

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 12 August 1981

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

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney General), and read a first time.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. G. E. Masters (Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. G. E. MASTERS (West—Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife) [5.20 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to enable increases in amounts payable for valuation-based water, sewerage, and metropolitan main drainage rates in 1981-82 to be limited to one half of the amounts paid in 1980-81. It will be recalled that similar action was presented last year to ease the rates burden on those businesses and other property owners subject to substantial increases in their rates bills over the previous year, because of steep increases in property valuations for 1980-81.

The 1980-81 increases coincided with the application of adjusted property values following a triennial review of valuations by the Valuer General's office. Such annual valuations are the basis on which the Water Board, like many other State and local government authorities, assesses its charges.

The new valuations, which reflected market conditions current at that time, applied as from 1 July 1980. The average increase in valuations resulting from the review was 140 per cent. Part of this increase was due to a change in basis from net annual valuations to gross annual valuations.

Increases for most properties fell within a reasonably limited range. Nevertheless, a small percentage of property owners—less than 10 per cent—were the subject of a large upward movement which directly resulted in an excessive increase in their rates bill for the year. This could not have been avoided by the board, which has to strike one general cent rate in the dollar value, and cannot apply different rates. Because this imposed a real financial strain on some of these ratepayers, the Government introduced legislation limiting the increase in rates to no more than 50 per cent of the amount paid the previous year.

Although the legislation proposed now is similar in effect to that of last year, the impetus centres on different circumstances. Last year the concern was for increased rates bills seen to result from large upward adjustments in annual valuations. These valuations, of course, still apply in the current year. Where these valuations resulted in more than a 50 per cent increase in rates in 1980-81 and were cut to the 50 per cent, this year's rates could still result in higher than a 50 per cent increase over 1980-81.

As such cases are considerably less than last year, this year a degree of public discontent, which has been taken up by the media and voiced through public meetings, is focusing less on the increased valuations that applied in 1980-81 and remain in force, but more on the need for a more equitable system to apply to commercial properties. An extension of the pay-for-use scheme is thought by some to be the answer. However, to extend the present pay-for-use scheme immediately would mean greatly increased charges and a financial burden intolerable to the domestic sector of the community. This is not acceptable.

The only immediate remedy available to relieve the present heavy burden on those ratepayers most affected is to repeat last year's exercise. This is only an interim measure pending the outcome of a further close examination of the existing valuation-based rating system as it applies to non-residential rates—an examination which is going to be undertaken—to reduce the anomalies resulting from changing valuations. The Government aims to introduce a modified and more equitable system for the financial year 1982-83.

The extent of the problem this year must be seen in perspective. There are about 4 000 ratepayers whose value-based rates for 1981-82 are 50 per cent or more greater than the bills they paid last year after taking into account the benefit of the limited maximum increase fixed by last

year's legislation. These ratepayers represent 1.1 per cent of a total of some 360 000.

It is mentioned that the proposals now being considered will mean a cost to the Water Board of around \$700 000 out of its estimated revenue for the year. Nevertheless, it is the Government's intention to give some relief to those ratepayers most affected by the inequities in part of the present system. This is provided in the Bill.

The proposals are similar in effect to those contained in the 1980 amendment and applied to the 1980-81 value-based rates assessments. However, there are two additions to the content. The first is aimed at avoiding any possible misinterpretation of intent with regard to cases where improvements were made to properties during 1980-81 and, as a consequence, the valuations of those properties increased accordingly. It is not appropriate that these receive the benefit, and the exclusion provisions ensure that the limited increase in rates does not apply in such cases.

The objective of the other additional provision is to remove any doubt as to the board's power to refund or hold in credit moneys in such cases where the originally assessed rates are paid on a property that may subsequently qualify for the limited increase in rates.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. F. E. McKenzie.

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. G. E. Masters (Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. G. E. MASTERS (West—Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife) [5.25 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to amend the Road Traffic Act 1974-80, to increase the annual fee payable for a motor driver's licence and to vary the concession on the fee which is granted to pensioners. The proposal is part of the Government's revenue-raising measures for the current fiscal year.

The current annual fee for a driver's licence is \$7, which has been operative since October 1977. Pensioner drivers are granted a reduction of \$4 on the licence, which means, in effect, that their licence costs \$3 per annum. The Bill proposes that the annual fee be increased to \$10 per annum and

that the flat concession of \$4 available to pensioners be changed to 50 per cent of the normal annual fee. Under the proposed new fees, a pensioner licence will cost \$5 per annum.

Since October 1977, which is the date from which the existing fees have applied, there has been a 38 per cent increase in the Consumer Price Index. Applying this figure to the 1977 fee means that in real terms there is no significant change in the fee now proposed.

If no change were made to the existing provisions of the Road Traffic Act relating to the granting of the \$4 flat concession for pensioners, the result would be that the licence fee payable by a pensioner would rise to \$6, or 100 per cent above the current fee. This would be unfair and the proposed amendment will avoid this situation through the application of the 50 per cent concession.

Although this will mean that the rise in the licence fee applicable to pensioners is a higher percentage increase than is the case with normal licences, it is the first rise in the pensioner licence since 1974 and it is believed that the proposed increase of \$2 per annum is not unjust in all the circumstances.

The amendment to maintain the pensioner concession at 50 per cent of the normal fee will mean also that relativity will be retained in the event of any future increases in the driver's licence fee.

Members will be aware of the severe financial problems facing this State in the current financial year and the need to maintain fees and charges at former levels at least. The proposed increase in the fee will increase the Consolidated Revenue Fund by an estimated \$1.88 million in the current financial year and by \$2.507 million in a full year of operation.

It is proposed that the amendment should come into operation with effect from 1 October 1981. This is to allow sufficient time for the Road Traffic Authority to issue renewal notices at the new rates to licence holders whose licences expire on or after 30 September 1981.

All new licences issued and existing licences renewed on or after 1 October 1981 will become liable for the increased fees. No change is proposed in the option to allow a licence to be issued or renewed for a three-year term. Although some consideration was given as to whether the three-year term licence arrangement might be changed, the conclusions reached in the past were considered to apply; namely, that the reduction in administrative costs in the provision of a three-year licence is not such as to justify a concession

when a three-year licence fee is paid. Those people who have paid a three-year licence fee prior to the coming into operation of the increase will benefit from that because their licence will continue to be valid without the payment of any other fee.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. D. K. Dans (Leader of the Opposition).

WHEAT MARKETING (DELIVERY QUOTAS) AMENDMENT AND REPEAL BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [5.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to repeal the Wheat Delivery Quotas Act 1969-1974, and to amend the Wheat Marketing Act 1979 to delete reference to the Wheat Delivery Quotas Act.

The Wheat Delivery Quotas Act was enacted in 1969 to restrict deliveries of wheat to the Australian Wheat Board because of the large world wheat surplus and consequent low prices at that time. However, the surplus was gradually reduced, and following an improvement in world prices, quotas were not enforced after 1974. Nevertheless, since 1974, growers have been required to register with the Wheat Quotas Committee each year to enable the committee to maintain its records for use if quotas were ever re-introduced. Growers were advised of their base quotas each year, but there was no restriction on the quantity a grower could deliver to the board.

In view of the likelihood that wheat quotas would not be re-introduced in the foreseeable future, and the tight budgetary situation at the time, the Government decided in October last year not to continue its financial support for the Wheat Quotas Committee beyond 31 March 1981.

The Government decided also to invite the Primary Industry Association to maintain the Wheat Quotas Committee's records at farmers' cost if it considered them to be of sufficient value.

The Primary Industry Association resolved that growers should maintain and fund the Wheat Quotas Committee's records, but decided that the

best approach would be for Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. to take over the recording function while retaining a committee to ensure grower control and scrutiny of the records.

The Primary Industry Association and Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. have not yet agreed on a suitable arrangement to continue the recording function of the Wheat Quotas Committee. However, it is understood that negotiations are continuing.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. J. M. Brown.

BILLS OF SALE AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. I. G. Medcalf (Attorney General), and transmitted to the Assembly.

WHEAT BAGS REPEAL BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 5 August.

THE HON. J. M. BROWN (South-East) [5.33 p.m.]: The introduction of this repeal legislation probably is an action that should have taken place in the 1940s. The original legislation was introduced in 1928 for reasons outlined in the Minister's second reading speech. This Bill marks the end of an era in the agricultural industry concerned with the handling, sewing, and delivery of bag wheat to the sidings. The delivery of wheat was a very strenuous and back-breaking type of job.

The system was changed late in the 1940s so that the bulk handling system which we have today could be introduced. It is an era that cannot be allowed to pass without mentioning a few of the highlights of the bag wheat industry and what occurred in those torturous years of the 1930s in the handling and delivery of grain.

In fact a bag slashing incident occurred in the Bruce Rock area at the Belka Siding where farmers were divided as to their responsibility whether or not to deliver wheat to the siding because of the very poor prices they were receiving for their produce. The person for whom the wheat was delivered at the time of this bag slashing incident ultimately became the chairman of the Australian Wheat Board (Sir John Teasdale). He came to play a very active and industrious part in the wheat industry.

But at that time there was a division between the Primary Producers' Association and the

Wheat Growers' Union which led to disruptions in the farming community. If we read a history of Bruce Rock it can be seen that the farmers did rally together and pass motions. It is worth mentioning that in 1932 a meeting of farmers at Merredin passed the following motion—

That the Union instructs its members to postpone delivery of this year's harvest until our demands are conceded. Such demands are:—(1) a bounty of 6d. per bushel on the season's crop, to be paid by the Federal Government in cash direct to the grower, (2) that the State Government introduce legislation to provide for (a) security of tenure for five years and (b) a preferential claim of a minimum of £150 per annum on crop proceeds for sustenance for the farmers.

That indicates the gravity of the situation as far as wheat delivery was concerned. In the same issue of *The Bruce Rock Post* the following was said of a meeting which took place at Bruce Rock on 10 December 1932—

It was noted that there was a wonderful spirit of loyalty among the farmers who in the face of tremendous breaking down tactics of the daily press and of vested interests, held their wheat on their farms, as was evidenced by the long rakes of empty trucks at every siding, the small amount of wheat that dribbled in not being perceptible.

It should be noted that the Wheat Growers' Union gave permission for a limited amount of wheat to be loaded for sustenance purposes. There was great unity in the farming community in those days.

I believe it has been worthwhile reminding the House of the torrid period which the farming industry went through in the 1930s and the low prices farmers received. This has led to greater stability in the industry through the introduction of the wheat stabilisation plan. A great deal could be said about that but I will not go on at any length.

It is interesting to note that when the wheat was sent to a siding a probe was used to obtain a sample of the wheat. The probe was inserted and withdrawn without leaving a hole and a sample was gained of the quality of grain a merchant was buying. At one particular siding in the era I mentioned a local storekeeper did the sampling of the wheat. He had a youngster staying with him. A farmer came into the store and noticed the youngster with the probe and asked him what he was doing with it. The youngster said he was taking it to his grandfather who did the sampling at the wheat siding. However, he added that the

probe was used by his grandmother to sample the sugar bags. She found a sample could be taken which left no mark. No-one would know what had happened.

The repeal of the legislation is merely a procedural matter because it is no longer used within the industry. No doubt there are many members in this House who could relate far better than I could, the activities that took place during those times. However, we must acknowledge an era of great hardship and all the things that happened in the industry at that time. We support the Bill.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [5.40 p.m.]: The Hon. J. M. Brown's comments on the passing of this legislation and the comments by members in another place seem to conjure up a sort of nostalgia for the passing of the times when farmers were most reliant on bags, especially in respect of branding the bags to show their contents had come from a particular farm.

This Bill provides me with no nostalgia because I hated the sight of bags. I spent a long time trying to construct machines and conversions of all types to get away from what I considered to be one of the greatest curses to the farming community.

During the depression years there was nothing worse on a cold day than being sent down to stitch up bags with holes in them, clean up stencil marks, and remove bags in danger of being washed into the dams. The Hon. Win Piesse and the Hon. Norm Baxter would know of all this. There is no nostalgia in this legislation for me.

In fact, bags nearly stopped Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. from being formed in 1934. The bag was one of the prime reasons for getting the organisation going but also was one of the things that nearly stopped it. It was said that bulk handling would put too many people on the waterfront, out of work, because there would be a lack of handling in the transfer of bags onto vessels.

I have no nostalgia whatsoever. I will not go to any great lengths to explain the way farmers used to put pinions and portions of segments into the bags in order to affect their weight. But this all happened.

Men had to lump up the stack of bags to receive a penny a bag in the stack during the depression times.

We could not exist with bags now, branded or otherwise, because of the weevil problem, the rat problem, and the mice problem. I understand that even now, if a shipment of bagged grain is ordered from overseas, invariably the best thing to do is to

load the grain in a container, chuck a dozen or so bags on top and then let it be bagged overseas. Bags are sometimes used for stowage on top of a hold to stop the wheat from sliding. But again tarpaulins are used if the vessel is not a self-trimmer. The Bill holds no nostalgia for me, and the sooner it is passed the better.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [5.43 p.m.]: I thank members for their contributions and for their thoughts on the nostalgia associated with the passing of this legislation. Having sown bags behind a stationary thrasher while balancing on the platform of the old header, I have no nostalgia. I was always amazed that the bags could not be made a couple of inches longer, because they were difficult to fill with the required three bushels of grain. I thank members for their support of the 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. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

**CATTLE INDUSTRY COMPENSATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [5.46 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Cattle Industry Compensation Act 1965-1979 to permit compensation for cattle deaths because of a specified disease occurring in a specified area.

Under the provisions of the Cattle Industry Compensation Act a compensation fund was established and this has been used to finance substantially the costs of the tuberculosis and brucellosis campaigns. The fund is financed by equal contributions from the Government and the cattle industries by way of levy.

The diseases for which compensation may be paid are proclaimed from time to time. At present compensation may be paid only for three diseases; namely, tuberculosis, brucellosis and actinomycosis.

Compensation under the Act is payable only if carcasses affected with these diseases are condemned as being unfit for human consumption, or if the cattle are ordered to be destroyed because of one of these diseases. Compensation is not payable, however, if the animals die. This does not matter very much in the case of tuberculosis or brucellosis, because they are not diseases which normally kill.

However, recently a case occurred where cattle died in the south-west of the State from a disease—cattle tick fever—which does not normally occur in this area. It is normally confined to the Kimberley. Under these sorts of circumstances, it is necessary to impose control measures on affected herds to prevent the disease spreading. The costs of deaths are borne solely by the owner.

The proposed amendments to the principal Act will permit compensation to be paid in these circumstances when the Minister proclaims the disease in question—if necessary in retrospect. The legislation allows not only for the particular disease to be specified, but also for the particular area to which it applies to be specified.

The legislation provides for the Minister to consult with primary industries before proclaiming that compensation is payable for a particular disease. This is desirable as one-half of the compensation fund money is provided by the cattle industries.

The Bill provides also for compensation to be paid in cases where the chief inspector orders affected cattle to be destroyed, or agrees to their destruction, and where carcasses are condemned because they are affected with the disease.

Primary industries have been consulted in the preparation of this Bill and it has their support.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. T. Leeson.

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY AMENDMENT BILL**

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 5 August.

THE HON. R. HETHERINGTON (East Metropolitan) [5.48 p.m.]: The Opposition will not oppose this Bill. As a matter of fact, we welcome the clause that will put two additional

members on the Council of WAIT. In particular, we welcome the part of the clause that will put a member of the non-academic staff on the council. I was pleased to see this gesture in support of worker participation included in the legislation.

My opinion is that not enough members of either the academic or the non-academic staff are on the council, but I realise such aims must be accomplished bit by bit, and at this stage welcome the present step towards my aim. I was pleased also to see that the Alumnae Association will have a representative on the council, and I realise that this was not done previously because we had to wait until there were enough members of that association from which to choose. In any case, I am glad to see this action, which will be to the benefit of the council.

I will make further comments during the Committee stage. At this point the only other matter I raise relates to my previously stated criticism of second reading speeches: that Ministers often tell us what legislation proposes to do, but not why. We were told in the Minister's second reading speech on this Bill that the word "The" will be dropped from the title of the institute and be replaced with the word "the"; and that of course we can see from reading the Bill. However, I wonder whether the Minister can tell us why the Government has decided to take this step.

I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. Tom Knight) in the Chair; the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5 put and passed.

Clause 6: Section 5 amended—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I wonder whether the Minister might give me the answer to the question with which I am seized: Why are we to change the word "The" to the word "the" in the title of the institute? The Minister should explain even small changes because that may lead him to the habit of explaining bigger changes.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It is not usual for the student to explain to the professor, but perhaps on this occasion I will be able to answer the honourable member's query. The reason, I presume—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I suppose I could have made presumptions, too.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Could you speak a bit more slowly!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: —is that when one reads any title one does not expect the word "The" to be part of that title, and one does not normally use a capital "T" for the word "the" when writing it before a title.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am not satisfied with the explanation, but I am accustomed to not being satisfied with the Minister's explanations. I will let the matter rest for the moment and follow other courses to obtain the information.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am sure if a student wrote "The lamb" in an exam paper the honourable gentleman would correct the paper so that it would read "the lamb".

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7: Section 9 amended—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am more concerned by this clause than the previous one. As I have stated, I applauded the inclusion of a member of the full-time salaried staff as a representative on the council. This move must be commended entirely. I congratulate the Government. It is rare I have the chance to give such congratulations, but I do so on this occasion. I also thank the Government for including a member of the Alumnae Association as a representative on the council.

I am perturbed by the proposed deletion of paragraph (d), which will have the effect of removing the Director of Technical and Further Education as an *ex officio* member of the council. I presume that in the Act the Director General of Education—or his nominee—is included as an *ex officio* member of the council for the same reason he is included as a member of every council we have around the place dealing with education. We know he cannot attend personally, but can at any given time appoint a nominee of his choosing to the council. This is understandable and, perhaps, sensible.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Perhaps the Minister read your previous speech.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Perhaps he did. It seemed to me that historically the Western Australian Institute of Technology grew out of the technical division of the Education Department. In fact, a Director of Technical and Further Education became the first director of the institute, and that was Dr Haydn Williams. Sometimes I feel he did too good a job of building up that very fine institution, and did so at the expense of other institutions. However, I would be

the first to admit he is a man of great abilities and capacities who has graced the education system in this State. I thought it would be appropriate not to have the Director General of Education on the council, but to have the Director of Technical and Further Education because he is peculiarly tied in with the institute.

I hope the deletion of paragraph (d) is not a slight upon our fine Director of Technical and Further Education (Mr Peter Forrest) who was appointed by this Government. He is a man of great capacity and ability. Some stories of divisions within the department have been passed around, and empire-building has been mentioned along with attacks on the technical education section. Those rumours do not make pleasant sounds, and I hope they are not correct.

I want to say that it would have been better for the Director of Technical and Further Education to be appointed as an *ex officio* member of the council. Certainly I would be sad if, under the powers of this legislation, the Director General of Education did not nominate Mr Peter Forrest as his nominee on the council. I know the appointment is the director general's prerogative, but I believe the appointment I suggest would be appropriate entirely.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I assure the honourable member that the clause was not designed as a slight against anyone. I am not aware of rumours within the department, and it is certainly up to the director general to appoint whoever he desires as his nominee on the council.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8: Section 9A inserted—

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I will not oppose this clause or ask for a reply from the Minister. I want to say that one of the problems with the council is that we allow people to be re-elected with no limitation on the number of terms they may serve. In that case we have people who are regarded as institutions who others do not like to remove even though such institutions have passed the point in life of being useful.

Therefore, the question has been, "How long should we leave such people there?" It has been decided—and this is reflected in the provisions of the Bill—that people should have three terms on the council. After three terms they cannot be reappointed for at least a year. This gives the council a chance to remove quietly people who may have outlived their usefulness. If someone has not outlived his or her usefulness, he or she can be reappointed a year later. This is a sensible provision.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Which part of the clause are you referring to?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I am referring to proposed subsection (4) which appears on page 4.

The other point I wish to raise is in connection with the proposed subsection (3), which refers to student representation on the council. It is proposed to limit the term of office of student representatives on the council, and I realise that it would be difficult to do anything else. The representation by any student is essentially ephemeral. Students are appointed year by year, and the proposal is that they should not be a member of the council for more than two years. This makes some sense if one is concerned about the students' own interests. However, one needs to be on an academic body for at least two years before one works out how it operates. Because of this, students on councils tend to become token members only because they do not have the length of experience to participate in debates and decision-making.

I do not know how to overcome the problem, except by putting more students on the council in the hope that they will reinforce each other. I have never worked out a solution. During my time at the University of Western Australia, I asked for two student members on the council of the Faculty of Arts. This was at the time it was an open faculty. In fact, there were three student members on the council, and although it got rid of the problem of student radicalism, the student members of the council were rather bewildered at the esoteric conversations that took place in the faculty. This seems to be a pity. I had hoped the proposal would have resulted in greater benefits.

Be that as it may, I do not think we can do anything about the problem here. Certainly I do not object to any of the provisions in the clause; I just mentioned these matters in passing. As a matter of fact, I am supporting the clause.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Just to put the record straight, this clause is to amend section 10 which deals with a person who, without leave of the council, is absent for six consecutive meetings of the council. It is proposed to reduce to three the number of meetings that may be missed without leave of the council.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 13 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Sitting suspended from 6.05 to 7.30 p.m.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Lands), and passed.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT

Consideration

Report of Standing Orders Committee now considered.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [7.32 p.m.]: I move—

That the President be invited to take the Chair in Committee.

Question put and passed.

In Committee

The President (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) in the Chair.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The Standing Orders Committee has considered a number of items relative to the working of the House as a result of which we have before us tonight a number of recommendations. It is my intention tonight to present my remarks in such a way that they will record the intention of the amendments and be able to be read in *Hansard* in future years so as to enable members and others to follow the purpose of the amendments we are proposing tonight. I do this with the express purpose of facilitating research which may be undertaken in future by members or others. I am mindful that on some previous occasions, insufficient detail may have been given by way of explanation to amendments to the Standing Orders. When one attempts to look back on the reasoning behind certain alterations from time to time it is difficult to follow what in fact happened.

Standing Order No. 63: Motion for adjournment to debate matter of urgency—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Existing Standing Order No. 63 states as follows—

63. A Motion without notice, that the Council at its rising adjourn to any day or hour other than that fixed for the next ordinary meeting of the Council for the purpose of debating some matter of urgency, may only be made after petitions have been presented and Notices of Questions and

Motions given and before the business of the day is proceeded with, and such Motion may be made notwithstanding that there be on the paper a Motion for adjournment to a time other than that for the next ordinary meeting. The Member so moving shall make, at least two hours previous to the meeting of the Council, in writing and hand to the President a statement of the matter of urgency, and such Motion shall be supported by four Members rising in their places and indicating their approval thereof. Only the matter in respect of which such Motion is made shall be debated. Not more than one such Motion shall be made during a sitting of the Council.

The recommendation is as follows—

Page 23—Delete all words after “after” in line 7 of the Standing Order to and including “given” in line 9, and substitute the following—

those items referred to in Standing Order 115 (a) to (g) have been dealt with

Under the existing Standing Order there is a degree of doubt as to just when an urgency motion may be dealt with under the routine of business as outlined in Standing Order No. 115. It is my view, and the view of the Standing Orders Committee, that the amendment will clarify the situation.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 67: Member uncovered when not in his seat—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Existing Standing Order 67 states as follows—

67. Every Member shall be uncovered when he enters or leaves the Chamber, or moves to any other part of the Chamber during debate, and shall make obeisance to the Chair on entering or leaving the Chamber.

The proposed amendment states as follows—

Page 24—Delete all words after “shall” in line one to and including “shall” in line 5.

This amendment will remove the need for members to be uncovered. It is an ancient custom which is not appropriate to current thinking.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 70: Members speak uncovered, etc.—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: This recommendation concerns a consequential amendment to delete the word “uncovered” in line 2 which will have the effect of tidying up the Standing Order.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 71: Indulgence to Members unable to stand—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Again, this recommendation concerns a consequential amendment to delete the words “and uncovered” in line 5.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 151: Documents quoted from by Member—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Existing Standing Order No. 151 states as follows—

151. A document quoted from by a Member not a Minister of the Crown may be ordered by the Council to be laid on the Table; such order may be made without notice immediately upon the conclusion of the speech of the Member who has quoted therefrom.

The proposed amendment states as follows—

Page 46—Delete all words in the Standing Order and substitute the following—

(a) A document quoted from by a Member not a Minister of the Crown shall, at the time such quotation was made—

(i) be identified; and

(ii) on request from any Member, be tabled immediately upon the conclusion of the speech of the Member who has quoted therefrom.

(b) Documents tabled by a Member in accordance with this Standing Order shall be returned to that Member prior to the next sitting of the House.

I believe the amendment will meet the approval of members because it will simplify the procedure of having a document made available for verification by way of tabling.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

The Hon. J. M. BROWN: Perhaps the honourable member might be able to tell me what is regarded as a “document”. I want to be sure what we are voting on. Apparently, at any time, a member might stand and ask that a document be tabled. The member may have several pieces of paper on his file.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The amendment proposes to delete the existing Standing Order in its entirety and the word “document” is used in both the existing Standing Order and the amendment. No qualification is included as to the definition of the term either in the Standing Order or the amendment. The definition of “document” has caused a great deal of debate and from time to time the Standing Orders Committee has given attention to the matter.

I am not quite sure that I am competent to give a ruling as to the definition of “document”. However, I repeat that the amendment will replace the existing Standing Order and that the word “document” is used in the same context.

The PRESIDENT: The question just raised by the honourable member is the very reason the Standing Order has been changed—because of the complication of identifying the document. The new Standing Order clearly says that “the document quoted from by a Member . . . shall, at the time the quotation was made, be identified”. The very purpose of this is that, if a member wants to have something tabled, it has already been identified at the time it was quoted from, so it is then decided whether or not it is a sheet of paper out of the file, the whole file, or a page out of a loose-leafed folder.

The existing Standing Order does not require that it be identified at any stage and this new Standing Order is proposed so that a member who is interested in the document may ask that it be identified at the time it is quoted. That is the purpose of the new wording as proposed in recommendation 5.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I should like to add that under the new Standing Order a member will be required to say at the time he quotes from a document exactly what he is quoting from, so that a member cannot quote from anonymous documents. The quotation is a quotation and the source must be given at the time. Therefore, if a member says, “I am quoting from a photocopy of such-and-such a document” that is what is required to be tabled and the member must be specific. If he says, “I am quoting from a file” that is what needs to be tabled.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: "That" meaning the whole file or something in it?

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It depends what the member says. If I am holding a file in my hand and I say that I am quoting from a photocopy of a certain document, that is what I am quoting from and that is all that can be required to be tabled.

If one is quoting from a report, that has to be tabled. It is quite clear a member must give the source of his document and, as far as I understand it, the proposed Standing Order is quite clear on that point. It will obviate the kind of tactics which are sometimes used to try to get a whole file tabled because a member is quoting from a letter. If he quotes from a letter, that is the document and there is no doubt he must give the source.

I do not believe it can be clearer than that. A member may then ask at any time that a document that has been quoted from be tabled.

The other important aspect of the proposed Standing Order is that, under the old Standing Order, the document tabled became the property of the House. I often wondered what would happen if I quoted from a book from our library. It would then be the property of this Chamber.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: It is anyway.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: So an attempt has been made to clarify that the member has cited his source. It is that source that has to be tabled and members will learn to be quite specific about their sources and say, "I am quoting from a photocopied extract of a document", and that has to be tabled. The member will get it back in due course when other members have had a chance to look at it.

It also gets away from the tactic some members might use of quoting from something which they have written themselves as if it were an authoritative document.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Never!

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I could not imagine it happening in the House, but it is just a useful by-product of the Standing Order. I do not think the Hon. Jim Brown need worry about this. It is quite clear and the Standing Order will be improved tremendously if we adopt the suggestion made here.

The Hon. NEIL OLIVER: I refer members to the wording of proposed new Standing Order No. 151(b). Does that mean the document shall be returned one minute prior to the House resuming at the next sitting or is it at the discretion of the President—say, two hours after the House adjourned? At which particular point in time will

the document become available, or when can a member request the document be returned to him?

The PRESIDENT: It would be placed on the member's desk prior to the time of meeting of the next sitting of the House. There is no special requirement, but it would be returned. It is simply there for the purpose of allowing members who want to examine it to do so, and it would be returned to the member's desk prior to the bells ringing the next day.

The Hon. R. G. PIKE: I am not one who would at any time be pedantic in this Chamber, but I think that, if there is a time to begin to be so, it is when we are looking at Standing Orders.

I pose a question to the Standing Orders Committee. A "document" is defined in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* as being "a thing, especially a title of deed, writing, script, or inscription".

What I am a little curious about is, having been a member of this place at the time we had the problem in relation to whether a quote from a file which had documents in it gave authority to the House to require the tabling of the totality of that file, it seems to me the situation is not resolved in this instance. The fact that the word "document" is in the singular perhaps reinforces that position. If a member has a file which has 20 or 30 items in it and he quotes from two letters in that file, is he then required, on request, to produce the two documents quoted from, or is he required, on request, to produce the whole file?

The fact that this is being recorded in *Hansard* will serve as a direction for the future, because, if it is not clearly set out, we will have a repeat performance of the Donnybrook we have had already on the matter.

The PRESIDENT: I point out, firstly, we do not rely on dictionaries for the determination of what things mean.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: That is a pity.

The PRESIDENT: Secondly, the explanation provided by the Hon. Robert Hetherington was probably the clearest explanation anybody has given so far of what the Standing Orders Committee has determined; that is, that a person, when quoting from a piece of paper, document, or whatever it is should identify it at the time, so that if he is quoting from several things from the one folder, he will identify those things. It does not necessarily mean the member will have to table any of them. They are only identified at that time so that, if subsequently a member wants a document tabled, it has been identified already.

Usually members do not require documents to be tabled, therefore, each article that is quoted from is a single article, hence the use of the singular in the word "document". The fact that he may do this several times does not change the context in which we view it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If the member asking the question follows a well-established parliamentary practice he will realise that, if he has a file in his possession and he does not want to identify all of it, he should simply remove the relevant pages and place them on top of the file. This has happened not only in this Parliament, but also in all Parliaments of which I have had experience. If a member experiences problems in this regard, it is his own fault.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I also refer members to the wording of proposed new Standing Order No. 151(b). My question is slightly different from that raised by the Hon. Neil Oliver and I have no doubt of the real meaning of the proposed Standing Order. It simply enables the return of the paper at some convenient time to the member who tabled it. However, it refers specifically to "prior to the next sitting of the House" and that may well be in three months' time or in the next Parliament. Realistically it may be a document which a member expects to be returned within a day or so, or it may be of a controversial nature and should, therefore, be available to members for an extended period. It may not impose great difficulty on the member who tabled the paper or the people who are seeking to have access to it; but a difficulty could arise in relation to the officers of the House who are required to return the paper. They would be placed in the situation of not knowing when they ought to return the document to the member in the event that the next sitting of the House would be at the next session or the next Parliament.

Under the wording of this proposed Standing Order the officers of the House would feel they were only obliged and, therefore, in effect, only permitted to return the paper to the member just prior to the next sitting which, of course, may be in three or six months' time.

I understand the intention of the proposed Standing Order, but a precise time should be given to obviate the difficulty to which I have referred.

The PRESIDENT: The Standing Orders Committee did not consider that particular aspect. However, the wording is quite clear inasmuch as it says "prior to the next sitting". The Clerks would ask the President and I am sure

(85)

he would be able to give a ruling which would obviate waiting until the House resumed. I used the explanation previously, assuming that the House was going to sit next day.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: There has been such a remarkable degree of harmony and unanimity on this matter that it seems a shame to move an amendment. Nonetheless, in view of all the comments which have been made, a number of which were quite reasonable, I move an amendment to proposed Standing Order No. 151(b) in the following terms—

Paragraph (b)—Delete the words "prior to the next sitting of the House" and insert in lieu the words "within 72 hours".

This will overcome all the theoretical problems which arise; for example, the sort of problem which might occur when a document is tabled on the last day of the sitting and there is not another sitting for three months, six months, or whatever the case may be.

Seventy-two hours is a reasonable period for any member of the Chamber to have access to such a document and there is no reason, in the ordinary course of events, that it should not be returned in that time. To avoid lengthy argument on the matter, it might assist if an amendment such as that which I have proposed were accepted.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: Could I ask your indulgence, Sir, to adopt a recommendation that has been made by one of my betters; that rather than include the words "within 72 hours", we adopt the phrase "after the expiration of 72 hours"? This will give both a minimum and maximum time of availability of these documents for perusal and, with your indulgence, I would put the amendment in that form.

The PRESIDENT: The amendment now is that in paragraph (b) we delete the words "prior to the next sitting of the House" and insert the words "after the expiration of 72 hours".

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I just heard a conversation in the Chamber which I think deserves consideration and I propose that instead of "within 72 hours" we should say "not later than 72 hours". Could I ask my learned colleagues whether this is better phraseology than that proposed?

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I support the amendment because to say "within 72 hours" does not, with all due respect, give an indication of how long it is going to lie on the Table. The point is that the document should be available for perusal for a specific period and that the member should have it available to him once that opportunity for inspection has expired. If that

period is defined by saying "at the expiration of 72 hours" it means everyone knows they have 72 hours to look at it and the member knows he can expect it back within that period.

If we say "within", it is left indefinite.

I want to ask a question that arises out of the same matter: At what point is the member referred to in subclause (a) (ii) intended to make the request? You will remember, Mr President, that, smarting from the injustice of the occasion, I think I sought somebody else to table a document that he had referred to and there was some controversy about the point at which that request should be made. So I ask members whether it is thought that the time for that request to be made is when the reference is made to its tabling—that is, presumably at the conclusion of the speech—or because it involves identification of the document, at the time of the quotation. The demand for the tabling ought to be made at the time of the identification.

The PRESIDENT: To answer your question, the Standing Orders Committee's view was that the identification would be made by the member who was actually doing the quoting and it would not necessarily be requested by some other member that that document be tabled. Therefore we have refrained from saying that. But the current practice is that the request comes at the conclusion of the speech. In other words, if a member so desired he would quote from a document. He would then speak for whatever the balance of his speech time was—another half hour—and he might identify three or four or five or ten documents. It is the second member's task to be in the House at the conclusion of the first member's speech and to ask for a document to be tabled. Under this proposal it will still be the responsibility of the member who wants the document tabled to seek that at the conclusion of his speech. That is the Standing Orders Committee's thinking on it, but that may not be satisfactory to you.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: Can I just suggest, my being new to this business of discussing Standing Orders, that to achieve that we really need to alter the wording, with all due respect to the Committee. The wording of this clause should perhaps be "on request from any member at the conclusion of the speech, be tabled immediately"—that would fill the bill. I do not like drafting on my feet. I think, with all due respect, the thing has to read differently if this point is to be put beyond question. I suggest, "on request from any member".

The PRESIDENT: We have already got one amendment. I think it might be a good idea if we got rid of the amendment we are dealing with first. I know this one comes first in the new Standing Order, but if half way through this one somebody moves to amend paragraph (a) we will never get anything done. I recommend to the Committee that we deal with the amendment. We are not dealing with this in the same way as we deal with the Committee stage of a Bill; hence, I am speaking.

We are dealing with the whole recommendation. We have already received a proposition to amend a portion of it. The fact that it refers to the last line does not preclude honourable members from subsequently moving an amendment to some other part of it; so if the Chamber agrees with me, I would recommend that we consider the proposal put forward by the Hon. J. M. Berinson that we delete the words "prior to the next sitting of the House" and insert those words which suggest that it be after the expiration of 72 hours. That is the part we are talking about.

Amendment put and passed.

The PRESIDENT: We have amended that. The question now is that the amended recommendation No. 5 be agreed to, to which the Hon. Peter Dowding wishes to address himself.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I wish to move an amendment to insert after the word "shall" in line 2 the passage "(i) at the time such quotation be made"; to delete the passage "(i)" before the words "be identified"; and to delete the words "be tabled" and insert them at the end of the same sentence so that the amended clause would then read "A document quoted from by a member not a Minister of the Crown shall (i) at the time such quotation was made be identified; and (ii) on the request from any Member, immediately upon the conclusion of the speech of the member who has quoted therefrom be tabled."

Can I suggest that it does two things. One is that it identifies the point of time at which the identification needs to take place—that is immediately upon the reference to the document—and the other is that it identifies the point of time at which the demand for tabling is to take place—that is when the member has finished speaking. It seems to fit into an orderly passage of debate at a point that we no doubt all wish to achieve.

The PRESIDENT: The question is to further amend the proposed Standing Order by inserting after the word "shall" in paragraph (a) the passage, "(i) at the time such quotation be

made"; deleting the numeral "(i)" appearing before the words "be identified"; and deleting the words "be tabled" in subparagraph (ii) and reinserting the words "be tabled" after the word "therefrom" in line 2 of subparagraph (ii). It would then read—

(a) A document quoted from by a Member not a Minister of the Crown shall—

- (i) at the time such quotation be made be identified; and
- (ii) on request from any Member, immediately upon the conclusion of the speech of the Member who has quoted therefrom be tabled.

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: I do not like to be, like Mr Dowding, pedantic, but I am not sure whether in Mr Dowding's amendment in crossing out the words "be tabled" he included the comma after the word "Member." Would it better achieve his purposes if that comma does not appear there, otherwise it may read "on request from any Member immediately upon the conclusion of his speech", etc. It may defeat the purpose of requiring the request to be made at the conclusion of the speech.

The Hon. Peter DOWDING: I agree.

The PRESIDENT: Honourable members have heard that included in the words to be deleted is the comma prior to "be tabled."

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: None of us wants to be pedantic and all of us are. That being the case, could I suggest that Mr Dowding might incorporate with his amendment one other small change? I suggest a change from the word "was" to "is" in the phrase "such quotation was made." At the moment the recommendation would be an order reading, "A document quoted from by a Member shall at the time such quotation was made" . . . be various things. That does not appear to be right. If Mr Dowding is agreeable to that, I think perhaps we should incorporate that at the same time.

The PRESIDENT: Honourable members have heard that further proposal so that the proposed Standing Order would then read—

(a) A document quoted from by a Member not a Minister of the Crown shall—

- (i) at the time such quotation is made be identified; and
- (ii) on request from any Member immediately upon the conclusion of the speech of the Member who has quoted therefrom be tabled.

(b) Documents tabled by a Member in accordance with this Standing Order shall be returned to that Member after the expiration of 72 hours.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: It was not in my mind when we passed this proposal that the Standing Order would be quite so rigid because it would seem to me some people might want to ask that a paper be tabled immediately. In view of the discussion which has taken place and because I think Mr Dowding's amendment in fact will provide certainty—quite obviously, in a matter like this we need the utmost certainty—I have pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Further amendment, as twice amended and read out by the President, put and passed.

The PRESIDENT: The question now is that the recommendation, as amended, be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation, as amended, agreed to.

Standing Order No. 153: Questions respecting public business—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Existing Standing Order No. 153 states as follows—

153. After notices have been given, questions may be put to Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs, and to other Members relating to any Bill, motion, or other public matter connected with the business on the Notice Paper, of which such Member may have charge.

The proposed new Standing Order states as follows—

153 (a) Notices of questions may be put to Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs, and to any other Members, relating to any Bill, motion, or other public matter connected with the business on the Notice Paper, of which such Member may have charge. Such notice shall be given by delivering it at the Table fairly written, signed by the Member, and showing the day proposed for asking such question. Questions shall be delivered when the President calls for Notices of Questions, but questions supplementary to those answered at the particular sitting may be delivered at the Table, in writing, up to one hour after the time fixed for the meeting of the House or such other time as may be approved by the President.

(b) Following the replies to questions on notice being given in accordance with Standing Order 115 (f) questions without notice may be put to Ministers of the Crown,

relating to public affairs, and to other Members relating to any Bill, motion, or other public matter, connected with the business on the Notice Paper, of which such Member may have charge.

This will clarify the situation, and I think members will find it a great comfort. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Members of the Opposition have so few opportunities to have amendments passed that the temptation to move further amendments is almost irresistible. However, it is not for only that reason that I move an amendment—

Line 1—Delete the word “put” and substitute the word “given”.

There is no question of principle involved; no question of ideology is involved. Heaven forbid that in a place such as this we should allow politics to intrude! It is simply a matter of good English. One “puts” questions, “moves” motions and “gives” notice. I think that simple explanation is really all I can add by way of explanation of the amendment.

The PRESIDENT: I note existing Standing Order No. 153 states that “After notices have been given, questions may be put . . .” That has been there since the Standing Orders have been in existence. However, that does not make it right.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I rise to seek clarification on this matter. Do I take it that all the Standing Orders Committee has done is simply to incorporate Standing Order No. 156 with Standing Order No. 153? Is there really any change? Mr President, perhaps you could explain the matter to lesser mortals like myself.

The PRESIDENT: It will have that effect. However, in addition, the last line of paragraph (a) of the proposed new Standing Order takes care of the situation by allowing the President to approve “such other time” for the delivery of supplementary questions. For example, on Thursdays, questions are sometimes not answered until the end of the afternoon due to the fact we sit early on Thursdays.

The proposed Standing Order provides that supplementary questions may be delivered to the Table of the House up to one hour after the time of commencement of the sitting. The proviso in the last line of paragraph (a) is to cater for the situation which arises where Ministers ask that questions be postponed until a later stage of the sitting, thus preventing members from putting supplementary questions because more than one hour would have elapsed. The President is to be

given a discretion in the matter. The situation regarding questions without notice is clarified in paragraph (b).

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: Without having colluded with my colleague, the Hon. J. M. Berinson, I would have moved a similar amendment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are not saying you are as smart as Mr Berinson, are you?

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: I would like to be regarded as being half as smart as Mr Berinson. To the uninitiated, the impression gained upon reading the proposed Standing Order is that written notice of questions shall be given and delivered to the Table of the House, signed by the member. There seems to be no basis for the practice which currently is adopted whereby the member stands and reads the question he intends to ask on the next day of sitting.

I would have thought the wording of the proposed Standing Order follows the procedure which I understand is adopted in the Legislative Assembly, where members do not stand and give notice of questions to be asked the following sitting day. Is that the intention of the proposed Standing Order, or are we still to stand and verbally give notice of questions? The words “delivering it at the Table clearly written, signed by the member” provide that all the member shall do is provide a signed, legible copy of his question on notice. There does not seem to be any provision for the actual verbalising of the notice.

The PRESIDENT: I do not want to answer all the questions.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: As long as you clarify what Mr Olney just asked.

The PRESIDENT: It is not intended to alter the current practice. The existing Standing Order No. 156 is being combined with Standing Order No. 153 and the proposed new Standing Order does not intend that a member shall do anything other than what he does now; namely, he must stand and give notice of his question. He must then deliver to the Table a signed copy of the question with the date on which it is proposed to ask the question. That is the current situation.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: Mr Olney has raised a serious question which I suggest should be considered separately. By way of advance notice I indicate to the Committee it is my intention to move a further amendment after the present amendment is disposed of which in fact will put before the Committee the question of whether our present procedures in respect of the pronouncement of notices of questions should be retained. I suggest the amendment before the

Chair be disposed of to clear the decks for the more substantial issue to follow.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Having earlier debated this matter *sub voce* with my colleague, I agree with the amendment. As Mr Berinson is thinking of moving an amendment which I intend vigorously to oppose I would like Mr Olney to read the proposed Standing Order and consider whether in fact the intention is not retained there. The third sentence of the proposed Standing Order states as follows—

Questions shall be delivered when the President calls for Notices of Questions . . .

If Mr Olney believes it should more properly read "delivered orally" I would be prepared to move such an amendment. I ask him to consider that matter while we are discussing the later amendment because I do not want to move such an amendment if his fine legal brain considers it unnecessary.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Mr President, as we are amending the Standing Order for the purpose of bringing it into line with current thinking, why is it still necessary to include the term "signed by the Member"? As you are aware, that does not take place; the existing practice is that the question is typewritten—I believe it should still be fairly written—but is not signed by the member.

The PRESIDENT: I answer the question simply by saying that the original draft of the question must be signed by the member. If the honourable member does not sign her questions now, I recommend in the future that she does sign them.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Neither does anybody else, as you know.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: I will refuse to answer in future.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The requirement is that the honourable member signs it. The requirement will still be that the honourable member signs it.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: No-one ever told me, or anybody else.

The PRESIDENT: I am telling you now.

Amendment put and passed.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I move an amendment—

Line 6—Delete the passage "Questions shall be delivered".

I confess at once that the terminology of the proposed new sentence as amended is not as felicitous as it might be. Nonetheless, it gives the

Chamber a clear choice as to whether we should proceed with the existing system which requires us to stand and mouth the question which we are submitting in writing at the same time, or whether it will be enough simply to submit the written question for subsequent answer.

To comment on the point made by Mr Olney earlier, it is rather odd at first reading, especially as the Standing Order is now amended at one point to say that notice of questions may be "given" to Ministers; in the next sentence to say, "Such notice shall be given by delivering to the Table fairly written . . ." etc; but in the following sentence of the original draft, to change the wording to say, "Questions shall be delivered". We say they shall be "given" twice, and "delivered" the third time.

Like Mr Olney I confess that, at first, I thought that "delivery" simply meant "handing over", as indeed it does. However, on reference to the same dictionary that we were enjoined to avoid a little time ago, I discovered that the word "delivered" also means "uttered". So, Mr President, you are quite right in your comments to the effect that our previous practice in this Chamber is observing the rule as established.

I am putting to the Chamber that that established rule ought now to be done away with. The Legislative Assembly in this Parliament no longer requires questions to be spoken. The House of Representatives and the Senate do not require it. The House of Commons does not require it. Indeed, if one stops to ask why we require it, one finds that the answer to that is remarkably elusive.

The Hon. H. W. Olney: It fills in time.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: What real point is there in our standing up and gabbling, as many of us do, especially when we have a long question to ask? What real point is served? The real benefit in the question and answer procedure in this Chamber, and in any Parliament, arises from the fact that one receives a Notice Paper, and one can read and understand what people are asking. Then one can hear what the answer is. On many occasions, especially when the answers are complicated, one does not have an understanding of the answers until one reads them in *Hansard*.

Probably the better practice is that of other Parliaments which do not bother to occupy the time of the Chamber with the giving of questions on notice and the answers. They treat the answers in the same way as the questions—that is, one hands in the questions on notice in writing, and the answers are delivered in writing, for the advice of all members. Not only does one have the

question on the Notice Paper, but also the answer is printed. Personally I regard that as preferable to the procedure we would be left with in the case of the amendment I am now proposing.

As a starting point, I suggest to the Committee that no good purpose is served by our standing and spruiking like puppets, saying, "I give notice that I am going to ask this question tomorrow".

The Hon. H. W. Olney: And then you do not ask it, anyhow.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: The procedure I am urging on the Committee is a sensible one. It is one that is adopted almost universally in other similar Chambers. We would be sacrificing nothing in terms of our rights as members or our ability to obtain information.

I commend this further amendment to the Chamber on that basis.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I oppose this amendment. I point out to my honourable friend that there is a difference between the Legislative Council and the House of Commons or the House of Representatives. The House of Commons has approximately 640 members, and the House of Representatives has something over 120 members. They are shorter of time than we are. Certainly the example of the House of Representatives is not one that fills me with any joy, because in that House written questions are placed on the Notice Paper, and they stay there for months. If a Minister is not required to give an answer the next day, we might fall into such habits. That is highly undesirable.

One of the good things about this Chamber—and I will not make a long list of them—is that we can put questions on notice today, and obtain answers from the Ministers tomorrow. If the Hon. Howard Olney wants us to be logical, perhaps we could ask the questions the next day. However, the Standing Orders Committee felt that this was not necessary.

I would like to think that this Chamber was still a "parley-ament"—a talk shop. The questions should be asked orally once; and the replies should be given orally once. We can do without the questions being asked orally twice. That is the reason for amending the Standing Order in the way that we propose.

We do not have to pander to the prejudices of members; but some members like to hear the questions asked, and they do not want to have to wait to read the Notice Paper. They like to hear the questions asked on the spot, so they know what a member is going to ask. Even I have been known to sit and listen, and wait for an answer. I have listened to the Minister when he is replying.

If he has trouble with his reading, sometimes I am frustrated; but at least sometimes I listen quite avidly.

The Standing Orders Committee was quite unanimous on this. Members from each side of the Chamber were in agreement, and for this reason. Perhaps I am being like Burke, wanting to make haste slowly. Perhaps I am looking to prescriptive history for what we have done as far as the answering of questions is concerned. We do not intend to take the next step yet. We will wait and see until such time as we are so overburdened with business that we just cannot afford to follow the present procedure. I think we can afford to keep this Standing Order as it is.

The PRESIDENT: I am asking this question for the sake of clarity. The Hon. Robert Hetherington has handed to me a proposed amendment—

The Hon. R. Hetherington: I am sorry, you received it a bit early. That is in case this one is defeated.

The PRESIDENT: That is the point I want to make. If it is the intention of the honourable member to move subsequently the amendment he has handed to me—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Mr President, we are having some difficulty hearing you and some of the speakers.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member has handed me a written proposed amendment, and in the interests of ensuring that everybody has a fair go in respect of what we are doing, and of ensuring that we amend our Standing Orders in the way in which we all want them amended, it is proper for me to mention this to the honourable member. The honourable member's proposed amendment is something in addition to but also including the proposed amendment of the Hon. J. M. Berinson. If the Committee defeats the proposal of the Hon. J. M. Berinson, we cannot reconsider the same recommendation. I ask the honourable member whether what he stated a while ago is what he meant to say.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I meant to say that although I am agreeing with the words that the Hon. J. M. Berinson wants to be deleted, I will speak against the words he wants to be substituted.

The PRESIDENT: That is a different kettle of fish.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: I thank you for bringing this to my attention, because I overlooked it. Perhaps I should inform the Committee that I will speak against Mr

Berinson's amendment. I do not know how I should proceed; but I want to include the words, "and shall be given orally". Once the words are deleted, the honourable member has a motion to include other words.

The PRESIDENT: That is the very point I am making. He has not.

The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON: Then I will move a motion to insert them.

The PRESIDENT: Honourable members, we have to be patient with each other, including me. The honourable member is saying, in effect, that he is foreshadowing a subsequent amendment to the amendment moved by the Hon. J. M. Berinson. I simply took the opportunity of indicating to him the correct procedure for doing that—simply foreshadowing that if the proposed amendment by the Hon. J. M. Berinson is agreed to, he will be then asking for certain other things to occur. It would then be a separate and distinct question for us to consider. I hope honourable members understand that.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I oppose the amendment moved by the Hon. J. M. Berinson. I do so on the ground that the method by which we operate at present is of interest to all members. Members rise in their places and give notice orally of their questions. It is done that way so that all members are informed at the same time.

On the next day of sitting the answers are given orally, so we do hear them in the Chamber. This is a privilege we enjoy in this House and it is one that works very well indeed for us. Members are well served by Ministers responding very promptly, which is more than is the case in other Parliaments.

I am of the firm opinion that the existing practice has great merit and that we should continue the practice of giving verbal notice of questions and having replies given the same way the following day.

If we follow the proposition outlined by the Hon. J. M. Berinson we may perhaps find there would be no need for notice to be given of a motion to be moved or perhaps of a second reading speech to be made, and so no-one would know of the matter until the speech was delivered. I would be very wary of accepting that situation.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I do not agree with the Hon. Joe Berinson that Ministers should not answer a question verbally. I really cannot understand the comments made by the Hon. Vic Ferry. Why on earth is there any difference between the verbalising of questions the day before and the printing of questions on the day the question is answered?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: For the reason given by Mr Hetherington.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: What happens if a member is not here the day before, if he has dozed off, gone to lunch, or arrives late? It is ridiculous to say that members cannot read the Notice Paper which is available prior to the sitting on the day a question is to be answered.

We waste a lot of time reading out questions which are going to be available for everyone to read the following day. We are all responsible members and vigorously scrutinise the Notice Paper before we come here. I am sure no member would say that he takes his parliamentary duties so lightly as to not read the Notice Paper from cover to cover before he enters this place and we begin our solemn religious activities.

The only time the question is of interest is when it is answered. Surely that is the point at which the question ought to be noticed by people. I know people like the Hon. Sandy Lewis, who energetically asks one question a day—

The Hon. H. W. Olney: One last year.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the amendment and not to follow the track he is on at present.

The Hon. PETER DOWDING: I did not intend to denigrate anyone, but there are some members who find the mechanism of asking questions a useful one and others who go about their vigorous parliamentary duties in other ways.

There does not seem to be any justification for the half an hour we waste having questions read out. *Hansard* does not take them down because they are written, the Ministers do not take note of them because they will get a copy, and the Press is not interested because tomorrow the questions will be on the Notice Paper. With all due respect, I do not see waves of enthusiasm when I read out my questions of an afternoon.

If we are realistic about this Chamber operating more efficiently we would not require that questions be read out. On the other hand, I do not agree that the questions should not be answered verbally. Verbalising the answers means that the answers are not lost in this paper warfare we all engage in. Members should understand that under the amendment the answers are still to be given orally, but not the questions. What is the justification in the meaningless reading out of words which are taken notice of by no one?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I listened with interest to the Hon. Peter Dowding and the Hon. Joe Berinson and it seems to me they are trying to change the system without following it through to

its logical conclusion. The natural corollary of everything they are talking about is that we would relieve Government Ministers of verbalising the answers to questions.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: No.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This is as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow. That will be the next step if we start to do this in a House with 32 members—if we believe we are too busy to verbalise questions. This happens in other Parliaments. Let us do what other Parliaments do and publish questions and answers once a week.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: But Standing Order No. 115(f) requires the answers to be given.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I know the Standing Orders. I was Deputy Chairman of Committees for a number of years—although there is no-one here who remembers it. The Chairman of Committees in those days was the Hon. Bill Hall.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Since the member knows the Standing Orders he knows he should be speaking to the amendment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: If we are going to make these big alterations, let us make a proper job of them. If it is of no value asking questions, let us not ask them. But if there is no value in asking them there is no value in answering them.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: That is not logical.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: It is not happening in the Assembly.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It happens in a number of Parliaments. It is not happening in the Assembly, but it will, sooner or later.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: What is the evidence for that statement?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Let us go further and cut out questions without notice to Ministers on subjects that are not under the direct control of their portfolios. That would be logical and sensible.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: It is not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: We cannot expect Ministers to answer questions other than on those subjects under their control.

The Hon. H. W. Olney: They do in the Federal House.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Surely the member would not want the sort of answers they give there.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: We get them here.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There is no reason that we should make this change in the name of efficiency or in the name of time saving.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Just in the name of doing away with unnecessary procedures.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will accept that and I will vote for that provided the member agrees that questions are made out in writing along with the answers and published in a paper once a week.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: That is not logical or sensible.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is taking efficiency and time saving to a logical conclusion.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: There is a good point in the question being answered on the day.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: We do not even give a Notice Paper to the few visitors we get so that they may follow proceedings.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: You are not suggesting that the question has the same value as the answer?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I have seen plenty of questions which have had more value than the answers. Mr Berinson has been a Cabinet Minister and he knows the reason half the questions are asked. They excite the attention of the good looking people in the gallery and they are published in the newspaper alongside the name of the person who asked them.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: When have you seen a question reported before the answer?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Bill Crommelin used to do it regularly once a week.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: When was he last here?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: He was here a while ago. He asked some rather smart questions and got alongside a rather smart reporter also. Nevertheless, most of the questions asked are designed by the questioner to obtain publicity.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: Which happens after the answer has been given.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Frequently the fact that a question has been asked is of more importance to the person who asks it than is the answer.

I shall accept the member's proposition, providing he takes it to its logical conclusion. The questions and answers should be printed once a week. That would save a great deal of the time of Government Ministers and staff.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: Would you, Sir, inform me whether the explanation just given by

the Hon. Graham MacKinnon is related in any way to the matter before the Chair?

The Hon. Peter Dowding: No!

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I was under the impression we were debating the amendment proposed by the Hon. J. M. Berinson which was to delete the full stop and the words, "Questions shall be delivered". If that is the case, I do not see how the amendment will change the procedure. In fact, the amendment simply changes the phraseology of the Standing Orders.

The proposed Standing Order reads as follows—

Notices of questions may be put to Ministers of the Crown . . .

Notices of questions comes under Standing Order No. 115(c). The proposed Standing Order continues as follows—

Such notice shall be given by delivering it at the Table fairly written, signed by the Member, and showing the day proposed for asking such question . . .

If we then delete the full stop and the words proposed to be deleted by the Hon. J. M. Berinson, the proposed Standing Order will continue as follows—

... when the President calls for Notices of Questions,

We are still talking about giving notices of questions under Standing Order No. 115(c). I suggest we take the operative words in line 4 of the proposed new Standing Order which are, "Such notice shall be given . . ." and "when the President calls for Notices of Questions"—

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: But how will it be given? It will be given by delivering it at the Table fairly written, not by utterance.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: Am I right in understanding that Mr Berinson believes the words "Questions shall be delivered" refers to the oral presentation of those questions?

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Exactly. That is the only part of the Standing Order which opens the way for them to be given orally. That was the reason I quoted the definition of "delivered" as meaning "uttered".

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I am not prepared to accept that as the interpretation, because the position is still unclear.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: Could I ask for your attitude in principle, ignoring whether the amendment achieves what I believe it will achieve?

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: Questions ought to be presented orally. The issue I am raising is whether in fact the deletion of those words necessarily makes any difference.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: It will not make any difference.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I do not accept that the use of the words, "Questions shall be delivered" necessarily means the words shall be uttered orally in the House. However, I still believe questions ought to be asked orally in the House.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: But they are not asked orally. We have abandoned the practice of asking them orally.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: That is the reason we are in a bind, because we give notice of questions orally.

The Hon. Peter Dowding: You don't need to ask them orally because they are on the Notice Paper for everyone to read.

The Hon. NEIL McNEILL: I will not persist in that discussion, because it moves the point of emphasis a little beyond the point I was raising.

The PRESIDENT: The interpretation under the current Standing Orders of the word "delivered" in line 6—which is proposed to be deleted under the amendment—is "uttered verbally". Where the word "delivered" appears in line 8, it means "physically delivered". That is the present interpretation under the current Standing Orders and it is the practice adopted.

In formulating its new proposal, the Standing Orders Committee allowed the word "delivered" to remain with the currently accepted meaning. I suggest to members who speak subsequently that they give serious consideration to recommending to the Standing Orders Committee that it re-examine this recommendation and return it to the House. Otherwise I can envisage debate continuing all night and we will end up with something we do not want, anyway.

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: Mr President, you have a facility for reading my mind. A saying amongst conveyancers—perhaps the Attorney General has heard it—is that a camel is a horse drawn by a committee. We have a few humps in the drafting of the proposed Standing Orders. Whilst I support the object of the Hon. Joe Berinson's proposed amendment and the philosophy that he and the Hon. Peter Dowding have espoused—I will vote for the motion if it comes to a vote—I agree also with the utterance I heard from the front bench opposite, which I think came from the Attorney General, that the

amendment will not make any difference. I was almost persuaded by the Hon. Joe Berinson that it would make the difference which he would like to see achieved, and which I would like to see achieved, in regard to the delivery of notices of questions. He commented that the word "delivery" also means "uttered". Obviously the notice cannot be uttered at the Table as well as fairly written and signed by the member.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: That is its other meaning.

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: If the words the Hon. Joe Berinson wants omitted from the next sentence are not omitted the Standing Order would be wrong. We are referring to notices of questions, not questions. If the amendment were agreed to, the delivery of the written notice would be when the President called for notices of questions. If we followed the rule, there would be a great stampede to the Table of people laying notices on the Table.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: One could give it to the attendant in passing!

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: The object of the President's calling for notices of questions would disappear.

The Hon. J. M. Berinson: It is a time limit for the submission of written questions. That would be the remaining point.

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: If the exponents of the verbalised notice had their way the Standing Order would read—

Such notice shall be given when the President calls for Notices of Questions and a copy of the notice shall be delivered at the Table fairly written and signed by the member.

That would indicate the giving of a notice and the delivery of a fair copy of it. Mr President, I would support your suggestion on this matter that it ought to go back to the Standing Orders Committee for some redrafting so that the real intention of the recommendation can be made clear. Perhaps that would make it somewhat easier for those who want to express a different intention by way of an amendment.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I express my agreement in principle to the proposal that the Hon. Joe Berinson put to us tonight. Frankly, I cannot see any point in having to write out a question, submit it, and then stand and read that question. I do not look upon the amendment as something that would save time, but rather as a matter of common sense. I cannot see any point in standing and reading it after it has been written

and laid on the Table. We trust *Hansard* with everything else, so I do not see why it should not be trusted in this case. I think this matter was raised also by the Hon. Peter Dowding.

Having taken the opportunity to stand I will say that I agree with the amendment in principle, but for the reasons I expressed a moment ago I will move that this proposed Standing Order be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee. We should not be chopping and changing and it seems to me if we are to amend the rules by which we operate we should be careful so that at the end of these deliberations the Standing Orders mean precisely what we intend them to mean.

Off the top of our heads we should not delete or include words without being absolutely sure of their impact.

The PRESIDENT: We have an amendment before the Chair. Before I can accept your proposed motion I would have to receive the authority of the Chamber to withdraw the proposal we are currently considering. The question before the Chair is that a further amendment be made.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I respectfully suggest to the mover of the amendment that he seek the leave of the Chamber to withdraw his amendment so that the appropriate motion may be accepted.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: I am happy to comply with that suggestion. I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I do not want to throw a spanner in the works and keep people any longer than necessary because I am sure they want to get this matter off the Notice Paper. I intended to move an amendment which I will not be able to do if this Standing Order is referred back. Mr President, I ask your advice of the best way to have the Standing Orders Committee give consideration to an amendment I want considered, which is that certain words be deleted.

The PRESIDENT: All the member needs to do is either verbally or by written submission deliver to the Standing Orders Committee her proposed amendment and when that Committee re-examines the proposed Standing Order presently under our consideration it will take her suggestion into consideration.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Do you mean verbally now?

The PRESIDENT: The facility to offer any submission to the Standing Orders Committee applies to any member.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: You said I can give it verbally. Do I presume you mean now?

The PRESIDENT: I did not say you could give it now.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Am I out of order?

The PRESIDENT: Yes. We have just given leave to the Hon. J. M. Berinson to withdraw an amendment in order that another can be submitted, and that other motion is that the recommendation be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee. If we permit other members to proceed to give notice of their proposed amendments then it would not be the intention of the Chamber to give leave to the Hon. J. M. Berinson to withdraw his motion. I put it to you that that leave was given on the basis of this other motion.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I will give it in writing.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: I move—

That recommendation No. 6 be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee for further consideration.

Question put and passed.

Standing Order No. 156: Notices of to be given—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: This recommendation is consequential to recommendation No. 6. I move—

That recommendation No. 7 be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee for further consideration.

Question put and passed.

Standing Order No. 157: Order of on Notice Paper—

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I refer to recommendation No. 8 in which it is proposed to delete all the words in the Standing Order after "Table" in line 5. I will read the existing Standing Order No. 157—

When Notices of Questions are given, the Clerk shall place them at the commencement of the Notice Paper, according to the order in which they were delivered at the Table, and the reply shall be handed to him in writing when given.

The proposed amendment is to delete all the words after "Table". This is really a direction to the Clerk which is considered no longer necessary. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

The Hon. J. M. BERINSON: At the beginning of the consideration of the report the Hon. V. J. Ferry made some general introductory remarks

and I trust I will have your understanding, Sir, if I make a few concluding remarks on the report under the umbrella of considering this item. As to the item itself, let me say that I support it and there is no reason that anyone should not. This amendment, though like most of the others, is acceptable on the basis that there can be no grounds for objecting to it. It is unobjectionable. It seems to me it is rather unenterprising.

I want to say, with respect to the members of the Standing Orders Committee that it is rather disappointing to see the limited scope of the recommendations which have been brought forward in this report. Nothing, I think, is as non-partisan as a report on Standing Orders. It is a matter of interest to us all as members. There is no question of taking partisan viewpoints and there is certainly no question of attacking personalities.

It really is to be hoped that with a set of Standing Orders as old as ours, and in a number of respects as inadequate, we should be looking for more of a lead from the Standing Orders Committee than this report provides.

Could I commend to its members the practice of including in their reports some comments on suggestions made by members of the Chamber which have been rejected. I am disappointed, for example, to see at least a couple of items which I forwarded for the consideration of the committee have not only not received its approval—which is reasonable enough—but have apparently not warranted their consideration to the extent of report.

I refer to the very strange continuing attachment to this funny rule which allowed us to imprison members who are absent without leave for more than six sittings of the House. That is an absurd thing. I have spoken at length on it before and I will not do it now; but I did make a recommendation to the committee that that absurd item in our Standing Orders should be eliminated after all these years, especially fortified as we were by Mr Baxter's assurance that in over 30 years' experience he was unable to recall a single instance in which a motion to grant leave was even discussed, let alone rejected.

There are other things. I can see you looking at me, Mr President, and I will not try your patience any longer. I would ask that the Standing Orders Committee takes advantage of the fact that it has had two items referred back to it for consideration, to really look at some more substantive amendments to the Standing Orders and, in particular, to look at any recommendations from members of the Chamber

and report upon them either favourably or, if unfavourably, at least with its reasons for their rejection.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I appreciate the comments made by the Hon. J. M. Berinson because he has been constructively active in putting before the Standing Orders Committee some suggestions for consideration. I am sure we all appreciate his attitude in this regard. I want specifically to refer to one suggestion he made in respect of Standing Order No. 112 which refers to the taking into custody of a member. The committee gave serious consideration to this item. The committee has requested the benefit and advice of Crown Law in this regard and it is unfortunate that we have yet to receive that advice for our guidance. It is still before the committee and I wish to inform the Chamber that this will be another item for consideration when we next meet.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I failed to hear the mover of this motion give any good reason to remove these words from the Standing Order. He simply said the Standing Orders Committee decided to remove them. It does not matter very much whether the words are included in the Standing Order, as long as the practice which has been in vogue over many years still obtains; in other words, that the Minister rises and answers the question and a copy of his answer is taken to the member who asked the question and another copy is handed to the Clerk for recording purposes. At least the mover of the motion could have given a reason for the removal of the words.

The PRESIDENT: We are talking about the proposal that when notices of questions are given the Clerk shall place them at the commencement of the Notice Paper according to the order in which they were delivered at the Table, and the reply shall be handed to him and shall be recorded in the *Minutes of the Proceedings*. Questions are no longer recorded in the minutes and therefore there is no necessity to hand them to the Clerk because there is nothing for him to do with them. It does not refer to the member who asked the question. He will continue to get his answer because he is the person who asked the question. So the words are no longer necessary because the purpose for which the Clerk was handed them no longer exists. He has not got anything to do with them.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Hence the explanation I gave before.

The PRESIDENT: If honourable members are happy, that is the reason that the words are taken out—because they are no longer required.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: It is better to put "shall be handed to the member in writing", isn't it?

The PRESIDENT: That is not proper. This particular Standing Order refers to the Notice Paper, and it simply says that the questions shall be placed on the Notice Paper in the order that the Clerk receives them. When the answers are available the Clerk shall get copies of them and record them in the minutes. That used to be done. They are no longer recorded in the minutes, so there is no purpose in having it.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: That is right. What about giving them to the members?

The PRESIDENT: We already give them to the members.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Standing Orders do not provide that a copy of the reply be handed to the member. Why do we not include the words, "The reply shall be handed to the member asking the question"? We seem to be so particular about taking out these little things. I took it to mean that the answer would be handed to one of the attendants, who would hand it to the Clerk.

The PRESIDENT: The Committee can recommend what it likes. The fact that our Standing Orders provide for a member to ask a question has inherent in it the provision that he will receive an answer. That follows like night follows day. There would be no purpose in a member asking a question if it did not imply that somewhere, there is a fighting chance he would receive an answer. I do not think it is necessary to write this into our Standing Orders.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: As I understand the situation, with the introduction of the new system of having questions and answers printed in a little extract of *Hansard*, the necessity for answers to be handed to the Clerk ceased, because they were no longer to be included in the minutes the next day. In fact, I seem to recall our discussing this matter on an earlier occasion; I do not know whether it was a recommendation of the Joint Printing Committee, or some other committee. It was at that stage that we introduced the system of including the questions and answers in pamphlet form, as an extract from *Hansard*.

The PRESIDENT: Do not let us make something complicated out of something which is simple. Standing Order No. 115 clearly indicates the order of business of this Chamber. One of the pieces of business is that members give notice of questions. Another part of the business is for the answering of those questions. That is part of our Standing Orders.

Standing Order No. 157 does not happen to discuss the member asking the question. If members want a new Standing Order to provide specifically that a member asking the question shall be provided with a written copy of the answer, it is entirely within their province to so move. However, that would be a new Standing Order. Standing Order No. 157 does not deal with that; it has to do with the Clerk.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Report

The Hon. V. J. Ferry reported that the Committee had considered the report, had made progress, and had resolved that the Standing Orders Committee further examine recommendations Nos. 6 and 7.

Report adopted.

FISHERIES AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (the Hon. V. J. Ferry) in the Chair; the Hon. G. E. Masters (Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Insertion of part IIA—

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: Last year, in speaking to the second reading of this Bill, I indicated the Opposition supported the measure. The reason for rising on this clause is to raise a couple of issues with the Minister. This clause provides for the insertion in the Act of a new part IIA which deals with the Commonwealth-State management of fisheries. Members who have taken the trouble of studying the Act will appreciate this whole measure is intended as a reciprocal operation with the Commonwealth and other States. The reason for the Bill having been stood over since the previous session is that other States have had to pass appropriate legislation.

My attention has been drawn to a statement by the Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Mr Nixon) in his second reading speech in introducing the Commonwealth component of this package of legislation in the following terms—

The Australian Fishing Industry Council has asked the Government to include in the Bill, provision for representation of that council on committees established to advise joint authorities. The council also requests that the Bill make establishment of such committees a mandatory requirement.

The States have agreed with proposed subsection 12F(7) in the Bill which leaves it to each joint authority to decide in the first place, whether it needs to establish advisory bodies and, in the second place, the membership of such bodies.

While it would not be proper for industry representatives to be privy to detailed submissions and departmental advice tendered to members of joint authorities for their consideration, the Government recognises the vital need for the establishment of a proper industry consultative mechanism to operate under the joint authorities to ensure that the views of the fishing industry on management issues are fully ascertained. Joint authorities will need to consider this immediately they are established.

Nevertheless, in view of the importance the Government places on the future relationship between joint authorities and industry, I propose to recommend that joint authorities establish advisory committees comprising not only senior officials of the Commonwealth and the State Government(s) concerned but also appropriate representatives of industry. In most cases, I envisage the Australian Fishing Industry Council and, where appropriate, representatives of any other industry organisation with particular interest in the area of an authority's responsibilities.

That is part of the text of the second reading speech of Minister Nixon. In case the Standing Orders have been amended recently, I indicate I am quoting from a telex that was sent to me recently by the Manager of the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative Society Ltd.

In Western Australia, the Australian Fishing Industry Council and the Rock Lobster and Prawning Association of Western Australia Inc. are recognised as representative industry bodies. The Bill contains a provision for the adoption of subsections (1) to (8) of section 12F of the Commonwealth Act, which become part of this legislation by adoption. Section 12F(7) is the one that deals with the establishment by joint authorities of advisory committees.

The two organisations to which I have referred have requested that the case for their recognition as representatives of the fishing industry be put to the Government. They have requested also that the Minister be asked whether he proposes to recommend that the joint authorities establish advisory committees as outlined by Mr Nixon to the Federal Parliament. If he does propose that,

would he indicate what organisations in Western Australia he would accept as appropriate representatives of the fishing industry?

I speak to raise those matters only. I do not oppose any of the provisions of the clause. Nor do I seek to change any of them.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: It should be understood that the joint authority will comprise the Commonwealth Government and the State Government, their Ministers, and their representatives. It is obvious there will be the need to set up advisory committees. That does not mean the State Minister should ask for that to be done. The joint authority will make up its own mind, bearing in mind that the State is represented.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind, and I am sure there was absolutely no doubt in the mind of any previous Minister holding the portfolio of Fisheries, that the advisory groups in this State—the Australian Fishing Industry Council and the Rock Lobster and Prawning Association of Western Australia Inc.—are organisations that have made a great contribution to the fisheries of this State. They have helped the Government and the department; and they have served the fishermen and the industry well. There is no doubt that when advisory committees are set up, the two groups I have mentioned will be invited to take part.

In certain situations someone else may be invited. It could be a representative from a fishermen's association in a particular area. For example, if we are dealing with the south-west, it could be someone from a fishermen's association dealing with the tuna fishery.

I thank the honourable member and those who have made the inquiry. The two groups I have mentioned need have no fear that the State

Government or the Commonwealth will not recognise the contributions they have made and will continue to make. They will certainly be looked to for advice with regard to the fishing industry.

Those remarks probably cover the honourable member's questions.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5: Section 52 amended—

The Hon. H. W. OLNEY: During the second reading of this Bill, I raised a query about the need for the new subsection (2) that this clause proposes to insert. I am indebted to the Minister for having supplied me with a reasoned answer. I do not propose going into that, except to say that I accept the explanation he has given. I have no objection to the proposal.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. G. E. Masters (Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife), and transmitted to the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [9.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 18 August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.44 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Pilbara and Kimberley

328. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) What bank, public, Public Service, and other holidays, are, will be, and have been, available to each town in the Pilbara and Kimberley region of Western Australia during 1981?
- (2) Upon whose authority is or was each holiday granted, and if gazetted, in what gazette?
- (3) Will, or have, all or any towns in those areas have as a holiday, their race day, and if so, which towns?
- (4) In respect of those towns that will not, or have not, why not?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Holidays approved under the Public and Bank Holidays Act as at 12 August 1981—

Townsite/Area	Date	Reason	Type	Gazetted
Broome	21.7.81	Annual Racing Carnival	Bank	19.6.81
Dampier	3.8.81	FeNaCl Festival	Public	17.7.81
Derby	1.7.81	Derby Race Day	Public	10.4.81
Goldsworthy	20.7.81	Marble Bar Race Day	Bank	19.6.81
Halls Creek	14.8.81	Race Day	Public	19.6.81
Karratha	3.8.81	FeNaCl Festival	Public	17.7.81
Kununurra	20.8.81	Race Day	Public	27.3.81
Onslow	10.9.81	Ashburton Race Meeting	Public	3.7.81
Paraburdoo	31.8.81	Wittenoom Cup	Public	3.7.81
Point Samson	10.8.81	Roebourne Race Day	Public	17.7.81
Port Hedland Shire	17.8.81	Cup Day	Public (will be gazetted)	14.8.81
Roebourne Shire—west of Nicol River	3.8.81	FeNaCl Festival	Public	17.7.81
Roebourne and Roebourne Shire—east of Nicol River	10.8.81	Nameless Festival	Bank	3.7.81
Tom Price	10.8.81	Nameless Festival	Bank	3.7.81
West Pilbara Shire—eastern section	31.8.81	Wittenoom Cup	Public	3.7.81
West Kimberley Shire	31.8.81	Wittenoom Cup	Public	3.7.81
Whim Creek	10.8.81	Roebourne Race Day	Public	17.7.81
Wickham	10.8.81	Roebourne Race Day	Public	17.7.81
Wyndham	20.8.81	Kununurra Cup Day	Bank	27.3.81

Holidays still under consideration as at 12 August 1981—

Townsite/Area	Date	Reason	Type
Newman	24.8.81	Festival	Bank
	31.8.81	Wittenoom Cup	Bank
Shire of East Pilbara (Newman)	24.8.81	Festival	Public
Wyndham	27.8.81	Wyndham Cup	Bank

Holiday not approved—

Townsite/Area	Date	Reason	Type
Marble Bar	20.7.81	Race Day	Public

There were no, and will not be, Public Service holidays determined for towns in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions during 1981. However, public servants are entitled to public holidays proclaimed under the Public and Bank Holidays Act.

- (2) Public and bank holidays are authorised by the Governor-in-Council under section 7 of the Public and Bank Holidays Act, 1972. Details of publication in the *Government Gazette* answered by (1).
- (3) and (4) Answered by (1).

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Exempt Employees

345. The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

For each of the last five years—

- (1) What number of employers were exempt from insuring under the Workers' Compensation Act?
- (2) Have any applications for exemption been rejected?
- (3) If so, what is the number in each year?
- (4) What is the number of employees covered by the exemption referred to in (1) above?
- (5) What is the number of accidents for which workers' compensation has been claimed and paid?
- (6) What was the average duration of those accidents?
- (7) Does the above information create a superior result to those injuries covered by insurance?
- (8) If the material is not on hand, will the Minister consult with the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention with the view of assisting in the production of the answers to the above questions?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) See annual report of Workers' Compensation Board for each of years up to June 1980.
July 1980 to June 1981 . . . 32.

- (2) Yes.
- (3) One in 1980.
- (4) 1976-7 1977-8 1978-9 1979-80 1980-1
12 151 12 326 15 262 15 559 17 368
- (5) 1976-7 1977-8 1978-9 1979-80 1980-1
1 914 1 927 2 986 3 041 3 071
- (6) Not available.
- (7) Not known.
- (8) I am informed that this information is not held by the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention.

WATER RESOURCES

Country Areas Scheme

346. The Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) In the interest of augmenting country town water supplies and supplementing the comprehensive water scheme, does the Government intend to—
 - (a) bituminize the catchment areas of town dams;
 - (b) fully maintain existing bituminized catchment areas;
 - (c) fully maintain non-bituminized roaded areas;
 - (d) enlarge roaded or bituminized catchment areas as to the increasing needs of the town; and
 - (e) enlarge roaded or bituminized catchment areas to supplement the CWS especially from areas relatively free from salt?
- (2) In respect of their town dam catchment areas, what amounts, and for what purposes, have been spent over the last three years for the towns of—
 - (a) Narrogin; and
 - (b) Boddington?
- (3) What are the envisaged future plans for the town dam catchment areas of—
 - (a) Narrogin; and
 - (b) Boddington?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) The Public Works Department has no general policy in respect to the augmentation or continuing maintenance of bitumen and roaded catchment areas. Decisions concerning individual catchments are made from time to time on the basis of the costs and benefits relevant at the time.

- (2) (a) and (b) The information sought is not readily available. However, the expenditure has only been related to minor maintenance and is thus relatively small.
- (3) (a) No augmentation of the Narrogin catchment is proposed and future maintenance will be minimal.
- (b) The future of the Boddington catchment is dependent on decisions soon to be made in respect of the augmentation of the scheme which is necessary to meet the additional water demands resulting from the mining of the nearby bauxite deposits.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

School: Merredin

347. The Hon. J. M. BROWN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) When were school buses operated by the Merredin Shire Council last inspected by the Minister's department?
- (2) Were there any work orders given?
- (3) Was the work carried out, and the buses inspected again?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) How many buses were involved?
- (6) Has the Minister's department been liaising with the RTA unknown to the shire council?
- (7) Has the Education Department withheld contract payments, and was the RTA aware of this without referral to Merredin Shire Council?
- (8) If so, why wasn't the council consulted first?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

I am advised—

- (1) 30 June and 1 July 1981.
- (2) Yes, on five of the six buses.
- (3) and (4) Not known. The inspector concerned is on a country inspection tour and the information will be made available by letter when the officer's report is received.
- (5) Six buses were inspected.
- (6) No.
- (7) and (8) Contract payments are being withheld. The department did not inform the RTA of this action.

348. *This question was postponed.*

RAILWAYS

Services: Upgrading

349. The Hon. J. M. BROWN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What investigations have been made by the Director General of Transport which have resulted in the upgrading of Westrail services?
- (2) Has he given any attention to the *Prospector* rail passenger service?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that passengers for the *Prospector* service are continually being denied travel because of the shortage of cars?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Under the State Transport Co-ordination Act, the director general is required to investigate and justify capital expenditure proposals developed by Westrail. Thus, in practice, he is continually involved in investigations which result in upgrading Westrail's facilities or improving the system's ability to give service.

Examples of service improving investments which the director general has investigated and supported in recent years are—

track upgrading, Kwinana-Koolyanobbing, Kalgoorlie-Leonora, Pinjarra-Picton.

construction of several types of modern bogie wagons as replacement for the old, inefficient, 4-wheel wagons.

installation of traffic control and other signalling improvements on various routes, including Kwinana-Koolyanobbing, Brunswick-Western and Coolup-Picton.

additional locomotives of a number of types.

bridge replacements.

- (2) No, but the service is continually monitored by Westrail.
- (3) Apart from six or seven times a year, Westrail has ample capacity to meet public demands for travel in *Prospector* rail cars.

However, throughout the year because of high operating cost uneconomical car usage is avoided where possible. Seat reservations may be made up to two months prior to departure date and this enables Westrail to determine the number of cars required on each service. Generally passengers who make later bookings are accommodated where vacancies exist. However, when it can be seen that the demand for travel only marginally exceeds the cars supplied the train consist is not increased.

In these circumstances intending passengers are offered an alternative date of travel, similar to measures adopted by airlines and other transport operators.

TOWN PLANNING: METROPOLITAN REGION PLANNING AUTHORITY

Resumptions

350. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

Further to question 318 of Wednesday, 5 August 1981, would the Minister advise—

- (1) Whether the property was compulsorily acquired or was it a negotiated purchase?
- (2) Would the Minister further advise the names of the members who comprised the Board of Valuers?
- (3) Would the Minister also advise the name or names of the property owner?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) A negotiated purchase.
- (2) C.M.B. Jarvis (Chairman), B. D. Mickle (member), I. A. Wilkins (member), C. G. Dudley (member)
- (3) Patricia Kathleen McCormack.

LOTTERIES COMMISSION

Tatts-Lotto

351. The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

Adverting to question 317 of Tuesday, 4 August 1981—

- (1) Are applications made to the Minister for a permit to conduct

Lotto, in accordance with subsection (1)(a) of section 7 of the Lotteries (Control) Act, for each week's Lotto lottery?

- (2) If so, is a permit for each individual Lotto applied for, or is a series applied for?
- (3) Do the applications to the Minister conform with subsection (1)(b)(i) by stating the number of tickets to be offered for sale in the Lotto lottery, or the total number of subscriptions proposed to be called for?
- (4) If so, how does the chairman or secretary of the commission assess the number of tickets or subscriptions when there is no limit set on the number of entries for each drawing?
- (5) How can the permit applied for under subsection (1)(b)(iii) of section 7 of the Act state the total amount of prize money to be distributed when the number of entries and subscriptions is unlimited, and also includes subscriptions in other States?
- (6) Does the fact that Lotto is drawn in Victoria by Tatts-Lotto which is a foreign lottery, conflict with section (6) subsection (1)(a) of the Act, which only authorises the commission to conduct lotteries in the whole or any part of the State of Western Australia?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A series of ten is applied for each time.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No assessment of the total number of tickets is made. Approvals are sought for an unlimited number of tickets.
- (5) The permit states that the prize money for distribution is 60 per cent of subscriptions received.
- (6) Not as the law is presently understood.

HOUSING: BUILDING SOCIETIES

Terminating: Insurance

352. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that the interim authority originally granted by the Trade Practices Tribunal for the continuation of nominated insurance by some terminating building societies was revoked by the tribunal on 20 June 1979?
- (2) If "Yes", will the Minister confirm that terminating building societies have no right to insist on nominating insurance companies, and that householders can insure with the company of their choice?
- (3) Is it the Minister's intention to introduce legislation to permit terminating building societies to legalise the practice of nominated insurance thus removing the societies from the exclusive dealings provisions of the Trade Practices Act?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Borrowers have the right to insure with the company of their choice provided that the company is operating with the authority of the Insurance Commissioner and has a concessions agreement with the society.
- (3) The introduction of the proposed amendments to the Building Societies Act, to incorporate a general empowering provision to allow tied insurance is under consideration.

MAGISTRATES: APPOINTMENT

Number and Training

353. The Hon. J. M. BROWN, to the Attorney General:

- (1) In the past 10 years, how many magistrates have been appointed in Western Australia?
- (2) Who are the appointees, and when were they appointed?
- (3) In each of the appointments, were there more than one applicant?
- (4) If so, how many on each occasion?
- (5) How many came directly from the Crown Law Department?
- (6) When a magistrate is appointed, what training does he receive?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) 25.
- (2) 1972: R. F. Rasmussen, T. E. Mulligan, R. H. Burton, M. J. McGuire, P. J. Sharkey.
1973: P. M. Buck.
1974: I. G. Martin, D. J. O'Dea (reappointment).
1975: P. G. Thobaven, D. A. McGann, G. L. Fielding, F. C. Robins, A. E. Clark, I. Connor.
1976: —
1977: R. J. Gething.
1978: D. W. J. Brown.
1979: K. F. Chapman, J. A. Howard, R. M. Davis.
1980: D. W. Walsh, C. H. Grant.
1981: M. J. Stapp, R. E. L. Greaves, M. T. Whitely, N. L. Roberts.

- (3) Yes, in all cases where the positions were advertised. This has not, however, been an invariable practice.
- (4) Earlier files not readily accessible. Most recently advertised vacancies have attracted from seven to 15 applicants.
- (5) Ten during the last ten years of whom four, all fully qualified legal practitioners, were appointed in the last five years.
- (6) No specific training is given to a magistrate on appointment apart from a period of familiarisation in Perth courts prior to taking up a particular assignment.
Appointees must have appropriate academic qualifications and experience.

HOUSING: RENTAL

Remote Towns: Subsidies

354. The Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Commonwealth Government does not levy income tax on subsidised housing rentals in most remote towns?
- (2) Is the Minister also aware that persons employed by the United States Navy and living in State Housing Commission rental homes in Exmouth, are paid a housing subsidy as part of their normal weekly earnings, and consequently pay tax on the subsidy?

- (3) Will the Minister take the necessary administrative action to arrange for the subsidy referred to in (2) above, to be paid directly to the State Housing Commission thereby ensuring that employees do not pay tax on their housing subsidy?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Income tax on subsidised housing rentals is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.
However, it is understood the position in remote towns is as indicated in the member's question.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The subsidy is a matter between employer and employee. However, the Minister will take this matter up with the US naval authorities at Exmouth.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Agencies

355. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that the Totalisator Agency Board is currently attempting to dispose of a number of TAB agency outlets, and is offering them to the existing agency manager or manageress for lease?
- (2) How many outlets have been disposed of in this manner?
- (3) What is the reason for disposing of the TAB outlets?
- (4) What control will the TAB have in the event that a manager or manageress would purchase an outlet, and then offer the agency for resale?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) to (4) I advise that nothing has occurred in this regard.

RAILWAYS

"Prospector" Service

356. The Hon. J. M. BROWN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

For the last three years—

- (1) How many meals per annum were served on the *Prospector* rail service?

- (2) What profit has the meal service meant to Westrail?
- (3) What were the total annual sales of other items, such as tea, coffee, light refreshments, etc., served on the *Prospector*?
- (4) What was the amount of profit gained from these consumer items?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| (1) Year ended | No. of meats |
| 30.6.79 | 45 867 |
| 30.6.80 | 49 413 |
| 30.6.81 | 50 839 |
| (2) The meal service does not return a net profit. | |
| (3) Year ended | Sales |
| 30.6.79 | \$ 94 729.32 |
| 30.6.80 | \$118 509.48 |
| 30.6.81 | \$131 472.74 |
| (4) There is no net profit because of the labour costs jointly involved with meal service. Catering <i>per se</i> on <i>Prospector</i> does not return a profit. | |

DAIRYING: MILK

Geraldton

357. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that during the recent milk strike, milk was delivered to Geraldton at 4.5 cents per litre less than has been the case with the normal transport company who has the contract to deliver milk?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) will the Minister take the matter up with the transport company which regularly supplies the milk at 10 cents per litre, and endeavour to have the freight charge reduced; and
 - (b) how long does the current contract with the transport company have to go before it comes up for renewal?
- (3) If "No" to (1) will the Minister undertake to inquire into the vast discrepancy between the two freight charges?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) to (3) The Minister for Transport is having the matter raised by the member investigated and will advise him of the result direct.

TRADE UNION: TEACHERS' UNION

Levy

358. The Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

It has been stated that the \$10 levy raised by the Teachers' Union is tax deductible—is this correct?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

I am unable to provide a definite response to this question. However, the Commonwealth Taxation Department has advised that subscriptions are allowable deductions under section 51(1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act where and to the extent of which they were paid for the purpose of securing better remuneration and improving or maintaining working conditions of the employees concerned. Section 16 of the above Act prevents the Taxation Commissioner from publicly commenting on individual matters under the Act.

The question of tax deductibility is one which would have to be assessed by the Taxation Commissioner.

HEALTH: NURSING HOMES

Licences

359. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many private nursing homes are licensed in Western Australia?
- (2) How many has the Government refused to re-licence, or have de-licensed during the last five years?
- (3) Will the Minister supply the names of those the Government has refused to renew licences to, or has de-licensed, and the dates on which they have ceased to operate during the last five years?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) 98 (including 26 conducted by religious/charitable organisations).
- (2) 10—all closed voluntarily.
- (3) 1976: Amevo, Carmel, Mt. Yokine, Ross Memorial.
1977: Deva, Elinor Merle.
1979: Guildford, RSL War Veterans (converted to frail aged accommodation).
1980: Lucknow, Hillroyd (replaced by accommodation in Sir David Brand Centre Nursing Home) voluntarily.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

"Phone-a-Bet" Service

360. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) How many Totalisator Agency Board agencies have closed since the inception of "Phone-a-Bet" in—
 - (a) the metropolitan area; and
 - (b) country areas?
- (2) Would the Minister advise the number of additional staff needed at TAB headquarters to handle telephone calls since the inception of "Phone-a-Bet", and signify whether the employees are permanent or part-time?
- (3) Is the punter still paying 16.5 cents in the dollar for the privilege of betting with the TAB?
- (4) Is the additional expenditure involved in providing the "Phone-a-Bet" system financed from the capital expenditure of the TAB?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) (a) Nil.
(b) Two.
- (2) Nil.
- (3) No.
- (4) No additional expenditure.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Redcliffe

361. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the acute drainage problem existing between Great Eastern Highway and the Swan River between Hardey Road, Belmont, and Fauntleroy Avenue, Redcliffe?
- (2) Is there any plan to sewer this area or any part of it?
- (3) If there is, when is it likely that it will be sewered?
- (4) If there is no plan, will the Minister have the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board investigate the need?
- (5) If a plan exists, what methods are available to residents in the area to have the priority for connection to sewerage advanced?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) The Metropolitan Water Board is aware that the area between Great Eastern Highway and the Swan River and bounded by Hardey Road, Belmont and Fauntleroy Street, Redcliffe is subject to drainage problems. Except for a limited area served by the MWB's Perth Airport southern main drain, however, the responsibility for storm water drainage lies with the local authority.
- (2) There are proposals to sewer a portion of the area between Aurum Street and Forbes and Davis Streets.
- (3) On the MWB's current five year development plan this area has been scheduled for construction to commence in 1986-87, subject to available funding.
- (4) Answered by (2).
- (5) Residents requiring to have their priority for connection advanced could write to the MWB and the local authority about their problems. Priority for sewerage is normally assessed in consultation with the local authority.

PORT: GEOGRAPHE BAY

Public Works Department: Report

362. The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

With respect to Geographe Bay fishing boat harbour investigations carried out by the engineering division of the Public Works Department, and described in a report dated January 1981, would the Minister please advise the total cost of this exercise?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

The total cost is approximately \$88 000.

FUEL AND ENERGY: ELECTRICITY

Power Stations: Conversion

363. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) How much money in today's dollar value has been spent to date on converting power stations in Western Australia from oil to coal?
- (2) How much remains to be spent?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) \$38 million actually spent.
- (2) Approximately \$42 million in today's dollar value.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Coal: Price

364. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

From *The West Australian* of 7 August 1981, it appears the price of coal used by the State Energy Commission is about \$20 per tonne—if that figure is not correct, will the Minister advise the correct price?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

Precise details of coal purchase prices applicable to the State Energy Commission are confidential, but the average during the financial year 1980-81 was approximately \$21 per tonne.

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

Subsidies to Private Industry

365. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Presuming the Government has made the correct decision in converting power stations from oil to coal, what subsidies or concessions are being offered to private industry to encourage them to use the higher priced commodity of gas?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

The decision to partially convert Kwinana power station from oil to coal firing was made in the light of the rapidly escalating oil prices during the 1970s. In terms of the current relative prices of oil and coal, the decision is well justified. During the financial years 1979-80 and 1980-81, after making due allowance for the payment of interest

charges and depreciation provisions, the savings to electricity consumers in Western Australia was in the range of \$20-\$25 million each year.

In respect of the second part of the member's question, it is not the Government's policy to offer subsidies in the marketing of gas to industry or to domestic customers.

FUEL AND ENERGY: NATURAL GAS

Price

366. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Figures published in the *Western Mail* on 8 August 1981, indicate a well head gas price to the State Energy Commission of about \$94 per tonne—

- (1) Would the delivered cost to Wagerup by pipe line bring this figure to less than \$140 per tonne?
- (2) If less, by how much?
- (3) If more, by how much?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) to (3) As I am sure the member fully appreciates, the commercial details of gas contracts, both for purchase and sale by the State Energy Commission, are confidential.

FUEL AND ENERGY: STATE ENERGY COMMISSION

Coal: Price

367. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What is the current price of coal used by the State Energy Commission at Muja?
- (2) What was the average price paid for coal by the State Energy Commission as at 30 June 1978?
- (3) What was the average price paid as at 30 June 1981?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

Precise details of coal purchase prices applicable to the State Energy Commission are confidential. However, the following gives the member an

approximate indication of the prices involved—

- (1) The current price of coal paid by the State Energy Commission at Muja is approximately \$21 per tonne.
- (2) The average price paid for coal by the State Energy Commission for the financial year ending 30 June 1978 was approximately \$11 per tonne.
- (3) The average price paid for coal by the State Energy Commission for the financial year ending 30 June 1981 was approximately \$21 per tonne.

ALUMINA REFINERIES

Industry: Energy

368. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

With reference to energy requirements of the alumina industry—

- (1) Does the alumina industry function principally on steam heat similar to power house operations?
- (2) If not, then to what extent do they vary?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) and (2) A very substantial proportion of the energy requirements of the alumina industry are utilised in the form of heat and steam.

369. *This question was postponed.*

EDUCATION: PILBARA

Priority School Grants

370. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

In respect of each grant made to schools in the Pilbara region under the priority school grants, will the Minister advise—

- (a) the date;
 - (b) the amount; and
 - (c) the purpose;
- of each grant?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(a) to (c) Grants to Priority Schools in the Pilbara Region for 1981

School	Grants \$	Totals \$	Purpose
Pilbara regional office	1 650		Teacher in-service.
	<u>4 043</u>	<u>5 693</u>	
Marble Bar	136		Language resource units
	515		Material for support teacher
	305		Language programme
	1 550		Outdoor education
	496		Community craft centre
	<u>4 066</u>		School community news letter
	<u>505</u>	<u>7 573</u>	Teacher (three-tenths time)
Nullagine	1 080		Options programme
	164		Language programme
	<u>100</u>	<u>1 244</u>	School and community recreation
Onslow	902		Plant nursery
	339		Pottery materials and tutor's services
	290		Literacy
	<u>150</u>	<u>1 381</u>	Experiential programme
Port Hedland	2 826		Science
	468		Literacy programme
	552		Science
	<u>504</u>	<u>4 350</u>	Numeracy
Roebourne	1 422		Experiential programme
	500		Literacy
	<u>6 645</u>		Experiential
	300		Nurse (half-time)
	175		Film programme
	<u>332</u>	<u>9 374</u>	Hobbies
		<u>330 015</u>	Community involvement

LAND

Ord River Farm Block

371. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister for Lands:

I refer to the Minister's answer to question 74 of Wednesday, 1 April 1981, and ask—

- (1) What rate of interest is charged to the land purchaser?
- (2) Was the Hooker Corporation paid in cash?
- (3) If not, on what terms were payments made?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Ten per cent per annum.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.

PASTORAL LEASES: ABORIGINES

Applications

372. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has the Minister received any applications by Aboriginal people or Aboriginal groups or organisations or instrumentalities for the transfer of pastoral land into their name?
- (2) If "Yes", from 1974 to date, specify—
 - (a) the name of the applicant;
 - (b) the date of the application;
 - (c) the name of the pastoral lease;

- (d) the geographic area in which the pastoral lease is; i.e. Pilbara, Kimberley, Murchison-Eyre, etc.;
 - (e) whether the application was granted;
 - (f) if so, on what date;
 - (g) whether the application was refused; and
 - (h) if so, on what date, and for what reasons?
- (3) In respect of each application received, and neither refused nor accepted, what is the reason for the delay?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) to (3) The member is referred to the answer to question 73 of 1981.

HOUSING: INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL EMPLOYEES' HOUSING AUTHORITY

Karratha

373. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) With whom are negotiations being conducted for the sale of Industrial and Commercial Employees' Housing Authority houses in Karratha on a sale and lease-back arrangement?
- (2) What are the terms of the negotiations?
- (3) What proposals does the Government have for a sale and lease-back arrangement?
- (4) What policy, if any, has the authority on sale and lease back arrangements?
- (5) For what reasons are sale and lease-back arrangements considered appropriate?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) Altenstadt Investments Australia Pty. Ltd.
- (2) 20 houses to be sold for a cash return to the authority of \$1.26 million, with a 20-year lease-back arrangement.
- (3) The Government has been prepared to examine any initiative that would assist in making more housing available including this sale and lease-back arrangement.
- (4) The authority would consider any such proposal on its individual merits.

- (5) Sale and lease-back arrangements may be considered appropriate in circumstances of substantial demand for housing and limited available capital funds.

ABORIGINES

Land Rights

374. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Will the Government introduce land rights for Aborigines in Western Australia?
- (2) If not, why not?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) and (2) The question requests the introduction of land rights which is an undefined term and it is not possible to give a definitive answer within the scope of the Lands portfolio.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Western Refuse Zone Disposal Committee

375. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

In view of the Government's announced intentions of replacing Swanbourne Hospital in the near future, and the extensive area of land available to be used at the Brockway rubbish tip, will the Minister make arrangements with the western refuse zone disposal committee to immediately cease tip operations in the vicinity of Manning House and move to a more distant part of the site?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

No. The efficacy of a landfill operation is related to the efficiency of management. The Brockway site, including the area adjacent to Manning House, is under constant surveillance by officers of the Department of Public Health and Mental Health Services, in addition to the zone committee officers. There is now no objection to the conduct of the site by my department and Mental Health Services reaffirmed its satisfaction with the operation. There is

no reason at present to require the cessation of the use of the present area. It should also be noted this area is used during the winter months only and it is anticipated that this portion of the site will be completed before any rebuilding commences.

I understand these aspects were explained to the member by the appropriate officers during your visit to the site.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Homeless Youth Research Project

376. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

With reference to the homeless youth research project of January to August 1980, financially supported by the Department for Community Welfare—

- (1) Was any action taken by the Government on the findings and 14 recommendations of that report?
- (2) If so, on which ones?
- (3) If not, why not?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

- (1) to (3) The research project on homeless youth in Perth was a project undertaken by the Homeless Youth Project Committee and the Department of Social Work at WAIT with financial assistance from the Department for Community Welfare.

The report of the research project was submitted to my department's Research Advisory Committee and I examined the report simultaneously. The 14 recommendations to which the member refers were mainly of a general nature and depended not only on a State Government response but demanded a response by the Commonwealth and community as a whole. Highlighted in the report was the problem of youth unemployment which, as the member will be aware, cannot be and is not an exclusive State responsibility.

Wherever possible this State has attempted to be supportive of those groups who are involved in service provision to homeless youth. In a letter to Mrs Genevieve Errey, the Secretary of the Youth Affairs Council of WA of 9 April 1981, I indicated that \$51 999 had been obtained from the Commonwealth to fund four agencies in the provision of services to homeless youth. I indicated in that letter that although the funds came to this State as a specific purpose grant the level of funding was based on the expenditure by the State Government to various groups involved in the provision of services to homeless youth. This State has had a commitment to supporting such agencies and recognises the essential and good work carried out by them.

It may be of interest to note that—
The total expenditure incurred by this State in this area is as follows—

	\$
1978-79	57 840
1979-80	62 258
1980-81	75 230

Therefore, the member will see that wherever possible the State Government has provided financial support to those agencies involved in service provision. In this way the State Government goes some way towards meeting the recommendations as highlighted in the report, but as the member will be aware this Government actively encourages the community as a whole to accept some responsibility for this problem.

WATER RESOURCES

Salinity: Agnew Clough Ltd.

377. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister and Wildlife representing the Minister for Water Resources:

With reference to the deputation which I introduced to the Acting Minister for Water Resources on 27 March 1981, regarding the salinity problem that would occur if clearing was allowed to take place on the Agnew Clough land at Wooroloo, what action did the

Government take as a result of the case submitted to the Minister during that deputation?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

Following the deputation led by the member for North-East Metropolitan, the Minister conferred with a number of Cabinet colleagues and then arranged the setting up of a committee of senior officers from appropriate departments to advise the Government on appropriate action. This committee has submitted its report but no final decision has yet been made.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

HEALTH: NURSING HOMES

WAIT Report

131. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Further to my question without notice of yesterday concerning complaints against nursing homes—

- (1) How many nursing officers were involved in the inspections referred to in answer (4)?
- (2) (a) Which homes were visited;
(b) at what times of the day; and
(c) what was the average duration of each visit?
- (3) How many nursing staff will be employed to continue the programme of inspections?
- (4) How often is it intended to visit each of the registered homes in a year?
- (5) Will the Minister define what he means by "abuse or neglect . . . of a fairly serious nature" in answer 7(c)?
- (6) Will he table a list of the Government, religious and charitable nursing homes and permanent care units referred to in 7(d)?
- (7) (a) Are there vacancies in any of this accommodation;
(b) if so, in which ones; and
(c) if not, what is the waiting period involved?
- (8) Will the Minister publicly invite further information in respect to abuse or neglect in nursing homes?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Three.
- (2) (a) The six nursing homes already named; i.e., Valencia, Hillview, Stranraer, Killara, St. George's, and Montrose.
(b) Between 5.30 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.
(c) 1½—3 hours.
- (3) One full-time plus others co-opted as necessary.
- (4) Each nursing home is visited at least twice annually. Those which appear sub-standard may require additional visits to ensure that required improvements are made.
- (5) Any persistent breach of the regulations or refusal to comply with the regulations or abuse or neglect of patients likely to seriously affect their comfort or well-being.
- (6) Permanent Care Units
Regional Hospitals—
Albany.
Bunbury.
Narrogin.
Northam.
Kalgoorlie.
Port Hedland.

District Hospitals
Pinjarra.
Manjimup.
Busselton.

Metropolitan
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.
Osborne Park Hospital
(Hawthorn).

Silver Chain
Silver Chain Nursing Home,
Hilton.
Alfred Carson Nursing Home,
Claremont.

Metropolitan
Mt. Henry Hospital.
Sunset Hospital.

Kimberley
Numbala Nunga.
(Derby Nursing Home).

Religious/Charitable
Carinya Village Home, Mt. Lawley
(Churches of Christ).
Christos, Wembley (Catholic
Homes for Aged).
Chrystal Halliday, Karrinyup
(Uniting Church).

Elanor Villas Lodge, Bunbury
(Churches of Christ).

Freeman Nursing Home,
Rossmoyne (Seventh Day
Adventists).

Glendalough, Mt. Hawthorn (Little
Sisters of the Poor).

Hardey Lodge, Mt. Lawley (CMM
Home Inc.).

Hillcrest, North Fremantle
(Salvation Army).

Hospital for Aborigines, Kalgoorlie
(Little Sisters of the Poor).

James Brown House, Osborne Park
(Anglican Homes for the Aged).

Joondanna Village Lodge,
Joondanna (Churches of Christ).

Maurice Zeffert Home, Mt. Lawley
(Perth Jewish Aged Home).

Mt. Saint Camillus, Forrestfield
(Trustees of the Order of St.
Camillus).

Nazareth House, Bluff Point, via
Geraldton.

Nazareth House, Hilton (Sisters of
Nazareth).

Parry House, Lesmurdie (Anglican
Homes for the Aged).

Rowethorpe Nursing Centre
(CMM Homes Inc.).

SA Village, Nedlands (Salvation
Army).

Victoria Park Home, Kalgoorlie
(Little Sisters of the Poor).

(7) (a) to (c) Vacancies are usually very
limited. Precise figures are not
immediately available, but will be
obtained as soon as possible.

(8) The Minister and the Commissioner of
Public Health have always been
available to receive and to investigate
complaints about nursing homes.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Boundaries: Redistribution

132. The Hon. TOM McNEIL, to the Minister
for Lands:

Did one of the electoral commissioners
show or discuss with him the proposals
for the current redistribution of electoral
boundaries?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The answer is definitely "No".

LOTTERIES COMMISSION

Tatts-Lotto

133. The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Minister
for Fisheries and Wildlife:

Referring to my question 351 on today's
notice paper, would the Minister refer
the questions and replies to the Chief
Secretary for an opinion as to whether
the answers given today were correct?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

Yes.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Pilbara and Kimberley

134. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the
Minister representing the Minister for
Labour and Industry:

I wish to ask a question arising out of
the Minister's long-delayed answer to
the question about public holidays in the
north. I draw the Minister's attention to
the fact that arising out of this schedule,
public servants in Broome, Marble Bar,
Tom Price, Wyndham, and Newman are
not afforded the opportunity of a public
holiday on the customary date for the
race day or the festival day as public
servants in all the other towns in my
electorate are afforded.

I ask him, since it reveals an anomalous
situation penalising public servants in
those towns of Broome, Marble Bar,
Tom Price, Wyndham, and Newman,
and since the Government apparently at
the moment does not propose to
introduce public holidays for those
towns, will he give consideration to
creating a special allowance or holiday
to compensate those public servants?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

In answer to the Hon. Peter Dowding,
certainly I will pass on his comments. I
am sure the Minister concerned has
given the matter very careful
consideration and will continue to do so.
I will pass those comments on, but I do
say he was given a carefully considered
answer and that is the reason it took a
few days to produce.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Pilbara and Kimberley

135. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and Industry:

I wish to ask a supplementary question. If it be the case that the Minister has given careful consideration to the matter, for what reason are public servants in Broome, Marble Bar, Tom Price, Newman and Wyndham being discriminated against?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

I have answered the member's question. I have told him what I am going to do and I do not propose to enter into debate about it.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND
ADVISORY COMMITTEE*Reports: Action*

136. The Hon. H. W. OLNEY, to the Attorney General:

I direct a question to the Attorney General in his role as the Minister responsible for the administration of the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee Act. It is as follows—

- (1) What action does he take, if any, in respect of reports of that committee after they have been tabled in the House and, in particular, has his attention been drawn to the committee's report on the Education Act Amendment Regulations (No. 8) of 1981 tabled yesterday?

- (2) If so, has he as the responsible Minister initiated any action?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) and (2) There is a standing order of the Government that I should examine the reports of the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee and communicate with the Ministers concerned in relation to the recommendations which appear from time to time in the reports. This has been done, and it is being done in connection with the report which was tabled yesterday.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND
ADVISORY COMMITTEE*Education Act Regulations: Referral*

137. The Hon. H. W. OLNEY, to the Attorney General:

I wish to ask another question of the Attorney General relating to another aspect of the same Statute. It is as follows—

- (1) Does the Attorney recall my having raised in debate last week the question of the validity of a regulation under the Education Act?

- (2) If he does, would it be appropriate for him to refer the question of that regulation's validity to the committee for its further consideration?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) and (2) I take great notice of any comments that the member makes. He may rest assured that appropriate examination will be made of any such comment.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Pilbara and Kimberley

138. The Hon. PETER DOWDING, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

This is supplementary to an earlier question, so that there is no misunderstanding of the response of the Minister. Will he treat that question as a question on notice, and undertake to bring an answer to this House, as opposed to simply answering me at some stage in the future?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS replied:

I have said I will pass the question and the comments to the responsible Minister. If the member wants the question placed on notice, he can go through the usual procedure.