If the information which has been given to me is correct—and I think it is—then Northern Developments Pty. Limited will become the owners of the pastoral lease which surrounds the land involved in this present agreement.

It is quite understandable that some adjustments would be necessary after the testing period since the Act was introduced earlier this year. In his second reading speech the Minister said that the company's developmental programme is based upon the rapid development of lands for the production of grain sorghum in lieu of rice and, therefore, it is essential that the words "grain sorghum" be included in the agreement made earlier this year.

Following difficulties which occurred in the years between 1957 and 1967, on the 25th June, 1968, the company requested the Government that the license which expired on the 31st March, 1968, be extended for a further three years. At that time both the Government and the company were the subject of considerable criticism because of the stagnant state of the use of the land which the company was privileged to hold under an Act of Parliament. In support of its request the company said that during the entire period of the license it had suffered a series of critical setbacks, and that during the wet seasons of both 1967 and 1968 the land was completely flooded to the extent that in 1967 rice plantings on 1,500 acres were destroyed and in 1968 no plantings would be made.

The company also advised that it was seriously short of finance and that it was hampered by the non-availability of a suitable strain of rice which would give a guarantee of an economic return. This letter was written at a time when the company had lost its rights under the provisions of the original agreement in connection with the availability of a Crown grant for the area. I think it is important to ensure that the interests of a company which has spent such vast sums should not be allowed to languish, or that its rights under the original agreement be allowed to lapse.

So now we have before us a Bill to amend the Northern Developments Pty. Limited Agreement Act of 1969. In looking through the Bill since it was introduced yesterday, and trying to get some thoughts

—if not original—to express in my examination of it, I found that many new provisions are to be made in an endeavour to amend the schedule. I wonder if the Minister has a copy of Act No. 41 of 1969 before him?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I have a copy of the original agreement, yes.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: As I go through this Bill I would like to draw attention to the variations it proposes to the original agreement. Firstly, the Bill before us provides that wherever the word "rice" appears in the agreement in the principal Act, the words "grain sorghum" are to be added.

One would wonder, on looking at the original agreement which provides for seeding with rice or other approved crop —which occurs in many places in the original agreement—why it was necessary to add the words "grain sorghum." Although the original agreement provided for the growing of crops of rice, it did not provide only for rice crops; it provided for rice or other approved crop, and in other places it mentions crops associated with the depasturing of stock. Perhaps the Minister can tell us why those words in the original agreement are not broad enough to meet the one purpose of this Bill—and this is its only purpose.

I will read subclause (4) of clause 7 of the original agreement—

> (4) Without the consent of the State the Company shall not use or permit or suffer to be used the land comprised in a parcel for any purpose other than the cultivation and processing of rice or other approved crop and associated depasturing of stock.

Now we are to add the words "grain sorghum" so that it will read, "processing of rice grain sorghum or other approved crop." It is not a flight of imagination to suggest that many other crops may be found to be welcome and economically possible in this region; and I refer to some of our legumes, such as soya beans, and indeed a crop which is produced in thousands of tons in Australia, cowpeas—and there may be others—which will need the approval of the Minister only. So why is this amendment necessary? There may be a particularly good reason to insist on adding the words "grain sorghum."

Clause 7 of the schedule to the Bill is the one case where the words "grain sorghum" are not to be added to the original agreement. I raise this point particularly because it could be construed by members when reading this Bill that following the word "rice" in the last line on page 4 of the Bill, the words "grain sorghum" should be added, because clause 4 of the schedule to the Bill states that the principal agreement is amended by adding after the word "rice" wherever it appears the words "grain sorghum."

Strangely enough this clause is designed to insist that rice be not dropped as a crop, and it provides that the company shall be responsible to continue, in experimental form, trials with rice of all varieties in the 100-acre area.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It places emphasis on that fact.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: So in that clause it does not mean rice and grain sorghum, it means only rice in that context.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Yes, in the 100 acres.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In clause 8 of the schedule I notice there is to be a wide differentiation in the rental, compared with the rental in the original agreement.

It includes a variation of the area prescribed, and provision is made for a specific lessening of the total payments to be made to the Crown. It is intended to substitute the words "a yearly rental calculated at the rate of forty dollars ($40) for every thousand acres or part thereof of land contained in the license" for the words "the yearly rental of TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS ($200)" in the original agreement.

We should not cavil at all at that reduction. I have worked out the difference in the collections the Crown may expect over a 10-year period and I find it runs into a very large sum. I think, however, that we have reached a stage in the consideration of the better use of this country under irrigable crops where we must give an incentive to people who have spent more than $500,000 up to this point. I have no objection to that.

I notice there is a continuation of the principle in this new agreement that the company must not only be responsible for considerable maintenance of contour banks and levees but that it must also ensure there will be a continuous maintenance of the barrage, contour banks, water channels, water control matters, and all those things which are important in the maintenance of a complex operation of this kind.

There is only one other matter in this schedule to which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister. I wonder whether paragraph (b) in new clause 11 on page 6 is in the right place in the Bill? I think it is not. We deal with clause 18 of the original schedule and we then insert a paragraph (b) in regard to the license set out in the schedule thereto, and we amend that schedule. If we look at the original schedule we will clearly see what it proposes to do.

My point is that this is entirely out of place; it should follow new clause 13 on page 7, because we are dealing with

clauses 18 to 23 by amendment, and we then deal with the schedule to be amended. I merely draw attention to it and ask whether it is in the right place. It refers to the schedule which is after clause 31 of the original agreement.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Which one is that?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If the Minister would look at clause 31 of the original agreement he will pick up the point at which paragraph (b) proposes to amend the previous agreement, and since clause 31 is much further on than clause 18, I am wondering whether paragraph (b) occurs where it does inadvertently or for a particular reason.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Clause 31 is the period of the continuance of the agreement.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is so, but if the Minister follows it straight on from there he will see the schedule which paragraph (b) on page 6 of the Bill proposes to amend. It proposes to amend the schedule after clause 31, but we introduce it in this Bill in a position between clauses 18 and 22.

I simply draw attention to it as being apparently out of place in the amending Bill which seeks to amend an agreement which otherwise is taken in sequence in relation to the clauses to which it refers.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: This is a schedule to amend a schedule, and as you cannot amend a schedule, I do not know what to do.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is out of position. However, I assume that wherever it is positioned it will still be operative.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I would like an opportunity to check this.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: As the Minister knows, I have not had much time to look at it myself.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You do not need much time.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I simply want to draw attention to it as being something which is not in the right place in the Bill, but I do not want to delay the House on that aspect.

I support the Bill, and I do wish the company a better run of successful results with its new crop. Whether it proposes to grow grain sorghum as a single crop in that area, or whether it proposes to grow other types of sorghum which are to be grazed, is something for the future, and that is where the future may lie.

So the words "other approved crops" in the agreement are very important in the future development of this area which has been checkered up to date but which, I hope, will be an unqualified success in the ultimate.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [3.26 p.m.]: I thank Mr. Wise for his remarks, and I will endeavour to comment on the points he has raised. In the first place, when moving the second reading of the Bill I tried to make it clear that there really was no necessity to bring the measure to Parliament to vary the agreement made between the company and the Government, because the variation clause provides that such variation can be made as long as the variation is able to live with the original intention of the Bill. I think the variation clause is so worded.

I also said that despite this fact and because of the major exercise which the growing of grain sorghum provides, the Government and the Minister for Lands particularly thought it desirable that this Bill with its accompanying schedule should be brought to Parliament.

Without meaning to cavil at this fact in any way at all, I would point out that we have on a number of occasions been criticised for the existence of variation clauses in agreements. I have always sought to make clear what the variation clause means, and I have also tried to show quite clearly that when there are distinct changes in an agreement, and although those changes can live within the terms of the variation clause, we still bring them to Parliament for the necessary debate and consideration.

The only explanation I can offer for this Bill with its accompanying schedule being before Parliament is simply that we desired to bring these matters before Parliament because the change was a major one.

I do not think the original definition would have prevented the growing of grain sorghum if we had not altered the definition, because rice includes other crops, and I feel sure this would not prevent the company in future from growing other crops which it might like to grow.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is so.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We are agreed on that point. The next point raised was the adjustment of the rent. The rental has been adjusted on an acreage basis as the size of the parcels of land has been increased to approximately 10,000 acres.

As Mr. Wise has said, if one does a mathematical calculation by comparing the rent provided for in the original agreement and that set out on the new basis, it will be seen that the company receives a considerable advantage. However, I imagine that this takes into consideration the many difficulties with which the company has been faced over the time the agreement has been in force. Also, as Mr.

Wise said, a good deal of State money—taxpayers' money—has gone into this proposal. There have been very many experiments of this nature where Government money has been expended, and let us hope that the money spent on putting this agreement into effect will, in the long run, be as fruitful as the money that was spent on the Peel Estate settlement, to which the honourable member referred. There is no doubt that time has proved the efforts of the Government of that day to be well worth while.

As regards clause 11 of the schedule to the Bill, I am a little confused. Of course, Mr. Wise quickly picks up these things but I have not had an opportunity thoroughly to examine the point and, if the matter needs to be clarified, or is wrong, what do we do?

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: If you look at page 20 of the parent Act you will see where it is inserted.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I realise that and I know it would appear in the way the honourable member suggested. However, my concern is this: If it is wrong, what do we do? As members know, we cannot amend the schedule. Rather than say any more about it at the moment I suggest to the House that we agree to the second reading and that will give me time to confer with the draftsman on the points put forward by Mr. Wise—whether they are correct or incorrect. If what he says is not correct, then I want to be able to say why the draftsman believes it is not correct.

I think perhaps it would be a profitable exercise if I did not try to go any further. Certainly it would not be worth while for me to stand on my feet and argue something without having it examined. So I thank the honourable member again for his remarks and I trust the House will agree to what I have suggested. I ask that the Committee stage be taken later in the sitting.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ACT

Deletion of By-Laws: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 18th September, on the following motion by The Hon. R. F. Claughton:—

> That the Institute Land by-laws made under the Western Australian Institute of Technology Act, 1966, and published in the *Government Gazette* on the 11th June, 1969, be amended by deleting by-laws 22 (b) and 28 (c).

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [3.36 p.m.]: The remarks I propose to make in connection with this motion moved by Mr. Claughton will be relatively short, but I hope to the point.

I conferred with my colleague (the Minister for Education) on the subject matter of the motion and I am advised that since there does not appear to have been any protest by the students at the Institute of Technology concerning the by-laws, Mr. Claughton's comments, at this stage, would seem to be purely academic. In view of advice from Dr. Williams that the council has no wish to have unnecessary by-laws, and that its legal and general purposes committee will make further inquiries of other institutions, it is suggested that the by-laws should not be interfered with at this stage.

Mr. Lewis informs me that he feels confident the council will change its by-laws when it receives a report from its legal and general purposes committee. The council of the institute has on it representatives of industry and commerce, the professions, and the institute staff. It is also proposed that legislation will be introduced, probably next year, for the inclusion of representatives of the student body on the institute council.

In addition to those comments I would like to point out that Mr. Claughton has connected the application of the institute's land by-laws to the students only, and members will recall that during the course of his remarks he emphasised this fact. However, the by-laws are applicable to all persons using the lands vested in the institute for the purpose of the Act. In the main, the by-laws are directed at the conservation of the land and improvements for which the institute is responsible. There are by-laws covering the movement and parking of vehicles on the land—that is, the land that surrounds the institute—and there are by-laws protecting authorised vehicles. From by-law 19 onwards the by-laws deal with the conduct of students.

Although I am sure the honourable member was well intentioned in his purpose, I feel he is misdirected in his conception of the need for the by-laws. All I can do at this stage is to repeat that the council itself will examine the situation.

As I have already said it is intended, probably next year, that further legislation will be introduced, and in view of this and the short life of the council up to date, I believe the by-laws should be left to stand as they are. In the light of experience, change can follow. However, if

any change is considered necessary, it would be better that this be suggested by the council itself as a result of experience rather than that this House should, by voting, disallow or amend by-laws which have hardly had a chance to be tested by time.

For these reasons I am obliged to oppose the motion.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [3.41 p.m.]: I read through the speech I made when moving this motion and it is possible that the Minister has misunderstood what I intended. The absence of one word would make a great deal of difference. It is not intended that all the regulations from No. 19 onwards should be deleted, but only the two to which the motion refers. The first has to do with the distribution of handbills and other printed matter, and the second has to do with the students' right to conduct a sweep, consultation, or something of this nature.

I do not think the Minister has submitted any case to show why Parliament should not carry my motion. The Minister said that no protest has been made by the students. This, surely, is the case with a great deal of legislation in this House. If people were familiar with the details of some of our legislation, they would no doubt protest and make their feelings known. However, I doubt whether the students themselves are familiar with these two by-laws; and until such time as they were about to distribute some pamphlets or leaflets, or were brought to order for conducting a sweep or consultation, they would have very little knowledge of them.

It was interesting to hear the Minister say that Dr. Williams is going to conduct further inquiries into the matter; but it is part of our function as parliamentarians to protect the democracy we so much treasure, and not leave these matters to some other organisation not democratically elected.

Surely these by-laws and regulations are submitted to Parliament in order that members might study them to see that they are in order! If we find that a by-law contains something with which we do not agree and which is not in line with our idea of democracy, then we have the power to move for its disallowance.

I repeat that the Minister has given no real reason why we should not agree to this motion for the deletion of the by-laws to which I have referred, and I therefore hope that members will support it.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—7

Hon. R. F. Claughton	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	*(Teller)*

Noes—17

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. T. O. Perry
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. F. R. White
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. E. C. House	Hon. J. Heitman
Hon. L. A. Logan	*(Teller)*

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Hon. H. C. Strickland	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. R. Thompson	Hon. G. W. Berry

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

Sitting suspended from 3.50 to 4.7 p.m.

MARKETING OF CYPRUS BARREL MEDIC SEED BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the 29th October. The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after clause 28 had been agreed to.

Clause 29: Power to enter and search—

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

> Page 14—Delete subclause (1) and substitute the following—
>
> (1) Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a provision of this Act has been or may have been contravened in respect of any seed, a person authorised by the Board may at any time enter and search any place, premises or vessel where that seed is or is suspected to be and may inspect any stocks of seed and accounts, books and documents relating to seed.

I was not very happy with the wording of the amendment that Mr. McNeill proposed to move and thought it would be best to refer the matter to the Parliamentary Draftsman, and this one was suggested by him. If anything, I think the wording may be stronger than the amendment originally proposed. All in all, I think it is worded better and will cover the situation in a better way.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I agree with the Minister. I believe this wording is preferable to what I had proposed. I think it will cover the situation in a better way.

I refer particularly to the words, "Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a provision of this Act has been or may have been contravened." This does not necessarily mean that the inspector or the person authorised by the board must have reasonable grounds for believing that the Act has been contravened; but, in fact, it could be any person whatsoever. Of course it may well be the board, in which

case it would authorise its officer to enter and undertake a search. However, as I have said, it does not necessarily have to be the board, but may be any person. I think the wording is more appropriate, and I support the amendment.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I also support the amendment moved by the Minister and am pleased that this wording has been suggested. In my opinion, it is undoubtedly stronger than the wording we were considering last evening in relation to another measure.

I am very pleased to see a principle vindicated; namely, that before any person who is authorised by the board is allowed to enter premises and make an inspection of books, seed, or anything else, such person must have reasonable grounds for believing that an offence has been committed. If that person does not have reasonable grounds, someone must have reasonable grounds for so believing. In other words, there must be a suspicion that an offence has been committed; because by talking about the contravention of the Act, we are, in fact, talking about offences. This will be apparent if members of the Committee look at clause 34 of the Bill, which says—

> A person who contravenes any provision of this Act is guilty of an offence.

In effect, what we are saying is that an offence must have been committed or suspected to have been committed; that is, in the reasonable belief of a reasonable man. I commend the Minister for putting this amendment forward. It has my full support.

The Hon. E. C. HOUSE: I am rather perturbed about not having a copy of the amendment which all hinges on one or two words that are very important in this legislation. Without a copy of the amendment it is difficult to understand the trend of the debate.

The Hon. F. R. WHITE: I support the comment made by Mr. House. On such occasions, when amendments are brought forward rather late in the proceedings, every member should have a copy of them.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I was under the impression that copies of the amendments were distributed to each bench of the Chamber. Nevertheless, I am not certain whether such copies are really necessary, because the amendment put forward is much better than that which members appeared to have accepted yesterday evening.

The Hon. E. C. HOUSE: I hope the Minister does not think we are objecting only in regard to not being provided with copies of this amendment. This practice occurs too often.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 30 to 37 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

Recommittal

Bill recommitted, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), for the further consideration of clause 9.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Members will recall that last evening we accepted an amendment to delete the words "during the pleasure of the Governor," because it was contended that one could not tell the Governor that he could do something at his pleasure and then impose a time limit. Also, at the time it was mentioned that if the Committee agreed to the amendment we might upset some operations of the Bill. The amendments which members now have before them are exactly the same as those that will be made to the Marketing of Linseed Bill.

I took the opportunity to see the Parliamentary Draftsman this morning and his comments were as follows:—

(a) The proposed amendment on page 5, line 24, would, without anything more, make the Bill inconsistent in that a non-elective member would not be subject to removal as an elective member is—see proposed subsection (6); also the proposed amendment would be inconsistent with "during the pleasure of the Governor"—see proposed subsection (7).

(b) As pointed out by you, the subsection (6) proposed by Mr. McNeill would be futile without anything more.

That is dealing with the right of appeal. The first comment deals with the words "during the pleasure of the Governor."

To solve the problem, four or five amendments will be submitted, but, in fact, they all have the same objective. The word "elective" has to be deleted in two or three places, and I think it would be more advisable if I move each amendment in turn.

The clause was further amended, on motions by The Hon. L. A. Logan, as follows:—

Page 5, line 15—Delete the word "elective";

Page 5, line 17—Insert after the word "and" the passage ", where he is an elective member,";

Page 5, line 18—Insert after the word "re-appointment" the passage "and, where he is not an elective member, is eligible for re-appointment";

Page 5, line 19—Delete the word "elective";

Page 5, lines 23 to 25—Delete subclause (7) as amended by a previous Committee.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

Page 5, line 32—Delete the passage ", if that member was an elective member,".

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I thank the Minister for the co-operation he has extended in order to tidy up this clause. He has acted in the right spirit and has accepted the intention of the amendments which the Committee agreed to last evening. Whilst expressing some regret at the complications that have arisen as a result of the amendment moved last night, I convey my thanks to the Minister and to the parliamentary drafting staff for the co-operation they have shown in tidying up this clause.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as further amended, put and passed.

Bill again reported, with further amendments.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), read a first time.

MARKETING OF LINSEED BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the 29th October. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair; The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 29: Power to enter and search—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on the clause after Mr. McNeill had moved the following amendment:—

Page 14, line 36—Insert after the word "linseed" the words "provided that before acting pursuant to such authority such person must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that an offence has been or may have been committed under the Act".

The Hon. N. McNEILL: In view of the discussion on this matter yesterday evening, and the explanation that has been given in relation to the Marketing of Cyprus Barrel Medic Seed Bill a short while ago, it is quite clear that the amendment I have moved is a little inappropriate, as the Minister suggested, and I therefore ask leave of the Committee to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

Page 14—Delete subclause (1) and substitute the following:—

(1) Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a provision of this Act has been or may have been contravened in respect of any linseed, a person authorised by the Board may at any time enter and search any place, premises or vessel where that linseed is or is suspected to be and may inspect any stocks of linseed and accounts, books and documents relating to linseed.

This amendment is similarly worded to the amendment that has been made to the clause in the Marketing of Cyprus Barrel Medic Seed Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 30 to 37 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

Recommittal

Bill recommitted, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), for the further consideration of clauses 9 and 19.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair; The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 9: Members—

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The amendments which have been agreed to in respect of the Marketing of Cyprus Barrel Medic Seed Bill also apply to the Bill before us. I move an amendment—

Page 5, line 15—Delete the word "elective."

Amendment put and passed.

The clause was further amended, on motions by The Hon. L. A. Logan, as follows:—

Page 5, line 17—Insert after the word "and" the passage ", where he is an elective member,";

Page 5, line 18—Insert after the word "re-appointment" the passage "and, where he is not an elective member, is eligible for re-appointment";

Page 5, line 19—Delete the word "elective";

Page 5—Delete subclause (7) as amended by a previous Committee;

Page 5, line 31—Delete the passage ".", if that member was an elective member.".

Clause, as further amended, put and passed.

Clause 19: Appointed date for commencement of the marketing of linseed by the Board—

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

Page 10—Delete new subclause (6) inserted by a previous Committee with a view to substituting the following subclauses:—

(6) Where, under subsection (5) of this section, the Board controls production of linseed and a person is adversely affected by the operation of the terms and conditions referred to in that subsection he may, in the prescribed time and manner, make an application to the Minister for an exemption from those terms and conditions.

(7) Where a person makes an application under subsection (6) of this section, the Minister may, if he thinks fit, exempt that person from all or any of the terms and conditions referred to in subsection (5) of this section.

After having given some thought to the amendment on the right of appeal which had been agreed to by members, I realised that as the amendment was worded it was futile. I drew the attention of Mr. McNeill to this afterwards, and I requested the Parliamentary Draftsman to look into the matter. I informed him that although there was the right of appeal to the Minister, the Minister did not have power under the Act to take action. The Parliamentary Draftsman prepared the amendment, which I have moved, to rectify the position.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I would like to concur with this amendment. The intention of the amendment which was agreed to by a previous Committee was to provide essentially for a right of appeal, and in this case to the Minister. This right of appeal was to lie with any person who considered himself to be adversely affected by the terms and conditions prescribed in the Bill. I had the feeling that although it was possible under the previous amendment that a right of appeal was conferred, it might be necessary to give the Minister the authority to make a determination one way or the other. This view has been confirmed by the Parliamentary Draftsman.

There is one further point I want to make: perhaps the amendment is not quite the same as a right of appeal. The words "right of appeal" are not used in the amendment, but provision is made so that where a person, as a result of the action of the board in controlling production, is adversely affected by the terms and conditions which have been put into operation, he may apply to the Minister for exemption.

Perhaps there is a slight difference, but I do not think this really affects the intention of granting the right of appeal. Under the circumstances, while I can see a difference, it is not one with which I quibble. After all, the amendment meets with the requirement which was in my mind when I moved my amendment on a previous occasion.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I cannot give the same support to the amendment before us as I did to the amendment which was agreed to last night. In this case I find some difficulty in following the Minister's reasoning. I appreciate that the original amendment to which we agreed did not specifically give the Minister any power, and it is perfectly valid that power should be given to the Minister in respect of applications.

I think the Minister could have been given that power simply by adding to the amendment which was passed yesterday the words "and may allow or reject the appeal on such terms and conditions as he thinks fit." This is very similar to the power which the Minister has under the Town Planning and Development Act. I do not know why we should say that the Minister may exempt a person from certain terms and conditions when we could have provided for the Minister to allow or reject an appeal in whole or in part. To a certain extent, we are tying the Minister's hands.

I cannot see what objection there is to adding to the amendment we passed last night, which stated that a person adversely affected may appeal to the Minister. It is of no use appealing to the Minister if he has no power to vary the terms and conditions. I agree that we should give him the power but do not, at the same time, take away the right of appeal and say that all the Minister can do is exempt a person from complying with certain terms and conditions. It would be better to approach this by adding to what was passed last night.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It might be better if we tidy up proposed new subclause (7) and do as Mr. Medcalf suggests. We would have to add, at the end of that subclause, after the word "section," the words "and the Minister may vary the terms and conditions in whole or in part."

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (The Hon. F. D. Willmott): I will read the proposed subclauses as they will appear with

the addition of the words proposed by the Minister. They will read as follows:—

(6) Where, under subsection (5) of this section, the Board controls production of linseed and a person is adversely affected by the operation of the terms and conditions referred to in that subsection he may, in the prescribed time and manner, make an application to the Minister for an exemption from those terms and conditions.

(7) Where a person makes an application under subsection (6) of this section, the Minister may, if he thinks fit, exempt that person from all or any of the terms and conditions referred to in subsection (5) of this section and the Minister may vary the terms and conditions in whole or in part.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: This is a most difficult situation for which I do not blame the Minister. I can see only four copies of the proposed new subclauses, and I think more copies should be made available to members. I make that request to the Minister.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am happy to accede to Mr. Lavery's request.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (The Hon. F. D. Willmott): I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended from 4.55 to 5.9 p.m.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (The Hon. F. D. Willmott): Copies of the Minister's proposed amendment have now been distributed.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: In view of my earlier comments on this amendment, I would now like to say that after due consideration I can see the reasoning behind Mr. Medcalf's suggestion. I think I should perhaps indicate that the board may decide to control production by some means or another. If I may give a specific example: The board may decide to adopt a quota system and grant quotas to particular people. If the Minister did not have the power of variation then, of course, an application could be made to the Minister by a particular person for exemption if that person thought that the quota system was not applicable to him; and all the Minister could do would be to grant the exemption or reject it. If he granted it, what position would the person be placed in? He would, in effect, be without a quota; so it is entirely reasonable under those circumstances—if such were to be the case, or anything similar—that the Minister should have the power to make variations, if he thinks the circumstances appropriate, in order to make the regulations workable. Whilst I did not indicate my support for the amendment in the first place, I can see now that it is entirely necessary to have this further variation inserted. I support the amendment.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Proposed subclause (7) in the amendment states that "where a person makes an application under subsection (6) of this section, the Minister may, if he thinks fit, exempt that person from all or any of the terms and conditions referred to in subsection (5) of this section and the Minister may vary the terms and conditions in whole or in part." I think the last part should read "or the Minister may vary the terms and conditions in whole or in part," so that in the first place the Minister may exempt an applicant from all terms and conditions or he may vary the terms and conditions in whole or in part. I think the word "or" is more appropriate than the word "and." I think we should provide an alternative by the use of the word "or."

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I think we should use the word "and," and my reasoning for saying so is that an application may be made for exemption from one condition and the variation of another. If the Minister has power to exempt from all or any of the conditions, it means that he can grant that application and exempt the producer from one of the conditions. If the word "or" is used that is the end of his power; he has done all he can, because he may grant only an exemption. He could not vary one of the other conditions. By the use of the word "and," we not only give the Minister the power to exempt an applicant from any of the conditions but, in addition, the Minister may—and do not forget the word is "may"—vary any of the other conditions.

Amendment put and passed.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

Page 10—Substitute the following subclauses for the subclause deleted—

(6) Where, under subsection (5) of this section, the Board controls production of linseed and a person is adversely affected by the operation of the terms and conditions referred to in that subsection he may, in the prescribed time and manner, make an application to the Minister for an exemption from those terms and conditions.

(7) Where a person makes an application under subsection (6) of this section, the Minister may, if he thinks fit, exempt that person from all or any of the terms and conditions referred to in subsection (5) of this section and the Minister may vary the terms and conditions in whole or in part.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as further amended, put and passed.

Bill again reported, with further amendments.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENTS PTY. LIMITED AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 put and passed.

Clause 5: Second Schedule added—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Wise raised a query in relation to the amendment to the second schedule which appears on page 6 of the Bill. Firstly, Mr. Wise thought that paragraph (b) of clause 11 was in the wrong place; and, secondly, he felt that the words to be inserted were being inserted in the wrong place.

I think his first objection could be explained by saying that this is a mode of drafting by the draftsman, inasmuch as when he got to the clause of the agreement which amends clause 18 of the principal agreement he dealt with that aspect and then inserted the words, "excepting the associated depasturing of stock."

Because these words were to be inserted into the schedule to the original Bill the draftsman chose to deal with them then and there. Clause 11 says—

> The principal agreement is amended—
>
> (a) as to clause 18 . . .
>
> (b) as to the license set out in the schedule thereto . . .

Another way of doing this might have been to have referred the amendment proposed in paragraph (b) of clause 11 to the end of the agreement and indicated that the schedule is amended accordingly; but because the amendment to clause 18 and the amendment to the schedule were associated they were grouped together.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: He also grouped clause 22 in the same paragraph.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is right. So he amends clause 18; he amends the schedule; and he also amends clause 22. The alternative would have been to amend clauses 18 and 22 and to have had the amendment to the schedule in a schedule of its own. Fortunately, however, the same objective is achieved.

Mr. Wise suggested the words were in the wrong place, but this is not so because in the original agreement certain things in relation to rice or other crop or crops must be approved by the Minister for Lands. If the words in the Bill were put in before the words, "Minister for Lands," rather than after those words, then the words, "excepting the associated depasturing of stock," would have been subject to the approval of the Minister for Lands, and this was not intended.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I had a fairly good look at this Bill and the parent agreement. It is not of great moment whether this provision is in its right place or not as long as it is effective where it is as distinct from my feeling as to where it should be in sequence. I do not agree at all with the last contention expressed by the Minister and the draftsman that the depasturing of stock is not intended to be under the control of the Minister for Lands. May I read from the principal Act and agreement, section 7 (4) of which states—

> Without the consent of the State—

that is the Minister—

> —the Company shall not use or permit or suffer to be used the land comprised in a parcel for any purpose other than the cultivation and processing of rice or other approved crop and associated depasturing of stock.

So in the context which affects this particular aspect it is definitely stated in the agreement that the depasturing of stock is subject to the consent of the Minister. My point is that if these words were inserted in the schedule as amended after the word "crops" and before the word "first" it would certainly be more properly placed. However, I realise the Minister has not had very much time to discuss the matter with the draftsman and although the agreement in its initial form provides that the Minister shall approve the depasturing of stock, if it is not approved in the form in which these words are inserted, it is in conflict.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you wish me to take it back?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We have had the unhappy example of the Committee being delayed in dealing with very serious business because of legislation which has been ill prepared. This afternoon we had a bad example of ill-prepared amendments being presented—only two or three copies of which were circulated—and members who were anxious to debate certain clauses being unable to follow the purport of the amendments.

We would have finished four other items had the two previous items on the notice paper been deferred until Tuesday so that the amendments could have been placed on the notice paper and studied. Had this been done, the Bills would have gone through in five minutes.

Accordingly, I do not want the Minister again to refer this matter. I simply draw attention, after careful examination of the Bill, to flaws which, in my view, are obvious, but whether those flaws affect the administration of this Bill I am not sure.

I do think there is conflict in relation to the words which are to be inserted in the clause which I read which places control of depasturing of stock under the Minister.

I have voiced myself wholeheartedly in support of the Bill but being a bit of a stickler for proper procedure—though not exactly a perfectionist because I could never be that—I do think the better we can do our work the better will be the legislation. We are not being encouraged to do our work better the way things have been handled this afternoon.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think it would be agreed that the attitude of Ministers would be generally one of co-operation.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And of the House.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The co-operation must be twofold.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is our objection.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What took place early this afternoon arose out of this spirit of co-operation. We attempted to get something done last night, but this was not achieved. However, that is not the point in this case. I offered to see whether the position was as Mr. Wise thought it was.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I do not want to hold up the legislation.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Nor do I, but I am quite prepared to go back again. I have no desire that legislation should go through this House while it is incorrectly written. That is why we often say, "Let us take a little time to consider this aspect."

Now that the Bill is in Committee, after having passed the second reading, I propose to talk to the draftsman and explain what Mr. Wise thought the position was, and I shall satisfy myself, even though I have already talked to him. I shall have a talk to the man who drew up the agreement before I ask members to agree to the third reading.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In the main I draw attention to the conflict between what is on page 8 of Bill No. 41 of 1969—clause 7, subclause (4)—and what the Minister has expressed with reference to the amendment in the Bill in clause 11, paragraph (b).

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 28th October.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.32 p.m.]: In introducing the Bill the Minister stated that its object was to enable commission applicants to obtain housing loans at interest rates which would bring the instalments within their financial means. In that text alone, the object is a laudable one; but, in a practical sense, it moves into the field of isolation. In total concept, the saving in interest rate, under the provisions of this Bill, will be 1 per cent.; and I suppose to those who are able to obtain this assistance, 1 per cent. is at least something.

As regards the economics of home ownership, if we look at the position from the point of view of buying one's home as compared with renting a home, there is not a great deal of advantage in the proposition—that is, leaving aside the personal aspect and the privileges associated with home ownership. I do not intend to go into that factor but simply say that this Bill is something because somewhere it will help some people, and is therefore deserving of support.

When it was said that people within the orbit of the State Housing Commission—and thus it covers those with a limited income—would get a comparatively cheap home through the passing of this Bill, I thought it was a very broad statement. The State Housing Commission caters for people with a very limited income—certainly limited by comparison with those who are able to afford to build a home through the various societies and associations that make houses available in Western Australia. So when we move into the field where we underwrite the interest rate by 1 per cent. for the various societies who will be affected when this Bill, as it is amended in Committee to cover other societies, is passed, I do not think a great many people will be affected nor will it help very much with the overall problems of the State Housing Commission in providing homes for the people.

However, it is an attempt to do something and the basis of 1 per cent. assistance will be of material help to those who are in a position to avail themselves of the opportunity.

In looking at the Bill, I wonder, firstly, how the Housing Commission proposes to recoup itself for the expenditure with which it will be involved by the implementation of this proposal. Is it proposed that when the commission authorises the 1 per cent. the applicant concerned will be eliminated from the commission's books? If that is so, it will mean that in essence the commission will be charging other people to subsidise this sum of money. As I read the Bill, there is no provision for the recovery of the money necessary to cover, in the initial stages, the 1,500 homes that are to be built. The immediate total cash commitment of the commission is $750,000. However, I accept the Minister's word that this matter has been looked at by departmental officers in

association with the officers of the particular society which put forward this proposal and they must have agreed that it is possible to cater for this particular income group.

As regards the suggestion that many applicants would prefer to acquire a privately built home of their own choice instead of one designed and built by the State Housing Commission within its own estates, I think that is perfectly true. However, I very much doubt whether a person whose income would qualify him to be assisted by the Housing Commission could move into the field covered by this Bill; because the 1 per cent. interest subsidy is over 10 years only. If this means that the societies are considering a poorer type of home to meet the situation, I think the Minister might have developed the point a little further; because that would seem to be the only practical way to overcome the problem.

Side by side with that, of course, there is the difficulty of placing this type of private home in areas where there are homes of a similar standard. In the first place, the land in the districts in which these houses will be built will be much more expensive and, in addition, the houses will be slightly more expensive to build. I use the word "slightly" because it depends on how much money a person has to spend.

I can see some practical difficulties in implementing the 1 per cent. subsidy proposed in the Bill, but I will still support it if it can take up some of the backlog of the State Housing Commission. Obviously its proposals will mean that some people will get houses much sooner than they would under present circumstances and, in that respect, the Bill has to be supported.

There is one other point that comes to mind. I question how we can reconcile the figures submitted by the Minister with those concerned in general purchase applications. The cost to the State—which would be to the State Housing Commission —for 1,500 homes over 10 years would be $1,177,800; and it is suggested that by handing over to the building societies a sum of $750,000 at 6 per cent. per annum it would, in addition to the initial deposits, be sufficient to meet the commitments to which I earlier referred. If we look at it on the basis of $45,000 per annum, that, multiplated by 10, gives us a total of $450,000. That figure, plus the original $750,000, gives us a point of equilibrium; in other words, in broad terms the Minister's statement would balance out.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is slightly better than balanced, really.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Slightly better, but I was giving the Minister the benefit of the doubt on this occasion. If we apply a general loan, whether it be by mortgage, overdraft, or some other means, we find that the total indebtedness is usually divisible over the term of the loan. In this case, as I see it, it would mean that $117,780 per annum would be needed to finance the loan over the 10-year period. On the basis of the interest on $750,000 invested there would be a return of $45,000 in the first year. Herein lies a deficit. If it becomes necessary to use some of the $750,000 invested to cover the payment of $117,780, then I suspect the figures given will not bear up under the normal financial conditions.

There is no doubt that this question has been looked at closely and we would presume that the figures given are correct. I do not challenge them in any way.

I would appreciate it if the Minister would submit a schedule of repayments spread over the 10-year period because it would have to be a totally different concept from what is usually the case. The initial $750,000 would have to be protected. I suppose it would be possible, but it would certainly be an unusual procedure.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You said that to repay $750,000 at 6 per cent. per annum for 10 years would cost $117,000 a year?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: No. The total amount is $1,177,800 and that, divided by 10, gives $117,000 per annum.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You say it is earning only $45,000.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Yes. If we touch the principal we reduce the earning rate of $45,000, so therefore in the first exercise of the Minister's remarks which balance up, if we take an analysis per annum on the basis of ordinary hire purchase and schedules of that kind, this would have to be a totally different concept; and that is the point I am trying to make.

I am not trying to challenge the figure. It is a new concept. Instead of paying off the principal each year it seems to me the bulk of the principal would be paid in the final year; and this would be a very new line of thought.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The figure being lent is $750,000.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: That is correct.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is not $1,177,000.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The total debt is $1,177,000 and the deposit is $750,000 which, in the ultimate, will pay a debt of $1,177,800. It is proposed that that will be paid from the interest on the $750,000 investment over 10 years. In the ultimate there would be no money left from the $750,000 when the whole thing is paid off.

As I see the situation, without having the use of a computer, if we take the normal procedure of returning part of the capital plus the interest, this basis would not work. Therefore there must be a new formula established under this Bill.

I repeat that I am not saying the figures are wrong, but I would be most interested to see how this is arrived at and the basis on which it is calculated.

THE HON. CLIVE GRIFFITHS (South-East Metropolitan) [5.48 p.m.]: I support the Bill because it provides another avenue which will help some of the applicants eligible for State Housing Commission assistance to obtain their homes somewhat earlier than at present.

I listened with interest to the remarks made by Mr. Willesee, and particularly to what he said about the financial situation because, strange as it may seem, the problems to which he referred are the same ones I have been battling with all day. I was therefore most interested to learn Mr. Willesee has been thinking along the same lines.

I worked the situation out and I believe that once about half the period has expired a big percentage of the $750,000 invested originally will have been used up and therefore the interest rate will not be able to provide the $45,000 per annum required. However, perhaps the Minister can explain this. He did so in fairly broad and general terms earlier. I would hope that when the money was invested it would return more than a flat 6 per cent. over a period and, indeed, building societies pay compound interest and I consider the return on that basis would be considerably greater than $45,000. Notwithstanding this, the capital would be gone. I would certainly be interested to find out how it would work.

However, I am hoping this Bill will enable some people who are eligible to obtain assistance from the Housing Commission to get houses a bit quicker than is possible at the moment, because I am becoming increasingly concerned about the length of time my constituents must wait for assistance.

I remember when I was first elected to this House the people in my electorate were waiting for something like two and a half to three years. I am very disturbed to find now that it is something like four and a half years. I therefore support this measure because I believe it will perhaps be another means of cutting down this waiting period.

As has been mentioned already, this Bill will help the people on the Housing Commission list if they are in the higher bracket of income because only those applicants will be able to afford the repayments. Therefore it will be only those on the absolute maximum who will be able to take advantage of this legislation. This, of course, will take some people's names off the list and will allow the less fortunate to have their names placed higher on the list and thus the waiting period of four and a half years will be reduced.

I mentioned a while ago that I am becoming increasingly concerned about the length of time people must wait for a house through the Housing Commission. Those who cannot afford to make the payments necessary under this legislation are the ones for whom I feel concerned. I am led to believe that the reason the waiting period is being extended is because so many people are being given accommodation out of turn owing to the emergent circumstances in which they find themselves. I am getting to the stage where I am beginning to wonder what constitutes an emergent situation. I think we should have laid on the Table of the House a list of the last 20 emergent cases for whom accommodation was found so that members might obtain some idea of the commission's idea of emergent circumstances. I have submitted cases to the commission and I thought that they were absolute emergencies, but I have been unable to obtain any housing assistance for them; and this really worries me.

While this Bill will certainly go some way towards easing the demand on the existing accommodation available, I wonder whether it will help these other people about whom I am talking. It will to a certain extent, I realise, because those who are able to take advantage of this legislation will have their names crossed off the list at the Housing Commission and therefore the names which remain on the list will be reduced in number and consequently the waiting period will not be as long. Those emergent cases which have been dealt with and given accommodation by the commission must be in such dire circumstances that they make the cases I have submitted look insignificant, because I certainly have not been very successful.

For this reason I have no option but to support the Bill. Not that I have the desire to do anything else but support it because it will discourage people from relying on the Housing Commission to provide houses built with its finance.

I will conclude by repeating the question asked by Mr. Willesee; that is, if this $750,000 is indeed invested, will it not be necessary to invest it at an interest far greater than 6 per cent. in order to finance the scheme over the entire period? I certainly will be interested to hear the comments of the Minister. However, I support the Bill because I believe it will go some way towards overcoming the problems to which I have just referred.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) [5.56 p.m.]: As my leader has said, this Bill will at least go some way towards easing the housing crisis

with which those on low incomes are faced. I must agree with every word uttered by Mr. Clive Griffiths as well as with what Mr. Willesee has said.

The reason I am speaking is to ask how it is thought workers in the low income group will be able to obtain a loan from an approved building society when many of them are only able to find the deposit necessary to obtain a house through the commission. It is well known that a four-year wait is involved with the commission and sometimes this period cannot be reduced even in emergent circumstances. It is impossible, of course, to obtain rental accommodation.

Under the policy of the commission at the moment a minimum deposit of $200 is required, but it has been a long time since a home was obtained through the commission for such a low figure because the commission has found it necessary to build on land which is much dearer than it used to be. Consequently, when an applicant is approved by the commission, he must find a deposit much greater than $200.

I have in mind now six specific cases which I have personally placed before the Minister. The officers of the commission, although most gracious in their attempts to help, cannot do the impossible and cannot act except in accordance with their policy. The Minister has said now that if these people go to the building societies, the Government will assist them by subsidising the interest at the rate of 1 per cent. for 10 years.

Recently I suggested to four young men that they should go to the societies, but not one of them can be approved for a loan. The reason is that it is necessary to have 10 per cent. of the loan required. The average young person with two children who earns $55 per week does a mighty job if he is able to save from between $500 to $700 as deposit over a short period of, say, 18 months. Consequently the societies are of no use to them. They are simply told by the societies that they are required to have a much larger deposit than they can raise. Therefore, they cannot be assisted in this way.

These people still have to wait on the priority list of the State Housing Commission until their turn is reached when the State Housing Commission is then able to assist them to obtain a home under the purchase section of the Act.

The measure before the House will be a great help to a number of people on the list of the State Housing Commission. If these people seek the advice of the State Housing Commission they will be told that the commission will make available the 1 per cent. if they purchase a home through a building society.

This will not lessen the basic problem of the people who cannot raise a high deposit. I am sure Mr. Clive Griffiths was talking about this type of person. Those who cannot raise the deposit will still have to wait four years, or whatever the term may be according to the district.

While I am speaking on this subject I wish to mention that some people are experiencing difficulty in obtaining purchase homes in areas of their choice. I do not know where the funds come from which are made available to the commission, but I assume they come from the Commonwealth Government. Because of a shortage in the amount of money being made available to the commission, it is not building the number of homes it used to build. I am referring, too, to purchase homes.

I have no doubts on this matter, because I discussed it privately with the Minister as recently as three weeks ago. At the time the Minister indicated that certain people would be helped under the scheme which is proposed in connection with building societies. I repeat this does not solve the problem of the people who are able to provide only $500, $600, $700 or even $1,000 as deposit. How, then, would a person obtain a purchase home if he has only $200 deposit? Although I support the Bill, I think attention must be drawn to these things.

I ask: where do we go? How will people in the lower income bracket who desire to purchase their own homes be able to do so? I know that many of them do not want to live in rental homes. I have in my hand details of the case of an invalid pensioner with two children whose rent went up this week to $22 from $16. Another person is paying $26 rent for an ordinary 40-year old brick house in East Fremantle. What assistance can the State Housing Commission give?

Only a limited number of people will be assisted under this scheme. I wish it well, but I draw attention to the fact that people cannot approach building societies unless they have at least 10 per cent. of the loan required.

Sitting suspended from 6.5 to 7.30 p.m.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [7.30 p.m.]: Like other members who have spoken on the Bill, I am intrigued at the financial arrangements that are included in clause 4. It is difficult to see how these are intended to assist. A worker who borrows $8,000 from the State Housing Commission to purchase a home would be liable to pay approximately $39 a month. The same amount borrowed from a building society, even at 6 per cent., would mean he would have to pay $53 a month. This would include a person who is in the income bracket of $50 to $53 a week.

The reason for the difference in the payments is that the building societies spread the payments over a shorter period than that allowed by the State Housing

Commission. The money is advanced to the building society by the State Housing Commission so long as the interest rate does not exceed 7 per cent. Therefore, such conditions mean that the arrangement can apply to only one company that is able to offer assistance. Also this one company may be granted a lump sum of $750,000.

If one looks through any issue of the *Daily News* during October one finds advertisements by various building societies calling for funds to be invested in those societies at interest rates of 7 per cent and upwards. One society offers cash dividend shares at 7 per cent. per annum over five years; another offers 7 per cent. interest over four years; another society offers 10½ per cent. interest spread over 9½ years, whilst yet another offers 9.1 per cent. over 5½ years, and so on.

Therefore, if a building society is to be given $750,000 for a term of 10 years, it would seem that it will make a handsome profit if it retains the full sum for the whole term. As other members have said, it is rather difficult to work out what arrangement is to be made with the building society; that is, in what way are the capital and the repayments to be handled? If the building society is borrowing sums of money from individuals at the interest rates I have quoted, it will not advance any money by way of loan at a rate of interest less than the cost of finance to itself.

I wonder whether all that will be achieved by the Bill will be to allow the building society to lend money, which it has received under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, at 7 per cent. interest and, by paying only 6 per cent. interest to the State Housing Commission for the money it has borrowed, it would make a fair sort of income from the difference.

This may be an uncharitable attitude to adopt, but it is difficult to see how this arrangement will work. I cannot see that it will assist to any great extent those who are in real need of housing assistance; that is, those who are in the low income bracket. They are at a disadvantage because when they approach a building society they are unable to obtain the best interest rates as they do not possess sufficient collateral. As a result they are forced to approach other financial houses that are prepared to risk lending money to them, but at a high interest rate.

It may be that under clause 4 the terms entered into between the building society and the State Housing Commission may be such as to prevent that which I have mentioned from happening, but there is nothing specifically stated in the Bill. Those who are unable to afford to purchase a home and are obliged to pay high rents are therefore placed in a position where they cannot accumulate a deposit sufficient to enable them to obtain assistance from financial houses outside the State Housing Commission.

We must support the measure in the hope that in some vague way assistance will be granted to deserving families.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [7.38 p.m.]: There appears to be some misunderstanding about the manner in which this legislation is intended to operate. Obviously the explanation I gave when I introduced the second reading of the Bill was not sufficiently clear, so I will make a further attempt. What the commission will set out to do under the Bill is to subsidise the interest rate on housing loans which are advanced to those people in a fairly high income bracket, but who are still eligible for State Housing Commission homes. The subsidy offered is 1 per cent. I will explain the matter in the most simple language I know. If a man borrows $10,000 at 7 per cent. interest, he will pay $700 a year in interest for the first year. If he borrows $10,000 at 6 per cent. interest, he will pay $600 a year, and the difference between the interest rates of 6 per cent. and 7 per cent. is $100 a year. It is quite clear that this represents 1 per cent., or on a $10,000 loan approximately $2 a week.

That is the subsidy the commission will pay to a man who obtains a loan from a building society. It has been calculated that if this is done 1,500 times it will cost the commission $1,177,800, but if it is not done that way it can be done another way: that is, by the investment of $750,000 at 6 per cent. which earns $45,000 a year for 10 years, and $45,000 a year for 10 years amounts to $450,000. The addition of $450,000 and $750,000 amounts to $1,200,000, which is slightly in excess of the total obligation the commission would have in respect of its 1 per cent. subsidy of interest rates.

I am surprised to hear Mr. Claughton say that it appears no-one will gain any benefit from this arrangement.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Of course they will!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Why does Mr. Claughton think we have introduced the Bill? So that people will not gain any benefit from it? Apparently where the misconception arises is there is some query in regard to the repayment of the amount of money that is advanced. There is no question of that. This is a direct subsidy to be granted to the home owner so that he will be relieved of 1 per cent. in his interest rates on the loan that has been advanced to him.

I heard Mr. Clive Griffiths say that 6 per cent. is a low interest rate. It may be but that figure was determined simply by offsetting the interest rate and so making any money borrowed a 6 per

cent. loan. That is the simple explanation. The amount of $750,000, or $1,177,800, will not be paid out in one fell swoop. It will be advanced as people make applications for loans and, as they become eligible for them, so the money will be advanced. The scheme will be limited to a term of 10 years.

I repeat again that this is a subsidy scheme to be entered into by the State Housing Commission for the building of 1,500 homes which normally would be estimated to cost $15,000,000, but which will cost the commission, under this 1 per cent. subsidy scheme, $1,177,800. This can be achieved in two ways. One way is to make an outright subsidy of that amount of money, and the other way is to invest roughly three-quarters of that sum at 6 per cent. and make up the difference between the capital of $750,000 and the interest rate of 6 per cent., which adds up to slightly more than the capital sum if the commission were involved in this scheme at the calculated figure.

That is the simple explanation. Members seem to be confused by thinking that there may be a need for repayment of this money. There is no repayment; it is a subsidy to the home purchaser. In case Mr. Claughton cannot see the point, I will tell him that the benefit will go to the person who obtains a loan, by being granted a subsidy of 1 per cent. in the interest rate.

That is as clear as I can explain the position. I am pleased that the Bill has received the support of members. It is intended to assist people, and I think it will be of material assistance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 60B added—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

> Page 2, line 15—Delete the words "permanent building societies" and substitute the words "approved lending institutions".

This amendment is in conformity with the undertaking that has been given by the Minister for Housing.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Perhaps the Minister could give us an indication of what the approved lending institutions are.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have explained that two points of view were expressed in another place, where two amendments were proposed in respect of the organisations which could receive the benefit. One member there suggested the inclusion of terminating societies, but the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggested the facility be extended to approved lending institutions. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Minister for Housing decided it would be better to make an amendment to include the words, "approved lending institutions." I am not sure of this, but I think the term "approved lending institution" is defined in the Housing Loan Guarantee Act.

Amendment put and passed.

The clause was further amended, on motions by The Hon. A. F. Griffith, as follows:—

> Page 2, line 19—Delete the words "permanent building societies" and substitute the words "approved lending institutions".
>
> Page 2, lines 23 and 24—Delete the words "permanent building societies" and substitute the words "approved lending institutions".
>
> Page 2, line 31—Insert the following passage:—
>
> > "approved lending institution" means an institution, body or person that is approved in writing by the Minister for the purposes of this section;.
>
> Page 2, lines 35 to 39—Delete the interpretation " 'permanent building society' ".

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: It is obvious the approach to this Bill will be very different when the Minister tells us that the amount of money to be advanced by the Housing Commission will not have to be repaid. If this is a direct contribution by the Housing Commission, is there no need for the money to be repaid?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is not a matter of writing out a cheque for the sum of $750,000-odd. This will be paid as a subsidised interest rate as money becomes available.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I understand that. Is there at any stage a need to repay the Housing Commission?

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: The word "investment" misled me.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: On the figures that I have given, the cost of the subsidy per person is based on $2 per week, and this represents the difference between the interest rate of 7 per cent. and 6 per cent.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I accept the figures. If an applicant signs up with the Housing Commission to purchase a house he is obligated to repay the money he borrows.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, but for the first 10 years of a loan under this proposal the Housing Commission will subsidise it at the rate of 1 per cent. In

other words, the Housing Commission virtually makes a gift of 1 per cent. of the interest rate for the period of 10 years.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I understand this will be paid direct to the lending authorities?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. The Minister for Housing has told me that no definite proposal has been decided on, but the method of earning the total amount of money required may be to invest some of it at the rate of 6 per cent. It so happens that if we take three-quarters of the amount of $1,177,800 it works out at just over $750,000; and if this latter amount is invested at 6 per cent., slightly more than the amount that is required to meet the obligation of subsidising 1,500 loans over 10 years will be obtained.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: In essence, this will be the position: If a person was subsidised to the extent of $100 each year over the 10 years he would receive $1,000 at no cost to himself.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I find this to be rather intriguing. It seems that everybody is getting on the merry-go-round. The building societies will be given more funds, and the people who borrow money from them will be subsidised at the rate of 1 per cent. over 10 years. In respect of a loan of $10,000, the home purchaser, instead of having to pay $700 each year in interest will have to pay only $600 each year. Surely there must be a loser along the line. It seems that by this method the Housing Commission will be deprived of $750,000 which it could use to build homes for the people who are in greatest need. The situation which has concerned us is the plight of the people on low incomes—the people who have to pay extremely high rents. These are the ones whom the Government should help.

The Minister has said that 1,500 loans will be assisted over 10 years. Does this average out at 150 loans to be assisted each year, or are the 1,500 loans to be assisted each year?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Surely the honourable member is having me on!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Housing Commission will be investing $750,000 for 10 years. I have mentioned the advertisements which show that the building societies are prepared to pay interest at the rate of 10½ per cent. a year on money deposited for a term of 10 years.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think Mr. Claughton is pulling my leg.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Someone's leg is being pulled.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As long as it is not my leg it will be all right. The position is that if the State Housing Commission were to build houses for 1,500 people at a cost of $10,000 per house, the total cost would be $15,000,000 would it not?

The Hon. J. Dolan: That is right, without working it out.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The State Housing Commission can be relieved of the responsibility of finding $15,000,000 in capital.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Over 10 years.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It does not matter whether it is over 10 years.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: There are 20,000 people on the books of the State Housing Commission now who require help.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Do not drag red herrings across the trail merely because some political advantage might be gained. I am too long in the tooth to listen to that sort of argument. The State Housing Commission will relieve itself of the responsibility of finding $15,000,000 because eligible applicants will be able to go to the approved lending authorities and get money. This will relieve the commission of the necessity of having to find $15,000,000 for 1,500 houses which is, equivalent to a subsidy of $2 a week on a $10,000 loan for 10 years.

I would like to assure Mr. Claughton that it is not a matter of everybody making a profit.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th October.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan) [8.4 p.m.]: This Bill is related to two propositions which have recently been put to the Lands Department. They relate to the occupancy or tenancy of underpasses and overpasses.

An underpass is constructed so that one can pass under a street or buildings, and an overpass is constructed so that one can go over a street. The Bill relates to Crown land, and has no application whatever to freehold land. It should be obvious that we are dealing with a situation where the underpasses and overpasses will be built only on Crown land.

The principal local governing body which is concerned in this particular instance is the Perth City Council. While the city council has control over its streets, and so on, it has no right whatever

over the land under the surface, or the air space above the surface. That is Crown land and the Crown can do what it likes with it.

I can recall the time when there used to be conveniences below the level of St. George's Terrace and, taking this Bill as a guide, I feel that the local governing body really had no right to construct those conveniences. That would apply especially if any charge were made by way of lease.

The applications which have been made to the Lands Department deal, first of all, with both underpasses and overpasses. The first will run from the south side of St. George's Terrace, through to Hay Street, across Murray Street, and to Forrest Place.

It might be recalled that we passed an amendment to the Local Government Act a short time ago to make it possible for a footway to be constructed across a roadway. That was to overcome the situation which exists in Murray Street where an overway will cross Murray Street.

The second application to the Lands Department will concern the area at the corner of Hay and William Streets. An underway will be constructed to the north-west corner of the intersection, and will necessitate the construction of tunnels under the roads, and also the air space above the roads will be used. As the local governing body has no power to use street reserves for other purposes that land will be vested in the Crown. That is the purpose of this amendment; to make sure the Crown has the authority either to lease the area, or grant a special license to an applicant.

Underways and overways are quite common in other parts of the world, and have been quite common down through history. I can remember seeing numerous pictures of the old London Bridge where trading was carried on in shops and people dwelt on the bridge. Of course, as time marched by those places became terrifically cluttered up and eventually they were cleaned out. A number of underpasses will be found in London, and anybody who has ever been to Melbourne knows that Flinders Street is particularly busy and there is an underpass from the front of Tattersall's across to the Flinders Street Station. It caters for an enormous number of people, more particularly during peak periods. In Melbourne the underway extends right through to Bourke Street.

As Perth grows similar situations will arise and it will be found that the same type of underways will be constructed. I also have in mind the underway at the Fremantle Railway Station which has been there for as long as I can remember. It goes under the station. The same sort of set-up exists at the Flinders Street Station, in Melbourne, where one can go to any one of about 20 platforms by way of underpasses.

In the last couple of days I have gathered from Press statements that some of the hideous advertisements will be removed. However, if they are removed from their present positions and placed in the underpasses, or on the overpasses, they will clutter up those pedestrian ways. I can envisage the situation of, perhaps, the Horseshoe Bridge accommodating stalls, off the street, where lottery tickets and so on could be sold. We do not want to see that situation develop.

We should ensure that the underpasses and overpasses do not become what could almost be called slums. Even though the underpasses will be constructed underground they could still be things of beauty. I mentioned earlier that this amendment will affect only Crown land. If it were any different then any person with freehold land would not be able to construct a basement. If the power extended beyond Crown land the situation would become ridiculous.

I can envisage that, perhaps, with the sinking of the railway a situation could develop similar to that which exists at the Adelaide railway station. Shops have been built in the underpasses and cater mainly for train passengers.

The amendments are fairly simple. Clause 2 of the Bill amends section 117 of the Act, which reads as follows:—

> The Governor may lease any town, suburban or village lands on such terms as he may think fit.

The amendment in clause 2 of the Bill will add a new section—117A—which reads as follows:—

> 117A. (1) For the purposes of facilitating the construction and maintenance of subways and bridges under and over streets, for the use of pedestrians and for other purposes, the Governor may, for such period and on such terms and conditions as he thinks fit, grant a lease or license of any part of land that is vested in the Crown pursuant to section two hundred and sixty-eight of the Local Government Act, 1960.
>
> (2) Any lease or license granted pursuant to this section, is subject to the provisions of section five hundred and eleven of the Local Government Act, 1960.

Section 511 of the Local Government Act reads as follows:—

> (1) A council may with the consent of the Minister authorise a person to construct and maintain all or any of the following works leading from land on one side of a street to land on the other side of the street, namely—
>
> (a) a subway at such depth under the street as the council approves;

(b) a bridge for the use of pedestrians to be constructed at a height of not less than fifteen feet over the street;

(c) a pipe, conduit or conveyor for the purpose of transporting material to be constructed at a height of not less than fifteen feet over the street.

Any lease granted is subject to those provisions, and in this section approved land means any part of land below the surface, and any part of the air space above the land. I think this type of development comes naturally with the progress of any city. I have certainly used the underpass in Melbourne on many occasions and I will continue to use it. Flinders Street is very busy and by using the underpass one will not get knocked down by the traffic.

The overpass across St. George's Terrace, and across Murray Street, and the underpass at the corner of Hay and William Streets will become very popular with pedestrians and there will be a demand and a clamour for more of such structures. From that point of view I think the Bill is desirable, and it is being introduced at a time when the necessity has arisen. I think we will find it will cover many facets of development which are absolutely necessary. I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [8.15 p.m.]: Looking at section 511 of the Local Government Act which gives the local authority power to construct subways and overways, perhaps the intention of this amendment is to provide not for just a subway, but for a shopping arcade to be constructed under the ground. If this is so, I think the Bill is even more commendable because of that. As Mr. Dolan has indicated, the scheme will link the area near the Esplanade to the south of the city and the cultural centre in the north of the city. Among other things it is designed to allow pedestrians access from the car parks in the southern part of the city and through the city itself without conflicting with vehicular traffic. This again is a desirable objective.

However, I express regret that the stage of planning reached by the Perth City Council has not been matched by the Government in regard to the planning of the cultural centre. The Bill proposes to provide for pedestrians underground access from the south of the city to the cultural centre, which centre will be non-existent for many years. At the moment, in the north of the city, there are a few isolated buildings which will become part of the cultural centre, such as the Museum and the Art Gallery, but they do not seem to be related to anything in the complex.

The purpose of the Bill will also have some bearing on parking and the flow of traffic in the city itself. The pedestrians of a city which is unable to cope with a heavy flow of traffic must be seriously affected. The objective should be to permit people to reach the city and avoid as much traffic congestion as possible. This Bill will permit that in a small measure, but a great deal more has to be done. In this morning's issue of *The West Australian* appeared some comments by a city town planner on what he has seen in cities overseas. He pointed out that the freeway concept in those cities has been abandoned because it has been realised that greater use must be made of public transport systems to bring the people into the heart of the cities.

These are points I was trying to make in the speech I made last week. I hope, therefore, the Government will do its share in making the city a better place than it is now. It should be an objective of town planning that the commercial activities are not separated from the cultural activities. Both should be linked so that people visiting the city will be able to take advantage of these facilities.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West —Minister for Local Government) [8.20 p.m.]: I am glad we have a new town planner in our midst, because there are plenty of vacancies he can fill if he cares to apply. The purpose of the Bill is defined in both the Land Act and the Local Government Act. Whilst a subway can be built from land to land, it cannot be built from one building to another. I have already granted permission for the construction of one overway from land to land.

The principle of the Bill is that if a tunnel is constructed in the expectation that people will use it, unless it is made attractive people will be disinclined to use it. Therefore the suggestion is that a tunnel arcade will be built comprising brightly-lit shops, and this arcade will be kept clean and under control at all times. Under such conditions people will be induced to use it.

The Hon. J. Dolan: A bit like London Court.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, but unlike London Court it will be constructed underground. If we can accomplish this at more than one location it will be a good trend. People should be educated to think along these lines, and the town planners we are obtaining are alive to such a situation. Under existing conditions there is no way by which a shop could be leased, so provision had to be made in the Land Act for this to be done. This is the purpose of the Bill. I express my appreciation that members realise that this is something worth while.

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 The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), and passed.

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 22nd October.

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East) [8.23 p.m.]: The original Bush Fires Act was introduced in 1937 following extensive uncontrolled fires which occurred in the south-west of Western Australia. These fires swept through forest areas causing much damage and tragic loss to individuals.

The 1937 Act was repealed by the Bush Fires Act No. 53 of 1954. The Bill was to make better provision for diminishing the dangers resulting from bush fires, for the prevention, control, and the extinguishing of bush fires, and the repeal of the Act of 1937-1950. The proposed amendments as outlined in the Bill before the House are in the main very desirable, and I support them. Disastrous fires have occurred in the past and have destroyed many homes and much property. Laws and regulations are in force, and we should obey them implicitly.

The State is very dry, and an extremely dangerous fire hazard exists at present. Dry conditions have prevailed for almost all the winter and spring, and into early summer, and it looks as though these conditions will continue. Already it is the end of October, and we have had a record low of three points of rain for the month. The previous low record for October in the metropolitan area was 15 points of rain.

Terrible fires at Dwellingup and other places in Western Australia occurred a few years ago. Fires also did much damage in Tasmania in recent years. These events should serve to make people, not only in Western Australia but also throughout the rest of the Commonwealth, particularly fire-conscious, as fire is a terrible and fearful master. It is also a good servant, and we should all endeavour to keep it in the servant class.

Four parts of the Bill seek to amend the Act; two new sections are to be added, a section repealed, and another section re-enacted. The first amendment is to insert the words "Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association of Western Australia": and the words to be deleted are "Fire Accident and Marine Underwriters' Association." The Minister has told us that the association was incorrectly named.

A board member is to be nominated by the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association of Western Australia. There is an amendment to provide for the delegation of power by the local government bodies, while another amendment is to provide for notification to be made to forest officers if a fire is to be lit within certain dates and if within two miles of a forest. This seems to be desirable and quite logical.

Another amendment disqualifies a fire control officer from granting or issuing to himself a permit to burn. It will delete the power now existing under the Act. He will in future have to arrange for a permit to burn to be issued by another fire control officer. This should not be a hardship. It will obviate undesirable criticism that could apply.

Under this Bill, the shire councils will now be able to vary dates for burning off in various districts. Weather conditions in Western Australia vary quite considerably from shire to shire. Conditions in northern areas could not be compared with the conditions around Albany and Esperance and in other southern shires.

The present prohibited time for burning off extends from the 15th December to the 15th April. It is now proposed that this prohibited burning off time will extend from the 1st October to the 31st May.

Provision will now apply for burning off such items as garden refuse, in the open, during restricted burning-off times. Conditions are to be specified by notice in the *Government Gazette*. This has not applied in the past.

The removal of hot ashes will now be controlled by the introduction of a new subsection in the Bill, in which hot ashes are referred to as "incendiary material." Section 208 of the Local Government Act reads as follows:—

> (a) for regulating or prohibiting the dumping of hot ashes; and
>
> (b) for minimising danger likely to arise from hot ashes.

The removal of hot ashes from boilers and similar apparatus is to be controlled under this Bill. Vehicles will have to be of metal fabrication and totally enclosed to prevent the spillage or escape of hot debris onto roads or verges. Spillage could cause fires on roadside verges. The land or site where hot ashes will be dumped will be required by the Bill to be specified by the local authority and bushfire officers.

A provision in this Bill is to be made for a minimum of accident insurance cover. Accidents are bound to occur to people and equipment during fire fighting.

It is desirable that all shires should have such an insurance cover, and people who give their services voluntarily should have some form of protection against accident. Due to their carelessness, tourists have

caused many fires, particularly along the Eyre Highway. They have lit fires to boil their billies, but when they finished their meal they failed to cover the ashes. The wind fanned the ashes, and fires were caused. I remember on one occasion 300,000 acres were burnt out; this land was along the Eyre Highway. Not a tree or a blade of grass was left standing in that area.

The metropolitan fire brigade attends to fires in the metropolitan area, and to the administrative work attached thereto. The volunteer fire brigades in the country districts do a similar job of work. The Bush Fires Board controls fire fighting, and performs the administrative work connected with fire control and fire prevention in the country districts.

There are 12 members on the Bush Fires Board. The chairman is the Under-Secretary for Lands, and the other 11 members comprise five who are nominated by the executive council of the Country Shire Councils' Association, one by the sawmilling industry, one by the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association, one by the Minister for Agriculture, one by the Minister for Railways, one by the Minister for Police, and one by the Minister for Forests.

I understand that 10 fire wardens have been engaged, and they travel over various centres in the State to co-operate with local authorities, and to assist local authorities to educate the public. I think the message is getting through to the people, and they are becoming fire conscious.

I wish to pay a tribute to the volunteer bushfire brigades in the various country districts. These fire fighters volunteer their services, and they are dedicated people. They give of their time after the working hours on week days, and on Sundays for the benefit of the community, to fight fires wherever they may occur. Some people regard them as those who participate in demonstrations at Easter and who pleasantly splash water around. The people seem to take these volunteer fire fighters for granted. I should point out that they are on call all the time to fight fires, no matter what their calling or occupation may be.

The volunteer fire brigades provide a wonderful training ground for young men. They provide education on fire fighting, on fire prevention, and on the use of chemicals for fire fighting. Further, they provide uniforms, equipment, and plant. The standards are high, the discipline is strict, and dedication and devotion are required.

Before I conclude I would like to make mention of the late Emil Nulsen, M.L.A., who was a member of the first championship team from Norseman to win at the demonstrations. His teammate was the late Mr. W. G. Kerr, who was the secretary of a shire council and who coached many State championship teams from Norseman, and an Australian champion team. Many excellent firefighters in Western Australia should be grateful to him for the coaching and training which they received. His son, Mr. Harry Kerr, is the postmaster at Norseman; and he is carrying on the good work of his father.

With those remarks I support the Bill.

THE HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [8.34 p.m.]: It is not my intention to delay the passage of the Bill, because the provisions have been dealt with adequately by Mr. Stubbs. Generally I am in agreement with them, except the provision which prescribes a minimum penalty, and this appears in three clauses in the Bill. This provides for a minimum penalty of $10, irreducible in mitigation, notwithstanding any other Act.

At any time this is a principle to which I am opposed, because I do not see any good reason for imposing a minimum penalty, regardless of what the mitigating circumstances might be. I admit that this is only a minimum penalty, but I would like the Minister to explain why it is necessary to have the provision in the Bill. In any case, I oppose the imposition of any penalty which is irreducible in mitigation. It is unnecessary for this provision to be in the Bill.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [8.35 p.m.]: I support the Bill, but there are one or two proposed amendments which, in my view, deserve some comment. One has already been touched on by Mr. Willmott, so I will not repeat the concern which he has expressed except to say that I too, will be interested to hear an explanation given for fixing a minimum penalty.

Another provision contained in the Bill relates to the need for landowners to notify the forestry officers when a fire is lit within a distance of two miles of State forests. Taking into account the practicability of this requirement, I can see the reasons for it; but I can also see that some inconvenience will be caused to the landowners. At the present time landowners are required to notify the Forests Department during certain periods of the year of their intention to burn. We now see an attempt to apply a uniform procedure, so as to avoid any misunderstanding which may arise as to the permissible burning periods of the year. In some districts it is obligatory on those who wish to burn to notify the department. I will be very interested to see or to hear how this works out in the future.

I have one point to raise in respect of the activities of the bushfire brigades in this State. Let me say at the outset that from my knowledge of the bushfire systems which are adopted in all the States of Australia, I believe that we in Western

Australia have the most efficient and most practical method of voluntary fire fighting. Like so many community efforts it is all very well to have legislation to deal with various matters, but when it comes down to the hard core of getting the work done somebody has to do it.

The system which has been built up over many years under the volunteer bushfire brigades—which are authorised by and operated under the Local Government Act—is probably the most acceptable form of protection against fires. However, no system is perfect, and later on I will suggest an idea for improving the lot of some of the brigades which protect the country districts of this State. In order to arrive at that point I need to draw a comparison with what happens in the other States. I start off by referring to what applies in Victoria.

In Victoria the Country Fire Authority is responsible for all prevention and suppression measures throughout the whole of Victoria with the exception of the Melbourne metropolitan area and provides both urban and rural fire fighting services. The authority is financed by contributions in the proportion of two-thirds from insurance companies and one-third from the Treasury. Both urban and rural bushfire brigades are subsidised mainly by the provision of equipment by the authority. Many of its rural brigades are situated in townships and many bushfire brigades serve a dual role of town and rural protection. The authority has complete control of the formation and registration of bushfire brigades. There are quite large areas in Victoria where there is little normal involvement of rural landholders who have come to look on fire fighting as a service provided and organised by the authority. Whilst landholders readily volunteer for fire fighting where a large fire occurs, in many cases they do not have fire-fighting equipment themselves. In many instances all the equipment of the bushfire brigades is authority owned and this has tended to lead to centralisation in towns.

Local authorities in Victoria do not play a very large role and are mainly concerned with the issue of permits to burn.

It is important to reflect on the present position in Western Australia where, under the volunteer system, there is greater participation by landholders who have a direct interest not only in the equipment required, but also in the need to protect the district.

In New South Wales the bushfire committee organises and co-ordinates the activities of bushfire brigades throughout the State and of fire prevention measures and fire prevention education. A bushfire fighting fund exists and bushfire brigades in a part of New South Wales are subsidised for equipment through this fund which is controlled largely through the Local Government Department. The Bush Fires Act comes under the administration of the Chief Secretary's Department. Local authorities take quite a large part in fire control organisation and fire prevention measures.

In respect of Queensland, each urban fire brigade comes under a separate local board which is autonomous except for finance. There is no clearly determined co-ordinating body. The cost of maintenance of the brigades is contributed on the basis of the Government one-seventh, insurance companies five-sevenths, and local authorities one-seventh. Rural fire services come under the rural fire brigades board which organises bushfire brigades and fire prevention provisions and education generally. There is no major subsidy scheme for assistance of rural brigades.

In South Australia the fire protection of smaller country towns and rural fire fighting services are provided under the South Australian emergency fire services. This service is directly under the control of the Commissioner of Police. Many of the brigades are organised in country towns and fill a dual role in providing fire-fighting services in the town and in the surrounding rural areas. Brigades under the South Australian emergency fire services are assisted by the provision of some of their equipment through the Police Department, provided that the brigade can ensure housing and a vehicle. The assistance is mainly in the provision of pumps.

There is also a bushfire committee in South Australia which is mainly advisory to the Minister and principally concerned with the provisions of the Bush Fires Act and restrictions and prohibitions on the lighting and use of fires.

In addition to the bushfire committee, there is a bushfire research committee financed by the Government which is responsible for research into bushfire problems and for publicity in public education.

The last State I wish to mention is Tasmania where the Rural Fires Board organises the volunteer bushfire brigades and undertakes fire prevention publicity and education.

Bushfire brigades are not well developed in Tasmania because of lack of interest arising from generally mild climatic conditions. Whilst bushfire brigades have been formed in many areas there has been no widespread involvement in the community generally. Most of the brigades formed are supplied by the Rural Fires Board with a kit of hand tools.

I am sure the people in Tasmania well remember the tragic fires in southern Tasmania, and particularly around Hobart a few years ago, and if they had to fight the fires there with hand tools, undoubtedly they did not have much success.

Referring to this State, I wish to touch on what is happening at the present time, and I pay tribute here to the high degree of efficiency in the well organised brigades we have. One of the best examples of this high degree of preparedness and efficient organisation can be found in the great southern area of this State.

I believe that in the main the bushfire brigades themselves want the voluntary system of bushfire control to continue, and I believe that the people involved in this work realise it is probably the most efficient method, brought about by the participation of the local people in each brigade area.

Statistics show that the better organised shires of the great southern have produced more, and in some instances better, fire-fighting units than shires of twice the area and population in Victoria. I think members will realise that that is correct if they can recall what I said in respect of the bushfire fighting system in that State.

Probably the great advantage of this voluntary system is that in Western Australia the whole responsibility of bushfire control is, under the Bush Fires Act, vested in the local authority. I refer to the local participation of the brigades, and who knows better about the local conditions and the measures necessary for fire prevention, control, and suppression than the members of the brigades themselves.

I suggest this knowledge has grown out of the experience and education of the members of these brigades plus the better equipment they have in the great southern and other areas; and the use of radio plays its part. I would suggest that to obtain the most efficient type of fire suppression, the following ingredients are essential:—

(1) A few dedicated and capable firemen;

(2) a strong and sympathetic shire council; and

(3) in the appropriate areas, an efficient and adequate radio network together with all the aids so necessary, these being fire maps, fire danger ratings, and that type of data, to say nothing of highly efficient powered pumps and all the necessary fire-fighting equipment.

It is recognised not only in the great southern area, but also in some of the northern wheatbelt areas, that with the availability of an efficient radio network amongst the bushfire brigades, organised regions can operate. In other words, under these conditions it is possible for brigades from three, four, or five neighbouring shires to join in the system when the need arises. Under these circumstances there is always an organised state of preparedness and help is usually offered before it is requested.

In practice, when smoke is observed in these areas, those on the network are so aware of the situation in times of fire danger that they immediately go on the air and seek information from the operator in the particular locality concerned, and request a report. As a result of that report they know the nature of the fire, how many units are required, and so on. Therefore they can offer whatever assistance they have at their command. If only a minor outbreak is involved, only one brigade or two or three men with the right equipment might be sufficient to suppress it. On the other hand, if it is a major outbreak other brigades are drawn in. Indeed, brigades from several shires can be marshalled to suppress the outbreak. Because of this tremendous efficiency, the requirements are very adequately covered.

All this has been built up through the voluntary system and I acknowledge that many of the radio equipped brigades have spent a tremendous amount of money on their equipment. Many individuals have spent hundreds of dollars, and in some cases thousands of dollars have been involved to provide efficient equipment. This has been done of their own free will for their own benefit and for the security of the district.

However, in other areas of the State, radio control is not quite so necessary between bushfire brigades. I am thinking particularly of the more heavily timbered and more closely settled areas of the south-west because in those areas there is a greater participation by the Forests Department which has, indeed, lines of communication on land lines, and also it has its own radio network. In addition it has very efficient fire-fighting units which are very well equipped with heavy and light equipment, as the need may arise. I am sure the settlers in the south-west appreciate the protection and the co-operation given by the Forests Department.

However, there is an obligation on the landowners in the south-west to provide also bushfire brigades in their own right, and this is done. The brigades are generally not of the same magnitude as those in the great southern and wheatbelt areas because the need is a little different. Many of the farmers in the south-west are relatively small landowners and have not the financial capacity to buy the heavy equipment other brigades enjoy. Being small landowners, many of the farmers in the south-west operate on a part-time basis and work off their properties during the day. They might work at the local timber mill or at some other type of occupation and consequently during the day the only occupant of a farm might be the wife.

In these circumstances if an outbreak occurs the menfolk belonging to the properties involved are many miles away and

so they are not available to support the brigades in the area or to attend fire outbreaks. The responsibility then falls back on a relatively few landowners; and so there is a problem here.

We have other brigades in developing areas in some of the light land country of this State where, because of distances involved, a similar situation occurs. Some of the areas opened up in recent years are sparsely populated and the settlers have generally put all their capital and resources into developing their properties and therefore cannot spare sufficient money to purchase specific fire-fighting equipment of the same magnitude possessed by brigades of other areas of the great southern or in the northern wheatbelt.

It is to these smaller brigades I now wish to refer. I said at the outset that in order to try to make my point it was necessary for me to refer to the type of assistance given in each of the Australian States and compare it with the situation in Western Australia. My understanding of our situation is that the voluntary bushfire brigades in the main wish the present system to continue and I believe that this is also the wish of the Bush Fires Board. As I said earlier, it is a matter of participation. Someone has to do the job when the need arises and only the local people can do it.

I referred to the preparedness of some of the more affluent brigades and their high degree of efficiency which enables them to suppress fires. However, some brigades are in need of financial assistance. I know of many local authorities in this State which do, in fact, subsidise bushfire brigades in their areas, and I appreciate their co-operation. I mentioned earlier that one of the main ingredients for efficient bushfire brigade operation was a helpful and co-operative local authority. However, some local authorities have found themselves in a position in which they have not been able to assist their bushfire brigades as much as they would like, because in some situations heavy and expensive equipment is necessary for the suppression of fire. Therefore, those brigades which do not possess this equipment are, in fact, relatively ineffectual.

I therefore ask the Bush Fires Board to make a further assessment of the need throughout the State, particularly in respect of the smaller bushfire brigades. I know the board has looked at the situation on other occasions. In fact it has been examined not only by the board, but by local authorities also over many years.

I raise this question tonight only because I believe there still remains the necessity for further assistance to be given those brigades which are unable, because of their pecuniary situation, to help themselves and, at the same time, their district and the State. The subject of subsidising brigades has been discussed over many years and I know that the older established and more affluent brigades do not want to be subsidised. In many instances they prefer not to be, but to remain voluntary organisations. They have a jealous regard for their reputation and take a pride in their work.

However, I would like this problem to be examined again. I suggest that the board should be good enough not only to examine this situation around the board table, but also to visit physically some of the areas involved and see at first hand the situation which exists. I know this has been done at odd times over the years. I well remember that members of the board went to the south-west about two years ago and saw for themselves some of the work done by the brigades and some of the problems they face. However, I feel this should be done on a wider scale in an effort to assist the people who man these less fortunate brigades, if I can use that expression.

A member: Less finance.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: It is not necessarily less finance: it may be a physical rather than a financial problem. Nevertheless, finance plays a very big part in it. The method by which assistance may be given to the lesser brigades perhaps would be by way of a subsidy which, I believe, would have to be handled through the local authority for the area. Whether the funds originate from the State by a special grant to local authorities, and are allocated to the brigades at the wisdom of the local authority, I am not sure, but I believe this is the only way it could be done. I do not suggest that I have the answer to the problem and this is why I have raised the matter tonight. I hope somebody will thoroughly study and restudy the situation with a view to eliminating some of the anomalies which are apparent.

I wish finally to pay tribute to the work carried out by members of the Bush Fires Board. Mr. Stubbs referred to this when he spoke to the Bill. I am in full accord with what he said. I wish to pay tribute to members of the bushfire brigades themselves for their high degree of efficiency and particularly to those who have seen fit to equip their organisations with radio units, both base stations and mobile units. I acknowledge the co-operation and assistance given by the Forests Department, at times at tremendous cost to the department, particularly in the more heavily timbered areas of the State.

For the record, so that it may be included in *Hansard*, I would like to clarify the situation in respect of what happens in towns in this State as against what is the case in the other States of Australia to which I referred earlier. The summary of

the activities of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board reads as follows:—

> The Western Australian Fire Brigades Board constituted under the Fire Brigades Act, 1942-1966, exercises jurisdiction in towns throughout the State. Permanent brigades operate in the City of Perth and surrounding suburban areas. Permanent brigade personnel serve with volunteer brigade personnel in five large Country centres. Elsewhere, as far afield as Derby and Esperance, volunteer brigades provide town fire protection at more than 50 centres.

The Fire Brigades Board is concerned primarily with towns. The Bill with which we are dealing refers only to bush fires, and I have made particular reference to bushfire brigades. In view of the fact that I have endeavoured to connect the situation throughout the whole of Australia I felt it necessary to mention the degree and method of protection which towns and cities enjoy in this State. I support the measure.

THE HON. T. O. PERRY (Lower Central) [9.3 p.m.]: The Bill seeks to amend certain sections of the Bush Fires Act. When the Bill was debated in another place, there seemed to be some confusion over the functions of the Bush Fires Board and the Fire Brigades Board. These are two totally different organisations. The Bill before us refers only to the Bush Fires Act, and the functions of the Bush Fires Board. Bushfire brigades are voluntary organisations and, for any voluntary organisation to be successful, I feel there must be a high degree of tolerance, understanding, and co-operation. The bushfire brigades come into contact with the Forests Department on many occasions and it is here that a high degree of tolerance, co-operation, and understanding is necessary.

The measure proposes to alter the time wherein it is necessary for landholders who own land within two miles of State forests to notify the forestry officers of their intention to burn off or to set fire to bush on their land. I wonder whether this provision is necessary. When the Forests Department requested it, did it contact the Bush Fires Board and obtain the approval of members of the Bush Fires Board? I know many landholders adjacent to State forests will not accept this readily. It is now suggested that the times in question will commence on the 1st October and be extended to the 31st March each year. In a normal year in the south-west of this State most of the country is green in early October and it would be impossible to start a bushfire. On a sunny day landholders might wish to burn off some rubbish around the farm, but if it is necessary for them to notify the forestry officer if their land lies within two miles of a State forest, I feel many of them will not go to the bother of burning off the land and much of the fire hazard with which the State is faced will not be lessened by this provision. I question whether there has been any communication between the Forests Department and the Bush Fires Board on this matter. I myself have found forestry officers very co-operative and helpful when dealing with bushfire matters.

The people in Darkan in the West Arthur Shire where I was chief fire control officer for 16 or 17 years quite often came into contact with the Collie forestry station, particularly when we were trying to pinpoint fires some distance from Darkan. We would ring the forestry officer in Collie, who would take a reading from that area from an adjoining lookout tower in the State forest. In this way he would pinpoint accurately the actual location of the fire. We found this very helpful. They also helped us with men and equipment at many of the big fires in the forest area. I have a high regard for officers such as Mr. Milesi and Mr. Grace. When they were stationed at Collie they went out of their way to co-operate with the local bushfire brigade boards.

There is to be an alteration to the provision in the Act governing the insurance taken out by local authorities. In the past, apparently, there has been some discrepancy between the coverage taken out by adjoining shires. In order that fire fighters will enjoy the same benefit—regardless of which shire they are operating in—it is proposed now to have a minimum desirable coverage in each shire. I think this is a good move.

It is also suggested that a local authority will now be given the power to delegate its authority for extending or closing the dates of the burning season. At present, only the local authority has power to extend or close the burning season. It is now proposed, as I have said, that the local authority shall have the power to delegate this authority to individuals; namely, the president of the shire, the mayor of the local authority, or the chief fire control officer.

I think this is very desirable where a local authority meets only monthly. If conditions change and the season cuts off very quickly, or if there are late rains, it is now necessary to call a special shire meeting to make any alteration to the dates. If the power is delegated to the shire president and the chief fire control officer they will be able to meet and make this decision.

In the main I support the amendments that are suggested. However, I do query whether it is necessary to extend the time whereby the local landholder or the landholder whose property lies within two

miles of a State forest must notify the forestry officer. Those are my comments on the Bill.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [9.11 p.m.]: I would like to draw the Minister's attention to page 5 of the Bill and, in particular, to line 31 where I consider the Bill is phrased in an extremely awkward way. I refer particularly to the word "extinguishment" in line 31.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: What page?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Page 5, line 31, where the word "extinguishment" occurs. I hope the Minister will consider the possibility of altering the wording to read, "to prevent, control and to extinguish bush fires."

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I think it is quite all right as it is worded.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The meaning is clear but I suggest a word such as "extinguishment" is extremely awkward and it could be altered in the way I have suggested to make the legislation easily read.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I think it would make it a lot worse.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I only draw the Minister's attention to this fact. If he refuses to do anything about it, I expect that will be an end to the matter.

An article appeared in *The West Australian* on the 12th March under the heading, "Fire Brigades: Shire Wants More Power." In the article attention is drawn to the difficulty which surrounds rights-of-way. One shire in particular wanted more power with respect to control in these areas. Many rights-of-way are freehold. One in particular which has been brought to my attention is in the name of a company, which seems to own nothing else except the land in the right-of-way. If one wants to sue the company, there is nothing against which to claim damages, because the company owns nothing else.

This not only presents a local authority with difficulty when it comes to clearing a fire hazard from the laneway, but it also presents difficulty in other circumstances as well. The matter is tossed from one authority to another and it only ends up in the too-hard basket with nobody wanting to take up the matter or to take action to overcome the problems.

There is a dead tree in the laneway to which I have just referred which is a danger to the residents in the area. Nobody is responsible and nobody is prepared to do anything about it. Because of the fire hazards and other problems, it is time some positive investigation was made to see what can be done to enable action to be taken to do away with problems in laneways and rights-of-way.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [9.15 p.m.]: I think it is fair to say that every time we have a Bill to amend the Bush Fires Act introduced into this House it creates a fair amount of discussion because it is a topic about which one can say plenty. Mr. Willmott raised a particular issue.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: I usually do, just to be awkward.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If the honourable member would read the principal Act he would understand the situation. I would advise him not to try to amend the Act by deleting the offending clause he has in mind because section 58(2) of the Bush Fires Act states—

> Notwithstanding the provisions of section one hundred and sixty-six of the Justices Act, 1902-1948, or of any other Act, the minimum penalty for an offence against this Act is, if no other minimum penalty is prescribed, one-tenth of the maximum penalty for that offence.

The penalty laid down in the Bill is only one-twentieth, so we would only be increasing the minimum by 100 per cent., and that would double it. The reason the provision is included is that instead of applying 10 per cent. of the maximum we are only applying one-twentieth.

Mr. Perry raised the question of consultation between owners, the local authority, and the Bush Fires Board. Surely it is the Bush Fires Board that makes the recommendation to the Minister when it is necessary to amend the Act so it would be well acquainted with the position. Apart from this a member of the Forests Department is on the Bush Fires Board. Accordingly they would all know the situation.

I have not had a chance to pick up the query raised by Mr. Claughton in regard to clause 18, but in connection with what he said concerning the word "extinguishment" being used instead of the word "extinguish" I am sure that if we read the provision carefully we will feel that extinguishment is a better word to use. Mr. Ferry gave us a very good run-down of the set-up in each State.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is not in the Bill.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Very often we discuss matters which are not referred to in Bills which come before us. It was, however, enlightening to get some insight into the set-up in the various States, because it gives us an opportunity to see whether we are doing the right thing or whether there is room for improvement. It would appear that we are far ahead of the other States and that is where we are going to stay. I thank members for their support and commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery) in the Chair; The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Repeal and re-enactment of section 37—

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

Page 7, lines 10 to 18—Delete the passage commencing with the passage "that," down to and including the word "damage" and substitute the following:—

"that—

(a) in respect of any one bush fire, exceeds—

(i) two thousand dollars for any one appliance or item of equipment or apparatus; or

(ii) four thousand dollars to any one person or partnership; or

(b) in any one insurance year, exceeds a total amount of ten thousand dollars to any one person or partnership for all loss or damage" .

When members are considering the amendments to the Bush Fires Act now put forward, I would like them to refer particularly to section 37 as mentioned in clause 8 of the amending Bill.

As this amendment now reads, the policy taken out by a local authority to cover loss or damage to equipment or persons, limits the amount payable in one insurance year under the cover required as a minimum stated in the policy of insurance.

The intention of clause 8 was to amend section 37 of the Bush Fires Act so as to set minimum requirements for benefits for injury to fire fighters and loss or damage to equipment. This is in accordance with the standard bush fires insurance policy usually taken out by local authorities.

As the amendment now reads in subsection (6) of proposed new section 37, payment for injury, loss, or damage is limited to the amounts stated in any one insurance year to $2,000 for any one appliance or item of equipment or apparatus, and to $4,000 to any one person or partnership. Through an error in the original drafting of the amendment, the minimum payments were intended to be a maximum of $10,000 to cover these causes in any one insurance year, but not to individual payments. Obviously, if more than one fire occurred during the year the intention was not to limit the payments for only one such occasion as now stated.

To remove all doubt, proposed new subsection (6) on page 7 of the Bill has been redrafted to allow more than one payment in any one insurance year for loss or damage to equipment, or injury to fire fighters, but the total which may be paid in any one insurance year is $10,000.

This amendment is in accordance with the provisions of existing insurance policies to cover benefits for losses or damage to equipment or injury to a person.

Members will, no doubt, see the necessity for submitting an amendment to subsection (6) of proposed new section 37 as now stated to comply with the original intention.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [9.26 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, which is presented for the consideration of members, has been drafted so as to enable the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia, with the approval of the Governor on the recommendation of the Minister to take up equity capital or debentures in companies. In this regard, I refer to companies associated with, or interested in the financing of the State's economic activities such as the development of our natural resources. Such ventures are often typical of merchant banking operations and, as such, they widen the opportunities for greater local participation.

The R. & I. Bank has not sought previously to participate in the capital of any of the fringe banking institutions, as has been the practice of the private trading banks. The R. & I. Bank prefers to meet its customers' needs from its own resources but there has been a recent development in which the Government and Commissioners of the Bank consider it desirable for the bank to have the power to participate in companies interested in the type of financing to which I have referred.

This development encompasses the formation of companies in which the major participants have been an Australian bank and one or more of the giant overseas banks. The associations thus developed are providing channels for the inflow of offshore capital for the development of new and growing industry. I shall make some more particular reference in this direction as I proceed.

It has transpired that the R. & I. Bank has been approached by the Crown Agents, in conjunction with the Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago and Credit Lyonnais of Paris, to set up an investing company in Australia with headquarters in Perth. This Bill aims at enabling the bank and the State to take advantage of this proposal.

In order that members might have a ready appreciation of the identity and standing of the three principals which I have mentioned, it might be beneficial if I were to enlarge in that respect.

The Crown Agents' Office dates from 1833. The agents were then styled Joint Agents-General for Crown Colonies. Although appointed by the Secretary of State of the British Government, they bore responsibility direct to the several territories they served.

By 1968, the Crown Agents were acting as financial and commercial agents for some 80 Governments, both within and without the Commonwealth, and for more than 160 public authorities and international bodies.

The Crown Agents' Office is not a department of the British Government, however, nor are the staff members of the home civil service. The office is, however, as its title implies, a public service holding a brief to do all in its power to advance the economies and the finances of its principals. It has a staff of 1,700 persons, including 200 engineers. Its purchases last year on behalf of its customer principals, totalled $167,000,000 and over 1,000 staff are employed on this procurement side. Investment portfolios with which it is entrusted total more than $1,600,000.

The Crown Agents are not strangers to this State of the Commonwealth. It is interesting to recall that they raised loans of £154,000 and £525,000 for the infant colony in 1884 and 1885. I mention in passing that photostats of the original documents relating to those arrangements are extant.

Members may have read the article entitled "Merchant Bank Planned for Perth" on the business page of *The West Australian* of last Friday week. In case not, the article reads—

> The Crown Agents of London yesterday announced plans to form a company in Perth to carry out the functions of a merchant bank. Others participating in the project will include Australian, French and United States financial institutions. The company which will be known as "Westralia International Ltd." will operate mainly in W.A. Its main purpose will be to encourage local industry and to participate in the management and financing of natural resources and industrial activities in the State. Additional activities will be involved in financial, technical and management problems, underwriting, portfolio management and intercompany finance. The overseas participants will also promote outside interest in Australia through their many contacts.
>
> The company will start with an initial capital of about $5 million.

From that point there is further elaboration of the proposals. There was no mention, however, of the Rural and Industries Bank proposing to participate, for the good reason that until Parliament gives its approval, the bank cannot indicate that it is prepared to join with these overseas financial organisations.

The Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago, more generally known as the Continental Bank, and with assets of $6,640,000,000 is the eighth largest bank in the United States of America. It conducts an impressive network of agents and correspondents throughout the world and is well regarded in financial circles as one of the foremost banking institutions of America.

The other principal participant—the Credit Lyonnais, a large State-owned French bank—has assets of $5,950,000,000. This bank, with its close connections with banking houses of the free western world, associates with the proposal a worth while and interesting European ingredient. As already indicated, this group, led by the Crown Agents, is now working towards setting up an investment company or merchant bank in Western Australia. Their proposal is that the company should have an authorised capital of $10,000,000 paid up to $5,000,000. Each of the three will take up 20 per cent. of the capital. The same proportion is being offered to the Rural and Industries Bank and the balance to other Australian interests.

The Crown Agents took the lead in seeking an association with the Rural and Industries Bank because they wished to anchor the proposal to an indigenous bank. It was considered, too, that a demonstration of local confidence could best ensure the participation of the two wealthy overseas banking partners. Moreover, the Crown Agents wished to show a general concern in matters Western Australian.

Summarised, in very general terms, the company's objectives would be, firstly, to arrange consortia finance and project management for local major developments, with an especial eye to the mineral field; secondly, to promote outside interest in Western Australia through the contacts and ramifications of the interests of the participants; thirdly, to mobilise local financial resources and so create a money market operation to channel funds to the point where they are most required; and, fourthly, to provide Australian portfolio management for off-shore and other funds which the company may attract.

Precedents have already been established for the formation of partnerships of local and overseas banks in order to bring the sophisticated techniques of the modern financial world to the Australian scene.

Recently, the Bank of New South Wales joined with the Bank of America and the Bank of Tokyo in the formation of what is known as "Partnership Pacific" with an issued capital of $3,000,000.

The Commercial Bank of Australia Ltd. has also linked up with the Midland Bank Ltd., the Standard Bank of South Africa, and the Toronto Dominion Bank, and established the "Midland and International Banks Ltd." with an authorised capital of $10,000,000.

More recently again, the National Bank of Australasia Ltd., the Chase Manhatten Bank, and A. C. Goode Associates Ltd. have set up the "Chase N.B.A. Group Ltd." with $5,000,000 capital.

The purposes of such consortia are to bring about a direct participation of overseas funds in the development of Australian national resources and to provide the expansion of productive enterprises.

It is this same motivation which promises to bring the Crown Agents and their substantial partners to Western Australia where they see such growth potential, and has led them to approach the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia, the only bank with headquarters in this State, as we know, with the suggestion that they participate, and in such fashion anchor the proposal firmly to Western Australia.

The Crown Agents' proposals represent something that rarely comes Western Australia's way and the commissioners of the bank feel that, if their participation will build up the confidence of the overseas participants, they are keen to take advantage of the wonderfully good opportunity now presented to introduce capital and expertise to local growth industries.

At the same time, however, the commissioners see their primary role as that of bankers to the community, and for this reason, would prefer to limit their initial participation in the new venture to a maximum of $500,000, and this is what is presently envisaged. The commissioners will have the right to increase their participation to $1,000,000 to equal that of the other major shareholders if later this proves beneficial.

I reiterate that the Crown Agents, last year, bought $160,000,000 worth of goods for their customer principals. These procurement activities of the Crown Agents, with their interests in South East Asia, and the emerging nations of Africa, must be of some interest to our local manufacturers and exporters and would definitely be advantageous for them, were the Crown Agents represented in Perth.

I think it might be useful if I were to develop more specifically the advantages of the new company's proposals already set out to members under four general headings. These proposals will mean a great deal to the State's industry and commerce in that the company will—

(a) bring substantial capital to Western Australia at once;

(b) be managed locally;

(c) from its resources of expertise will give local companies technical and administrative help;

(d) will arrange finance for local companies often the "hard core" of their requirements, which trading banks seek to avoid;

(e) will find equity capital to help float promising ventures;

(f) can provide key management personnel for major developments;

(g) with its overseas principals is in a position to arrange consortia finance of considerable magnitude for proposals ranging from city development to mineral exploration and exploitation;

(h) with its substantial paid up capital, will have sufficient status to enable it to marshall and apply local company funds in conventional money market transactions; i.e., meeting the financial needs of some companies from the credit funds — often temporary — of others. This is a valuable service in industry and commerce today, which is presently more highly developed in the Eastern States and overseas than it is locally;

(i) intends to provide advice in the management of individual and corporate investment portfolios;

(j) will promote outside interest in the State through its European and American participants;

(k) with the Crown Agents representing 80 countries and purchasing as agents for their principals, goods to the value of $167,000,000 last year, they will be admirably placed to foster actively Western

Australian exports, especially to South East Asia and the Pacific area as mentioned earlier;

(l) will be able to offer alternatives to propositions which would involve the loss of Western Australian control of valuable local industries.

The proposed company still needs to obtain the approval of the Reserve Bank of Australia under its guidelines policy for full-scale operation locally, and with the involvement of the Rural and Industries Bank, it is thought the Reserve Bank's approval will be more readily forthcoming to the resultant advantage of the State of Western Australia.

The bank should be able to protect its interests by arranging, where it considers necessary, for the appointment of board representation in those companies with which it becomes involved in pursuance of the powers given in this Bill, including the company which should evolve from current discussions.

Members will see that, subject to ministerial approval and the consent of the Governor-in-Executive-Council, appropriate provision in this direction is made.

The Bill will give the Rural and Industries Bank powers in line with those presently enjoyed by other banks in the matter of share and debenture investment and, in particular, will enable it to seize an opportunity to base a new financial enterprise in Perth.

I commend the Bill to members for their favourable consideration.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. J. S. Wise.

House adjourned at 9.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 30th October, 1969

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

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Sir David Brand (Premier), and read a first time.

QUESTIONS (20): ON NOTICE

1. PERTH RAILWAY TERMINAL

Integration with Suburban Service

Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware that the departure point for country bus services is causing much concern and increased cost to all passengers?

(2) Have any steps been taken to connect this terminal to the city rail system by providing a passenger platform adjacent to the rail and bus terminal?

(3) Will any provision be made to run feeder buses from the city centre to the terminal?

(4) Is it to be expected that the only means of access will be by taxi?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

(1) No. A survey undertaken prior to the transfer of the bus terminal to the Perth Terminal revealed that 90 per cent. of passengers joining buses at the city station and more than 95 per cent. of passengers arriving at the city station used private transport or taxis to and from the bus terminus.

It is inevitable that a small minority of passengers would have been disadvantaged but an interim arrangement has been instituted whereby passengers travelling to Perth may alight at Midland and travel to the city station by rail on throughout bus tickets.

Similarly passengers who prefer to travel by rail to Midland may join buses for country centres at that point.

(2) Yes. Work is currently in progress and the facilities will be available for use during December next.

(3) No.

(4) Answered by (1) and (2).

2. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Kelmscott

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Traffic:

(1) Because of the large increase of people and vehicles attracted to the trebled shopping facilities at the Kelmscott commercial centre, will he examine the present need for a pedestrian crosswalk on Albany Highway, Kelmscott?

(2) If an inspection confirms the need for this safety measure will he have an adequately signed and lighted crosswalk installed at an appropriate site on Albany Highway as soon as possible?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) Yes, subject to the Armadale-Kelmscott Shire Council providing the Main Roads Department with the necessary details of pedestrian and vehicular counts. It is pointed out, however, that at the request of the Armadale-Kelmscott Shire Council consideration is being given to the construction of pedestrian refuge islands in