

this Chamber in that unparliamentary fashion. Those views certainly will be noted and will be borne in mind if at any time the legislation is repealed. It has been indicated that if more normal conditions are restored in the industry, the need for this legislation will no longer exist because the type of control it provides will not be required.

With those words, I again thank members for their contributions to the debate on the Bill which I commend to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. Lyla Elliott) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6 put and passed.

Clause 7: Section 8 amended—

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: This clause applies to the ability of the committee to set prices for slaughtered cattle for local consumption. It is actually the crux of the Bill and a provision which is very necessary. It is fortunate that in Western Australia we have a forward-looking community which does not take the narrow view of those people who made the comment Mr Dans mentioned in his second reading speech. In Western Australia we are prepared to "give it a go". We have given to the Eastern States many leads in this type of legislation and I am sure we will see them following us at some future date.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 and 9 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. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and passed.

House adjourned at 5.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 6th November, 1975

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

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER

THE SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson): I have to announce that I have received the writ issued for the electoral district of Greenough, and from the returns endorsed thereon it appears that Mr Reginald John Tubby has been duly elected

to serve in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Greenough. I am now prepared to swear in the honourable member.

The honourable member took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance and signed the roll.

QUESTIONS (35): ON NOTICE

1. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Cockburn Sound: Industrial Effluent

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) What wastes are discharged into Cockburn Sound by each of the following industries—

Cuming Smith British Petroleum;
Australian Iron and Steel;
Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd.;
British Petroleum;
State Energy Commission;
Cockburn Cement;
Alcoa;
Western Mining Corporation;
Kwinana Nitrogen Company;
Chemical Industries (Kwinana) Pty. Ltd.;
Commonwealth Industrial Gases;
Steel Mains Pty. Ltd.;
Newbold General Refractories Ltd.?

- (2) If the Minister is unable to provide the public with these details, I would remind him that they were promised "in due course" by his predecessor in question 19 of 11th September, 1974, and ask when such vital information will be made available?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) As previously advised, much of this information will be contained in the report commissioned by the Environmental Protection Authority.

The report is expected to be presented shortly but I cannot yet advise when or whether the report will be made public.

2. NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES

Commonwealth Grants

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

Why did the Western Australian Government fail to obtain funds for national parks and reserves under the State Grants (Native Conservation Act) for the financial year 1974-75?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

Approval in principle to purchase land was not received from the Commonwealth Minister for Environment until 27th March, 1975, for some areas of land and until 6th June, 1975, for other areas. An agreement in relation to the provision of financial assistance was not received from the Commonwealth prior to 30th June, 1975.

3. CONSERVATION THROUGH RESERVES COMMITTEE

Report: Availability

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

With respect to question on notice 75 of 27th March, 1975, in which it was stated that system 7 of the Conservation Through Reserves Committee's study would be reported upon in the third quarter of this year (a period now past) will he inform the House and the people as to when the report upon system 7 will be made available to the public?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I am advised that the Environmental Protection Authority has been directing its greatest attention to systems 1 and 2 reports. System 7 will be treated in a final form as soon as possible.

4. WOOD CHIPPING INDUSTRY

Resources from Private Land

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

With reference to part (5) of question on notice 34 of 11th September, 1975, what consideration is being given by the Government or by the EPA to the implication of the further clearing of private land in the Manjimup woodchip license area?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

The matter of restrictions on the clearing of private land is currently being investigated.

5. ALCOA ALUMINA REFINERY

Effluent: Leakages

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) With reference to his statement in March of this year that Alcoa had been asked by the Department of Industrial Development to prevent a repetition of leakages from the pipeline carrying effluent to Mandogalup and to institute a system of detecting

leakages, what has been the response to the request?

- (2) What monitoring occurs, by whom and how often are the results reported to the Environmental Protection Department?
- (3) Is there checking of the monitoring, and if so, by whom?
- (4) Has the subject been discussed by the EPA, and if so, is it satisfied with the precautions taken by the company and upon which date(s) was the matter discussed?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) The company has modified its construction methods and operational procedures which are believed to be adequate for prevention of future pipeline ruptures.
- (2) and (3) Closed circuit TV monitors pump stations and there are regular 2-4 hourly patrols of the pipeline by the company. Spot visits are made by State officers.
- (4) I am advised by the chairman that the Environmental Protection Authority is satisfied with the company's efforts in this regard.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mineral Sands: Impact Study

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Has the environmental review referred to in question on notice 38 of 9th September, 1975 yet been received by him?
- (2) If so, will he table it?
- (3) If not when does he expect to receive it?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) No. The report is still under discussion and no decision as to its public release can be made at this time.

7. LAPORTE TITANIUM

Effluent

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) With reference to question on notice 36 of 7th October, 1975, what effect will the increased concentration of ferrous sulphate and sulphuric acid in the effluent waters have on the recipient area?
- (2) Has this problem been discussed by the EPA, and is it satisfied that there will be no deleterious effects of the increased effluent discharge?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) As has been previously advised to the Member (question 17 of 1st May, 1975), the matter of effluent disposal from Laporte is being investigated by the Environmental Protection Authority in conjunction with the company and other State Government instrumentalities. These aspects of the effluent disposal will be taken into account in the investigation.

8. LAPORTE TITANIUM

Effluent

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

With reference to question on notice 36 of 7th October, 1975, what effect will the sale of ferrous sulphate have upon the daily tonnage of this substance discharged daily and its quantity expressed as a percentage of the total volume of the effluent, allowing for the increased production and the greater water economy?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

The company is removing about half of the crystalline solid ferrous sulphate (copperas) being presently produced. Its effect on the total volume of effluent is marginal but the removal of part of the ferrous sulphate is an important step in the right direction.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Pollution Committee, and Oil Spillage

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Who are the members of the State Government Pollution Committee referred to in the answer to question 43 of 8th April, 1975, and what "interests" do they represent?
- (2) What are the terms of reference of the committee, does it have regular meetings, and if so, how often does it meet?
- (3) If it does not have regular meetings, what are the dates upon which it has met to date in 1975?
- (4) What is the chemical composition of the detergent BP1100X which is apparently held in stock to deal with oil spillage?
- (5) Has the composition of that detergent been discussed by the EPA and if so is it satisfied as to its effect upon marine biota?

- (6) What research has been carried out by the Australian Government so as to decide the degree of the damage it may cause to marine biota?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) The committee referred to in question 43 of 8th April, 1975, is the State Operational Committee for Combating Marine Oil Pollution. The Committee consists of the following members:

Capt. C. Hartley, Chairman and Co-ordinator, Naval Advisor, Harbour and Light Department.

Capt. R. S. Campbell, Harbour Master, Fremantle Port Authority.

Capt. M. D. Kiely, Marine Surveyor, Commonwealth Department of Transport.

- (2) and (3) The committee is responsible for the combating of all marine oil pollution in Western Australian territorial waters. The State committee operates in accordance with the national plan to combat pollution of the sea by oil. The committee meets on an irregular basis to develop operational procedures and as the need arises to respond to specific oil pollution incidents.

- (4) I am now advised that the detergent held in the national plan stockpile is BP-AB, which has properties similar to the product BP1100X. The chemical composition of both these products is confidential to the manufacturer and the Commonwealth Department of Transport.

BP-AB is a low toxicity detergent that was selected by the Commonwealth Department of Transport following an evaluation of a number of detergents by that department. BP-AB has the following general properties:

It is a clear yellow-brown mobile liquid having an indefinite shelf life taken to be in excess of 5 years; stable to heat and cold (60°C-10°C); a flashpoint above 65.5°C—(Pensky-Martens closed cup) and a kinematic viscosity approximately 12 cSt at 10°C (ASTM D445 method).

- (5) No.
- (6) As yet there is no international standard for determining the toxicity of oil dispersants towards marine biota. The Commonwealth Department of Transport determined the toxicity of BP1100X by

the Bio-assay method of Portman (1970) and the LC₅₀ results (48 hours) are as follows—

Shrimp (*Macrobrachium Intermedium*) 11 400 p.p.m.

Shore Mussel (*Mytilus Planulatus*) 33 900 p.p.m.

10. ROAD TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

Rationalisation

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Premier:

As in the Governor's Speech of 13th March, 1975 he outlined the Government's legislative programme and included in the Bills to be introduced a Bill to rationalise the road transport industry—

- (a) has the Bill been introduced into the Parliament;
- (b) if not, when will the Bill be introduced;
- (c) if it is not intended to introduce legislation, what action does his Government intend initiating to overcome obvious problems in the road transport industry?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (a) No.
- (b) See answer to (c) below.
- (c) The Government has already acted to more stringently administer section 36 (d) of the Transport Commission Act, which relates to entry into those road transport operations for which Transport Commission licenses are required.

The Government has also, in accordance with its pre-election policy statement, instituted a transport policy study in the southern half of the State. It is hoped that this work, which will be complete in late 1976, will provide a more adequate definition of the role of road transport.

Legislation of the type envisaged in the Governor's Speech could possibly flow from the study recommendations.

11. MUJA POWER STATION

Additional Units

Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

In view of the Government's announcement regarding the conversion of two units to burn coal at the Kwinana power station will he please advise the construction programme for the additional 2 x 200 MW units at the Muja power house, Collie?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

The first of the 200 MW units at Muja will be re-programmed to be in service to meet the winter demands of 1981 and the second unit re-programmed to meet the winter demands of 1982.

12. SWAN VIEW SCHOOL

Library-resource Centre

Mr MOILER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) When is it anticipated tenders will be called for the building of the cluster library/resource centre at Swan View school?
- (2) What is the anticipated completion date?
- (3) What is the anticipated cost of the additions?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) 15th November.
- (2) Mid-1976.
- (3) \$250 000.

13. RAILWAYS

Midland Workshops: Efficiency Study

Mr MOILER, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has an efficiency study been carried out at Midland railway workshops recently?
- (2) If so, would the Minister table the results of the study?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No—efficiency is obtained at Midland workshops by the practice of continuous review in all areas.
- (2) Not applicable.

14. CITY OF MELVILLE

Town Clerk: Replacement

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Was the recent replacement of the Town Clerk at the City of Melville in accordance with the procedures laid down by the Local Government Act?
- (2) Did Mr Pyke have an opportunity to answer publicly any of the allegations made in *The West Australian* on 13th June, 1975, and any subsequent allegations?
- (3) Were the Melville City Council and the Local Government Department satisfied with the explanations which have been given by the consultants on the allegations made about Mr Pyke's administration?
- (4) If not, why not?

- (5) Did the Minister and the Local Government Department consult with Mr Pyke before coming to the conclusion that an inquiry into the affairs of Melville City Council was not justified?
- (6) Was the legal position of Mr Pyke as Town Clerk of the City of Melville, as approved by the Minister, clarified before another town clerk was appointed, particularly as the recent rate notices for Melville were sent out over Mr Pyke's name?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) As this question seeks an expression of opinion on a question of law, it is inadmissible.
- (2) I know of no reason why Mr Pyke could not give public answers to allegations.
- (3) Any report by the consultants was not required by the department and was a matter of internal administration by the council. I have no information that the Council was dissatisfied with the report.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) No.
- (6) The question is not entirely understood. If it relates to the clarification of the dismissal of Mr Pyke, that is a matter which concerns the council. If it relates to clarification of the appointment of Mr Pyke, I am satisfied that this appointment was eventually properly made.

15.

IRON ORE

Marandoo Project

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has he visited the Marandoo project recently?
- (2) If so, what was the date of the visit?
- (3) What departmental officers accompanied him on the visit?
- (4) Was the visit as a result of an invitation from Messrs Hancock and Wright or Texas Gulf?
- (5) Who accompanied him during his inspection of Marandoo?
- (6) Has the Marandoo project been discussed by the Cabinet iron ore sub-committee with the partners?
- (7) Has the Marandoo project received the green light in so far as the State Government is concerned?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 1st and 2nd November, 1975.
- (3) Co-ordinator only.

- (4) Texasgulf Marandoo Pty. Ltd., the project managers.
- (5) Manager and officers of Texasgulf Marandoo Pty. Ltd.
- (6) The sub-committee does not deal with projects being administered by me under ratified agreements.
- (7) The provisions of the agreement between the State and company are being adhered to. I will consider proposals from the project managers when they are tendered under the terms of the agreement.

16. *This question was postponed.*

17.

STATE FORESTS

Shannon River Basin: Cutting Contracts

Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) Would the Minister inform me whether the 9% of total area within the Shannon River basin to be cut over by the timber millers actually contains 20% of the marri timber within the Shannon catchment basin?
- (2) If "Yes" would the Minister advise whether the Government would be prepared to reconsider allowing existing cutting contracts to continue beyond the end of 1975, recognising that compensation would probably be necessary?
- (3) What proportion of the 9% area within the Shannon will be cut over by clear felling and by selective cutting methods respectively?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) The volume of marri in the area referred to is estimated to be considerably less than the percentage quoted.
- (2) Not relevant in view of answer to (1).
- (3) Cutting proposals provide for 43% to be clear felled and 57% to be selectively logged.

18. WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Rehabilitative Treatment

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) How much, if any, of the cost of rehabilitative treatment for workers injured under the Workers' Compensation Act is met by Medibank?
- (2) Where workers are sent for rehabilitative treatment, either to a Federal or State Government instrumentality how much has this cost the Workers' Compensation Board for the years 1974-75?

- (3) What are the weekly charges for rehabilitative treatment at those centres that are treating patients for workers' compensation injuries?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Nil. On inquiry in April last the Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board was informed by the Health Insurance Commission (Commonwealth) that this aspect had not been decided. A further letter received only last week stated that this was still the situation.

- (2) 1974—\$10 990.

1975—\$27 808.

- (3) The charges are as follows—

Daily patients—\$11 per day.

Residential patients—\$17 per day.

These charges were increased by almost 100% shortly before the commencement of Medibank. Appeals for reconsideration have been rejected without reason.

19. GUILDFORD ROAD, BASSENDEAN

Re-routing

Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In regard to the re-routing of Guildford Road around the existing shopping centre at Bassendean, will the Minister advise when the Bassendean Bowling Club will have to vacate that portion of land that they now use that is needed for the project?

- (2) (a) Is it intended to construct another bridge adjacent to the existing road traffic bridge at Guildford over the Swan River to provide four lanes of traffic over the river;

(b) if not, why not?

- (3) If it is intended to construct the bridge as mentioned under (2), when will the work commence and when is it anticipated the work will be finished?

- (4) Are there any proposals in hand to build a road traffic bridge over the Swan River at or in the vicinity of Kingsley Drive, South Guildford?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) End of April, 1976.

- (2) (a) and (b) The Main Roads Department is preparing plans for the duplication of the existing bridge.

- (3) No firm commencement date has been set as construction will be dependent upon the acceptance

of the project by the local authorities concerned and the availability of funds.

- (4) No.

20.

TOWN PLANNING

Geraldton Region Study Plans

Mr CARR, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

Will the Minister please table a copy of the draft Geraldton region study plans?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The plans form part of a report being prepared by a study group of the planning and co-ordinating authority which will report to Government through the Minister for Industrial Development. The question should therefore have been addressed to that Minister; however, I have been advised by him that it would be premature to table draft plans which are presently wide open for consideration by the local authorities and the State Departments and possible re-drawings as a result of such considerations.

21.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

Enrolments

Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

What was the enrolment for each electoral district immediately following the last redistribution?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

The final report and final recommendations of the Electoral Commissioners as published in the *Government Gazette* of the 14th June, 1972 shows the number of electors in each electoral district as nearly as can be ascertained, as at 3rd September, 1971 as follows—

District	No. of Electors
Ascot	15 095
Balga	14 622
Canning	14 433
Clontarf	14 774
Cockburn	14 773
Cottesloe	16 107
East Melville ..	16 134
Floreat ..	15 419
Fremantle	16 509
Karrinyup	14 980
Maylands	16 171
Melville ..	15 835
Morley	14 484
Mount Hawthorn ..	15 718
Mount Lawley ..	15 750
Nedlands	15 777
Perth	16 659
Scarborough ..	15 437
South Perth	15 153
Subiaco ..	15 211

District	No. of Electors
Swan	15 815
Victoria Park ..	15 931
Welshpool	15 642
Albany	7 599
Avon	7 696
Boulder-Dundas ..	7 394
Bunbury	7 711
Collie	7 789
Dale	7 042
Geraldton	7 382
Greenough	7 218
Kalamunda	7 386
Kalgoorlie	7 355
Katanning	7 764
Merredin-Yilgarn ..	7 548
Moore	6 986
Mount Marshall	7 330
Mundaring	7 453
Murray	7 097
Narrogin	7 851
Rockingham	7 427
Roe	7 919
Stirling	7 583
Toodyay	7 015
Vasse	8 061
Warren	7 522
Wellington	7 631
Gascoyne	3 417
Kimberley	3 329
Murchison-Eyre	1 835
Pilbara	6 134
Total	550 903

22. SCHOOLS

Geraldton: First-year Enrolments

Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many year 1 students are enrolled at Government primary schools in Geraldton?
- (2) Can the Minister provide an estimate of how many year 1 students are enrolled at private schools in Geraldton?
- (3) Will the Minister advise the total capacity of pre-school accommodation available in Geraldton in 1976?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) 392 Year 1 pupils at 1st August, 1975.
- (2) 127 Year 1 pupils at 1st August, 1975.
- (3) 289 places.

23. GERALDTON MEDICAL CENTRE

Completion and Lease

Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) With reference to the Geraldton medical centre, have the matters referred to in part (3) of his answer to question 12 of 21st August been satisfactorily resolved?

- (2) Is the anticipated date for calling tenders still January 1976?
- (3) What is the present anticipated completion date?
- (4) Will the Minister please detail the terms under which doctors and other services will occupy facilities at the centre?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) May, 1977.
- (4) It is anticipated that community health services generally will occupy the centre on a rent free basis.
Lease agreements regarding terms and conditions will be negotiated with doctors and other private practitioners.

24. *This question was postponed.*

25. BEECHBORO-GOSNELLS HIGHWAY

Realignment at Belmont

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) When were plans initially approved and announced for the Beechboro-Gosnells Highway?
- (2) In terms of the original alignment of the section of the proposed highway in Belmont was the property described as lot 563 or street No. 57 Johnson Street, Belmont, partially or wholly involved?
- (3) If the answer to (2) reveals that the property was partially or wholly involved will the Minister explain what action was taken to notify the owner of this property and when such action was taken?
- (4) (a) Has the alignment of the proposed highway in this area been officially altered;
(b) if so—
(i) when was the alteration approved;
(ii) is the above residence now wholly or partially involved?
- (5) Are further moves under way to realign the proposed highway in Belmont?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Plans for the Beechboro-Gosnells Highway were incorporated in the metropolitan region scheme which came into effect on 30th October, 1963.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.

- (4) (a) Yes;
- (b) (i) 23rd August, 1974;
- (ii) Yes.
- (5) No.

26. **PENSIONERS**

*Complaints of Increased Charges:
Correspondence*

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he confirm that my letter to him of 14th August concerning complaints received from pensioners in respect of the State Government's increases in water rates, electricity charges and vehicle registration fees, has not been lost?
- (2) Are Members of Parliament to understand that it is normal to wait three months or more for a reply to correspondence to the Premier's office?
- (3) Will he indicate when the letter referred to above will be answered?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) The delay in reply to the Member's letter is regretted. It is certainly not normal procedure for such delays. An answer has been forwarded to the Member.

27. **LAND AT CARNARVON**
Sale

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has the Lands Department received communication from the Carnarvon Shire Council containing a suggestion that a parcel of prime land be sold to a certain Mr C. W. Tuckey?
- (2) Has the department received approaches from other interested parties in respect of this parcel of land, with a request that the land be sold by tender or auction as the land in question is prime land and because there is a shortage of good commercial land in Carnarvon?
- (3) (a) Has the Lands Department sought the views of the Carnarvon Shire Council in respect of the suggestion that the abovementioned parcel of land should be sold by tender or auction;
- (b) If so, what was the council's reaction?
- (4) Has the Carnarvon Shire Council in fact subsequently suggested that the parcel of land be sold to Mr Tuckey for a figure which was less than \$4 000?

- (5) What would be the estimated current market value of the parcel of land referred to above?
- (6) Will the Minister ensure that all parties interested in purchasing the abovementioned parcel of land have a fair and reasonable opportunity to do so?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) The Carnarvon Shire Council has proposed the closure of portions of Wooramel Street, adjacent to lot 1039, held by C. W. Tuckey and suggested disposal in part to C. W. Tuckey.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) (a) Yes;
- (b) Council reiterated its previous recommendation that the land be offered to the adjoining landholder. The Town Planning Board advised in similar terms for reasons of zoning.
- (4) No.
- (5) \$8 000-\$10 000 depending on zoning.
- (6) If closure occurs disposal will be made having regard to statutory rezoning and Section 118A of the Land Act.

28. **HEALTH**

Whale Meal: Mercury Contamination

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

With reference to his answers to my question 27 of Tuesday, 14th October concerning the mercury contamination in whale meat—

- (a) will the Minister indicate who has been given the responsibility to conduct the investigations referred to in parts (2) and (3) of the answer;
- (b) whilst some information on mercury contamination of whale and whale products has already been submitted to Parliament, will the Minister make all information on this subject compiled by his department available for public scrutiny?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (a) The Pesticide Residues Advisory Committee;
- (b) Further information will be made available after the report of the Pesticide Residues Advisory Committee has been received.

29. **HEALTH***Whale Meal: Mercury Contamination*

Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Further to question 27 of Tuesday, 14th October, part (4), will he indicate when his department proposes to publish information relating to mercury contamination of whales and whale products?

Mr OLD replied:

The departmental research officer involved in these experimental studies is preparing a paper for publication in a scientific journal. It is not possible to nominate the issue of the journal and hence the date of the publication.

The department proposes to issue a Press release for general information following a meeting on 18th November of the Pesticide Residues Advisory Committee. This meeting has been specially called to discuss this issue.

30. **PUBLIC SERVICE***Ministerial Appointments*

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

Is the information now available which the Premier promised to provide in answer to my question 40 of 7th October, 1975 concerning ministerial appointments in the Government service?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Yes. I understood it had been forwarded to the Member.

I have requested that a copy be supplied, and I shall table it on Tuesday.

31. **PUBLIC HOLIDAYS***List for 1976*

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

Would he be good enough to list public holidays for 1976?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

1976 public and bank holidays under the Public and Bank Holidays Act—

1st January, Thursday, New Year's Day;

26th January, Monday, Australia Day;

1st March, Monday, Labour Day;

16th April, Friday, Good Friday;

19th April, Monday, Easter Monday;

25th April, Sunday, Anzac Day—holiday under the Public and Bank Holidays Act is celebrated on Monday, 26th April;

7th June, Monday, Foundation Day;

11th October, Monday, Queen's Birthday;

25th December, Saturday, Christmas Day—holiday is celebrated on Monday, 27th December;

26th December, Sunday, Boxing Day—holiday is celebrated on Tuesday, 28th December;

1st January, 1977, Saturday, New Year's Day—holiday is celebrated on Monday, 3rd January, 1977.

32. **SCHOOL TERMS***List for 1976*

Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

Would the Minister be good enough to list school terms for 1976?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

Primary and secondary schools—
1st term, 9th February–14th May, 1976;

2nd term, 31st May–27th August, 1976;

3rd term, 13th September–17th December, 1976.

Technical schools—

1st term, 23rd February–15th May, 1976;

2nd term, 31st May–28th August, 1976;

3rd term, 13th September–27th November, 1976.

33.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY*Members: Interest in Wood Chipping Industry*

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

(1) Has any member of the Environmental Protection Authority been at any time whilst a member of the authority a director of Inchcape (W.A.) Pty. Ltd.?

(2) If so, who were directors and are they still directors?

(3) If a member is not still a director, when did such an appointment cease?

(4) Did such a member who was a director declare his interest at the time of considering the marriage woodchip project?

(5) Is any member a shareholder in Inchcape (W.A.) Pty. Ltd. or has any member been a shareholder at any time?

- (6) If so, who were shareholders and was an interest declared at the time of the consideration of the marri woodchip project?
- (7) What method is used so that interests of members of the EPA are known and recorded, thereby avoiding a conflict of interests?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Mr P. R. Adams; No.
- (3) 15th May, 1975.
- (4) Yes. I have perused the relevant minutes of the Environmental Protection Authority meeting and satisfied myself that such interest was declared.
- (5) No.
- (6) Answered by (5).
- (7) I am advised by the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority that members declare their interest and do not vote when any matter in which they have an interest arises.

34. SLOW LEARNING CHILDREN

Training Centre Site

Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has any site been set aside in either Cockburn, Kwinana or Rockingham area for the establishment of a training centre for slow learning children in the 12 to 18 age group?
- (2) If "Yes"—
- (a) where is the site;
- (b) what plans are in hand for the construction of such a centre?
- (3) How many such children are presently registered and awaiting vacancies for admission to the existing Fremantle centre?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) The old Spearwood Primary site in Rockingham Road, Spearwood, has been earmarked for a special school.
- (b) There are no current plans in hand for the construction of a special school in the Cockburn area. The construction of a new special school on this site will depend on the future demand for special school places and the availability of loan funds.
- (3) Nil.

35.

BUS SERVICES

Single-fare Journeys

Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Transport:

If the journey is completed within the stipulated two hours what would be the stipulated single bus fare for any worker travelling between the undermentioned centres—

- (a) Burns Beach via Wanneroo to Armadale (40 miles approximately);
- (b) Burns Beach via Wanneroo to Thomas Road, Kwinana (52 miles approximately);
- (c) Midland to Fremantle (24 miles approximately);
- (d) Midland to Thomas Road, Kwinana via Perth and Fremantle (40 miles approximately);
- (e) Kalamunda to Thomas Road, Kwinana via Perth and Fremantle (36 miles approximately);
- (f) Kwinana town centre to junction of Rockingham Road and Hope Valley Road (3 miles approximately);
- (g) Kwinana town centre to O'Connor industrial area (15 miles approximately);
- (h) Kwinana town centre to Fremantle terminal (19 miles approximately)?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (a) 30c.
- (b) 30c.
- (c) 30c.
- (d) 30c.
- (e) 30c.
- (f) 30c.
- (g) 45c.
- (h) 45c.

QUESTIONS (9): WITHOUT NOTICE

1.

STATE FORESTS

Acquisition of Land at Manjimup

Mr THOMPSON, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Will he take note that since publicity was given to the motion passed in this House on Tuesday, the 4th November, to give the Government authority to acquire Nelson Location 3643, Mr R. V. Johnson of Heath Road, Kalamunda, has contacted me to advise that—
- (a) Mr R. P. Johnson, the registered owner of the land, died in September, 1942; and

- (b) there still live in Western Australia a brother and two sisters of the registered owner?
- (2) To enable the next of kin to consider their position with respect to entitlement to this land, will he delay the passage of the motion through the Legislative Council?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr RIDGE) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is proposed to proceed with the motion to obtain parliamentary approval. Ample time will be available for next of kin to consider their entitlement to the land prior to resumption.

2. PIONEER QUARRY Test Blast

Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is it a fact that the test blast that took place at the Nettleton Road, Byford, quarry on Wednesday, the 5th November used 500 pounds and 40 pounds of explosive respectively?
- (2) Is the estimate of approximately 400 tonnes of stone dislodged in the blast correct?
- (3) Is it true that Pioneer Quarries intends to blast only twice a month and that it intends to begin operations at a level of 10 000 tonnes per month gradually increasing to 20 000 tonnes?
- (4) Is it a fact that if Pioneer Quarries blasts only twice a month for 10 000 tonnes the blasts that take place will need to use 5 000 pounds of explosive?
- (5) Is the Minister aware that if a license is granted to Pioneer Quarries to mine 10 000 tonnes per month now, rising to 20 000 tonnes, this computes to approximately 40 trucks a day on an outward journey through Byford and obviously 40 on a return journey, and that on the basis of an eight-hour day this will mean approximately one truck every five minutes, increasing until at 20 000 tonnes there will be one truck every 2½ minutes?
- (6) Was the purpose of reducing the explosive charge by 90 per cent of what the normal charge will be, to lull the people of Byford into a false sense of security?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) The two blasts used 450 pounds and 22 pounds respectively.
- (2) I estimate 800 tonnes.

- (3) The company proposes to blast twice a month at the tonnages suggested.
- (4) The two blasts necessary to dislodge the 10 000 tonnes would require 3 300 pounds of explosive each.
- (5) The company works on an average 22 days a month allowing 450 tonnes to be carted each day. Thirty loads would be required averaging a load every eight minutes. At maximum production there would be a load every four minutes.
- (6) The test was a simulated blast. Equipment was placed in close proximity to the blast for evaluation purposes and full effects are to be equated.

3. ROAD TRAFFIC PATROL

Infringement Notice: Liberal Party Member

Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) Did the Minister receive a letter from the member for Geraldton, as indicated in this morning's Press, claiming a Road Traffic Patrol officer had torn up a traffic infringement ticket for a Liberal Party helper at Geraldton on Saturday last?
- (2) Did the member or anyone else report the matter to the Commissioner of Police or the patrol officer in charge at Geraldton?
- (3) Is the report substantiated?
- (4) Is the report true or false?
- (5) Is any further action anticipated?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr O'CONNOR: Do not members want a reply? Do not they want to know the facts? The reply is as follows—

- (1) Yes, I received the letter one day after a copy was delivered to the Press.
- (2) I am advised they did not.
- (3) The letter mentioned no names and appeared to be based on hearsay.
- (4) The report is false. Infringement notices are numbered and none is missing from the books on the appropriate day; therefore none could have been torn up.

- (5) We have become accustomed to false allegations being made in an effort to degrade law and order and the Police Force. I would say only that as a matter such as this is easily checked, I would hope members would act more responsibly in future.

4. GOLDMINING

Kalgoorlie Lake View: Government Assistance

Mr MAY, to the Premier:

Will he either table or make available a copy of the letter forwarded by the State Government to the Chairman of Kalgoorlie Lake View, Mr L. C. Brodie-Hall, outlining the State Government's offer of assistance to Kalgoorlie Lake View Pty. Ltd.?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

A copy of the telexed letter to Mr L. C. Brodie-Hall, Chairman of Kalgoorlie Lake View, under date the 5th November, 1975, together with a telex sent to the Prime Minister on the 4th November, concerning Kalgoorlie Lake View, are presented for permission to table.

The papers were tabled (see paper No. 531).

5. CIB HEADQUARTERS

Breaking and Entering

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Police:

At the risk of incurring the wrath of the Minister for Police, I apologise for very short notice of this question. It is as follows—

- (1) Was there a breaking and entering at CIB headquarters overnight?
- (2) If "Yes" did the offence occur in a room in which material referring to a current Royal Commission was being photo-copied?
- (3) If "Yes", which Royal Commission did the material refer to?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) to (3) I thank the member for Balga for some notice of the question and advise that I have been able to obtain only a little detail since that notice.

There was not a breaking and entering, but a partition was broken when a door with a faulty lock was slammed too hard. That is the only detail I could obtain.

CITY OF STIRLING

Retaining Wall Dispute

Mr YOUNG, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Does he see any tangible progress having been made towards a solution of the dispute between Mr and Mrs H. Kensitt of 77 Pearl Parade, Scarborough, Mr D. Kent of 5 Coral Street, Scarborough, and the City of Stirling in respect of the construction of a retaining wall between the above properties?
- (2) In view of the fact that this dispute has been going on for more than five years and that the City of Stirling can clearly be seen to have been a major contributor to the events which caused the dispute, will he use every endeavour to force the city to build the wall and recover the cost from Kent, if possible?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), can he say what time limit will be imposed?
- (4) If "No" to (2), what and when will be the next action in regard to the dispute?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for adequate notice of this question. The answer is as follows—

- (1) Yes. The Council of the City of Stirling has advised that it is initiating action to have the problem resolved.
- (2) The power suggested is not provided in the legislation.
- (3) and (4) Answered by (2).

7.

EGGS

Quota Reduction

Mr BARNETT, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) (a) Has the Minister received a request to implement a cut in egg quotas?
- (b) If so, when was the approach made?
- (2) (a) Has he made a decision on the matter yet?
- (b) If so, what is it?
- (c) If not, when can we expect a decision to be made?

Mr OLD replied:

In reply to the honourable member, whom I thank for adequate notice of the question, I advise as follows—

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) The 15th October, 1975.
- (2) (a) No.
- (b) Answered by (2) (a).

- (c) I have asked the Egg Marketing Board for further clarification of some issues and when this information is received a decision will be made.

8.

HEALTH*Fish: Mercury Content*

Mr SHALDERS, to the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

In view of the fact that the Minister has indicated there is more information available in respect of mercury in fish than has been tabled, and in view of the public interest in this matter, is he able to advise if there is any intention of tabling or publishing further details?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

My understanding is that two reports are currently being prepared. The first is an analysis of the information that was tabled earlier and is being put into the form of a departmental bulletin which will be published in about two or three months' time.

The second is a much more comprehensive study which is being prepared by Dr Hancock and will be published on a national basis in, I understand, February or March of next year.

As this matter is of some concern, I undertake to table both reports when they are available.

9.

CITY OF MELVILLE*Town Clerk: Replacement*

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Local Government:

Further to question 14 on the notice paper today: in view of the fact that this question was passed by the Speaker and permitted to be placed on the notice paper, does the Minister not think an answer should be given to it?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

The member has had my answer, and if he wishes further details to be supplied I would ask him to place the question on the notice paper.

Mr J. T. Tonkin: You didn't answer it at all; you said the question was not allowed to be asked.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL*Second Reading*

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Works) [2.46 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill amends the Hospitals Act, 1927-1973 in two areas.

The first amendment is to section 18 (2). This embodies the Government's policy that no Government should hold the power to direct an individual doctor how he may or may not treat his patient. The existence of such a power is completely unacceptable to the medical profession, there being appropriate mechanisms for dealing with ethical problems.

The matter of treating individual patients is one between doctor and patient and no political power should be interposed between them. This principle is not made abundantly clear in the current wording of the Act and therefore an amendment is necessary.

The second amendment deals with the matter of raising fees for doctors' services to patients in Government hospitals. The advent of the Commonwealth-State Hospitals Agreement precludes the raising of such charges in respect of "hospital" patients and "out-patients" of recognised hospitals as defined by the Commonwealth Health Insurance Act, 1973. The proposed amendment brings the Hospitals Act, 1927-1973 into line with the hospitals agreement and provides that this shall apply so long as a Commonwealth-State Hospitals Agreement is in force.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Davies.

**INTERPRETATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Works) [2.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The sole purpose of this Bill is to repeal and re-enact section 11 of the Interpretation Act, 1918-1974.

Members will be aware that whenever any major new Act or amending Act is passed which will require the making of regulations or the establishment of an administrative organisation or board to render the Act fully operative from its commencement date, the new Act or amending Act concerned generally does not come into operation when it receives the Royal Assent, but its commencement is expressly deferred until an appropriate date is fixed by the Governor by proclamation.

The purpose of section 11—which has been contained in the Interpretation Act since it was first passed in 1918—is to permit matters principally of a machinery or regulatory nature to be carried out prior to the date fixed by proclamation for the commencement of the Act. Common examples of things done between the giving of the Royal Assent and the fixing of the commencement date by proclamation are the appointments of members to boards established by Acts, and the making of

regulations prescribing procedures and forms to be used for the proper administration of the Acts.

A recent decision of the Full Court of the Supreme Court of Victoria—*Rex Muldoon v. John Lesley Johnstone*, judgment given on the 25th June, 1975—has cast considerable doubt on the validity of the exercise of powers under section 11 in its application to an amending Act as distinct from a new or original Act.

A perusal of the reasons for the judgment indicates that the court was of opinion that the equivalent provision of the Acts Interpretation Act, 1958, of Victoria, which for all relevant purposes is indistinguishable from section 11 of the Interpretation Act of Western Australia, did not confer power to make regulations or to issue or approve other statutory instruments where the regulations or instruments were intended to make the amendments effected by the amending Act fully operable upon the date fixed for the proclamation of the amending Act. Such regulations or instruments could be validly made only if they were necessary to make the original Act fully operable upon its commencement.

The decision of the Full Court of Victoria reveals a deficiency which has existed for over 50 years in the Interpretation Act of this State and in the equivalent provisions of the Interpretation Acts of all other States and the Commonwealth. It is understood that all other States and the Commonwealth are considering amending their respective Interpretation Acts to overcome the deficiency exposed by the Victorian decision, and in fact the terms of the Bill now before the House have been arrived at after conferences of Parliamentary Counsel representing all States and the Commonwealth.

The section as proposed to be re-enacted by the Bill will permit regulations to be made, appointments to be made, and other action to be taken after the date of assent to any Act, be it an original or amending Act, but prior to the date fixed by proclamation for the commencement of the Act or amending Act.

Members may care to know, however, that even as re-enacted the section provides that any regulation, instrument or other action taken under the section does not confer any right or impose any liability upon any person prior to the date fixed by proclamation for the commencement of the Act concerned unless the contrary is necessary or expedient for making the Act concerned fully operative at its commencement.

The Bill is in essence a technical one which is intended to restate section 11 in terms which will give it the effect which it has always assumed to have had, and I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bertram.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [2.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The present parliamentary superannuation scheme came into operation on the 1st January, 1970, replacing the original scheme which had been in operation since 1944.

While the present scheme is a vast improvement on its predecessor there are a number of features which need review in the light of changes since 1970, in similar schemes in other States.

As members are aware, the present basic pension entitlement is 30 per cent of basic salary increasing by 1 per cent for each six months of contributory service in excess of seven years to a maximum of 66 per cent after 25 years.

By comparison with other parliamentary schemes in Australia, this method of calculating pension entitlements produces a less favourable benefit for retiring members.

In New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland the maximum benefit is 70 per cent of basic salary after 20 years but members contribute 11½ per cent of salary compared with 10 per cent in Western Australia. In South Australia, where the maximum benefit is 75 per cent after 22 years 1 month, a member also contributes 11½ per cent of salary.

It would take 23 years for a 10 per cent contribution to amount to the total paid over 20 years at the rate of 11½ per cent and accordingly, a maximum benefit of 70 per cent of basic salary after 23 years' contributory service is considered appropriate for Western Australia by comparison with other States.

The Bill proposes, therefore, that the basic pension entitlement after seven years of contribution to the fund, be 38 per cent of the basic parliamentary salary at the date a person ceased to be a member, increasing by 1 per cent for each further six months of contributory service to a maximum of 70 per cent for 23 years of contributory service.

In the case of pensions at present being paid to former members and widows of former members, the Bill provides for them to be recalculated on the proposed new basis and increased accordingly. It is proposed that the increase be payable with effect on and from the first pension day in January, 1976.

Under the provisions of the existing scheme, a member has to maintain his contributions to the fund during service beyond the period of 25 years required to attract the maximum benefit. It has been suggested that contributions ought to cease

when a member becomes entitled to the maximum benefit.

However, as members will appreciate, the calculation of pension entitlement takes into account not only length of contributory service but also any additional salary resulting from the occupancy of higher office. As such salary will be taken into account for any period beyond 23 years, it is proposed that contributions to the fund should continue but at the reduced rate of 5 per cent of salary.

It is also proposed to amend the method of updating pensions payable under the scheme.

At present the pensions payable to former members or their widows are adjusted according to the movement in the basic parliamentary salary from time to time. However, the adjustment is made only to the State's share of pension which is assumed to be two-thirds of the total pension. There is no adjustment of the remaining one-third.

The existing method of updating is to be changed to provide increases in the total pension according to movements in the Consumer Price Index for Perth. This is the method now used to adjust the pensions of former judges and retired Government officers.

The first cost-of-living adjustment under the new method is to take effect on and from the first pension day in January, 1976. Subsequent adjustments are to be made each January thereafter in accordance with the percentage movement in the Consumer Price Index for the previous year. Where a pension has been in force for 12 months, the full percentage increase is to be applied. Where it has not been paid for a full year, 25 per cent of the increase is to be applied for each complete quarter the pension has been paid.

As existing pensions have been or are being increased under the present method of updating to take into account movements in the Consumer Price Index for March, 1975, and June, 1975, quarters, the January, 1976, adjustment to pensions will have regard only to the movement in the CPI from the 1st July, 1975, to the 31st December, 1975.

However, the increase will not take place until official notification of the December Consumer Price Index is received from the Commonwealth Statistician which is expected towards the end of January or early in February next year, but it will apply retrospectively to the first pension day in January.

Provision is made in the Bill to protect the pension rights of any member who may elect to resign from one House in order to contest a seat in the other. Under the present legislation, there is no provision to preserve continuity of membership between the date of resignation and

the date upon which the election for the contested seat is conducted.

Another provision which has been reviewed is the benefit payable to a former member's widow where the whole or part of his pension entitlement has been converted to a lump sum at retirement. Under the present scheme, a widow's pension is based on the portion of the member's pension remaining after conversion to a lump sum.

It is a provision common to other State parliamentary schemes and also to the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, that where a contributor exchanges part of his pension for a lump sum, his widow is entitled to receive a pension based on the full pension for which he had contributed, irrespective of whether his pension had been reduced by commutation.

It is considered that a similar provision should apply in the parliamentary scheme in this State. I believe that when we enacted the original legislation we made a mistake in not including this particular provision. It seemed logical at the time to accept the fact that when a member had received a lump sum it should be the finish of the matter, but it had no regard for the hardship that could be caused to his widow or for the fact that pensions were based on certain actuarial calculations which could reasonably have been assumed to take care of the widow. I think this is a desirable adjustment.

Therefore, it is proposed that the widow of a former member be entitled to five-eighths of the pension which her late husband would have been receiving, had he not converted part of it to a lump sum.

It is considered that this benefit should apply also in the case of a widow of a former member who qualified for pension, but being under 40 years of age at the time of retirement, received the whole of his entitlement in the form of a lump sum.

Provision has been made for such a widow to be entitled to five-eighths of the pension which her husband would have been receiving at the time of his death had his pension not been converted.

Other aspects of widows' pensions have been reviewed and several changes are proposed.

Under the present scheme, in order to qualify for a pension, the widow of a former member must have been married to him at the time he ceased to be a member. Moreover, pension ceases on the widow's remarriage and cannot be reinstated.

These provisions fall well short of those contained in the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act and it has been decided to bring them into line.

The Bill therefore provides that where marriage occurs prior to retirement, the widow's pension would cease only if she remarried before attaining the age of 55

years, but in this event it would be restored on the termination of that remarriage. It is also proposed that where marriage to a former member occurs after retirement, the widow be entitled to a pension from the date of her husband's death if she is then aged 55 or more, or from the time she attains the age of 55 years if she were less than that age when she became a widow and had not remarried.

I regret that so much of this speech deals with widows. I am not suggesting it is of any significance, but it happens to be one of those rather sordid matters we have to deal with if we are to make provision for the widows. However, looking around the Chamber it is my view that members may relax at the moment!

Under existing legislation, an allowance is payable on the death of a member or former member to any of his children under the age of 21 years undergoing a full-time course of education. In keeping with other schemes, it is proposed to raise the age limit to 25 years and provision has been made in the Bill accordingly.

At present, an allowance is not payable where children of a former member are the issue of a marriage contracted after he ceased to be a member. This provision is to be repealed to permit payment of children's allowances irrespective of when the former member's marriage occurred.

I am sure members will agree that the proposed changes to the scheme are both realistic and desirable.

I appreciate the work that has been done by Mr K. J. Townsing in reviewing the whole question and putting a submission to us. I believe the adjustments proposed are sensible and very necessary. In the light of the changed circumstances and what is available in a number of other schemes, including the schemes of the other States as well as the ordinary scheme under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act catering for the public servants of this State.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES TRIBUNAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—
Treasurer) [3.06 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I should explain the reason for reversing the order on the notice paper of this Bill and the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act Amendment Bill. As members will appreciate, the Bill before us has to be dealt with before the one I have just mentioned.

The purpose of this measure is to facilitate the periodic adjustment of judges' salaries by eliminating the need for legislation at regular intervals in order to give effect to recommendations made by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

As members know, the tribunal is required to inquire into and to report from time to time on the remuneration of judges of the Supreme Court and of the District Court, but it can recommend only the nature and extent of the alterations that should be made.

As the annual salaries payable to judges are now fixed under the provisions of the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act, it becomes necessary to amend that Act on every occasion it is decided to vary their remuneration, which is a most cumbersome procedure.

In fact, if recommendations are to be made by the tribunal at frequent intervals, as may well prove to be the case for some time at least, an almost intolerable situation will arise.

Even in the event of only one annual adjustment of judges' salaries, it would be necessary to introduce legislation once a year which is not of course favoured by the Government.

We have therefore considered other methods which could be used to authorise alterations to the remuneration of judges.

One such method which is contained in the Bill now before members is to provide for a recommendation made by the tribunal to come into operation unless either House of Parliament passes a resolution disapproving the recommendation.

It is necessary, of course, to limit the time during which recommendations could be rejected and a period of 15 sitting days, after a copy of the tribunal's report has been tabled, has been allowed for this purpose. If I remember rightly, 15 days is the period specified in the Commonwealth legislation.

The recommendation made by the tribunal in its first report resulted in an amendment to the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act which now prescribes the annual salaries payable from the 8th August, 1975.

Action has not yet been taken to further amend the Act in order to give effect to the tribunal's recommendation which was contained in its second report, to increase the remuneration of judges by 3.5 per cent from the 19th September, 1975, and no such action will be required if this measure is passed.

The second report was tabled on the 16th October, 1975, and if the provisions in the Bill are accepted, a period of 15 sitting days after the 7th November, 1975, will be available to either House to disapprove the recommendation should this course be decided upon.

However, an amendment to the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act will be necessary to make the salaries now prescribed in that Act subject to the provisions of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act, and a Bill for this purpose will be introduced immediately after this one.

The proposed method of varying judges' salaries is a simple one and will avoid the necessity for future amendments to the Act in order to give effect to the recommendations of the tribunal which are not disapproved by either House.

By way of amplification, members will recall that when we introduced the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Bill, all of the salaries and allowances that are covered by that legislation are determinations, with one exception; and that is the salaries and allowances relating to judges of the Supreme Court and District Court.

At that time they were insistent that the final decision in respect of their salaries had to be made by Parliament. It seemed to me to be a little cumbersome but it was their wish. It meant that we might easily have had to introduce two or three Bills each year to give effect to the requirements of the Act. I do not think that was foreshadowed.

There were a number of alternatives. One was to follow the course of introducing a Bill every time it was necessary to make an adjustment. An alternative was the course we now propose to follow whereby we will table recommendations, and if those recommendations are not disallowed by the Parliament they will become fully effective.

The SPEAKER: Would members please watch the level of their conversation?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Under the proposed system we believe Parliament will, in effect, approve the salaries because Parliament has within its powers—in the positive act of tabling the recommendations—a provision in the legislation to disallow the recommendations.

Mr Jamleson: A period of 15 days seems to be an unduly long time. It is longer than most of our other statutory requirements.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I intend to deal with that point in a moment. A number of variations of the proposed scheme were canvassed but it was eventually felt that the simple way to make adjustments was to table the documents and allow a period of 15 days for objection. I queried the 15-day provision, but it is the period allowed in Commonwealth legislation.

Mr Jamleson: But you have often said there is no need to follow Commonwealth legislation.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I originally suggested there needed to be a period of only six days.

Mr Jamleson: A period of 15 days is virtually five sitting weeks, and it seems to be too long.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I originally suggested six days, which would be two sitting weeks. If Parliament decided not to move during that time it would indicate there was no objection. However, 15 days was eventually brought forward and I did not dispute it because it was an academic question.

Mr Jamleson: They will have to wait a long time for their increases.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Five sitting weeks could be a complete parliamentary sitting. Apparently the Commonwealth has agreed to 15 days. If anyone was to move for the disallowance of the recommendations they would move fairly quickly, and would not be reticent in taking the appropriate action. We would then have an indication that the recommended sum might be disallowed.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

STATE FORESTS

Revocation of Dedication: Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had concurred in the Assembly's resolution.

Acquisition of Land at Manjimup: Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had concurred in the Assembly's resolution.

JUDGES' SALARIES AND PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [3.14 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In certain respects the existing pension benefits of retired judges and the widows of former judges, are deficient and need revision which is the main object of the measure now before members.

At present, a retired judge who has attained 60 years and has served for not less than 10 years in that capacity, is entitled to a pension equal to 50 per cent of salary at date of retirement. The pension is adjusted annually according to movements in the Consumer Price Index.

Where a judge has served for less than 10 years, his pension entitlement is 30 per cent of salary if retirement occurs before he has completed six years' service as a judge. For each complete year of service in excess of five years he is entitled to an additional 4 per cent of salary until he reaches the maximum benefit of 50 per

cent of salary after 10 years' service. A widow receives 50 per cent of her late husband's pension entitlement.

A pension equal to 50 per cent of salary at date of retirement, after 10 years' service as a judge and the benefits at present applying for service of less than 10 years, are considered reasonable and indeed, they are favourable by comparison with the pension benefits of others who also serve the State in various capacities. Therefore, it is not proposed to vary these existing benefits.

On the other hand, the present benefit for the widow of a former judge of 50 per cent of her late husband's entitlement is low by comparison with other Government pension schemes in this State.

The Bill therefore contains a provision to lift the rate of benefit payable to the widow of a former judge, to five-eighths (62.5 per cent) of her late husband's entitlement which is the rate for widows of former members of Parliament. The rate for widows of former public servants is 62.8 per cent.

Under the provisions of the Act as it now stands, the pension of a former judge's widow who was married to him before he ceased to be a judge, terminates on her remarriage but if she married him after he ceased to be a judge, she has no pension entitlement.

These provisions are far less generous than those provided for under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act and there appears to be no good reason for not bringing the two into line.

The Bill therefore provides for the pension of a former judge's widow who was married to him before he ceased to be a judge, to terminate only if she remarried before attaining the age of 55 years, but in this event her pension would be restored on the termination of that remarriage.

In the case of a former judge's widow who married him after he ceased to be a judge, it is proposed that she be entitled to a pension from the date of her husband's death if she is then aged 55 or more, or from the time she attains the age of 55 if she were less than that age when she became a widow and had not remarried.

Since January, 1972, pensions payable to retired judges and the widows of former judges have been increased annually according to movements in the Consumer Price Index and it is proposed to continue with this method of updating pensions. However, there is a time lag at present, in applying the initial updating to a pension and it is proposed to amend the Act in order to reduce this delay.

Under the existing provisions of the Act, the first updating of a pension can be delayed for periods of up to two years

which is quite unreasonable in current economic circumstances.

The Bill provides that where on the 1st January in any year, a pension has been in force for at least 12 months, it is to be increased by the full percentage movement in the Consumer Price Index for the previous year.

In the case of a pension which has been in force for less than 12 months on the 1st January in any year, it is to be increased by 25 per cent of the movement in the Consumer Price Index for the previous year, for each whole quarter that the pension has been in force.

The proposed new provisions speed up the first updating of a pension and conform with those laid down in the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act.

The opportunity has also been taken to bring allowances for the dependent children of a deceased judge into line with those prescribed in the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act for dependent children of a contributor or former contributor to the fund established under that Act.

The present allowance in respect of the dependent child of a deceased judge is only \$2 per week which has remained unchanged since 1950. The allowance applies only to children under 16 years of age.

The rate currently applying under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act is \$8 per week for each child under 16 years or student child under 25 years, where the contributor or pensioner is survived by a spouse. Where both parents are deceased, the rate is the greater of \$10 per week and an amount based on the national widow's pension.

At present, the annual salaries payable to judges are fixed under the provisions of the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act and as members know, it has been necessary in the past to amend the Act on every occasion it was decided to increase their remuneration.

In my speech on the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act Amendment Bill, I explained a proposed new method of effecting changes in judges' salaries which will do away with the need to amend the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act in order to implement recommendations made from time to time by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

In the Bill now before members, provision is made to make the salaries now prescribed in the Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act subject to the provisions of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act which, of course, is essential if the objective of the proposed new method of varying judges' salaries is to be achieved.

Members will appreciate that it is not an easy exercise to arrive at a pension scheme for judges. In many cases they take up their appointment at a very mature age, and in fact, it is necessary that they have

proved themselves in their profession before they are invited to the Bench. This means that the period of service is often so restricted that a pension scheme of the normal type would be impossible in practically every case. We have to allow also for the fact that we may in future have some judges coming to the Bench at a younger age than in the past with the new District Court scheme.

In preparing these amendments, those responsible have endeavoured to look at the total situation and to upgrade the scheme in a general way relating to all judges, and particularly to those in the Supreme Court, but at the same time having full regard for the fact that we now have a new type of judge of recent years; namely, the District Court judge.

I believe this scheme is a realistic one. I should add that there was some agitation to have the scheme related to a percentage of the current salary of a judge, but after mature consideration, the Government decided against this and opted for the CPI adjustment system such as prevails in the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, and also under the parliamentary superannuation scheme.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

BILLS (3): MESSAGES

Appropriations

Messages from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the following Bills—

1. Parliamentary Superannuation Act Amendment Bill.
2. Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act Amendment Bill.
3. Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Act Amendment Bill.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

In Committee

Resumed from the 5th November. The Chairman of Committees (Mr Thompson) in the Chair; Sir Charles Court (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Vote: Premier's Department—\$966 000—

Item No. 1: Salaries and Allowances, generally, \$501 000—

Progress was reported after the item had been partly considered.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I undertook to obtain information on two counts for the member for Victoria Park when we were discussing this particular item last evening. One of these related to the method of expressing the number of employees budgeted for in each of the departments, and the other was related to the actual establishment of the Premier's Department itself. If I may, I will respond briefly to the honourable member's request.

For at least two consecutive years the member for Victoria Park has taken an interest in the method of expressing the number of employees, actual or budgeted for, in each department. Last year I explained that we were undergoing a transition from one method to another in an effort to try to arrive at something which was more easily understood, and which in fact was more correct in its presentation. It is not always easy to do this, as I will explain. For instance, the figures in my own department show a number of employees on the staff at the 1st July, 1975, when in actual fact some of these people were on the staff for a matter of days only. However, they had to be included on the basis that they were staff members at that time, although on temporary assignment.

I would like to deal firstly with the question of presentation, and I will give a summary of the position which I hope will answer the honourable member's queries. I would like him to let me know if it does not do this, and I will obtain further information for him.

The member for Victoria Park has again sought an explanation of the change in presentation of departmental staff numbers in the Estimates.

As previously explained to the House, the figures shown in the Estimates for 1973-74 and earlier years were not comparable and led to confusion in debate on departmental estimates.

The figures shown for the current year were as at the 1st July and comprised staff on pay-roll plus vacant items, because provision had to be made in the Estimates for the filling of those items.

The figures for the previous year were staff on the pay-roll—excluding vacant items—as at the 30th June; that is, one day earlier. The differences shown between the two columns therefore reflected only vacant items at the end of the year and gave no information on increases in actual establishment.

The new series, presented for the first time in the Estimates for 1974-75, show approved establishment at the commencement of the Budget year divided into staff actually on pay-roll, vacant items, and temporary assistance. Full information on the establishment of departments and the extent to which actual staff numbers fall short of this figure due to vacant items may therefore be ascertained by members from the new presentation.

Comparison between the figures given in the Estimates for the current year and for 1974-75 indicate the extent to which the approved establishment of departments has increased between the 1st July each year. I emphasise the words "approved establishment" because that might be different from the actual numbers engaged. This information could not be obtained from the previous presentation.

In the case of larger departments such as the Education Department, it was becoming increasingly difficult to fit all information in the space available and the presentation was extremely cramped.

In the new series therefore, only one column of staff numbers has been shown but the amount of detail given in the dissection of staff categories has been greatly expanded. Reference to the salaries estimates for the Education Department in the Estimates for 1973-74 and for the current year will make this point clear.

It was considered that in this way, more information could be given to Parliament and more meaningful comparisons could be made although this necessarily requires members to refer to the Estimates for the previous year.

If we are to revert to showing all data for the previous year in the current year's Estimates, consideration would need to be given to a changed form of presentation.

After members understand this, I think they will appreciate that from this year onwards we will build up a much more reliable record than we have had in the past, because we are working on approved establishments and not on a figure which, in my own experience, was not a very satisfactory basis on which to make any assessment.

I repeat for the benefit of the member for Victoria Park, if he wants further amplification of this presentation after he has studied it, I will be only too pleased to give it to him, because he and I seem to be the only two members in this House who are interested in it, and we both seem to have the same problems. I believe we have now resolved the problem in a way which is satisfactory and which from this year onward will provide a relative basis for comparison.

I have a complete list of the Premier's Department staffing for the year ended the 30th June, 1975, and for the year to the 30th June, 1976; however, I do not wish to delay the Committee by reading the list. I undertake to make the figures available to the member for Victoria Park for his perusal. I believe he was temporarily out of his seat when I mentioned that the staff numbers shown in the column as at the 1st July, 1975, included all those people actually employed at that time. However, some of those people were temporarily engaged, and it so happened that the list was compiled at that time. If it had been compiled on a different date the numbers would have been down to that extent. Also, additional staff was engaged in preparation for the 150th anniversary celebrations.

Mr JAMIESON: While I thank the Premier for his explanation, I believe than an increase in staff from 33 to 50 is a fairly large one, despite the fact that some of these people may have been working on a temporary basis. The Government has

expressed a policy of limiting fairly substantially the increase in public servants, because of the prevailing economic circumstances, and it would appear that the Premier's Department is not setting a very good example.

The member for Victoria Park asked why the number had increased to such an extent, and I do not believe the Premier has provided the Committee with an adequate explanation. He explained the problems associated with printing another column in the Estimates, but did not indicate why his staff should increase from 33 to 50. I assume there may have been four or five temporary workers at the time the figures were extracted; however, this still leaves us with a fairly substantial increase in what is a purely administrative department.

The Premier's Department is not like the Public Works Department or the State Housing Commission, where there are people working in other than a purely administrative capacity. If the Premier's Department has increased by 17 in one year, what will be the situation at the beginning of the next financial year? The number quite possibly would have grown to 75 and thus the staff of the Premier's Department would have more than doubled over a period of only two years.

I suggest that the situation needs watching if the Premier is to set a good example to the other Government departments.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I will gladly provide members with the full information, because there is a very simple explanation for what might appear to be a large percentage increase. I assure the member for Welshpool that there is no Premier's Department in Australia which is run as economically as ours; in fact, we are often criticised for keeping the numbers down too low.

The honourable member should appreciate that since last year, an additional portfolio has been added to the ministry, which must be incorporated within the Premier's Department. I refer to the portfolio of Federal Affairs, which comes under me; additional staff comes with that portfolio. Also, additional officers have been engaged in connection with the 150th anniversary celebrations; again, these officers come within the Premier's Department. Quite a number of other items have been added. It looks as though in my efforts to save time, I have been misunderstood so I had better read out the list.

Last year under the heading of the Leader of the Opposition, which comes under the Premier's Department, there were two clerks and two typists; this year the same situation applied. Last year, the Leader of the Country Party had one typist; this year he has no typist. Last year, the Deputy Leader of the Country Party had one typist, but this year he has

no typist. The Secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Party has one typist, whereas last year he did not have any staff. The Honorary Minister in charge of matters relating to Federal Affairs has one clerk and one typist; last year, the situation did not apply. The Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet has one clerk and one typist; last year, he had none because the position was only recently created.

Under the heading of "Administration", last year we had one under-secretary, one assistant under-secretary, and one clerk, and this year the same situation applies. Under the heading "Public Relations" last year, we had one public relations officer, four assistant public relations officers, and one clerical assistant; this year we have one public relations officer, four assistant public relations officers, one clerical assistant and one telex operator, who is shared with the Treasury and we contribute only half her salary, but who still is counted as one staff member. This person services many departments, but must be located somewhere. Under the heading of "Reception", last year we had one reception officer and two clerks, whereas this year we have one reception officer, two clerks, two additional assistant clerks on a temporary basis, and one typist.

Under the heading of "Records", we had three clerks last year, whereas this year we have three clerks and three additional assistant clerks on a temporary basis. Under "Accounts", last year we had three clerks, and this year we have three clerks and one relieving officer. Last year, the private secretary to the Premier had one private secretary, whereas this year he has two private secretaries. Last year, we had seven typists, and this year we have eight typists and one additional assistant typist on a temporary basis. Last year, we had one graduate assistant temporarily allocated from the Public Service Board, whereas this year we have two graduate assistants employed on the same basis.

That is how the figure of 50 is arrived at. It should be mentioned that the Premier's Department has to absorb some people for whom there is no other home, and these people appear as staff numbers in the Estimates. I believe if members look at the breakup of staff they will find that the question should be, "Why do we have so few?" rather than, "Why do we have so many?"

Mr DAVIES: I thank the Premier for his explanation. However, on a quick look through the notes, the position is not altered from the information contained in his letter of about the 20th June last year. My complaint was that to make any comparison at all, one would have to get the previous year's figures and compare them with the figures for this year.

We are comparing the staff number as at the 1st July, 1974, with those applying

as at the 1st July, 1975, therefore we are comparing like with like. Although there may have been some small differences, there is no great expansion of the information provided to members. Indeed, if we compared the two publications, we would find that the only difference is that last year there was an item shown as, "One vacant position" which is not shown this year; the only other difference is that there are 41 clerks, typists, etc. shown as at the 1st July, 1975, compared with 24 for the previous year. That is where the increase of 17 seems to lie.

Although I am sure we will find from the list that there is a reason for these quite considerable increases, the fact remains that last year the Premier said it would be better this year; however, we find the position this year is exactly the same as it was last year. Unless both columns are included and we can compare the staff numbers for the two years we will never improve the situation. As I said, the Government's claim that additional information would be provided is not being put into effect.

However, I will accept the explanation and point out I do not think it is very satisfactory. There will be other times, I hope, for me to have a closer look at it, and that will be after I have further examined the information given here. We are comparing like with like.

Sir Charles Court: You are not.

Mr DAVIES: We are comparing what the position was when the Estimates were brought down and the staff numbers given as at the first day of the new financial year; and again in these Estimates we are comparing the same staff numbers, and the information given in the two Budgets is almost word for word.

We are comparing the position as it was on the first day of the new financial year. So far as comparing like with like is concerned, we are using the same day in each financial year as the datum peg; that is the only one we can use, because previously the staff was shown as at the last day of the financial year and what it was proposed it would be during the coming year. We were not comparing like with like then because in each case it was shown what it was estimated the staff would be.

We are in a better position except that two columns are not shown. If the Treasurer has a look at last year's Budget and this year's Budget he will find the wording is almost identical, and the information I claim the Committee should have reasonably to assess the staff numbers is not shown in the Revenue Estimates.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not know what one must do to explain these matters to the honourable member. If he does not want to accept my explanation and the explanation of the senior Treasury officers there is nothing we can do.

He is not comparing like with like. Last year we were comparing the figure which fell on the 30th June, though it is certainly shown in the Estimates as at the 1st July each year indicating the actual number of people on the pay-roll.

This time so that members may get a more accurate or, I might even say a more honest statement of the position, the figure shown will be the approved establishment on the 1st July.

There could be a lot of people who are individually employed; they may not be available; they could be specialists who cannot be engaged, but at least that is the figure approved; and that is the staff on which every department is allowed to base its operations. The extent to which they can economise is a matter we applaud. In some cases, as the honourable member knows, it is not unusual during the year for the departmental head to go to his Minister, or to the Public Service Board, and do a little switching around within his Budget. This is a matter of good sense and administration.

If the honourable member will look at page 2 of my notes he will find that the first paragraph is pertinent. It reads as follows—

The figures for the previous year were staff on the pay-roll—excluding vacant items—as at the 30th June, that is, one day earlier.

And they were still shown on the 1st July. To continue—

The differences shown between the two columns therefore reflected only vacant items at the end of the year and gave no information on increases in actual establishment.

Mr Davies: What are the two columns you are referring to?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The two columns of the Estimates.

Mr Davies: There are not two columns on the Estimates.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I know; but there is a column for last year and one for this year. There is no intention of recasting the Estimates at the present time to put in an extra column each year, because if we did so we would have to go into a much more elaborate addition for no greater result.

Mr Davies: You have carried two columns for years.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I suggest the honourable member study the matter, and if he is not satisfied the officers will be only too pleased to explain the situation to demonstrate what they are trying to do is to provide a better and more reliable position to Parliament than has been the case in the past.

I am not suggesting anyone has tried to fiddle things in the past; it is the way they have been presented, and the actual

method of assessment used for the purpose of this column. Having considered the matter with the former Under-Treasurer and the new Under-Treasurer, I believe the present system is a desirable one.

Mr Davies: Does the present column differ in any way from the one shown last year?

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.06 p.m.

Mr DAVIES: I will accept the invitation issued by the Premier to talk to Mr McCarrey. The fact remains that the situation was altered last year from that which had previously existed for many years. I have here a copy of the Estimates for the year ended the 30th June, 1973, and in the Premier's Department there are two columns which show the number of persons, one for 1971-72 and one for 1972-73. For the year ended the 30th June, 1975, the Estimates show only one column for the staff numbers as at the 1st July, 1974. This year's Estimates have one column also showing the staff numbers as at the 1st July, 1975. So the staff numbers are as for the first day of the new financial year. Those staff numbers represent the maximum establishment of the department for the coming year. It does not mean the staff employed on that date. It includes, as I know from the Premier's letter and his notes read this afternoon, the maximum establishment for that year.

So, what we are looking at now is the maximum establishment for the Premier's Department for the end of the current financial year. Whether or not it changes is immaterial. What I was comparing was the maximum establishment for the year past, because that is indicated quite clearly in the Premier's letter of the 24th June and in his notes today. So, we are comparing like with like.

I agree the previous presentation was not acceptable, but what he tells us is that the system was altered. However, what Mr McCarrey seems to have overlooked is that it was altered last year. The same procedure is being used this year. Therefore there seems to be some basis of comparison and that is the only basis upon which it can rest.

I make no withdrawal whatever because I still maintain there has been no change and if there has been a change it is certainly not indicated in either of the two documents.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Can I go back to the old order of presentation? To make sure we are dealing with the old order, let us go back to 1971. I have here the Estimates for the year ended the 30th June, 1971, when we had two columns. One carried the figures for the year before and the other carried the figures for the current year. I am looking at Division 7 which was then the Premier's Department,

Those Estimates show the number of persons for 1969-70 in one column and the number for 1970-71 in the other.

The big argument which ensued then was that these figures were not a true declaration of the actual establishment of the departments which had been approved whether the men were engaged or not.

Last year I made the statement that we would have a transition—and this is where we might be at cross-purposes—from the old to the new system.

Perhaps I have picked a bad division in Division 8 in giving my explanation. Let us turn to Division 12 in this year's Estimates under which we have the headings Agent General, Official Secretary, Public Relations Officer, Interviewing Officers, Clerks, Typists and Telephonists, etc., and then we have "Vacant Positions". The number of staff in this instance is two. That shows the total establishment approved for budgetary purposes. Under the old system of presentation that figure would not have been available.

Mr Davies: Last year—

Sir CHARLES COURT: Last year we did, but not a comparison figure as at the 30th June. The point I am trying to make is that the 30th June figure used in the old days was the actual number on the pay-roll.

Mr Davies: We agree on that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Under the new system we are dealing with the total approved establishment.

Mr Davies: What if I compare last year's column with this year's?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Item for item should be taken. As I pointed out in connection with Division 12, we have actually shown vacant positions so members will know the total number which has been approved for the establishment for this year and not just a figure that has been carried over from the 30th June at, say, midnight the previous day, as being the number on the pay-roll.

I have here a list of all the people who were in the establishment last year and this year. Some of the people I never see. For instance, I never see the Secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Party. That is one added to my establishment this year. It so happens it is the only place where that position can be accounted for, so I take the blame. We have the people connected with the 150th anniversary. They must be given a home and they are given it here. The member for Victoria Park can have this list as soon as we get off this item. In the meantime I hope I have answered him to his satisfaction. If not, Mr McCarrey and I would be only too pleased to go through it further with him.

Mr Davies: If I compare last year's with this year's I am making a proper comparison?

Sir CHARLES COURT: As long as the honourable member accounts for vacancies. I did query the possibility, for ease of reference, of having an extra column, and I was told that for technical purposes it would be rather difficult. It would not be impossible, but rather difficult. We did not want to have a completely new format merely for a second column. However, in the light of experience it may be found necessary, but the Treasury officers asked that it be avoided if possible. We discussed the matter with the printer and an extra column would cramp the presentation of the Estimates.

Mr Davies: We agree at last!

Item No. 6: Travelling Concessions to Members of Parliament and Life Pass Holders, \$69 000—

Mr BLAICKIE: I ask the Premier to indicate to what this item relates. I would make a guess that it relates to air travel concessions the Government has provided for members who have an air service to their electorates. Should this be the case, I have no argument. This indicates the changes in the mode of transportation of members, and this change is very necessary. Of course, expenditure is involved.

I recall that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke last night about air travel for members of Parliament generally and he compared the gold pass and previous travel concessions available to members.

I believe members are entitled to this consideration by the Government but other members who do not have this kind of facility are disadvantaged by comparison. A member can determine where he wishes to live and how he can best serve his electorate. Whether he lives in his electorate or in the metropolitan area is his calculated assessment, and ultimately the electors will decide whether it is right or wrong. With the concessions available today it is an advantage for members to live in the metropolitan area.

I am personally opposed to living in the metropolitan area, but travel allowances need to be updated. I have a gold pass which is frankly of minimal use to me. I have my own personal vehicle in which I have travelled in excess of 40 000 miles a year on parliamentary duties in the last 4½ years. Many other members are doing a far greater mileage than that.

The air travel concessions are necessary and very important but I believe the Government should look into the question of other members who are disadvantaged under the present system of concessions. I ask the Premier to indicate what item 6 relates to and would appreciate his opinion on this matter.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The item which is referred to as "Travelling Concessions to Members of Parliament and Life Pass Holders" is one of long standing. Perhaps I can summarise the various components

of it because it would take too long to give a full explanation.

First of all, the increased vote provides for the full year cost of extended air travel to all members representing electorates served by a regular public air service, and unrestricted travel over all MTT services, plus increases in general costs and fluctuating use of concessions from year to year.

Mr Jamieson: How much are we paying to the MTT? We are usually fleeced by these people.

Sir CHARLES COURT: This is the breakup of the air, rail, and sea travel for members of Parliament and their wives and rail travel for life pass holders—

By air interstate and intrastate and over the Tasman Sea	47 000
Members of Parliament and their wives on railways	10 200
By sea to the north west	Fares 400
	Freight 100
MTT Travel	4 000
Life pass holders—intrastate and interstate rail travel	7 300
	69 000

For rail travel I think members know the entitlements of individual members in respect of metropolitan, intrastate, Eastern States, and Commonwealth Railways. I think members are also aware of the travel provisions for the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the National Country Party, and members in their electorates. We must make allowance for the fact that each member is now allowed once in each three years on a noncumulative basis one return trip to any part of the State, as distinct from travel by members to their electorates where they have regular services. We have the permitted entitlement to interstate travel of the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the National Country Party, and a spouse of a Minister.

Mr Jamieson: How would the Leader of the National Country Party have an allowance at present?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am not enumerating the money factors but the entitlements, without going into details. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition may have a look at this document if he so desires. It recites the entitlements and the circumstances where anyone qualifies for them.

We then have bus travel and life passes over the Australian Railways. I will not enumerate the qualifications for life passes but a considerable number of former members have an entitlement to them. Some of the life passes extend beyond intrastate travel to travel to other States, as well as on railways.

I come to the second part. I would not be prepared to say off the cuff what amendments should be made to the travel allowances and concessions for members as suggested by the member for Vasse. I think we now have a clear pattern of

those who have to use regular air services for the sake of their electorates. We have laid down a pattern of entitlement for all members over the life of the Parliament. The gold pass provisions are fairly clearly understood.

I understood that in assessing the electoral allowances the tribunal had taken into account the special travel problems of members in isolated areas. If this has not been adequately covered, the tribunal is always available to hear evidence on these points. This is distinct from the special concession for a member to have a pass throughout the whole of the State once in every Parliament. The Government questions whether the tribunal can deal with that particular type of concession.

So far as a member's electoral allowance is concerned, that is essentially a function of the tribunal. If the honourable member feels his commitments are such that his electoral allowance is unrealistic, I suggest he do what some other members have done and parade himself before the tribunal. Other members have found the tribunal anxious to talk in an informal way, and where one has a case to present members of the tribunal are very anxious to listen, in my experience. I think the member for Pilbara and a number of others have personally presented their cases to explain the problems confronting them in their own electorates. I gather this is the type of problem about which the honourable member is concerned.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Governor's Establishment, \$465 000—put and passed.

Vote: Executive Council, \$10—

Item No. 1: Administration Expenses, \$10—

Mr JAMIESON: This is a remarkable department which, with all the problems of inflation and so on over the years, is still at \$10. For many years it was at \$5. We should probably have another look at it in this day and age. The money is never spent, of course, but those who have been in the Ministry will realise that the Executive Council meets in the ministerial rooms and when it has discharged its duties—perhaps the swearing-in of a new judge or something like that—the judge is taken into the anteroom and has a drink with the members of the Executive Council and the Governor. I think it is time something was put into the Executive Council vote to cover those small out-of-pocket expenses. I realise at the present time they are paid by the Cabinet fund.

Entertainment is a legitimate expense with all departments and I think it is high time that an amount was included in the vote to cover this kind of situation. The custom has been one of the necessary niceties associated with these meetings. It would not cost very much—perhaps \$100 would cover the situation.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I understand there was a problem with the Cabinet and

its refreshments and associated things like wreaths and entertainment. I remember on the first day I became a Minister the then Under-Secretary of the Premier's Department, one R. H. Doig, presented himself and listed all the things Ministers had to do. One of the questions he asked us was, "Do you want a Cabinet fund?" When we asked what it was all about, he replied, "Do you want afternoon tea?" We had thought we were going to make momentous decisions, but we were told if we wanted afternoon tea or a drink, or to send a wreath, we had to pay for it ourselves.

I can see there is a distinction. I have never really questioned whether there was some constitutional reason that these things could not be funded out of the departmental estimates. I took it for granted we were not entitled to it. However, the point is well made that a function associated with the Executive Council is entirely different from a Cabinet function.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Government Motor Car Service, \$349 000—put and passed.

Vote: London Agency, \$737 000—

Item No. 1: Salaries and Allowances generally, \$392 000—

Mr JAMIESON: The expenditure associated with this department has risen from \$420 000 last year to \$737 000 this year. I know inflation is rather rampant but perhaps we need a little more explanation of this situation. Most of the amount is made up of salaries; however, we notice later on that the amount for the Tokyo Agency is not nearly so high.

My main reason for querying whether this is a worth-while expenditure in this day and age is the fact that the United Kingdom is now shown to be only the third greatest trading power associated with this State. I think the order is Japan, followed by Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Strangely enough, we have not an agency in Singapore, and yet we spend a considerable amount in this other field. It would appear to me that we should prune our efforts in the European field and concentrate more in the Asian field. The establishment of an office in Japan was a good start, and it is now high time the hubs of these areas were effectively serviced by some agency. I think the pruning of the London Agency to provide funds for a future agency in Singapore would be quite justified. I would like to hear the Treasurer's comments in respect of that.

Mr DAVIES: The Treasurer will notice that this year 20 clerks are included on the staff, whereas last year the establishment was 18. More significantly, 13 typists and telephonists are shown this year, whereas in the year past the number was five. There were some vacant positions

which have probably been taken up in the clerical staff, but it does seem a rather large leap from five to 13 in respect of telephonists and typists.

Has a new Deputy Agent-General been appointed? I believe we are arranging to have officers in Germany, so perhaps there is some accounting for the clerks. However, I am not aware of anything that would require this additional number of typists and telephonists. I know the new Agent-General is a man of great capacity, but I do not think he would be able to keep an additional seven typists and telephonists in work.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Dealing firstly with the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, it is accepted that there is a changing scene both in the United Kingdom and on the Continent. I think we made it clear that the new Agent-General in London was directed more to trade and investment and the Continent than were any of his predecessors. In fact, it is clear in his briefing that he is to give greater emphasis to trade and investment factors and also to give greater emphasis to the Continent. We were very reluctant to establish offices on the Continent because they cost so much money. If we had an office in Germany when we already had one in France or Holland the cost would be prohibitive. In view of the short distances involved from London to the Continent it is quite sensible to service the Continent from a base in London. This was the arrangement made and more help has been given to the Agent-General to enable him to cover the European scene better and to spend less of his time on the protocol aspects. He has been given a greater opportunity to cover investment factors and the European scene. Therefore, I cannot suggest at this stage that we should contemplate cutting back the London Agency.

There are some distortions this year: for instance, we have included the purchase of a residence for the Agent-General. For many years past there has been argument as to whether or not we should have such a residence. I feel we should have purchased one many years ago, but the matter has been postponed and postponed and we have experienced terrible troubles. We had an opportunity to buy a house at a price which was considered by United Kingdom standards to be good value. It is not a very elaborate residence and is of such a nature that it will hold its value. I believe this will prove to be a good investment; and there is also the fact that we will always have a home for the Agent-General to go to.

We have no immediate intention to cut back on the United Kingdom representation, because we want to see what value we can get from the new appointee.

I do not believe we can hold down the Tokyo Agency expenses. We have been

very fortunate to have a trade officer who, with a purchasing officer and a typist, has been able to hold that office. He receives assistance from his wife, who is not on the staff. His representation is quite unique, and he has earned a very good reputation for himself and his wife.

At the moment we are hanging by too slender a thread because we have only one person with highly specialised knowledge, and no backup. I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that we will have to give greater emphasis to representation in the South-East Asian areas and Asia proper. We have an office in Singapore; it is not an office of our own, but one arranged by the Minister for Industrial Development on an experimental basis. So we have an address there and I understand this has been a useful exercise. I cannot elaborate on the details of it because they are included in the departmental estimates of the Minister for Industrial Development. Perhaps the matter should be raised when we come to that department.

Mr Jamieson: You should also have a branch of the Western Australian Government Tourist Bureau there. That is vital.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I believe that area, of course, is the focal point for South-East Asia. It is the crossroad for Asia and has been in all modern history, and I believe its importance will increase in the future, not only as a result of its geographic position but also because it produces a type of people who are born traders. Whether they are in finance, commerce, or whatever, they have developed not only a tremendous expertise of their own but also have been able to attract to Singapore people from many races of equal competence in order to give them greater strength. The point made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is well taken and supported.

So far as the increase in staff of the Agent-General's Office is concerned, I cannot give the member for Victoria Park exact details off the cuff. The Under-Treasurer of the day (Mr Townsing) was sent to London to review completely the office there. He was there on two occasions, once during the term of the Tonkin Government and then at the time I was in London. He has completely overhauled the office. He had to make some reclassifications and do some reorganisation because he found some people had not been very fairly treated. We have a combination of indigenous employees as well as expatriates in the office, and there were some very bad anomalies. Mr Townsing sorted all this out, and although I cannot give the exact answer to the member for Victoria Park I would say that, knowing Mr Townsing as I do, there would not be one too many on the staff.

Item No. 11: Purchase of Residence, \$116 000—

Mr SKIDMORE: I would like to ascertain from the Treasurer whether the amount of \$116 000 is the total purchase price of the residence, or whether there will be a continuing expense in the future in respect of this purchase.

Sir CHARLES COURT: To the best of my knowledge it is the total price. It is the price we paid for a residence in Wimbledon Common, at the same time as South Australia or some other State was purchasing a residence. We were fortunate enough to get ours for \$5 000 cheaper than the other State's. My understanding is that this is the total, all-up price converted to Australian dollars.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Tokyo Agency, \$101 990; Public Service Board, \$1 476 000—put and passed.

Vote: Treasury, \$1 327 000—

Item No. 1: Salaries and Allowances generally, \$984 000—

Mr DAVIES: In all fairness, I would point out that the number of staff in this office is reduced from 106 last year to 99 this year; so an advantage is gained here.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Computer Centre \$1 605 000; Superannuation Board \$453 000; Government Stores, \$1 533 000; Government Printing Office, \$8 161 000; Audit, \$986 000; Taxation, \$4 301 000—put and passed.

Vote: Miscellaneous Services, \$81 123 000—

Item No. 5: Aboriginal Lands Trust, \$67 000—

Mr DAVIES: I asked a series of questions about the funds being made available to the Aboriginal Lands Trust, and I was led to believe that the amount would be much greater than the \$34 000 shown as the actual expenditure for the last year. Can the Premier tell me exactly how the amount of \$34 000 was made up, and why the expenditure was so much less than the estimate of \$74 000? In addition, why is the estimate for this year only \$67 000?

Sir CHARLES COURT: This is an increase of \$33 000 over the expenditure for last year. My notes state that of the total increased provision, \$13 000 has been provided to cover higher operating costs arising chiefly from salary adjustments. The balance of the increased provision is necessary to offset the loss in revenue mainly as a consequence of the farm enterprise now being leased to Aboriginal persons.

I will ascertain the reasons for the difference between the actual expenditure and the estimate last year. I have an idea it has something to do with a division of the Commonwealth expenditure. I feel it has something to do with a rearrangement of the spread of expenditure, which resulted

in the lower figure. However, I will ascertain the information for the honourable member.

Item No. 10: Air Transport of Perishable Goods to Remote Centres, \$37 500—

Mr SKIDMORE: The vote last year was \$38 500, and the actual expenditure was \$45 552, and I note that the estimate for this year is down to \$37 500. Firstly, I would like to know the reason for this item to provide air transport of perishable goods to remote centres. What does it include? Secondly, I am surprised to learn that this amount should be reduced, compared with the estimate last year, and I would like an explanation of that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is almost impossible to budget for this item with any certainty because there are so many factors which intrude. Perhaps if I read my notes they will answer the question as far as is possible at this point. However, I do make the point that this estimate is subject to many unpredictables each year.

Provision has been made to meet known commitments for air transport of perishable goods and the unpredictable extension of the service in the event of flooding or road washouts.

This can be hazardous; or it can be quite light, as the case may be. The apparent increase in this item arises from payment in 1974-75 of outstanding accounts of \$10 000 in respect of transactions in earlier years.

There was a catch-up in that year of some previous items. This item provides for the payment of subsidies on the air transport of perishable foodstuffs to remote centres north of the 26th parallel and in the north-east and eastern gold-fields areas where there is adequate road delivery service.

The subsidy normally applies from about the 1st November to the 30th June each financial year. Where the water supply precludes local vegetable growing, the subsidy is available for the whole year.

The extension of refrigerated road transport services and better roads has helped reduce the amount spent under this item from \$90 214 in 1965-66 to \$45 552 in 1974-75. Adverse weather conditions, flooding and road washouts, however, necessitate the use of air transport from time to time.

I am afraid that one cannot be more accurate than this. I can assure the honourable member that if an emergency arises, as it sometimes does, then the Budget is not the limiting factor.

Item No. 28: Australian Railway Historical Society (W.A. Division) Inc., \$20 000—

Mr SKIDMORE: Under this item, I understand the Historical Society is endeavouring to provide a suitable building

on its site at the museum in Bassendean. This will be erected on the basis that the society has to find some \$10 000 to qualify for a Government grant of \$20 000. As the society has assumed what I believe is the responsibility of the Railways Department—that is, ensuring that railway items of historical significance shall be retained so that future generations may be able to view them, together with early types of railway engines and their equipment—one would think that in the circumstances, as this society is only a small body and has been able to raise some \$800 or \$900 to the present time only by dint of hard work, it should be accorded some further consideration.

I appeal to the Premier that if the society is unable to raise the \$10 000 required by the time specified the Government will look kindly at the question of reviewing this 2:1 ratio and perhaps be prepared to give a straightout grant to the Historical Society when the time allowed for raising this amount of money has expired.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am always prepared to give sympathetic consideration to representations, but I understand the arrangement between the Government and this particular society has been a very satisfactory one.

Mr Skidmore: I am not denying that.

Sir CHARLES COURT: While I was Minister I always endeavoured to encourage the society in its work, because the voluntary work it does do is fantastic. One of the oldest locomotives goes back to about 1880.

I think the society has always accepted the principle that it believes in self-help, and had it not been for this philosophy I think the Treasury would not have been as happy to provide the assistance it has done.

I am not sure of the amount of assistance the society has had over the years, but there has always been a fairly harmonious relationship between the society, the Railways Department, and the Government. I can assure the honourable member that if it gets into serious problems, and if it is still genuine in following the principle of self-help for which it has been famous in the past, I will always be willing to listen. I will not give an assurance as to how much help we can give, but I can give the assurance that if it is unable to raise the full amount of \$10 000, we will give the matter further consideration.

Mr SKIDMORE: Perhaps I should have explained to the Premier that one of the many fund-raising ventures that has proved quite successful for the society has been that of hiring trains like the *Leschenault Lady* and other steam trains on country trips. However, I believe the Historical Society received a recent communication that perhaps the

Railways Department will be unable to make these trains available for these fund-raising ventures in the future because the society is unable to pay the charges involved. I thought I would submit this explanation to the Premier, because without the advantage of the funds obtained from this venture a further burden would be placed on the society in being able to raise the \$10 000 by the time set.

Item No. 34: Cancer Council of W.A., \$160 000—

Mr DAVIES: Last year the expenditure under this item was \$36 000 greater than the vote. This year the vote has been dropped down dramatically by about \$280 000—from an expenditure of \$446 000 to a vote of \$160 000. It could be that the Government has been paying closer attention to the research that is being conducted, which did not impress me very much when I was Minister, but I think that considerable drop in expenditure could perhaps be explained to the Committee.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The answer is simple. A reduced provision has been made as the Institute of Radiotherapy was transferred on the 1st April to the control of Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. In consequence, the institute's financial requirements are now provided in the Medical Department's hospital fund estimates.

In 1974-75 \$316 000 was paid to the institute through this item.

Annual grants are paid to the council to assist in meeting the cost of administration and research. In 1974-75 an amount of \$90 000 was provided for administration and research and a further \$40 000 was paid to clear outstanding accounts which had accrued to the 30th June, 1974.

A provision of \$160 000 in 1975-76 is required to meet escalating costs.

The council provides a cancer detection service in conjunction with the University of Western Australia for investigation into gynaecological cancer.

Mr DAVIES: That was discontinued during the year, if I remember correctly.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We have allocated this \$160 000 to allow for an escalation of what would have been the cost last year in connection with administration and research, as distinct from the funds now being provided through the Medical Department.

Because of the transfer of the Institute of Radiotherapy to the control of Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital that amount no longer goes into the Miscellaneous Vote.

Mr DAVIES: You mention that \$330 000 was paid last year.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It was paid to the institute through the item in 1974-75.

Mr DAVIES: And that is included in the \$446 000?

Sir CHARLES COURT: Yes. We did have to run over our estimates last year for the reasons I have given.

Mr DAVIES: The \$160 000 is for administration.

Sir CHARLES COURT: We paid \$90 000 to them for administration and research and we added to it another \$40 000, making a total of \$130 000 to clear outstanding accounts which had accrued to the 30th June, 1974. However we had to pay them on our 1974-75 Budget. Therefore there is \$130 000 there, and if we add the other item of \$116 000 the total of \$246 000 is reached.

Item No. 37: Child Health Centres, \$75 000—

Mr DAVIES: This item shows considerable disparity. The vote last year was \$75 000, and the expenditure was \$29 941. This year, however, we see once again a figure of \$75 000. Is there any reason for the disparity in view of the fact that we are now voting another \$75 000 to the current year?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I can only give the honourable member information in relation to the current year.

The provision is based on anticipated claims from child health centres now being planned or constructed in towns throughout the State.

The Government provides a subsidy equal to one-third of the total cost of construction of new child health centres which conform to standards approved by the Public Health Department. In the case of combined child health and pre-school buildings the contribution towards the child health centres is \$6 000 in areas north of the 26th parallel and \$4 000 in areas south of that line. Contributions towards the pre-school part of the combined centre are met from item No. 175 of this division.

So it will be found that there is a complementary item. I can only say that the figure that has been put down for this year is very much an estimate and will be dependent on the claims that are made from child health centres during the forthcoming period.

Item No. 45: Country High School Hostels Authority, \$491 000—

Mr McPHARLIN: The estimate for this year is \$491 000, and last year the expenditure was \$434 104. The fact that the estimate has been increased by \$31 000 this year over the figure allocated for last year has created a good deal of interest and discussion in various country electorates, and I would like to ascertain from the Premier whether the Government is considering increasing the allocation, because people in many centres have been asking not only for the establishment of new hostels, but also for additions to existing

ones. The costs of erecting new hostels, of course, have increased dramatically in the last few years, especially in the north of the State, and therefore the amount of money that is now allocated does not build many new hostels. I therefore ask the Premier to consider increasing the allocation for the coming year if possible.

Sir CHARLES COURT: This item, under Miscellaneous Services, relates to revenue expenditure and not to capital expenditure.

The higher provision arises from additional debt charges caused by new loans raised in 1974-75 and proposed raisings in 1975-76.

Under this item provision has been made in 1975-76 for a grant of \$14 200 towards the authority's administration expenses and \$457 000 for debt charges on loans raised for capital works.

Again, this is a revenue item, as against capital expenditure itself. Under this item we have also provided \$20 000 for subsidies to hostels for losses. During last year we had to increase the assistance to hostels quite considerably and, in some cases, we have had to go to their rescue because of situations arising completely beyond the control of the local people.

I think, in the main, they would accept we have been able to find a way to help them to a reasonable degree. However, I assume the honourable member is referring more particularly to the possibility of increasing expenditure on a number of new hostels. This, of course, would have to be done through the Country High School Hostels Authority which has a borrowing capacity of its own, but not to any great extent. I think the Minister has to look at the situation with a view to getting a number of people to agree to having larger hostels constructed to serve a number of districts in view of the fact that some hostels are being situated close to one another.

I have not yet received the information as to what prospects there are of establishing a sizeable hostel. I can assure the honourable member that we are very conscious of the pressure we are receiving from various places. This fits in with our ideas of keeping the children in their own areas, rather than bringing them to the city.

Item No. 53: Emergency Water Rescue Services, \$18 000—

Mr SHALDERS: I am pleased to see that the Government has seen fit to provide an allocation on a matching basis to the emergency water rescue service groups that are situated along the coast of our State. They provide an extremely valuable service, particularly the emergency water rescue service group in my electorate which was formed some years ago following a drowning tragedy in the Peel Inlet.

Since that time the number of people who have availed themselves of the opportunity to go boating in the Peel Inlet and outside in the ocean has increased rapidly. So, the need for this service has increased correspondingly. I should point out that the cost of providing this service has increased, and the type of equipment that is needed has grown more complex over the years.

The members of the group in my electorate give their time freely and voluntarily. I am extremely pleased that the services rendered by this group and other groups in the State have been recognised by the Government. I can assure the Premier that those people wish to convey their thanks to the Government for its generosity.

Sir Charles Court: I thank the honourable member for those remarks.

Item No. 54: Family Planning Association, \$6 500—

Mr MOILER: I would like some clarification in regard to the reduction of \$5 000 in the estimate for 1975-76. I appreciate that in item 83 the vote to the Marriage Guidance Council has been increased. The same amount has been allocated in 1975-76 to the Family Planning Association as was allocated in 1974-75, although the actual expenditure in 1974-75 was \$11 500. I think it is necessary to maintain the grant at \$11 500.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The honourable member will note that the actual amount estimated for 1975-76 is identical with the vote for 1974-75. The reason there is a difference between the actual amount spent last year, compared with the estimate of last year and the estimate for this year, is that we gave the Family Planning Association a special grant of \$5 000 during the last financial year, and that was a nonrecurring grant.

This grant was made to assist in meeting the costs incurred in giving expert advice to members of the public on all aspects of family planning. Let me refer to the initial grant of \$4 000 in 1971-72, which was made to enable the establishment and the operation of a pilot clinic at Melville. Annual grants of \$5 000 have been paid since 1972-73. The vote was increased to \$6 500 in 1974-75.

Last year I received some special representations, and we gave that association a special nonrecurring grant of \$5 000 to meet a special commitment. That explains why the vote has carried on in 1975-76 at the 1974-75 level.

Item No. 59: Good Neighbour Council, \$1 000—

Mr SKIDMORE: In view of the tremendous amount of work and good that this council renders in the field of social welfare, I wonder why the vote for this year should be reduced to \$1 000. That is a

reduction of 50 per cent in the vote for 1974-75.

This council does good work and deals with many problems affecting the people. Probably through its services a great deal of the expenses involved in social welfare is obviated. It provides a valuable service, particularly to those people who are not well versed in the method of securing social welfare benefits.

I hope the Premier will be able to indicate that there will be no reduction in this vote. If there is any chance to increase the vote to \$2 000 I am sure the Good Neighbour Council will be very grateful.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The reason for the reduced estimate is that last year the Good Neighbour Council asked for a special grant to assist it in meeting the expenses of observing its 25th anniversary since its formation. We gave that body \$2 000 on a nonrecurring basis. That explains why we have gone back to the original vote of \$1 000.

Item: Oldpower Association—

Mr McPHARLIN: I wish to seek to some information on this item.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no amount estimated for that item, and I cannot allow the honourable member to speak to it. The vote has been discontinued.

Item No. 110: Perth City Council—Contribution towards Concert Hall, \$5 000—

Mr DAVIES: Last year there was no expenditure on this item, although there was a vote of \$5 000. The vote for this year is again \$5 000. Is this a contribution to the Perth City Council from the Government?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I would like to inform the member for Mt. Marshall who wanted some information on the Oldpower Association that I will get him the information, but I am not permitted to speak on that item.

In respect of item No. 110, provision is made to recoup 50 per cent of the annual operating losses of the Perth Concert Hall, up to a maximum of \$5 000. An amount of \$4 934 was paid in 1973-74, but in 1974-75 no recoup was required, the receipts having exceeded payments by \$39 000. Members no doubt will be delighted that the receipts have exceeded the payments.

Members are aware of the assistance given by successive Government towards the construction of the Concert Hall and the arrangement made to share the losses. That explains why there was no expenditure in 1974-75. We made the same provision of \$5 000 for this year as a safety precaution.

Item No. 113: Pinnaroo Cemetery Board, \$100 000—

Mr SKIDMORE: I am one of the inaugural members of the Pinnaroo Cemetery Board, and I am well aware of the

problems associated with the establishment of the Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park. Recently in company with other board members I made an inspection of the area. I found that the actual amount spent last year—\$38 766—represented what might be termed parsimonious expenditure on the part of the board. I hope the vote of \$100 000 this year will be expended, in view of what the board has to develop.

The concept of the Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park is tremendous. In my opinion it resulted from the visits made to various States of Australia, and from the very searching examination of cemeteries in overseas countries. This memorial park will be a showplace, and in future the public will be able to enjoy all the facilities that will be available at the park.

A great responsibility has been placed on the board to develop the Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park. This park will be needed very quickly to replace Karrakatta Cemetery. I sincerely trust that the claims made by the board will be met, and that the vote will not be reduced in any way.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I am sure that funds are made available to develop the Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park Cemetery on a timetable which will allow it to take its rightful place as a cemetery when Karrakatta Cemetery is phased out. Eventually Karrakatta Cemetery will attain maximum occupation. I understand its capacity for burials is estimated to be reached in 10 years, but whether that will be the end of it as a crematorium centre I do not know.

Mr Skidmore: No, it will not be.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I understand that for burials, Karrakatta Cemetery has a maximum life of 10 years. It is also hoped to get Pinnaroo into use within two years. I am sure the funds needed to achieve this result—I understand this is a very fine concept—have been made available. I will check with the Under-Treasurer on this vote. My understanding is that the vote has been increased progressively to meet the needs of the board.

I understand that Pinnaroo Cemetery will come into operation in approximately two years' time. In view of the fact that it will have no income to service its costs, we have in the meantime filled the need under the Miscellaneous Services vote.

A grant of \$10 000 was made in 1973-74 for preliminary work and administrative costs, and \$100 000 was provided in this item in 1974-75. Of this latter amount only \$38 766 was expended due to difficulties in the preparation of landscaping programmes.

It would appear that the funds from the Treasury under the Miscellaneous Services vote are adequate. It is a question of how fast the board can get on with the programme it has. Obviously we will have

to keep on filling the need until such time as the board has revenue-earning capacity.

Item No. 124: Royal Agriculture Society of W.A. (Inc.), \$20 000—

Mr DAVIES: The Royal Agriculture Society by its very nature is not expected to show much profit. Every time I visit the Royal Show I wonder how much longer it will continue to operate in that area. I am amazed at the amount of money that is spent by the various organisations and by the society itself on the grounds. I notice that last year the Government gave the society \$20 000, and this year the vote is also \$20 000. It looks as though a continuing arrangement has been entered into, or alternatively a set amount is being provided over a period of years.

Can the Treasurer tell us what is the vote, and whether the Royal Agriculture Society will shift from Claremont? When I was Minister for Town Planning, various sites were suggested as alternatives, but now it looks as though the Claremont Showgrounds will be there for good. On the figures appearing in the Estimates it looks as though the Government will be subsidising the RAS over a period of years.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The situation regarding this vote to the Royal Agriculture Society is that in 1973 the Government agreed to assist the society with the cost of constructing a new wool pavilion and theatre at the Claremont Showgrounds. Work on the new building was completed in August, 1974, at a cost of \$300 000. The Government contribution was made on the basis of a grant of \$200 000 over a period of 10 years. It is a continuing payment, with which the member for Victoria Park has the honour of being associated. This is a very fine building and it is playing a useful role.

Item No. 135: Salvation Army—Centre for Female Alcoholics, \$5 000—

Mr SKIDMORE: Last year the vote was \$20 000, but the actual expenditure was \$15 000. This year the vote is \$5 000. The reduction concerns me greatly. I do not think there should be any curtailment of funds to such a worth-while organisation. I hope the centre has been able to show that it can manage its activities with a grant of some \$5 000 from the Government. I would be very disturbed and concerned if the reduction made in the vote this year is on the basis of restricting the grant to the Salvation Army for the centre.

This centre is badly needed and it is playing a very vital role in the community in catering for the alcoholics. One could say that these people have reached the end of the road, and for that reason every effort should be made by the Government to bring them back to good health. Whether or not we like it, chronic alcoholism is a sickness.

Some of the private institutions in Perth have made remarkable progress and have done a good job. I would like the Treasurer to explain the reason for the reduction.

Sir CHARLES COURT: In answer to the honourable member, this is one of those items where money is phased out of one item and put into another. The honourable member can be assured, as far as I am concerned, that the Salvation Army always gets a receptive ear. We all know the good work that organisation does and from the Government's point of view any money granted is money well spent.

Mr Jamieson: The Salvation Army originally taught the Treasurer to blow the trumpet.

Sir CHARLES COURT: Yes, although it was a cornet. It was the most battered cornet one could imagine.

Mr May: He has not stopped blowing it.

Mr Jamieson: The Treasurer himself has become a little more battered.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I make no bone about that, and I used to keep my cornet very clean.

The payment of \$15 000 in 1974-75 represented the final instalment of the Government's contribution to help meet the capital costs of the centre. The provision of \$5 000 in the Estimates for the current year represents the annual grant to assist in meeting operating costs.

The provision in last year's Estimate for the operating grant was not required as the centre was not operational.

Although the Government has facilities at Byford and at Bandyup Women's Prison, it was considered that some women would probably benefit by receiving treatment without the stigma of a prison sentence.

Consequently the Government agreed to contribute \$60 000 towards capital costs by instalments of \$30 000 in 1972-73 and \$15 000 in each of the years 1973-74 and 1974-75, and to assist in meeting operating expenditure.

The centre forms part of the Salvation Army's "Graceville Complex" in East Perth.

Mr B. T. BURKE: I am not sure that anyone but myself would remember that at this time last year I spoke on the allocation to the Salvation Army, and I mentioned that there did not appear to be, in last year's Estimates, an allocation for a day-care centre which was being established in Balga and which had been the subject of personal representation by myself some several months previously.

Again this year there is no allocation of a vote for the day-care centre, and I still have not received a reply from the Premier's Department. I understand that the project requires an allocation of \$5 000; it is to be viable at all.

I ask the Premier, firstly, whether he is aware of any consideration having been given to the matter, and, secondly, if the proposal has been rejected, why the organisers have not been notified.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I well remember the honourable member raising the item, and he also wrote to the department.

If I remember correctly, I understood the matter was being negotiated between the Treasury and the Salvation Army with regard to the day-care centre. Beyond that I cannot express an opinion. I will make a note of the item.

I do not think that such a matter would come under the item now under discussion, but under some other heading. I notice the honourable member has used Item No. 135 as a basis for his inquiry. The amount he mentioned was \$5 000, but I thought it was greater.

Item No. 147: Surf Life Saving Association, \$20 000—

Mr CLARKO: The Surf Life Saving Association was granted a sum of \$20 000 last year, and it is proposed that it will be allocated a sum of \$20 000 for 1975-76.

I ask the Treasurer to reconsider the allocation. In a general way, the Surf Life Saving Association is associated with a real growth industry. Because of the increased leisure time available to people, more of them are using our beaches than ever before. People are opening up new beaches, and going to the areas between the established beaches. The use of those beaches has increased the requirement for equipment. I am not referring to the Swanbourne beach because I am sure there would be no trouble experienced in establishing a surf club there!

Mr Jamieson: More than a surf club.

Mr CLARKO: More people participate in swimming than in any other recreational activity in Western Australia.

The local authorities are generous in their allocations of money to the life saving clubs. I would like to pay special tribute to the Wanneroo Shire which allocated \$50 000 for a new club building at Sorrento and an additional \$42 000 is to be granted by the Lotteries Commission. This building is needed, not only to cater for the people who use the beach at Sorrento, but also those who use the beaches to the north.

I am very pleased to see an allocation to the Whitfords Sea Rescue Group to enable it to do a better job on our coastline, where there have been a number of tragedies.

In a specific sense, I would like to mention items which are required this year by the Surf Life Saving Association. Virtually every item required by the association has increased in price. The association has taken out a public risk policy this year to cover accidents which occur to surf lifesavers while involved in rescue duties. The policy will cost \$1 200 per year, which is an additional item, and it will have to be found each year. General insurances, particularly workers' compensation have also been increased by \$1 200 per annum.

A surf boat which previously cost \$2 500 has gone up to approximately \$5 000 in a period of one year. All those items have to be met by the association, and it requested an allocation of \$25 000 from the

Treasury. However, it is to receive only \$20 000.

The surf lifesavers are very modest people and they do not ask for much. I request the Treasurer to give further consideration to the request for \$25 000.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The Surf Life Saving Association received an extra \$10 000 last year to meet a liquidity problem. I want to assure the honourable member that as far as the Government is concerned—and as far as all members of this Chamber are concerned—the Surf Life Saving Association has a tremendous reputation and standing. It comprises essentially voluntary workers, and we do our best when we are approached for money in order to keep the association in a liquid position.

My understanding is that over many years the association has proved itself to be a self-help organisation, and it is the only association where a fee has to be paid to become a member in order to be able to rescue someone or save somebody else's life. For that reason it is one of the most wonderful voluntary organisations we have.

If the honourable member is aware of any acute financial problem faced by the association I ask him to advise it to make representations to me and I will discuss the matter with the Treasury. I cannot recall any application to meet a situation such as we met last year.

Item No. 148: Swan River Conservation Board, \$75 050—

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Item No. 148 provides for a very substantial increase in expenditure. I am not opposed to that expenditure but I am curious to know what the board proposes to do in order to qualify for the substantial increase. I would appreciate it if the Minister could give the reason for the large increase.

Sir CHARLES COURT: From a quick reading of my notes it appears that provision has been made to cover a carry-over expenditure from 1974-75. There is also provision for \$10 250 for extension of existing activities, which have been approved by the Treasury following recommendations by the board.

Item No. 175: Western Australian Pre-School Board, \$2 570 000—

Mr MOILER: I would like some clarification with regard to the increased expenditure in connection with this item. Is it envisaged that the increase is for the construction of pre-school centres, for the conduct of the board, or to cover the appointment of additional teachers?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I think it would be preferable if I were to read out the notes I have on this item because it is the only way to explain it to the satisfaction of the honourable member.

The transactions of the board are financed mainly from Commonwealth grants under the childhood services programme, parents' levies, and State grants. The

board's expenditure for the year ended the 30th June, 1975, amounted to \$4 519 570 and is estimated at \$6 345 521 for the current year. The increase of \$1 825 951 is due to the following factors—

	\$
Full year cost of staff appointed in 1974-75, award variations, increments and associated administration expenses	1 269 927
Allowance for new appointments and expenses in 1975-76	328 024
Allowance for award variations expected in 1975-76	218 000
Allowance for increased postal and telephone charges	10 000
	<hr/>
	1 825 951
Less additional revenue from Commonwealth and other sources ..	1 372 593
	<hr/>
	453 358
Add additional funds required from State sources to offset funds in hand 1/7/74	219 814
Outstanding recoup from State sources in respect of 1974-75 transactions and equivalent sum for 1975-76	283 428
	<hr/>
Increase in State contribution	956 600

This statutory body was constituted under the Pre-School Education Act, 1973, which was proclaimed to operate from the 1st July, 1973. Under the Act responsibilities previously undertaken by the Kindergarten Association of WA with the exception of teacher training, were transferred to the board.

The responsibility for teacher training was transferred to the Western Australian Institute of Technology.

This item provides the following grants to the Board—

	\$
1. Administration costs of the board and net operating costs of pre-school centres	2 448 000
2. Building grants at the rates of \$4 000 each for southern areas and \$6 000 each for the north-west	80 000
3. Assistance to needy pre-school centres in poorer areas experiencing financial difficulties	12 000
4. Grants to independent pre-schools	25 000
5. Grants to play groups in needy circumstances	5 000
	<hr/>
	2 570 000

Mr MOILER: Following the explanation given by the Treasurer, I would like to ask him whether he could have this item reviewed. In the explanation he outlined that an amount of \$4 000 had been contributed from that fund to establish each pre-school centre. When one realises that the cost of building a pre-school centre is in the vicinity of \$40 000 or thereabouts—

Mr Jamieson: That is without equipment.

Mr MOILER: Yes, just for the building alone. Therefore, the bulk of the money for the pre-school centres will have to come from the local authorities concerned. With the threat by the Education Department that the Government will absorb all locally established kindergartens, it is unlikely that many pre-school centres will be established under this arrangement.

The Government is establishing approximately 20 pre-primary centres a year and obviously many pre-school children will be deprived of this type of education in the next year. So I ask the Treasurer to give consideration to an increase in the subsidy from the State Government for the establishment of pre-school centres. I think this amount has remained static for some years, and naturally it should be increased considerably.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The question raised by the honourable member is much wider one than the reference to the particular item. However, I have noted his point. I will ask my colleague to enlarge further on these comments. If the honourable member desires a photostatic copy of the information I have given, I will ask Hansard to let him have the details I have read out.

Item No. 176: Western Australian Symphony Orchestra, \$69 400—

Mr DAVIES: The Concert Hall was opened, I believe, in January, 1973. I remember that the Treasurer—the Leader of the Opposition as he then was—said that the WA Symphony Orchestra could be improved by the addition of a few strings; and if the right kind of Government were in office, no doubt those strings would be forthcoming.

I have visited the Concert Hall frequently over the years, and if some strings were forthcoming, they could only be for on violin because the estimate for this item has remained static. I have taken note of this at my attendances at concerts over the years, and there does not seem to be an expansion in the number of players through the efforts of the Government. There is no additional provision for the orchestra this year.

I wonder whether the Treasurer remembers making the statement I quoted whether he thinks the right kind of Government is now in power, and whether we can have more strings spread around the whole orchestra, and not just to on violin.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I well remember the statement I made, but I believe it was slightly different from that quoted by the honourable member. At the time I said that if the then Premier were prepared to include something in the estimate to allow some additional strings so that the brass could play with less inhibitions, the Opposition of the day would not oppose it.

Mr Davies: I rather thought it was the other way around.

Mr Nanovich: A different situation altogether, wasn't it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: My understanding is that the then Premier did in fact do something about it, and he increased the contribution to the orchestra, I think from \$40 000 to \$51 000. I am sorry, that was the contribution from the 1st January, 1971. It was increased to \$65 000 from the 1st July, 1973. The increase to \$65 000 was made conditional on an increase in the number of members of the orchestra; that is, an increase in the permanent strength of the orchestra from 57 to 63. In other words, this increase would give the orchestra extra strings if it could recruit players of a sufficient calibre—this is always a problem.

The Government of the day did increase this grant, and I personally know of no requests that have been made. There is an allowance in the estimate to meet some of the costs necessary for the orchestra to visit country areas. As the honourable member knows, not only the State Government but also the City of Perth, a number of shire councils, and the ABC make a contribution to the orchestra. I know of no request that we have had that has not been acceded to. My attitude remains the same: I hope one day we will have an orchestra of the size of the London Philharmonic Orchestra or the orchestras of Sydney and Melbourne. I believe this will come in due course.

Mr Davies: They should not be shy about approaching you.

Item No. 186: Daylight Saving Referendum, \$12 000—

Mr McPHARLIN: We have here an estimate of \$12 000 for this item.

Mr Jamieson: That is for next year—it's going to be much cheaper than the last one though!

Mr McPHARLIN: I would like to know the reason for this particular estimate.

Sir CHARLES COURT: First of all, the member for Mt. Marshall will notice that the cost of the referendum was less than we estimated.

Mr Jamieson: Not this figure though.

Sir CHARLES COURT: This is an overflow from items of expenditure outstanding from the last one. I assure the member for Welshpool that it is not for another referendum. The total expenditure for conducting the referendum was \$231 620, but provision was necessary to clean up a few accounts arising from that.

Item No. 190: Ex Gratia Payments, \$60 000—

Mr DAVIES: I believe the amount for this item requires some explanation. How does one apply for an *ex gratia* payment, and where does one apply?

Sir CHARLES COURT: This item is quite unpredictable, of course. From time to time we have to face up to some issues where these payments have to be made. Some of the circumstances are such that, after analysis, the Government of the day decides it should provide an appropriate

sum in the Estimates to deal with them. Some of these are continuing cases, but as fast as one case dies, another one comes along. If the honourable member would like a list of these payments, he can have it, unless he would like me to read them.

Mr Davies: No, I will be quite happy if the Treasurer will pass it to me.

Sir CHARLES COURT: In all these cases the Government of the day has to make assessments about whether or not items which may not be covered by a specific Statute are worthy of some special consideration. I will pass this list to the honourable member.

Vote put and passed.

Part 3: Minister for Works, Water Supplies and the North West—

Votes: Public Works and Buildings, \$25 971 000; Harbour and Light and Jetties, \$3 406 000; North West, \$577 000—put and passed.

Part 4: Minister for Justice and Chief Secretary—

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.39 p.m.]: I want to deal again with the hardy annual I raise every year, and that is the introduction of joint electoral rolls.

On the 6th December, 1972, the then Commonwealth Electoral Officer for Western Australia (Mr Abbott) and the then Chief Electoral Officer under the Western Australian Act (Mr S. E. Wheeler) submitted a report to the Government which clearly indicated a considerable saving would be made not only by the State Government but also by the Commonwealth Government if a joint roll were introduced. This report was prepared after much study. In their final summing up at page 25 of the report, those gentlemen said—

12.21. In the final summing up we report that in our opinion the introduction of a Commonwealth/State joint roll system in Western Australia—

(a) is a feasible proposition providing the necessary amendments are made to the State legislation;

The amendments were not great in number, anyway. The report continues—

(b) operating along the lines of systems functioning in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, would result in a substantial saving to the State and to a lesser degree to the Commonwealth.

One might ask how it would result in a saving to the Commonwealth. The answer is that the State would pay the Commonwealth to maintain the rolls. Instead of the State spending something like \$380 000 in this respect, I should imagine \$100 000 would be paid to the Commonwealth and probably a further \$100 000 would be required to maintain the remaining part of

the Electoral Department. The rest of the current expenditure would be saved. In his summation, Mr Wheeler said—

The staff of the State Electoral Department probably being reduced from 28 officers to under 10. At general elections it may be necessary to arrange secondment of senior officers with electoral experience from other departments to cope with the work. This could cause a problem.

Of course, that is what is done now, so there would be no difference. As you probably well know, Mr Chairman, not only do the other States I have mentioned prepare the State and Commonwealth rolls, but they also keep the municipal rolls and charge local authorities a fee for this service. This saves the local authorities considerable expense. It results in a more efficient roll system in those States because instead of having three separate organisations keeping election rolls one department does the lot.

The only reason I can see that the Government would not be interested in this procedure, despite the fact that it would clearly save an amount of about \$200 000 a year—and this could be done by a stroke of the pen—is the fact that it may represent some form of centralisation. I am aware the Cabinet has made a decision in respect of this matter. However, I just cannot get the gist of the thinking of the Government, and I cannot understand why it is running away from this feature. It appears the system has not greatly affected New South Wales or Victoria. The Hamer and Lewis Governments have not sought to revoke their procedures and go back to the old system. Therefore, I think they must be enjoying a considerable saving.

I would say that if there were a change of Government in this State we would be very much committed to the change I have outlined. It would be, as it was last time, a matter of policy on the hustings.

I do not believe the people of Western Australia should be burdened with the considerable number of enrolment worries with which they are burdened at the moment. Certainly they do not understand the difference between the rolls. It is easy for those in politics; we know the series of cards which must be filled in. But when one talks to the people and asks them whether they have filled in a yellow or an olive-coloured card, they look at one strangely and are not sure; they are not even sure what they have done with the receipts. A great deal of time is taken up trying to sort out these matters.

The State Electoral Department, when handling applications for enrolment, usually gets the applicant to fill in the Commonwealth cards at the same time, and the reverse situation applies in the Commonwealth office. The cards must then be transmitted between the Commonwealth and State offices at a cost which, although not large, is unnecessary. It seems to me

that we have this unnecessary cost and unnecessary work for no reason other than to remain apart from the system which most other States have found to be convenient. I have mentioned previously that the only other State which has a separate electoral roll system is the deep north of Queensland, which indulges in a method which would not be tolerated in this State.

For many years Queensland has had its Police Force prepare electoral rolls. I am sure the Police Force of Western Australia would have a lot to say about the proposition if we tried to introduce it here and to make the force responsible for maintaining electoral rolls.

The Government is always looking at ways and means of cutting expenses. Obviously if this system were adopted some electoral officers would become redundant; but they are civil servants and would be employed in other departments. The adoption of the system would merely cut down the size of a particular department.

Obviously we are going to unnecessary expense when the other system has been proved to work well. Our system presents problems to the community only because the people must fill in an unnecessary number of cards. I am sure once an arrangement is made between the State and the Commonwealth local authorities would join in so that we would have one office looking after the rolls for the three echelons of government.

The officers who examined this proposition on behalf of the Government of the day found there would be no great difficulty. Mr Wheeler listed a few minor problems, most of which have since been overcome. There was a difficulty at the time in respect of having separate cards for persons over the age of 18 years and other cards for persons over the age of 21, but this has now been overcome as people now have the right to vote at 18 years of age for both State and Federal elections.

I think it is high time we had a keen look at this matter with a view to overcoming the unnecessary duplication of activities of two Government departments.

Incidentally, when the Commonwealth department canvasses a region it does not accept applications for State rolls. It accepts State applications in the office, but not in the field. Of course, this also causes some confusion when the Commonwealth office issues removal notices and yet the people concerned remain on the State roll. They do not realise they have been removed from one roll, but remain on the other. The reverse situation applies also in respect of the State office.

I am sure that if we had only one department it would be to the benefit of the people of Western Australia. They would all know where to go in respect of electoral matters and we would have one body responsible for the keeping of habitation indices and all other information associated with this matter.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park) [5.48 p.m.]: This is an appropriate time to suggest to the Chief Electoral Officer that he review the polling places throughout the electorates. I know such a review has been undertaken on a Federal basis, but that has not prompted my thinking in respect of this. There has been a tendency over the years to use the same polling places for obvious reasons; people get used to them and know where they are. In my opinion the bulk of the people go to the same polling booth at election after election.

However, with the passage of time and the increase in traffic flow, there are several polling places in my electorate which are now potential traffic hazards because they are situated too close to corners or traffic lights. I fear every election day that someone will be killed as a result of cars pulling up right outside the polling place. These cars bring the elderly and infirm to vote; and there are also other cars driven by people who want to get their cars as close as possible to the door of the polling place.

This is not something which should be attended to within the last few weeks prior to an election. I suggest a review should be carried out now so that any new sites which are selected may be advertised. It is difficult to obtain suitable polling places.

Mr Jamieson: If we had dual rolls with the Commonwealth, the polling places would be gazetted every year, whether or not an election was to be held.

Mr DAVIES: That may be a better idea. I know that at the moment polling places may be changed for Commonwealth elections, and the people may find that at the following State election the polling place is back at the original site; it is most confusing to the public and I believe the Government should turn its attention to this matter.

I should also like to draw the attention of the Chamber to how smoothly the daylight saving referendum was carried out. Many people expressed to me what a pleasure it was to go to a polling place without having how-to-vote cards forced upon them. This has been a matter of contention for many years; we seem to be evenly split on the subject of whether or not how-to-vote cards are necessary.

In fact, when the Opposition was in Government it introduced legislation banning the distribution of how-to-vote cards during elections. However, they are still permitted and I suggest this is a matter which could be examined by the Government in view of the experience we have had on the daylight saving referendum.

The elector can inform himself as to how he wants to vote; in fact, the great majority of electors know how they will vote and how-to-vote cards are unnecessary.

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Works) [5.52 p.m.]: Three matters were

raised by members. In respect of the suggestion made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I have checked with the Premier because it was my recollection that recently he asked the Minister for Justice, who administers the office, to again examine this proposal to establish common rolls.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition pointed out, in the past there have been legislative bars against such a practice. I think one was that there was a different age qualification between the Commonwealth and Western Australia; also a different residential qualification applied, in that the required period was three months for the State and only one month for the Commonwealth. However, those obstacles have been removed. As he suggested, in accordance with Mr Wheeler's report, there may be a few other minor legislative amendments which may be necessary. The Minister for Justice has been requested to take a further look at this matter.

A review of polling places is a matter of some concern. Personally, I have a great objection to the dual polling places where polling places cover the candidates from two contiguous electorates. It is extremely confusing to the electors but I understand it is very difficult to do otherwise.

I know that in the past the returning officers for the electorate of East Melville have always experienced difficulty in obtaining adequate polling places. State schools, of course, present no problem, but private schools and convents may not be willing to open their premises, and this can present a problem in some electorates.

In many electorates, including mine, there appears to be a lack of public hall facilities which could be used for the purpose. Frequently, the returning officer has contacted me and said, "Do you know of any buildings in your electorate which could be used for polling purposes?" I have never been able to assist him.

In many cases, polling places have been established in private houses; I should point out that these have been used by the Federal department rather than by the State department. I have never thought it a particularly acceptable proposition to establish a polling place on the front verandah of a private dwelling.

I do not know the answer to this problem. Perhaps we could use polling places conjointly for State and Federal elections, those elections being held at different times. Quite frequently, I suppose, buildings are not available because they have been committed for other purposes. In answer to the member for Victoria Park, I anticipate this is a problem which will always be with us.

Mr Davies: My query related principally to polling places which had become unacceptable and even dangerous due to increased traffic flow.

Mr O'NEIL: I fully agree; they can become hazardous. However, it is not so easy to find an alternative building close enough to the hazardous polling place which could effectively handle the poll. Perhaps we can establish a system of mobile polling booths in caravans; that is not beyond the realms of possibility. However, until that occurs, I am not sure what the answer is. I am sure the Chief Electoral Officer and the various returning officers are constantly plagued with the problem. Certainly, the honourable member's comments will be conveyed to the Minister for Justice.

I believe we will have to agree to disagree on the matter of how-to-vote cards.

Mr Davies: I said we were evenly divided.

Mr O'NEIL: I have often heard the example given in respect of the Senate ballot paper that a ballot paper for the various parties should be a registered document and be posted in an appropriate place in each polling booth at the various polling places. However, the point remains that every candidate also should be entitled to have his recommended how-to-vote card posted up in the same place. I would not think that polling booths would have sufficient wall space to cover the number of how-to-vote cards which appeared during the double dissolution.

Mr Jamieson: The less how-to-vote cards we have, the less the informal vote becomes. Tasmania banned how-to-vote cards, and this has been their experience; and they have a much more complicated system than do we.

Mr O'NEIL: I do not think Tasmania bans how-to-vote cards.

Mr Jamieson: Yes they do; completely.

Mr O'NEIL: I think the rule is that one cannot canvass for votes within a specific distance of a polling place on polling day, and that distance is so great as to put a person in the next suburb.

Mr Jamieson: If a party puts out a how-to-vote card, it is not allowed to print the name of its opponents. For a how-to-vote card to be useful, other candidates' names must be printed, so it would not be much good producing cards under those circumstances.

Mr O'NEIL: I am not sure of the precise situation. At any rate, Tasmania has what I call a topsy-turvy system of elections in that they have a modified Hare-Clarke system for the Assembly, where five electorates return seven members, while members of the Legislative Council are elected to represent single electorates, which is completely the reverse to our situation. However, I am not improving the shining hour by discussing the Tasmanian system or the Government's attitude towards how-to-vote cards.

Mr BATEMAN (Canning) [5.59 p.m.]: I believe the Government should introduce legislation to prevent the posting of political signs on trees, buildings and the like

before elections. I believe such a practice disfigures the countryside and does no good for any party involved in the practice. It is a very costly business, and all parties suffer greatly at the hands of vandals who tear the signs down and hurl them all over the place. As fast as people put them up, they get pulled down again. I have suffered from this experience and I would imagine that members of other parties have experienced the same problem.

Mr O'Neil: I have no problems in my electorate; the election signs are banned by the local authority.

Mr BATEMAN: That is very sound. All local authorities should introduce by-laws banning the erection of election signs. I can recall that during the last election campaign the National Country Party said it did not agree with visual pollution and that it would do something about introducing legislation to prevent it, but at the same time it was erecting election signs all over the place. The sooner legislation is introduced to have our trees protected from these terrible election signs the happier we will all be.

I therefore hope the Premier will bring some pressure to bear on local authorities to introduce by-laws that will prevent all political parties from erecting election signs all over the place, because they are an ugly sight. I am rather fortunate in view of the fact that the Town of Canning does not allow signs to be erected not only on road verges but also on private properties. However, there are many local authorities which do not impose such a ban and to see election signs erected on fences and on road verges is a most unsightly spectacle.

Vote: Crown Law, \$7 733 000; Corporate Affairs Office, \$849 000; Office of Titles, \$2 292 000—put and passed.

Vote: Public Trust Office, \$1 289 000—

Item No. 1: Salaries, Wages and Allowances generally, \$1 092 000—

Mr JAMIESON: I take the opportunity to debate this item because the office of the Public Trustee is only a small department. The amount of expenditure that will be involved this year is expected to increase as all items have increased as a result of increases in wages and other contingencies which are necessary in clerical occupations. I notice that these days the Public Trust Office seems to be handling a considerable number of estates. Although members know that there are two large executor and trustee companies in Perth which specialise in the handling of estates, and that many other estates are also handled by lawyers in private practice, I think it could be correctly assumed that the Public Trust Office would be handling about one-third of all estates in Western Australia.

This means that the Public Trust Office must have a considerable turnover. Last year its revenue was \$1 100 000, in round figures and its expenditure was \$1 050 140.

As the Public Trust Office works on a percentage of the value of estates handled, I realise that many of its clerks are employed not only in the capacity of looking after estates from which they receive revenue, but it must also be borne in mind that these officers are assigned the task of looking after all sorts of estates including those of people who are committed to mental institutions, because they have a responsibility to meet under the relevant Acts governing such institutions. Therefore, those duties would not be very remunerative.

Nevertheless the Public Trust Office must handle some fairly large estates and a considerable amount of income must be received by the office. I think some attention needs to be paid to the fact that it does not appear it will continue to pay its own way if present conditions prevail this year. From the figures shown, the office had a downturn last year. The Public Trust Office can be compared to the Rural and Industries Bank or the State Government Insurance Office. It is dealing with funds at large in the public sector and it should be expected to receive some sort of income.

I would therefore like the Minister to tell us a little more about why it is necessary to keep this office staffed at the present level without receiving income which will at least offset its outgoings.

Mr O'NEIL: I can only provide the honourable member with the information supplied to me. The amount of revenue depends on the number of estates handled, and, naturally, the increase in costs is entirely due to the increases in salary rates for officers in all divisions. Nevertheless I have noted what the honourable member has said, and if the Minister for Justice can provide him with any more information I will ask him so to do.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Electoral, \$386 000—put and passed.

Vote: Licensing, \$235 000—

Item No. 1: Salaries and Allowances generally, \$197 000—

Mr SKIDMORE: I am wondering what is entailed in the duties of the six supervisors of licensed premises, the estimate for 1975-76 being \$62 200. This represents over \$10 000 per annum for each supervisor. I would like to have an outline of their duties.

Mr O'NEIL: It will be appreciated that I am handling this matter on behalf of the Minister for Justice who is in charge of the Licensing Court. I am not aware of the duties of the supervisors. The figures I have been given relate to the expenditure and receipts for this vote. However, I will make a note of what the honourable member has said and notify the Minister concerned. I shall see whether I can supply him with the information.

Mr T. J. BURKE: Over the last year or so we have heard a rumour the Government intends to change the format of the Licensing Court, but that is not reflected in the vote before us. I wonder whether the Minister for Works can give us any indication of whether the Government proposes to change the format of that court, and whether there is likely to be further legislation introduced to affect the licensing laws.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the honourable member can raise that matter in speaking to this item.

Mr T. J. BURKE: I have been prompted to raise this matter after perusing the second reading speech of the Minister for Justice on a Bill before the Legislative Council. However, I limit my remarks to asking the Minister whether the Government intends to proceed with its proposals to reform the Licensing Court.

Mr O'NEIL: I cannot answer the query that has been raised by the honourable member. He said that he has heard a rumour as to the Government's intention to introduce legislation.

Mr T. J. Burke: It was in the Press.

Mr O'NEIL: I do not care where it appeared; it is still a rumour. The proper place for announcing Government policy is in this Chamber or in Cabinet. I am not prepared to comment on or confirm any rumour that has been going around.

Mr T. J. Burke: This is a genuine inquiry.

Mr O'NEIL: The honourable member should consult *Erskine May* to ascertain whether he is entitled to ask questions based on rumour.

Mr T. J. BURKE: As members of Parliament, we depend to a great degree on information appearing in the Press. I would like some indication from the Minister as to whether it is the intention of the Government to effect some reformation of the Licensing Court during the life of this Parliament.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Chief Secretary, \$1 130 000; Registry and Friendly Societies \$416 000; Astronomical Services, \$292 000—put and passed.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr Davies.

BEEF INDUSTRY COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 6.13 p.m.