

I refer to the provisions which appear in clause 4. They relate to exemptions on the discharge of mortgages where the original mortgage is exempt, such as for charities. I subscribe to this and agree that it is a worth-while amendment.

Clause 5 deals with the insurance policies which are now to be liable for duty—not only policies over properties, but policies on risks for loss or damage as a result of loss of profits, and various kinds of insurance policies not related to property. It has been suggested that when the Government of the day brought in the last amendment to the legislation in 1968 it intended to include policies over the kind of risks I have mentioned, as well as policies over properties.

I have read the debate on that Bill, and in particular the speech of Mr. Griffith who introduced the measure in this Chamber. The debate is recorded on page 2293 of the 1968 *Hansard*. On page 2294 Mr. Griffith is recorded as having said—

In the matter of insurance cover, cover on assets in this State . . .

Later on he said—

With a view to overcoming this situation and removing any doubts as to the liability to pay duty on insurance policies covering assets in this State . . .

Again, further on he said—

One of these sections will provide for persons resident in the State, who insure Western Australian property . . .

Once or twice more in the debate he referred to Western Australian property.

I therefore find it hard to follow the reference to the fact that the Minister in introducing the Bill in 1968 intended to include other policies besides policies in relation to property. It may well be that the department intended to include them, but the Minister did not, otherwise he would have said so. However, I am not opposing this particular amendment in the Bill; I am only drawing attention to the comment in the second reading speech of the Minister.

For the reasons I have given I support the Bill, with the exception of clause 3. I support that clause in principle, but I propose to move an amendment which will affect one small area only of the stamp duty which the commissioner hopes to collect under the amendment.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan (Minister for Police).

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House)
[9.44 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.15 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).
Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 3rd May, 1972

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Acknowledgment of Presentation to Governor

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Norton): I desire to announce that, accompanied by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn (Mr. Brown), the member for Karrinyup (Mr. Lapham), the member for Blackwood (Mr. Reid), and the member for Murchison-Eyre (Mr. Coyne), I attended upon His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech at the opening of Parliament. His Excellency has been pleased to reply in the following terms:—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly: I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty The Queen, and for your Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER

Oath of Office: Administration by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Norton): I desire to announce that in the presence of the Premier (Mr. J. T. Tonkin), The Hon. A. F. Griffith, M.L.C. (representing the Leader of the Opposition, Sir David Brand), the President of the Legislative Council (The Hon. L. C. Diver), and Mr. W. R. McPharlin (representing the Leader of the Country Party, Mr. Nalder), I did this day, in accordance with section 8 of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act, 1971, administer the Oath of Office under that Act to Oliver Francis Dixon. The oath administered by me was as follows:—

I, Oliver Francis Dixon, sincerely promise and swear that I will faithfully and impartially perform the duties of my office and that I will not, except in accordance with the Parliamentary Commissioner Act, 1971, divulge any information received by me under that Act. So help me God.

The oath was signed by Oliver Dixon in my presence.

QUESTIONS (39): ON NOTICE**1. WATER SUPPLIES***Dams: Canning River*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) When and where will additional dam or dams be built on the Canning River above or below the Canning dam?
- (2) What capacity will these dams be?
- (3) Is the Department planning to build a dam for any purpose including irrigation downstream of Canning Dam?

Mr. T. D. EVANS (for Mr. Jamieson) replied:

- (1) Current feasibility studies have considered the possibility of additional major storage in the south Canning branch but the board has no firm plans for such development at present.
- (2) Not determined.
- (3) No.

2. CRUISING YACHT CLUB*New Site*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it intended to reclaim a portion of Mangles Bay, Rockingham, on which to site the Cruising Yacht Club?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) how much;
 - (b) where;
 - (c) when?
- (3) If "No" to (1) is it planned to incorporate the Cruising Yacht Club in the Fremantle Port Authority stage one development?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3) will he let me have a plan detailing the positioning of the yacht club buildings, boat pens, etc.?

Mr. T. D. EVANS (for Mr. Jamieson) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (3).

3. LAKE ROAD AND SHOPPING CENTRE, KELMSCOTT*Local Government Consultation*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Has the Shire of Armadale-Kelmscott consulted with him or his department to try to resolve the

differences between the local authority and the developing company over—

- (a) construction of Lake Road, Kelmscott;
 - (b) siting of a shopping facility in Westfield Park, Kelmscott?
- (2) What was the shire's request and his decision?
 - (3) Will he—
 - (a) as Lake Road is long overdue and in urgent need of upgrading for the safety of the people using it, ensure that the differences are resolved quickly to enable early reconstruction of Lake Road;
 - (b) as the residents of Westfield Park are experiencing great inconvenience bordering on hardship without local shopping facilities, resolve this dispute urgently?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

4. CRUISING YACHT CLUB*New Site*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Will he let me have a plan of the approved site of the Cruising Yacht Club (buildings, boat pens, etc.) in Mangles Bay?
- (2) Will he advise whether the Government's decision to site the Cruising Yacht Club near Point Peron reserve will enable the yacht club—
 - (a) to occupy the site immediately or shortly;
 - (b) to complete negotiations for sale of their present premises?
- (3) When does he expect the yacht club will be given the green light to act?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) A decision on the exact location of the Cruising Yacht Club site in Mangles Bay has yet to be made.
- (2) (a) No. The club should, however, enter into discussions with the Fremantle Port Authority and appropriate Government departments with a view to delineating a site in terms of area, precise location and the timing of occupancy.
 - (b) This is a matter entirely for the Club to determine.
- (3) Answered by (2) (a).

5. FORESTS

Armada-le-Brookton Highway Clearing

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What is the programme for development of the cleared area near the 43 mile peg on the Armada-le-Brookton Highway?
- (2) How much land has been pushed down, heaped and burnt?
- (3) What has, in itemised costs, been spent on the project so far?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) An area of 250 acres is being cleared for a pine planting trial. 150 acres is to be planted in 1972 and the balance in 1973.
- (2) 250 acres.

		\$
(3) Pushing down	\$13 per acre	3,250
Burning and cleaning up	\$11 per acre	2,750
Total		\$6,000

- (2) What is the estimated annual cost of—
 - (a) prices advisory committees;
 - (b) Prices Commissioner's office and staff?

- (3) What number and classification of staff will be employed?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) It is envisaged that the Prices Commissioner and staff will be accommodated within the Department of Labour and integrated with the Consumer Protection Bureau. Minimal establishment costs will be incurred.
- (2) (a) Members of the Prices Advisory Committees will be paid sitting fees on an *ad hoc* basis. It is not possible to estimate annual costs at this stage.
(b) The Prices Commissioner, two investigating officers, one clerk and one typiste would cost approximately \$27,500.
- (3) Answered by (2) (b).

6. SUPERPHOSPHATE

Deliveries

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What tonnages of—
 - (a) bulk superphosphate;
 - (b) bagged superphosphate;
 - (c) all compound superphosphate,
 have been despatched ex each superphosphate works in Western Australia for the period October 1971 to the end of April 1972?
- (2) What is the anticipated tonnage of each to be despatched in May and June of this year?
- (3) How will this compare with the period October to June in the two preceding superphosphate delivery seasons?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) to (3) The information required is not readily available but I will endeavour to obtain it when I shall inform the member.

7. *This question was postponed.*

8. PRICES CONTROL DEPARTMENT

Cost of Establishment

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Premier:

- (1) What is the estimated initial establishment cost under the proposed Prevention of Excessive Prices Act?

9. HOSPITALS

Services: Centralisation

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it possible under the existing Hospitals Act or any other Act for the Government to establish Government operated central laundry and linen services, catering and X-ray laboratories?
- (2) Is it intended that the work of the proposed teaching hospitals advisory council will supersede some or all of the functions of the State Health Council?
- (3) What is the future of the State Health Council?
- (4) Has any start already been made by the Government to establish—
 - (a) central laundry and linen services;
 - (b) central catering facilities;
 - (c) X-ray laboratories?
- (5) If so, what progress has been made in each, what future roles will each play, and where are the services located or to be located?

Mr. H. D. EVANS (for Mr. Davies) replied:

- (1) It is doubtful whether the existing Hospitals Act would permit the establishment of central laundry and linen service, catering and X-ray laboratories, and no other Act would do so. As there is an area of doubt about the extent of the Minister's powers, it is considered necessary to make specific provision.

- (2) No. The Teaching Hospitals Advisory Council will advise the Minister on matters described in Clause 10 of the Bill.

There are some issues, including those which extend beyond the teaching hospitals, in respect of which the advice of both bodies would be appropriate.

- (3) No change in the State Health Council's activities is envisaged. Their advice will still be available to the Minister.

- (4) and (5)—

- (a) A hospital laundry and linen service is being planned for establishment at Ellis on the proposed Lakes Hospital site adjacent to Murdoch University land, and will provide laundry and linen services for several public hospitals and Government institutions.

A management committee was appointed in May, 1971, to be responsible for all aspects involved in the establishment of the service and for its management and control when operating.

Site works are expected to start towards the end of 1972.

- (b) Approval was given by my predecessor on 18th November, 1970, for the establishment of a food freezing unit in conjunction with the proposed Lakes Hospital to supply that hospital as well as others, and particularly Fremantle Hospital and the proposed Rockingham Hospital.

In June, 1971, a committee was appointed to thoroughly investigate all aspects of food processing.

Any decision would be made after considering their report and recommendations.

- (c) The State X-ray Laboratory, located at the Perth Medical Centre, has been operating for many years and it is envisaged that its role will not change.

10. MINERAL ROYALTIES

Payment into Consolidated Revenue

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Premier:

- (1) Would he enumerate any circumstances under which his Government would agree to any royalties on minerals being paid into other than Consolidated revenue?
- (2) Would he enumerate the circumstances under which his Government would agree to the unused

amount of a Consolidated Revenue Fund vote being retained by a Government department?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Under the provisions of the Constitution Act, all royalties on minerals have to be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. As the law now stands there is no alternative to this course.
- (2) The Audit Act provides that the unexpended balance of a vote shall lapse provided, if the Treasurer considers it expedient, any such balance may be transferred to an appropriate account for the purpose of meeting any relevant accrued unpaid commitment.

11.

EDUCATION

School Sites Committee

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the statutory source upon which the School Sites Committee is formed?
- (2) What are briefly the powers and functions of this committee?
- (3) Who are its present members?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) The School Sites Committee is an interdepartmental committee and as such was not established on a statutory basis.
- (2) Briefly the functions of the School Sites Committee are:—
- (a) to plan for future Government school sites;
- (b) to approve of suggested sites; and
- (c) to set in train the machinery for acquiring sites.
- (3) Mr. A. Kell (Chairman), representing the Town Planning Commissioner.

Mr. P. Howden (Executive Officer), Town Planning Department.

Mr. P. Beeson, Chief Property and Valuation Officer, Public Works Department.

Mr. M. Williams, Architectural Division, Public Works Department, representing Principal Architect.

Mr. E. Evensen, Lands Department, representing Under Secretary for Lands.

Mr. W. Wilson, State Housing Commission, representing General Manager, S.H.C.

Mr. D. Briggs, Education Department, representing Director-General of Education.

12. EDUCATION

*Parents and Citizens' Associations:
Government Subsidies*

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government continued the policy of the Brand Government to subsidise projects financed by the parents and citizens' associations of primary schools?
- (2) What is the proportion of subsidy and up to what amount is it paid in connection with the improvement of grounds such as bitumen cricket wicket?
- (3) Are such subsidies granted according to priority of application by various schools or is the approval subject to other considerations?
- (4) If after application for subsidy a parents and citizens' association carries out the project, will subsidy be paid in relation to such project in the next financial year if it is claimed by his department that there are not enough funds in the current financial year?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) \$ for \$ to a maximum subsidy of \$1,000.
- (3) In general, subsidies are granted in order of application, subject to availability of funds. However, if funds are limited, priority may be given on the basis of the urgency of the project.
- (4) No, the department has no authority to make a prior commitment of funds from a new financial year. Subsidy can only be paid when approval has been given to proceed.

13. *This question was postponed.*

14. TRANSPORT

*Interstate Trucks: Equipment
Deficiency*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has he received a letter from the Broome shire indicating interstate trucks operate without equipment (front brakes, etc.) required by law in Western Australia?
- (2) If this is so, will he take action to see these vehicles have no advantages not permitted on local vehicles?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) A letter has been received by the Commissioner of Police and enquiries are being made.
- (2) Yes, as far as the law, including section 92 of the Constitution, permits.

15. HEALTH

Expenditure in 1970-71

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Health:

Will he advise the total spent in Western Australia for the 1970-71 year as far as health is concerned and including buildings, health education, etc.?

Mr. H. D. EVANS (for Mr. Davies) replied:

The total expenditure by the State Government in 1970-71 covering the Medical Department, Public Health Department and Mental Health Services, was \$58,423,532. This includes the cost of new buildings, additions, renovations, etc. as well as running costs.

The information is obtained from the Auditor-General's Report for 1970-71.

16. POULTRY FARMING

Hen Licenses: Transfer

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

With reference to the transfer of hen licences—

- (1) How many applications for the transfer of licenses have been lodged with the Egg Board?
- (2) How many transfers has the board agreed to and forwarded to him for his approval?
- (3) How many transfers has he approved?
- (4) How many applications agreed to by the board are still awaiting his approval?
- (5) How many applications for transfer of licenses have still to be considered by the board?
- (6) Has the board or the Minister refused an application for transfer of license?
- (7) What were the dates on which the Minister's approval was given for the various transfers and what were the number of hens on each individual occasion?
- (8) From whom and to whom were the licenses transferred?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 28.
- (2) 26.
- (3) 22.
- (4) 4.
- (5) 2.
- (6) No.

- (7) and (8) Information requested is submitted for tabling.

The information was tabled.

17. EGG PRODUCTION

Shortage, Pulping, and Storage

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

With reference to the Egg Board—

- (1) Does the board anticipate a shortage of eggs for any period of time during the 1972-73 hen licensing year?
- (2) What generally are the reasons for arriving at the answer to (1)?
- (3) Are any eggs being pulped by the board at present?
- (4) If (3) is "Yes" what eggs are being pulped?
- (5) If (3) is "No" when did pulping cease, and for what reason?
- (6) Does the Egg Board store or propose to store eggs?
- (7) What is the maximum time eggs are usually stored by the board?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Not anticipated.
- (2) It appears from our records that producers generally have altered their restocking programmes and husbandry methods to produce eggs on a more even yearly pattern. The number of licenses issued should ensure sufficient eggs to supply consumers all the year round. It is estimated that production for 1972-73 will be approximately 1,200,000 dozen surplus to local requirements.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Certain types of eggs not suitable for packing into consumer packs are being pulped to supply the liquid pulp requirements of local cake manufacturers. As the supply of this type of egg is more than sufficient to supply the local liquid trade small quantities of export frozen pulp are being manufactured.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) The storage of some eggs will continue in the Albany and Bunbury depots to obviate the transport of eggs from the metropolitan area. Cool storing of certain grades of eggs will continue at Palmyra on a seasonal basis to ensure that consumers can receive the grade of egg desired.

- (7) Eggs are rotated through cool stores so that the period of storing is kept to a minimum.

18. KALAMUNDA HIGH SCHOOL

Additions

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When will tenders be called for the construction of ten additional classrooms, three staff offices and a Commonwealth Library at the Kalamunda High School?
- (2) Will the additions be complete before the start of the 1973 school year?
- (3) Is it a fact that there are at present nine demountable classrooms in use at the school?
- (4) Will the new buildings render the use of demountables unnecessary next year?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) As working drawings have not yet been completed, it is not possible to advise the date tenders will be called.
- (2) Every endeavour will be made to have the work completed for the commencement of the 1973 school year.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Present predictions of enrolments for Kalamunda Senior High School indicate that the use of all but possibly two demountables will be unnecessary in 1973.

19. KALAMUNDA HIGH SCHOOL

Ground Improvements

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) In reply to question 26 on the 21st March the Minister stated that tenders would be called early in April for mechanical work associated with ground improvements at Kalamunda High School. As it is now early May and still no tenders have been called, will he state—
 - (a) when tenders will be called;
 - (b) what is causing the delay?
- (2) When will tenders be called for the drainage and grassing contracts?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) Tenders will be called next week.
- (b) Investigations on the holding capacity of the dam.
- (2) Early June, 1972.

20. KALAMUNDA HIGH SCHOOL

Science Classrooms

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Now that two teaching units of the four science classrooms which were scheduled for completion on the 20th March, 1972, are available to the school, will he state the anticipated date of completion of the contract?
- (2) Is there a liquidated damages clause included in the contract documents?
- (3) What is the daily rate of damages?
- (4) Will the liquidated damages clause be applied?
- (5) If (4) is "No" why not?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Builder states that anticipated date of completion is 31st May, 1972.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) \$28 per week.
- (4) Will be considered at completion of contract.
- (5) Answered by (4).

21. LESMURDIE SCHOOL

Classrooms

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

Now that it has been decided to provide a second demountable classroom and an additional teacher at Lesmurdie Primary School, will he consider the provision of a three teaching unit (half cluster) for the start of the 1973 school year?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

On the basis of past growth patterns at Lesmurdie primary school and the headmaster's estimated enrolment of 440 pupils for the beginning of 1973, it is planned to provide up to three demountables at the school before constructing a half cluster. Present planning provides for the erection of a half cluster for the beginning of the 1974 school year.

22. WALLISTON SCHOOL

Reticulation Scheme

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When will the test bore, which is to be sunk at Walliston Primary School, be started?
- (2) Will he make available the details contained in a recommendation made by the Public Works Department on the reticulation scheme?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Tenders will be called in about three weeks time.
- (2) Copy of recommendation will be supplied direct to the member by the Public Works Department.

23.

RAILWAYS

Darling Range Line: Bridge

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is his Department still responsible for the bridge which used to carry the upper Darling Range railway line over the Helena River near the Midland abattoir?
- (2) If so, will he have the rotting timber structure demolished because it appears to be a danger to the many small boys who play on the bridge and along the banks of the river?
- (3) If his department is not responsible for the bridge, will he say who is?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) The area of land on which this bridge is located is now Crown land under the control of the Department of Lands and Surveys.

24.

COMMONWEALTH AID
ROADS FUND*Quota and Expenditure*

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

Under section 8 of the Commonwealth Roads Aid Act 1969—

- (1) What was the State quota for 1969-70, 1970-71 and estimated 1971-72?
- (2) Was the aggregate of amounts expended by the State in excess of the quota in the same years and giving estimate 1971-72?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) State quota for—

		\$
1969-70	....	13,132,765
1970-71	....	14,354,281
1971-72	....	15,275,534

- (2) The aggregate of amounts expended by the State in excess of the quota in the same years, including estimate for 1971-72, is \$854,000.

25. **TRAFFIC CONTROL***Investigating Committee*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has the New Zealand Government's system of traffic control been examined by the committee appointed by the Government as announced at a meeting of the Country Regional Councils' Association in Perth on 30th April, 1971?
- (2) Will he now name the personnel of the committee?
- (3) Is the report available for perusal; if so, would he table a copy?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) No Government committee has been announced or formed to examine the New Zealand Government system of traffic control. However, this system has been examined by departmental officers and the previous Commissioner of Police, Mr. R. T. Napier.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

26. **ABATTOIRS***Trades and Labor Council and Farmers: Subscriptions*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Attorney-General:

- (1) Are the moneys being raised through subscriptions by the T.L.C./U.F.G.A. for a proposed abattoir project the property of each organisation or held jointly by both organisations?
- (2) In the event of this project not going ahead, what security have the subscribers for the return of their funds?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) This information is not known.

27. **ABATTOIRS***Trades and Labor Council and Farmers: Government Finance*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) In view of the slaughtering facilities available and in course of construction together with requests from private investors, does the Government consider the T.L.C./U.F.G.A. proposal worthy of further full investigation?
- (2) If so, for what reasons?
- (3) Has the present Government provided any other project, or is it considering providing any project, other than the T.L.C./U.F.G.A. project, with 100% of required finance?
- (4) If so, what are the projects concerned?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is not this Government's policy to dismiss out of hand any proposal that is placed before it. A recent survey of availability of livestock and killing capacity revealed that after taking into account facilities now under construction, there is still scope for additional abattoirs. A number of abattoir proposals, including the U.F.G.A.-T.L.C., are now under consideration.
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (3).

28. **ABATTOIRS***Midland Junction and Robb Jetty: Throughput*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What numbers of—

- (a) cattle;
 - (b) calves;
 - (c) sheep;
 - (d) lambs;
 - (e) pigs,
- have been slaughtered at—
- (i) Midland;
 - (ii) Robb Jetty;
 - (iii) all other export works,
- from 30th June, 1971 to 31st March, 1972?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

Records show the following—

Number of animals slaughtered and inspected for export from 30th June, 1971 to 31st March, 1972.

	Midland	W.A.M.E. Robb Jetty	All others
Cattle	51,257	43,573	134,350
Calves	635	356	1,898
Sheep	1,119,088	447,768	905,672
Lambs	493,241	537,625	134,336
Pigs	92,220	20,175	95,013

29 and 30. *These questions were postponed.*

31. **MILK ACT***Charges Withdrawn*

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Have any charges been laid against milk treatment companies under the Milk Act within the last six months and subsequently withdrawn?
- (2) If so, what were the reasons for withdrawal of the charges?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes—One.
- (2) A charge was laid as a result of an offence by a treatment company selling milk in a district for

which it held no license on 3rd December, 1971. Subsequently, a merger of two companies was completed resulting in the trade which was the subject of the offence being served under license.

32. **PARLIAMENTARY
COMMISSIONER**
Office Accommodation

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Attorney-General:

- (1) Has the Parliamentary Commissioner yet been allocated office accommodation?
- (2) If so, is that accommodation allocated in the Rural and Industries Bank building?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2) has it been suggested to him that to provide the Parliamentary Commissioner with accommodation in a State owned building mainly occupied by State Government departments, including the Crown Law Department, may not give the impression of impartiality necessary for the proper public attitude to the Commissioner's Office?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

This question should more properly be directed to the Premier who administers the Act. However, I am prepared to answer the question, and I assure the Premier that I will not be putting in any application for overtime in doing so. The answer is—

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

(3) Answered by (2). For the information of the member I would advise that accommodation has been arranged on the first floor of the old Treasury building.

33. **TRAFFIC**

Police Control: Lake Grace

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Did the Press correctly state the situation in regard to Lake Grace after the police takeover of traffic on 1st July, 1971, "that of the first 150 vehicles the police inspected for relicensing only 28 were found to be roadworthy; the other being rejected mainly for defective lighting (particularly on trucks), bald tyres, faulty steering or other dangerous defects"?
- (2) Could these figures be related to any other country area?
- (3) If so, will he give details?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

(3) No. The policy of the Government regarding traffic control has been clearly stated and there is no desire to allow past issues to be continued or developed.

34. **PARLIAMENTARY
COMMISSIONER**

Office Accommodation

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier:
In what building will the Ombudsman and his staff be established?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Accommodation has been arranged on the first floor of the old Treasury building.

35. **DOG RACING**

Effect on Trotting Meetings

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

Having regard for the Government's proposed legislation to allow greyhound racing in Western Australia—

- (1) Has he given consideration to the effect this may have on the sport of trotting in Western Australia?
- (2) If so, what effect will greyhound racing have on trotting?
- (3) Is it proposed to include in the legislation that some protection is afforded the Western Australian Trotting Association?
- (4) Is the Government aware that the W.A.T.A. is allowed only 43 meetings a year compared with the Western Australian Turf Club's 81?
- (5) If "Yes" will the Government give consideration to allowing the W.A.T.A. to race on a number of occasions more comparable with the W.A.T.C.?
- (6) If greyhound racing is held at the Western Australian Cricket Association ground, will the Government ensure that such meetings are not held on the same nights as trotting because of the intolerable traffic parking problems which would result?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Greyhound racing and trotting have, for many years, operated together in Victoria and New South Wales with mutual benefit to both sports.

In fact in some places, both sports share the same course and facilities.

- (3) No.
- (4) W.A.T.A. and Fremantle Trotting Club are allowed 55 metropolitan meetings. W.A.T.C. have not held more than 63 meetings in a single year for the past five years.
- (5) Discussions are being held with the W.A.T.A. at present.
- (6) No decision has been taken concerning a venue or days on which greyhound racing may be held. Metropolitan meetings of greyhound racing and trotting in other States are scheduled to avoid clashes of dates and it seems likely that a similar procedure would be adopted in Western Australia.

36. STAMP DUTY ON RECEIPTS

Refunds: Applications and Amounts

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What number of applications have been received for refund of receipt tax?
- (2) What total amount has been paid out and what sum does he estimate remains to be paid?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) To date, 6,422 applications have been received.
- (2) Nil. Until all applications for refund are received and processed, I am unable to estimate accurately the total amount to be paid.

37. TIMBER *Imports*

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) What is the current amount of imported "Island" timber to Western Australia and the country of origin?
- (2) What is the percentage of imported timber, from all sources, during 1971 as compared with the total timber usage in Western Australia?
- (3) Does the Government intend to initiate any move to decrease the amount of timber imported, and, if so, by what means?
- (4) If (3) is "No" why not?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Imports of "Island" timber into Western Australia during 1970-71 and the country of origin are shown below—

Log timber:		Cubic feet
Indonesia	.....	448,000
Malaysia	.....	351,000
Thailand	.....	2,000

Mainly for use in local production of plywood and veneer.

Sawn timber:		Cubic feet
Malaysia	.....	1,087,000
Thailand	.....	9,000
Singapore	.....	6,000
Indonesia	.....	5,000
Philippines	.....	2,000

- (2) The percentage of imported sawn timber from all sources, as compared with total sawn timber consumption during 1970-71 was 9%.
- (3) Action is not contemplated at this stage, as control can only be effected by the Commonwealth Government applying selective tariffs.
- (4) Answered by (3).

38. WATER CATCHMENTS

Cowaramup River and Willyabrup Brook

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the Public Works Department undertaken any investigation of the—
 - (a) Cowaramup River;
 - (b) Willyabrup Brook,
 with regard to assessment as water catchment areas?
- (2) If "Yes" when was investigation commenced, and what results have been achieved to date?

Mr. T. D. EVANS (for Mr. Jamieson) replied:

- (1) Some preliminary studies have been made with a view to making an assessment of the water resources of both the Cowaramup and Willyabrup Rivers.
- (2) It is proposed to construct a gauging weir on the Cowaramup River next financial year provided that the current investigations locate a suitable site.

39. *This question was postponed.*

QUESTIONS (4): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Officers to Benefit

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Premier:

- (1) How many officers would benefit from the passing into law of the Bill now before the House to amend the Public Service Act?
- (2) Are any of these officers permanent heads of departments and, if so, of which departments?
- (3) What are the classifications of each of the other officers who would benefit and in which departments are they employed?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (3) This information will take some time to collate. The honourable member will be advised as soon as it is available.

2. POLICE FORCE

Maximum Personnel

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) What is the maximum number of police that can be employed in the W.A. Police Force under the present regulations?
- (2) Are there more employed than actually authorised?
- (3) Is there a surplus of police to cope with normal police duties at present?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

On behalf of the Minister for Police I thank the member for Mr. Lawley for some notice of this question, the reply to which is as follows:—

- (1) Authorised strength—1,650.
- (2) Yes. To provide against wastage.
- (3) No.

3. IRON ORE AGREEMENTS

Mount Bruce and Wittenoom: Tabling of Plan

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

Will the Minister table a copy of plan "A" which was mentioned in the Mount Bruce and Wittenoom iron ore agreement Bills?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

I am unable to recall having made mention of any plan when I introduced the Bills. I can only suggest that the honourable member misunderstood something I said when I indicated that the company would be required to employ a town planner to prepare a plan of a town.

Mr. Thompson: Mention is made of the area marked in red on plan "A" as being the portions which are subject to be mined.

Mr. GRAHAM: I will have the matter checked but I have no recollection of it. Perhaps the member for Darling Range would be good enough to draw my attention to my alleged statement.

4. TEACHER EDUCATION

Tertiary Education Commission: Recommendations

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

Will the recommendations of the Tertiary Education Commission concerning teacher education, referred to in this morning's issue of *The West Australian*, be made available to the House?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

Yes.

BILLS (2): MESSAGES

Appropriations

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

1. District Court of Western Australia Act Amendment Bill.
2. Iron Ore (Rhodes Ridge) Agreement Authorization Bill.

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. T. D. Evans (Attorney-General), and transmitted to the Council.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Attorney-General [5.03 p.m.]): I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I would like to comment on a statement made last evening by the member for Floreat when speaking in relation to clause 16 of this Bill. The member for Floreat mentioned questions he had asked regarding the incidence of offences referred to under clause 16, and the answers given to those questions.

I sought information from the Crown Law Department and members will probably have observed the Clerk hand a document to me. The document is the advice I have received from the Crown Law Department, and is to the effect that question 2 specifically asked for statistical information covering the past 20 years. It is submitted that having answered that statistical information has been recorded only since 1964, it was reasonable to expect that the answer to part (2) would be accepted as an opinion and not a statistically confirmed answer.

The honourable member stated that the figures quoted by the Minister for Works (Mr. Jamieson) on my behalf on the 20th April, 1972, revealed an increase of 360 per cent. in offences from 1964 to 1967. The relevant figures are from 2,888 to 4,799, an increase of 66 per cent.

Subsequently, the member for Floreat gave details of the number of complaints in the years 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1970, and stated that the number of complaints in 1970—as given in the answer on the 12th April, 1972—was 8,042 which represented an increase of 360 per cent. on the number of complaints made in 1964—namely, 2,888.

The actual increase, by comparison, was 178 per cent. I think the House should be made aware of the situation as it really exists, and having said that I commend the third reading of the Bill.

MR. MENSAROS (Floreat) [5.05 p.m.]: The Attorney-General might have overlooked the fact that when dealing with clause 16 I mentioned the statistics relating to clause 19. So the figures I quoted regarding the answers given to me by the Minister for Works, on behalf of the Attorney-General, actually related to breaking and entering. I mentioned them while dealing with clause 16, and I mentioned that fact, which is recorded in *Hansard*.

I was rather surprised to find that the Child Welfare Act Amendment Bill had been discharged from the notice paper in another place.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Yes, it was discharged simply by mistake.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara—Minister for Housing) [5.09 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill will amend the State Housing Act in three important respects; namely in regard to—

the eligibility of persons seeking housing assistance under the legislation;

increasing the amount which the commission may advance to an eligible applicant wishing to build or purchase a dwelling; and

enlarging the Act so that the State can make financial advances to building societies, and like institutions, in accordance with the new housing finance measures unilaterally determined by the Commonwealth for the quinquennial period from 1971-72 to 1975-76.

The measure will also amend the Act to grant rental rebates to tenant families whose limited means preclude them from paying assessed rentals without experiencing financial hardship.

It has become increasingly obvious over recent years that the existing income levels set for eligibility for State Housing Commission assistance have been excluding more and more of the lower income community from assistance. This has been brought about mainly through the present levels of income applicable, which are as follows:—

\$2,956.28 per annum for the metropolitan region;

\$3,468.39 per annum for the country regions south of the 26th parallel; and

\$5,535.39 per annum for that portion of the State north of the 26th parallel.

The maximum levels of income have not kept in line with the upward movements of wages and prices, despite the eligibility being increased slightly through an increase in the basic wage, and an extension of the additional allowance of \$100 per annum for each dependant child under the age of 16 years to cover dependant children under the age of 21 years.

For some time it has been considered that the eligibility for State Housing Commission assistance should be reviewed annually, taking into account all those factors which influence a person's ability to obtain a home. Those factors would include the wide differences in prices which apply between the various geographic regions of this State.

The main factors are—

the cost of the various types of housing built by the Government, local government, co-operatives, and private enterprise in any region or part of the State;

the wage and income levels existing therein; and

the socio-economic aspects which are likely to have a bearing on the question; namely,

the extent of funds likely to be available for public housing;

the waiting period compared with the time required for an applicant to be satisfied through other than the Government sector; and interest rates and the term of repayment.

Briefly, it will be seen that the geographic spread of costs in this State necessitates an annual review, and advice to the Government of the day regarding the level of income which should be set for eligibility for State Housing Commission assistance.

In undertaking such a review cognisance will be taken of the capacities and policies of the building society movement, the savings banks, insurance companies, and all other home-finance agencies. The

effect of the operations of the Housing Loan Guarantee Corporation, the home savings grant, and the Housing Loan Guarantee Act will also be taken into account when considering the elimination of risk in high ratio loans to home buyers of moderate means.

Such consideration will ensure a more comprehensive review of demand-needs and resources than has been the case in the past. Naturally, the review will take into account the new home finance arrangements which have been finalised between the Commonwealth and the States for the five-year period from 1971-72 to 1975-76.

A further aspect of the question of eligibility is that the State Housing Act has been in existence in this State since 1947—and it followed the Workers' Homes Board legislation which came into being in 1912—and it has always been accepted that a tradesman would be eligible for State housing assistance.

This very long-standing traditional assistance has been denied to tradesmen during the last few years. The Government has approved the principle of eligibility being restored to a tradesman, and to those workers with an equitable pay standard for a 40-hour week.

It is interesting to note that when the Commonwealth presented its new ideas on financing State or public housing it stressed that housing grants would have to apply to housing built and financed by building societies and similar institutions which received State advances and consequential grants.

It was repeatedly stressed by the Commonwealth that the grant was designed to assist with the provision of welfare housing which, it will be noted from subsequent explanation, included advances made to building societies for the purpose of assisting those on a moderate income to obtain their own homes.

The Government and the commission, therefore, believe that a "tradesman" quite accurately comes within the scope of moderate income and should be eligible for both State housing and that financed by building societies operating under the State home builders' account scheme. In fact, this higher level of eligibility will assist the financial security of both societies and the commission.

It is appreciated by the Government and the commission that higher levels of "eligibility" for the three principal divisions of the State could bring increased demand upon the State Housing Commission. However, it is now apparent that today's home-seeking public is aware of the many avenues, particularly those of the building societies and savings banks, open to obtain a home on low deposits, longer terms, and now assisted by interest rates brought

about through guarantee, indemnity, mortgage, insurance, and interest subsidisation applying to a very much higher percentage of the community than when the State housing schemes emerged at the close of World War II.

It should be borne in mind that with the numerous avenues now available to satisfy a desire for improved housing, it will be open for a Government and its housing authority to consider, should circumstances so warrant, the introduction of needs criteria as a means of regulating the housing demand upon the public sector.

Over recent years, it appears that about half the metropolitan applicants who have been housed by the commission have constituted demand; the remaining 50 per cent. being real need and, at times, real and urgent need, which continues to be met promptly where proven.

Turning to the increase in the amount which can be advanced or loaned by the commission on mortgage security, it will be apparent that the present level of building costs needs to be recognised.

At present, the ceiling is \$8,000—having been last fixed in the mid-sixties. As building costs of commission homes have been increasing around 3 per cent. per annum, it is believed there is every justification to lift the ceiling to \$9,000.

Over recent years this provision has not been extensively used—possibly because of high land costs which have led applicants to look to buying a group house erected on commission land. Nonetheless, it is considered the provision should be updated so that an eligible individual who has saved a substantial deposit and provided his own land can be assisted. Incidentally, this figure equates that recently approved for war service homes assistance.

Before dealing with the provision of powers to establish a State home builders' account, I would like to outline the Commonwealth's proposals as presented at three separate meetings between the Commonwealth and States before the State Grants (Housing) Scheme was accepted.

Between 1945 and 1971, housing finance for the States was provided by the Commonwealth after each State had indicated what percentage of its approved works and housing loan programme it desired for housing purposes. This money was made available over 53 years on equated repayments with interest, since 1956, being 1 per cent. below the long-term bond rate obtaining as at the date of borrowing. Under this arrangement, the Commonwealth was responsible for the whole of the sinking fund arrangements—whereas under normal loan financing this is shared between the Commonwealth and the State.

In late 1970, a conference—called by the Commonwealth Department of Housing—of experienced housing officials, discussed

the essentials for a new housing agreement in view of the 1966 agreement of five-years' duration expiring on the 30th June, 1971.

Nothing transpired at that meeting which gave the States any lead that an entirely new approach was likely to be presented to the States in 1971. In fact, it seemed fairly certain that the States could expect the Commonwealth Minister to outline, or at least discuss, the Commonwealth's ideas at the Housing Ministers' Conference proposed for Hobart in early 1971, which never eventuated because of ministerial changes following the change in Prime Ministership.

As there were no imminent leads of any new concepts, this State—when presenting its 1971-72 loan programme for Commonwealth review prior to the Loan Council meeting—proposed, as it had done for many years, that it would only require \$12,500,000 under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, 1966.

After the agreement expired, the Commonwealth introduced "stop-gap" legislation which enabled it to make funds available to the States for housing purposes. At no stage did the Commonwealth officially write to this State and outline its new concept on housing finance, though it is understood that a very "broad band" explanation was outlined by the Prime Minister at the close of Loan Council proceedings.

On the 27th August, 1971—for the benefit of members that happens to be my birthday—the Commonwealth Minister met State Housing Ministers and their officers in Canberra, and released the Commonwealth's new concept that for a five-year period commencing from the 1st July, 1971, the States would receive, firstly, a housing assistance grant and, secondly, a rental assistance grant—provided the State allocated 30 per cent. of its advances for welfare housing to building societies, which were to receive also 30 per cent. of the housing assistance grant.

It was explained that the housing assistance grant would, in the Commonwealth's view and calculations, allow the States to reduce interest rates by at least 1 per cent. below the long-term bond rate applicable at the time the State borrowed.

As there had been inadequate time fully to study the ramifications of the new scheme, and the proposals had been unilaterally prepared by the Commonwealth, despite earlier appearances of co-operation with the States on any new housing financing, the State Ministers unanimously walked out of the conference, which I think was rather rude.

Mr. Taylor: On the contrary.

Mr. BICKERTON: Western Australia had the further objection that the Commonwealth had fixed its share of the hous-

ing assistance grant and the rental assistance grant on the basis that its welfare housing—so repeatedly called by the Commonwealth Minister—was serviced by the advances made under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement.

In other words, out of a Budget provision of \$20,500,000 which came within the ambit of the Commonwealth's definition of welfare housing, this State's share was based on \$12,500,000 which meant that the resultant share of the housing assistance grant, when applied to interest reduction of funds allocated to both the societies and the commission, would be less than the minimum 1 per cent. benefit claimed by the Commonwealth.

The rental assistance grant was also adversely affected through the Commonwealth's incorrect assumption that this State's welfare housing programmes were financed only by Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement advances, and not as was the long-standing practice to use both Commonwealth-State advances but also loans from State loan funds by the issue of State Housing Commission debentures and domestically generated funds. Queensland was similarly disadvantaged when compared with the other States which substantially relied on Commonwealth-State funds for their public or welfare housing programmes.

At a subsequent officers' conference, much of the inequity to this State was eliminated. There followed a second meeting of State Ministers in Sydney with the Commonwealth Minister and this resulted in the States accepting the new proposal with some protest—despite the assurance of the Commonwealth Minister that the Commonwealth would not interfere with the States in the conduct of the new arrangements, where such were certificated by the Auditor-General as being in accord with the basic requirements of the two grants which are, in effect, interest subsidisation on the one hand, and rental rebating on the other.

Apparently, the Commonwealth also recognised that its earlier requirement of 30 per cent. of the whole of the State's loan funds being channelled into welfare housing was too demanding and, therefore, proposed that as there had been inadequate time, or notice, for altering its planned programme for the year 1971-72 it would limit the percentage to 24.1 per cent. which proposal was not objected to by the other States and consequently accepted by this State.

Throughout the three conferences, the Commonwealth—through its Housing Minister and its officers—was adamant it would not accept any variation of its original proposed method of housing and rental assistance grants for what it constantly referred to in discussion—but not in its legislation—as welfare housing.

However, throughout the third and final meeting, apparently because of concern that the States might again refuse the scheme, the Commonwealth Minister often stated that the new arrangements were flexible and the States would be subject to the minimal Commonwealth interference.

In recent weeks, it has been stated in this House that this State's operation breaches the Commonwealth scheme because of the fact that 50 per cent. of the new State—and not Commonwealth and State—home builders' account can be used by societies for financing housing for home purchasers on exactly the same terms and conditions as applied when societies received 30 per cent. of the Commonwealth-State home builders' account.

Simple calculation will disclose that after the first year, societies will receive advances at much the same level to allocate as they did under the 1956-1971 agreements.

In regard to the other 50 per cent. of the State home builders' account, attention is drawn to the fact that, for some years past, it has been recognised that, because of the tremendous growth of the building society operation and funds in this State enabling the movement to finance over two-thirds of metropolitan housing, the real unsatisfied housing need lies in the low or limited income groups which includes migrants and many young marrieds, who have to rely heavily on the State Housing Commission provision of both purchase and rental housing.

It will also be recalled that the previous Government during its last years of office had rightly authorised the commission to increase its programmes so that this demand and need might be adequately met as well as providing employment for builders and tradesmen who were looking for construction work through having substantially met demand and needs of the moderate and higher income market. This build-up of both applications and programmes for purchase dwellings of modest design, but of sound construction—and, thus, security—was one which this State had to consider when the Commonwealth made its unilateral and, as stated, unalterable scheme known.

Publicity as to programme intentions had to be taken into account as builders and the industry in general looked to the commission to continue to service the demand and needs of the lower income groups.

This situation was comprehensively conveyed to the Commonwealth by the State and resulted in approval of the State's scheme of requiring the building societies financing from the remaining 50 per cent. of the State home builders' account, houses built by the commission for eligible applicants under the State Housing Act.

Without this arrangement, the commission would not have been able to continue to provide the volume of low-cost housing which was then in the greatest need, and continues to be in the greatest need now.

It will be seen that societies, which were consulted prior to this scheme being implemented, are in a better position than under the old Commonwealth-State arrangements, as they receive greater advances and grants than hitherto, and have a larger pool of clients—all of whom they can screen before approval. This does not always apply to the commission.

For both arrangements, the societies will receive their 30 per cent. share of the grant, which is all the Commonwealth legislation requires. This part of the scheme is no different from that of an acceptable client asking a society to finance a home built by a project builder and made available for sale through a selling agency.

It has been necessary, in view of the uncertainties expressed in this House, to go into some considerable explanation of the background and reasons for this State's approach to the State home builders' account, and the housing assistance grant allied thereto. This would not have been necessary had the Commonwealth fixed the size of the grants, particularly the housing assistance grant, realistically to the funds allocated by this State to welfare housing by consultation and not unilateral action.

Continuing with the explanation of the housing assistance and rental assistance grants, the first is in reality a rather complicated formula—due to sinking fund contribution considerations between the Commonwealth and the States—for reducing interest rates for housing finance and housing provided by State housing authorities and building societies and approved institutions, and for persons on low and moderate incomes.

This grant shows that the Commonwealth recognised the need to assist such home purchasers with what is, in effect, an interest subsidy. Because it was to the benefit of the income groups which need such support most, the States finally accepted the Commonwealth's proposal, which results in this State receiving in each year a fixed percentage of 11.4 per cent. of the total grant of \$2,750,000, fixed by the Commonwealth for each of the five financial years 1971-72 to 1975-76.

The Bill sets out in detail how the State home builders' account will be conducted to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth Act—the States Grants (Housing) Act, 1971—and to provide that protection and security for public moneys advanced under specific conditions from that account.

The protection and security powers parallel those contained in the expired Commonwealth and State Housing Agreements 1956-1966.

It will be appreciated that the creation of large-scale housing estates can lead to delays in the issue of individual titles for home sites. Therefore, where societies and other approved institutions operating under the State's approved employment of the housing assistance grant are unable to have a title as required by the Building Societies Act, authority has been given for the societies to make advances to low and moderate income families so that they are not delayed in taking occupancy of their new homes. Thus societies will be able to lend without security of a first mortgage, but only where the title for the land built on is held by the commission pending the issue of a new title, which will be issued to the society for security endorsement upon being available.

The rental assistance grant requires some explanation. The original Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, 1945-1955, provided that rental rebates could be granted to tenants whose family income precluded them from paying the economic rent without undue hardship. The cost of the rebate was shared between the Commonwealth, three-fifths, and the State, two-fifths.

It was a significant aid to low-income tenants such as pensioners of all categories, deserted wives, or widows with dependent children, and low-income workers—particularly in difficult economic times. It materially assisted the States to provide housing without undue burdening of the States' limited finances so often required for other social urgencies.

In 1956 and subsequent agreements, the Commonwealth terminated the rebate arrangements, and indicated that an interest subsidy of 1 per cent. should compensate the States for any rebates they might care to make.

This State continued to grant rebates, which are currently charged against the commission's revenue to the tune of \$600,000 per annum. Because of the growing size of the cost of rebates through spread of operations into remote localities and the increased number of unfortunate families which are housed by the commission, this State—with all others—has for many years been pressing the Commonwealth to revert to, or implement, a rebate system similar to that operated under the 1945 agreement.

At long last the Commonwealth has responded to repeated representation and, in this case, has provided that this State will receive 11.5 per cent. of an annual rental assistance grant of \$1,250,000.

This grant can be used to reduce rents of homes occupied by families unable to pay the rents fixed under the 1956-1966 agreements, and under the new arrangements where the State Minister deems that such rebate is necessary. As previous rebating was carried out under the authority

of the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreements, which have now expired, it will be seen there is need for a power for the Minister to set criteria for granting rebates to tenants of commission homes.

As advances have been made from the State home builders' account already, acting in the public interest to assist the building industry and meet demand from intending home purchasers, provision has been made in the Bill validating what has been done pending these proposed amendments becoming operative.

I apologise to the House for such a long dissertation but I feel it is necessary in the circumstances. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Williams.

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara—Minister for Housing) [5.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Traffic Act, 1919-1970 to provide for—

- (1) payment of the difference in license fees appropriate to the unexpired portion of the license instead of returning the license and number plates when a vehicle subject to a concession in fees is disposed of;
- (2) authority for the Commissioner of Police to appoint any person with limited powers for the purpose of carrying out duties of crosswalk attendants or vehicle examiners;
- (3) the reduction in fees for a pensioner's license to drive a motor vehicle other than a passenger vehicle from \$3 to \$1;
- (4) variation of conditions and limitations of drivers' licenses issued by order of the court on appeal following refusal by the Commissioner of Police to issue or renew a license or where he has cancelled or suspended a license under section 24 of the Act.

The first measure, providing for the payment of a difference in fee where a concession has been issued under section 11 of the Traffic Act and the vehicle is disposed of to another person, relates to section 16 of the Act. Under that section a person is at present required to return the license and number plates to the licensing authority when he disposes of the vehicle. There is little doubt that

under subsection (8) of section 11 of the Act, it was intended a person should be able to convert the license to full rates instead of returning the number plates when he disposes of the vehicle, and the proposed amendment is to remove any ambiguity.

Under the Police Act the Commissioner of Police may, subject to the approval of the Governor, appoint noncommissioned police officers with extensive powers under the various Acts which they are required to enforce. For a number of years crosswalk attendants have been appointed to carry out duties on school crosswalks, and recently civilian vehicle examiners have been appointed to replace police officers carrying out inspection of motor vehicles for licensing purposes. It is necessary to give crosswalk attendants and vehicle examiners authority under the Traffic Act to carry out their duties, and it has been the practice to seek the approval of the Minister for their appointment as traffic inspectors under this Act.

In view of the numbers of such appointments it is now desired to give the Commissioner of Police authority to appoint these persons as crosswalk attendants and vehicle examiners. There is no intention of interfering with the power of country local authorities to appoint traffic inspectors in their districts—not at this stage.

For the purpose of cancellation of the authority of these persons when they leave the job, provision has been made for the revocation by the Commissioner of Police of any appointments previously made under the authority of the Minister.

It was originally intended to exempt aged pensioners from the \$3 increase in the surcharge on motor vehicle registrations, but some major problems were experienced with this proposal which would have made its implementation difficult.

At present there are no means of identifying the owners of motor vehicles, according to age, invalidity, or pension. Also, not all motor vehicle registrations are handled by the Police Department—most local authorities outside the metropolitan area register local vehicles and keep independent records. The continual change in vehicle ownership will lead to much higher administrative costs because under this scheme transfers by pensioners will have to be noted separately in order to maintain an up-to-date record of eligibility.

Finally, it would be very difficult to prevent a tendency for the relatives of pensioners to register their vehicles in the pensioners' names to take advantage of the concession.

A reduction from \$3 to \$1 in the annual renewal fee of motor drivers' licenses would in all probability be a more valuable con-

cession to pensioners, especially in the case where both husband and wife hold licenses.

The identification of pensioners eligible to receive this concession would present no administration difficulties provided the concession is granted upon application.

At present a person who is convicted of an offence in connection with the driving of a motor vehicle may apply to a magistrate in a court of petty sessions for the removal of the suspension and the issue of an extraordinary license. In directing the Commissioner of Police to issue an extraordinary license, the court is required to impose such limitations and conditions as it thinks proper. Provision is also made for application to the court for variation or cancellation of the limitations or conditions during the currency of the extraordinary license.

Where the Commissioner of Police refuses, under section 24 of the Traffic Act, to issue or renew a driver's licence, or cancels or suspends a license, provision is made for appeal to the court and the issue of a license subject to conditions and limitations as it thinks fit. However, no provision exists for the variation of the conditions and limitations during the term of the license and the Law Society has drawn attention to an anomaly between sections 24 and 33A of the Act. The Commissioner of Police agrees with the proposed amendment which gives the court power to vary the limitations or conditions of a license issued under section 24.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Blaikie.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd March.

MR. R. L. YOUNG (Wembley) [5.45 p.m.]: This Bill deals with the Public Trust Office which was established in 1941 to take over the office of Official Trustee and the office of Curator of Intestate Estates. Over the 30 years the office has operated, the Public Trustee has dealt with, and administered, the estates of thousands of people; not only deceased estates but also has managed the affairs of handicapped persons, incapable persons, minors, and the like. The Public Trustee also acts as an agency under powers of attorney and the like when the occasion warrants.

To some extent the office of Public Trustee is, in effect, a social service office, and as such we would not necessarily think that the office would be one which had to compete with the other two trustee offices in the State, nor would one expect that the office should profit from the management of the affairs of estates it

administers. In the latter part of this speech I intend to demonstrate that this situation does exist to some extent and that Consolidated Revenue does in fact benefit to some degree from the workings of the Public Trust Office.

The purpose of the Bill is, firstly, to fix the rate of commission payable to the Public Trustee by regulation rather than have a ceiling limit built into the Act as it exists at the moment. In his second reading speech the Attorney-General gave notice that he will, by regulation, increase the fees payable to the Public Trustee from 2½ per cent. to 3 per cent. In the first instance one would think that the values of the various estates would increase year by year, and therefore if the percentage chargeable was left at 2½ per cent. the administration costs of the Public Trust Office would be met comfortably out of the income derived from the various estates.

Having looked at the figures, and having discussed this point with people who are acquainted with these matters at present, it appears to me that this has not happened, and therefore, to some extent, the Public Trust Office is entitled to impose a higher charge than it is currently imposing.

Secondly, the Attorney-General has given notice that, by regulation, he will implement charges for special work that is carried out on individual estates or trusts administered by the Public Trust Office. The third purpose of the Bill is to allow the Public Trustee to draw commission from the common fund of the Public Trust Office.

In respect of the first part of the Bill, I would make it clear that I am opposed in principle to the theory of government by regulation, and I think that, wherever possible, the Act should state the circumstances, particularly in relation to the charges that will be enforced, rather than leave the matter in the hands of the Minister to make charges by regulation from time to time.

I think it should be borne in mind that the Public Trustee has operated under the present legislation since 1941. Therefore, for 30 years apparently, there has been no need to change the rate of commission he is entitled to charge under the Act. As a result it would seem to be reasonable to think it strange that suddenly it becomes necessary to give the Minister power to regulate the rate of commission the Public Trustee may charge, especially when one considers that this power in Western Australia is probably given to the Minister only for expediency and to avoid the necessity of his coming to Parliament every time he wishes to make a change. I put it to the Minister that if the Act can be administered for 30 years, with a ceiling rate of commission written into it, it does not seem necessary for the Minister to have

the power to change that rate of commission by regulation. For those reasons I will move in Committee to amend the Bill so that the Public Trustee will have the right to charge up to 3 per cent. on corpus, or the capital value of the estate, rather than the 2½ per cent. he is presently entitled to charge.

If the amendment is accepted and put into effect, the Government will not only be denied the power to fix the rate of commission on corpus by regulation, but also will be denied the right to fix charges for the specific work performed on individual estates, for reasons I will outline shortly.

It is interesting to note that in his second reading speech the Attorney-General did state—and I point this out to him only by way of reference—

The time and expense involved in investigations to settle next-of-kin should be a charge against the particular estate to avoid the need to fix an overall rate at the expense of other estates where such investigations are not required.

I point out to the Attorney-General that the other two trustee companies do not have the power to charge for that sort of work, and if the Bill goes through Parliament and is proclaimed, it will be worth having a look at the work performed by the other two companies.

It could be argued that to charge for specific work on individual estates would spread the load more equitably, but considering the estates administered by the Public Trustee, and in pursuing that line of philosophy, certain factors should be borne in mind. Firstly, as I pointed out at the beginning of my speech, the Public Trust Office is, to some extent, rendering a social service. It is set up so that if beneficiaries of an estate suddenly find themselves confronted with a situation which must of necessity be controlled by the strictest rules and regulations, they can go to somebody who will be able to assist them in the administration of the estate in which they are interested. When the Public Trust Office was set up these people were not the kind who would have, say, a family lawyer, an accountant, or someone they could turn to in the circumstances.

Secondly, I think it is fairly clear that the load cannot be spread equitably no matter how hard we try; because even if the Act were to remain exactly as it is it could be argued that very large estates, for instance, will pay a commission rate of 2½ per cent. on corpus of the estate. I have dealt with some of these estates myself in a professional capacity and, in some cases, by virtue of the efficiency and competence of the deceased, they are very easy to administer, because everything is tidy, neat, and clean, and there are no

problems. On the other hand, one may have to deal with a very small estate which causes endless trouble and, to put it quite frankly, it is in a mess so far as administration is concerned. I think the Attorney-General's attitude to that will be, "Therefore, give us the right to make specific charges for specific work." I refute that by saying that what would happen is that the estate would come under the administration of the Public Trust Office, which would not be able to tell the beneficiaries concerned what they would be liable for in regard to the payment of fees. No matter how one looks at the question we would not get an equitable spread of charges for the work done.

I suggest that to charge on a time basis for a social service cannot be done, and I regard the work performed by the Public Trust Office as a form of social service. I cannot think of any instance where a social service is charged for on a time basis. Further, as I said at the beginning of my speech, the office of the Public Trustee should not necessarily be called upon to be a competitor with the other trustee companies set up under their respective Acts; namely, the West Australian Trustee, Executor and Agency Company Limited Act, and the Perpetual Executors, Trustees and Agency Company (W.A.) Limited Act. I might mention that both of these companies have excellent records of administration in exactly the same field in which the Public Trustee operates. For the information of members, they are both administered under their respective Acts and have rendered excellent service to the people whose estates they have administered over the many years they have been in existence.

The fifth point I would make in regard to this kind of charge for specific work, and my suggestion that the Public Trustee is unable to spread the work equitably in any event, is that the testator at the time he appoints the Public Trustee to be his executor must, by virtue of the fact that he is dealing with a public office, have the right to know, as closely as can be ascertained, what expenses he will have to meet for the administration of that estate. That is most important when anyone is dealing with a public office.

Mr. Brady: Would you apply that to people who have estates in Europe or in other places?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: It does not make any difference where the estates are. The same sort of work has to be done regardless of where the trustee is; whether the estate is in the Eastern States or in Europe, the principle remains the same.

In regard to the second part of the Bill, I think some financial analysis is necessary, and I would therefore like to quote some figures to the House. This is the part

of the Bill which gives the Public Trustee the power to draw commission on the income of the common fund.

I have taken out some figures for the period from 1966 to 1971, and these will be given to the House in round figures of thousands of dollars. The cost of administration of the Public Trust Office over that six-year period was \$2,145,000. The amount of commissions and fees earned by the Public Trustee over that period was \$1,572,000, which gave an administrative deficiency of \$573,000. Shifting from there to the common fund, over the six-year period the common fund earned, in interest, a total of \$2,646,000, but distributed to beneficiaries \$1,760,000, and created a stabilisation fund amounting to \$150,000, for the purpose of stabilising future dividends to beneficiaries. This left \$736,000 in excess from the common fund.

So on the one hand the estates would not return, over a period of six years, sufficient income to the Public Trustee to meet his costs by \$573,000; but on the other hand, the common fund, over the same period, earned \$736,000 that was not paid out to beneficiaries. In other words, Consolidated Revenue profited by \$163,000 over that period, and the stabilisation fund profited by \$150,000. So the Public Trustee made a profit of \$313,000 over a period of six years.

The beneficiary, therefore, does not pay enough on the administration of the estate, and he misses out on some interest on his assets to make up for it. If the Public Trustee is given the right to charge fees on income from the common fund; firstly, his commissions increase, thus reducing the administrative deficiency; and, secondly, the beneficiary will receive a little more from the common fund, because the trustee will have less deficiency to fund.

It may seem that it does not matter much whether the Public Trustee has the right to charge interest on the common fund income or not, because he is simply operating in the form of robbing Peter to pay Paul. If his administration costs fall short, he turns to the common fund and he plucks from that whatever his shortfall is in administration. This has been the practice over a number of years, and if one checks the figures over past years it is found that this practice is almost diabolical in its application.

What does appear to me to make a difference is whether or not the assets of the common fund are returning sufficient income overall. At the 30th June, 1971, the assets of the common fund were invested as follows:—

Mortgages—16 per cent. of all funds.

State Instrumentalities—52 per cent. of all funds.

Real estate—19 per cent. of all funds.

Other investments—13 per cent. of all funds.

These investments returned to beneficiaries an average of about 5 per cent. or a little over.

By comparison the Perpetual Trustee invests all of the company's common fund money in mortgages. For the year ended the 30th June, 1971, and for some prior years, he has been able to pay beneficiaries approximately 8 per cent. or a little over. The West Australian Trustee, who has 62 per cent. of his common fund invested in mortgages, 30 per cent. in Commonwealth or State securities, and 8 per cent. in bank deposits, has paid to beneficiaries 7 per cent. on short-term investments and 9 per cent. on long-term investments. I estimate that with a more enlightened approach to investments the Public Trustee will not need to increase his income as outlined in the Bill, and I suggest to the Attorney-General that he could increase his income by something between \$100,000 and \$150,000 a year by such an enlightened approach.

I suggest this more enlightened approach might be to invest a great deal more in mortgages and to take a considerable amount of money out of public State instrumentality investment. This would, firstly, overcome the necessity for increased charges which I pointed out; and, secondly, it would provide mortgage money for capital works and thereby stimulate employment in the building industry.

It should be remembered that the Public Trust Office was established to protect the little man and it has done that job very well for 30 years or more. However it should also be remembered that the resources available to the Public Trustee are, in fact, not the resources of the little man, because invariably he is dead, but are the resources of the little man's widow, who is left; and of necessity we should consider that these estates cannot stand to pay any more than the barest minimum.

I recognise the fact that the Public Trustee is entitled to an increase in charges, and I recognise that under the amendment I intend to move in Committee. We could consider the possibility that in addition to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. increase in commission on corpus, there might be a little money available from the assets of the common fund were they better invested. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that the funds are better invested.

The State instrumentalities have had the benefit of a considerable amount of investment. On the 30th June, 1971, it was 52 per cent. of the total investment by the common fund, and State Government instrumentalities had somewhere near \$5,000,000 or more invested in them by this fund. State instrumentalities could perhaps stand a little firmer on their own two

feet, and with heavier emphasis on mortgage investment by the Public Trustee, no necessity should exist for an increase over and above the $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I propose.

The reasons I have submitted in regard to special charges for special work should be acceptable to the House because, as I have said, no matter what we do we would never be able to charge for public services on a time basis. I give notice to the Attorney-General that, in Committee, I will be moving an amendment to clause 3.

MR. MENSAROS (Floreat) [6.05 p.m.]: I must commend the member for Wembley for the study he made of this measure and the very useful figures he gave. However, I must admit that I am at odds with some of the thoughts expressed on this measure which sets out to increase the charges of the Public Trustee upon the Minister's pleasure.

If I were a Labor member in the Opposition and this Bill had been introduced by a Liberal Government, I would have no hesitation in opposing it with great vigour. If this were the case I could easily cite the pious words of the Attorney-General who said in his second reading speech that other matters, including some of a social service nature, are undertaken by the Public Trustee, and that when required, the affairs of incapable persons are administered by the Public Trustee who also undertakes investment of money under the control of the courts and the Workers' Compensation Board. He also said that persons may appoint the Public Trustee to act on their behalf and that these services could not readily be undertaken by any other organisation.

I could say that for these laudable services the Government proposes to increase the Public Trustee's charges. I could say that the proposed amendment to section 38 of the Public Trustee Act to delete all limits on charges, is really rather startling. I could go on to say that this is the first time that such a thing has ever been done for any statutory trustee. The private trustee companies are limited by the Statutes and must manage within these limits.

Mr. T. D. Evans: What is that upper limit?

Mr. MENSAROS: It is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on corpus and 5 per cent. on income.

Mr. T. D. Evans: What is the upper limit for the other two statutory companies?

Mr. MENSAROS: As far as I understand it, it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on corpus and 5 per cent. on income.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You had better have a look at the two Acts. You are out of date.

Mr. MENSAROS: I am prepared to be corrected.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You are out of date.

Mr. MENSAROS: I could be. I could continue and say that this is what the Public Trustee is now abandoning, and should this measure be passed, the sky will be the upper limit.

I could also point out that, with monetary inflation incomes, estates have higher values, and consequently the set 2½ per cent. charge automatically increases with the increase of values. Although the member for Wembley said this is not quite so, I cannot imagine the estates handled by the Public Trustee would have decreased in value to such a small amount that the monetary inflation would not have increased the value of the charges.

I could go through other professions and occupations which charge a percentage fee and show that the Attorney-General's argument about high costs and the time involved in certain cases, as he mentioned, in searching for relatives, is not valid because in every profession some cases are easier and some are harder to handle. A legal practitioner who in some conveyance work charges a percentage handles one case in a very short time with comparative ease, and another is complicated. The same applies to an estate agent who executes a sale with perhaps one day's work in one case, but on other occasions he has to spend 10 times as much time over months and months before he can make a sale, but he gets the same percentage in commission.

I could do all this and, as I said, easily oppose this legislation, but being a Liberal member upholding Liberal principles I must support it because the net result of the measure will, in fact, be that the Public Trustee will be more competitive and, therefore, in the whole field more competition will enter; and also it will mean that the Public Trustee possibly will be less of a charge on revenue, which is a very sound and healthy principle. For these reasons I could not, in conscience, oppose the measure.

One other remark which I must make in connection with the common fund—and this was pointed out by the member for Wembley—is that the return for those unfortunate deposits which find their way to the Public Trustee is about half as much as the return for those which go to the private companies; because, as far as I understand—and again I am open to correction—the average return to the Public Trustee is around 4 to 5 per cent., whereas the private companies return about 8 or 8.36 per cent. on the common fund.

Searching for reasons for this I asked a question which revealed that more than half this common fund is accommodated by lending to State instrumentalities. It is somewhat puzzling that on some other occasions—I bear in mind, for instance, daylight saving which the Government

wanted to achieve in the State with the most sunshine—tremendous concern has been felt about a fraction of a percentage interest which could be gained. At the same time the Public Trustee's common fund serves certain Government instrumentalities and returns a very low percentage indeed. For these reasons, as I mentioned before, I believe this Bill reflects Liberal Party principles from the point of view of competition and the Public Trustee being a lesser charge on the taxpayer, and therefore, with my best wishes to the Public Trustee, I support the Bill.

Sitting suspended from 6.14 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Attorney-General) (7.30 p.m.): It has been my duty and responsibility to listen to both the member for Wembley and the member for Floreat and it will now, I assume, be in their interests to listen to me and, with a little bit of luck, we may all conclude our respective duties together.

Having heard the comments of both honourable members whom I have mentioned, and particularly the comments of the member for Wembley, who spoke at great length and who indeed spoke first, I can only say he gave us some very erudite projections accompanied by—and I use the expression “accompanied by” rather than the term “supported by”—certain statistical information which reminds me of one of Shakespeare's most memorable plays—*Hamlet*—from which play I grasp at the situation which was stated in the following words:—

The play's the thing wherein I'll catch
the conscience of the King.

From there I pass to Hamlet's soliloquy the opening words of which are—

To be, or not to be:

This brings me to the dilemma in which I find myself, because I do not know whether the members in question have in fact supported the Bill or whether they have not done so. I assume the member for Wembley—

Mr. O'Connor: Has not.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: —supports the Bill but intends to move to amend it. I am, however, still in somewhat of a dilemma.

Mr. O'Connor: I think that is a correct assumption.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: In the past the question has arisen, and it is still being asked today, whether Hamlet was or was not mad. I still do not know the answer. The rationale of my being so light-hearted, comical, or even perhaps facetious in this reply is that I can well and truly appreciate the significance of the statistics presented by the member for Wembley, though I cannot agree that these figures support the contentions that he would like drawn from them.

If I may be permitted to illustrate the point I am trying to make. I think it is to one of the remarks of the member for Wembley I should refer when he said the Public Trust Office is indeed a social service office. This reminds me of a sign I once saw of what should be regarded as a typical private enterprise exercise. It read—

This is a non-profitable organisation. It was not intended to be, but our experience has proved it so to be.

The question arises whether the Public Trust Office, which the member for Wembley so rightly said was designed to assist the small man but which in its experience has assisted persons right across the board throughout our community, should be regarded as an organisation which should be financed by John Citizen the taxpayer or whether, if its existence is accepted as being part and parcel of this segment of the quality of life we enjoy, it should be expected to stand on its own two feet. Trust members will excuse not the mixed metaphor but the misplaced metaphor of a public body standing on its own two feet!

I would now like to indicate the real purpose of the Bill. The real purpose of the main amendment—the one which appears to have attracted objection, if not opposition—is to remove from the Act the existing inflexibility in assessing fees and charges.

I would like to draw a distinction between fees and charges. It is proposed that the Act be amended to enable the fees and charges proposed to be varied from time to time by way of regulation. At the present time, for all practical purposes—and I refer to “all practical purposes” having regard for present-day money values—in the case of the estates which the Public Trustee is called upon to execute he is entitled to a flat rate charge of 2½ per cent. I think the member for Wembley will appreciate the point when I say “for all practical purposes in this present day.”

It is proposed, with the sanction of Parliament, that the Public Trustee shall from time to time be entitled to vary this percentage by regulation. I would point out that pursuant to section 36 of the Interpretation Act—a provision which seems to have been forgotten in this debate—it is within the prerogative of either House of Parliament to challenge and indeed defeat any regulation that is made varying the existing amount.

Provision is also made that if after a regulation has been tabled and has matured beyond the 14 sitting days provided for a challenge to be effective, it can be challenged by a motion carried through both Houses of Parliament; and, indeed, on the notice paper today we have

an example of this provision being availed of in a motion moved in the Upper House—a motion which is to be piloted through this House by the member for Stirling.

Mr. O'Connor: The seat belt legislation.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I would like to indicate, therefore, that any regulation which is made to vary the amount the Public Trustee may charge must first of all be approved by the responsible Minister—and I am sure the member for Mt. Lawley will agree that he is a responsible Minister—and secondly, such regulation, if gazetted, can be challenged within 14 sitting days next following the gazetting of the regulation. Indeed, if such regulation manages to run the gauntlet and escape detection or challenge during that time, it is still open to the State Parliament to further challenge the regulation.

I would like to point out by way of comparison that the 2½ per cent. rate which is at present fixed in the Act governing the operation of the Public Trust Office was set at a time when the corresponding rate for the two other support companies was also set at 2½ per cent. What is the prevailing rate for the other two companies?

Mr. R. L. Young: Four per cent.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The member for Wembley has answered my question. The fees payable by the other two trustee companies, reference section 16 corpus commission with a maximum of 4 per cent., is a minimum of \$50 with an income commission of 5 per cent.

On the other hand the Public Trustee is presently limited to a gross corpus commission of 2½ per cent. and an income commission of 5 per cent. But that is not all. The Acts relating to private trustee companies provide for a ceiling rate of 4 per cent. so far as fees are concerned, and over and above and beyond it also provides for a charge to be made in addition to fees of remuneration according to the value of service, rental, and of such items as the preparation of income and land tax returns; those for gift duty; and the keeping of books of account including the preparation of balance sheets and profit and loss accounts, interest and reports on real estate; arrangement of insurance policies, and for carrying on of businesses.

For all those services the Public Trustee cannot charge an extra fee. In other words, the time and effort involved in performing those services—and the Public Trustee does perform them—must be spread right across the board and borne by every person who has dealings with the Public Trustee and becomes liable to pay a fee to him. It is my contention that this is completely inequitable.

Mr. Mensaros: How much do they charge—private companies?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I cannot follow the question.

Mr. Menaros: You said the ceiling was 4 per cent. but how much do they actually charge?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I was hoping no member would ask that question but I have here a typical account rendered by one of the statutory companies. I am reluctant to mention the amounts concerned and the headings under which charges are made. However, for the edification of the member for Floreat, I am prepared to let him have a look at this document at the conclusion of the debate. The Public Trustee does not want to appear to be in competition with the private companies. Hitherto they have had a happy relationship. I am making the point that the Public Trust Office is in fact operating at a severe disadvantage compared with the other two companies. At the conclusion of this debate I am prepared to offer to the honourable member this information which will prove the point I am making. I will defer further comment until we deal with the amendment proposed by the member for Wembley.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. A. R. Tonkin) in the Chair; Mr. T. D. Evans (Attorney-General) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Amendment to section 38—

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: In his reply to my second reading speech the Attorney-General made a few comments which were Shakespearean and eloquent but I am afraid in doing so he accused me of missing the point. He said the figures I quoted did not support the case I had put up. He then went on to speak about the charges that were to be levied under the Bill now before us. The figures I quoted related to the part of the Bill I am not opposing; that is, the right of the Public Trustee to charge commission on the income of the common fund.

Mr. T. D. Evans: But you expressed a doubt as to whether he was justified in so doing.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: I only expressed that doubt in order to illustrate the other aspect of the matter where he was losing money on one hand and getting it back from the beneficiaries on the other hand. The clause before us does not deal with that.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I was referring to your contribution in its entirety.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: That is reasonable. The Attorney-General said he doubted whether it was valid to challenge this Bill

on the basis that Parliament may consider regulations and disallow them if it sees fit. It seems to me the question is whether we should have Bills or Acts which give to the Minister the power to regulate all sorts of charges or whether we should have Acts which, wherever possible, lay down in distinct terms the charges for which people are liable. If there is a very good reason for having a regulation rather than having a charge written into an Act, that is fair enough; but I cannot see any good reason for the Attorney-General wanting power to regulate these charges. If he wants government by regulation, I suggest he should come right out and say so.

In this instance the Act has been administered for 30 years subject to a ceiling in respect of the commission chargeable on the corpus of an estate without any necessity for regulations. I cannot therefore see the urgency of the Attorney-General acquiring the power to regulate the charge. I think in this Committee debate the Attorney-General should say exactly why he wants the power to regulate rather than tell us it is all very well to regulate because Parliament has the power to knock back the regulation if it thinks fit. I think we should tackle the matter from the positive point of view.

The Attorney-General said the other two trustee companies have the power to charge up to 4 per cent. on the corpus of an estate. I agree they have that power. I also know that in some instances they do not charge that amount, and in other instances they do. It depends on the value of the estate.

The point is that when he introduced this Bill the Attorney-General said he intended to bring down a regulation whereby the amount of commission chargeable on the corpus of an estate would be 3 per cent. instead of 2½ per cent. The figure of 3 per cent. which I will move be written into the Act is the figure the Attorney-General asked for. If he had asked for 4 per cent., I am sure my amendment would have contained that figure to go along with the percentages the other trustee companies are permitted to charge under their Acts.

The Attorney-General also said the other companies had the right under their Acts to charge for certain works done, and those works were mainly in regard to the administration of an estate—taxation, bookkeeping, and the like. I admit the Public Trustee has not that right under this Act but, as I pointed out during my second reading speech, I do not believe a department of social services should ever put itself in the situation where it charges the people who come to it a fee based on time expended. I do not believe a department of that nature has that right. I believe that when dealing with a State Government department which is in the nature of a social service department the

beneficiaries or the testators, in the case of deceased estates, have the right to know exactly what they are liable for.

I therefore put it to the Attorney-General that the challenge he has to answer is not what this Parliament can do to a regulation but whether or not this Parliament should be regulating when in fact it can just as easily write these things into an Act. Before a charge is made subject to regulation, I think the necessity for it must first be proved. After 30 years of administration of this Act with a fixed percentage written into the Act, it completely escapes me why the Attorney-General wants the power to regulate—which is, after all, an expedient measure only. I wish to move an amendment—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The member for Wembley cannot move an amendment at this stage. He can only seek to defeat the clause and move to insert a new clause after clause 4 has been agreed to. If clause 3 is deleted he can move to add a new clause.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Do you mean after clause 3, Mr. Deputy Chairman?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): No. If clause 3 is deleted, you can move to add a new clause after we have dealt with all the existing clauses.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The member for Wembley rightly asked me to indicate to the Committee the reason for the urgency of this amendment. I can do no better than quote from a Crown Law Department file. I will quote from a minute dated the 14th March, 1972, addressed to the Under-Secretary for Law by the present Public Trustee (Mr. Marshall). It refers to this particular Bill. I will not quote the whole minute. The relevant part reads—

These amendments will have an important bearing on financing the activities of this office.

It is noted they will come into operation from a date to be fixed by proclamation.

May I stress the need for the changes to operate as soon as possible, because the increased fees contemplated can apply only to estates reported after the date of proclamation, and in practice there will be an inevitable time-lag before the benefits can be brought to account.

This time-lag will result in an adverse effect on the finances of the 1972-73 year if proclamation is not made before the beginning of that year.

It is most desirable that the Act when assented to be proclaimed to operate from the beginning of the month following, and as far as possible in advance of the 1st July 1972.

May I respectfully submit that all necessary action be programmed to achieve this end?

Obviously, an officer charged by the State to administer this very important office sees the need for the amendments and sees the need for them to be quickly effected.

I would like to indicate that when doubt is expressed as to a person's conduct one should always have regard for that person's standing with his own fellows. If he is somewhat *avant garde*, perhaps he should rethink his situation. Let us have a look at the Public Trust Office in Western Australia to see how it operates in respect of fees and charges compared with its counterparts in other States of Australia. I am advised that in other States these fees and charges are usually specified in the regulations to the Acts. Western Australia is not in fact *avant garde* but is right at the tail end; we are behind the times.

I was most interested and, indeed, a little flattered to hear the member for Wembley advise that because he saw the need for some increase he was prepared to agree to such increase being written into the Statute, in view of the fact that I had indicated the Government's intention to prescribe a rate of 3 per cent. if approval were given to this Bill; and that if the Government had indicated that 4 per cent. would be prescribed serious consideration would have been given to writing into the Act a ceiling rate of 4 per cent.

Let us see what the Public Trustee had to say in this regard in a minute to me. He said that a ceiling rate of 4 per cent.—which would bring the Public Trust Office into line with the other two private trustee companies—was not suggested for introduction into the Act as it was not considered appropriate. He said that parliamentary surveillance of regulations applying to any Act is a constant protection to the public. Furthermore, I believe that the Public Trust Office should—and I again use that misplaced metaphor—stand on its own two feet, and that it should be able to compete with, and co-operate with if necessary, the two private companies. It should not be a burden upon John Citizen, the taxpayer.

Therefore, approval to allow the Public Trust Office to regulate its fees from time to time would ensure that if it is required to co-operate or compete with the two private companies it could not afford to allow its rate to exceed the 4 per cent. ceiling provided in the other two Acts. At the present time the Public Trustee indicates that in his view a 4 per cent. ceiling rate is inappropriate, and he has decided the rate should be 3 per cent.

Mr. R. L. Young: He could change his mind, and so could the Attorney-General, at a later time.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: In his final minute to me the Public Trustee, when referring to a scale showing the rates charged by

the private companies, which start at 4 per cent. and go down to 1 per cent. said—and I quote—

Thought could be given to a scale somewhat similar when the regulations come up for final consideration, but the vast majority of the Public Trustee's estates are those of ordinary citizens, and the lowest possible rates will be aimed for. At present it is thought a flat 3% should be adequate for the time being. If members have other ideas I shall be pleased to hear them and will certainly consider them when amendments proposed are put before me.

Therefore, I ask the Committee to vote for the clause as printed.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: The Attorney-General has dug in his toes. I appreciate that he wants to get the Bill through. He says that the Public Trust Office must stand on its own two feet and that John Citizen, taxpayer, should not be expected to support it. Yet the figures I have given to the Chamber tonight clearly indicate that it is not John Citizen, taxpayer, who is subsidising the Public Trust Office—and, in fact, subsidising a profit paid to Consolidated Revenue—but it is John Citizen, testator, deceased, and his beneficiaries.

Mr. T. D. Evans: And he is still a taxpayer.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: He is not when he is deceased.

Mr. T. D. Evans: No, but his dependants are.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: The Minister is starting to draw a long bow. The payment of a profit to Consolidated Revenue is invariably borne by small estates. If the Public Trust Office puts money into Consolidated Revenue I cannot see why it is necessary to increase the charges, unless the Attorney-General is prepared to say that that office must pay even more money into Consolidated Revenue to boost the funds of the State out of the pockets of the beneficiaries of deceased people; or unless he is prepared to say that the office is no longer what it set out to be. He went on to say that the Public Trustee told him that 3 per cent. was an adequate amount.

Mr. T. D. Evans: At the present time.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Yes, at the present time. I agree that it is reasonable. I said by interjection earlier—it may not have been heard—that if the Public Trustee feels that is sufficient at present, bearing in mind that we have worked on the figure of 2½ per cent. for 30 years, it might be another 30 years before the Minister—probably not in this Minister's life span—comes to Parliament and asks for an increase to be written into the Act.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You underestimate my life span.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Not the Attorney-General's life span, but the life span of his Government. The point is that the Attorney-General has not yet said why this should be done by regulation. I think when one considers this pragmatically and historically it must surely be evident that there is no need to regulate a charge such as this. Nothing the Attorney-General has said has refuted my claim. If I am successful and this clause is defeated, I will then move for a new clause to be added which will write the fee into the Act, rather than give the Attorney-General the power to regulate it.

The Attorney-General has given no good reason to show that should not be done. He has not said it is proper that regulations should be the means of doing this. As far as finance is concerned, he skirted around the fact that the Public Trust Office returns money to the taxpayer out of the pockets of the beneficiaries of estates. That is irrefutable. The question is not whether or not we gain more income by increasing the charge on estates; it is whether or not the Public Trust Office can—

Mr. T. D. Evans: Can equitably distribute its charges amongst those who enjoy its services.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Yes, I admit that is the second part of this provision.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I think it is the primary purpose.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: I think I have demonstrated that a social service department of this type simply cannot charge people on a time basis.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It is not conceded that the Public Trust Office is completely a social service department. It is performing a social service, but that is not its sole function.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: That is its function to some extent, and the people who rely on it as such should know where they stand. I challenge the Attorney-General to tell the Committee in clear terms why it is necessary to have the power to charge commission by regulation rather than write it into the Act. He has failed to do so.

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

Ayes—19

Mr. Bertram	Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Harman
Mr. Brady	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brown	Mr. Jones
Mr. Bryce	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Burke	Mr. Norton
Mr. Cook	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Davies	Mr. Taylor
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Moller
Mr. T. D. Evans	

(Teller)

Noes—19

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Coyne	Mr. O'Connor
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Reid
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Williams
Mr. Lewis	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. McPharlin	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Mensaros	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. McIver	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Bateman	Mr. Court
Mr. Hartrey	Mr. Stephens
Mr. May	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rushton
Mr. J. T. Tonkin	Sir David Brand

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Ayes.

Clause thus passed.

Clause 4 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 Mr. T. D. Evans (Attorney-General), and transmitted to the Council.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 27th April.

DR. DADOUR (Subiaco) [8.14 p.m.]: This evening, as promised, the Bill to amend the Hospitals Act is before us. It contains a number of points of contention. I would like to commence by saying that the broad purposes of the measure are, firstly, to set up a teaching hospitals advisory council, and to give the Minister power to direct boards of teaching hospitals to implement such recommendations of the advisory council as the Minister thinks fit; and, secondly, to validate a number of services which have been already introduced, and other matters already implemented by the department under another authority.

The teaching hospitals advisory council will deal only with matters concerning the teaching hospitals. These are Royal Perth Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, and Fremantle Hospital.

As we all realise, it is necessary to co-ordinate all aspects of health throughout the State, and steps should be taken towards the appointment of a health commission. I feel this Bill is a right step towards the formation of such a commission in the years to come. There is need to rationalise all the resources of the State and the funds that are available. We should make plans for the future on

this basis. This means that plans must be made for all hospitals, and not only for the teaching hospitals; and plans must be made for all matters of health in the broadest sense.

In introducing the second reading of the Bill the Minister said that the administration of public hospitals in Western Australia was a major task, although that might not be generally realised. I would remind the Minister that a great deal of valuable time is given by a large number of people in serving on the respective hospital boards. They have also given freely of their services. They are, to name a few, Mr. H. V. Reilly, Dr. J. Ainslie, Mr. Tom Sten, Mr. George Chessell, Mr. Lionel Cox, Mr. Justice Burt, Sir Reginald Rushton, Mr. C. C. Bennett, and not forgetting the member for Fremantle and his good lady. These are but a few of the many people who are giving their time and services voluntarily, and for that we must give them full credit.

I agree with what the Minister has said that an alarming point has been reached over the last two years, because in the five teaching hospitals the increase in the cost of running has been in excess of 30 per cent. in each of the last two years; and there do not seem to be any signs of an abatement of the increase. So, steps should be taken by us to group together and to rationalise the resources of the State, by planning for the future and preventing the position from getting worse than it is at present.

The first step towards this objective is the setting up of a teaching hospitals advisory council, possibly to be assisted by a health council of some description in the future. I am sure the Minister is aiming at that objective, and for this I commend him, because in Western Australia we face unique problems brought about by the vast area of the State. Many health and medical problems are created as a result of the vast area. When we take into account the amount of money that has already been earmarked for building hospitals both within and beyond the metropolitan area—I refer to projects that are ready to commence or are still on the drawing board—we find the figure is fantastically high. It amounts to over \$100,000,000. As the Minister pointed out, \$20,000,000 would need to be spent each year in the next five years; so in total \$100,000,000 could be spent in that period. For that reason it is important to rationalise our hospital needs, and to attempt to prevent duplication as far as possible.

Turning to another aspect of health, I would point out that the cost of prevention of diseases is far less than the cost of treating established diseases, but we can never be completely successful in preventing them. The most effective means is to prevent diseases from occurring as early as possible.

What I am getting at is that steps should be taken to treat people in the home situation. We have to keep them out of the hospitals if at all possible. The cost of treating a person at home is approximately \$5 a day, but the cost of treatment for a patient in a country hospital is approximately \$20 a day.

The SPEAKER: There is too much talking.

Dr. DADOUR: The cost of treating a patient in a teaching hospital is nearly \$50 a day, or 10 times as much as the cost to treat a person at home. So we should concentrate on prevention and the early detection of disease. That is why I impress on the Minister that a health commission should be established as soon as possible.

One point has constantly worried me in respect of the cost of teaching hospitals. Since the establishment of the Medical School a number of costing problems have arisen. In the teaching hospitals we find a number of students and some resident doctors who are employed purely to teach. This is done to give the graduates two years of training before they are considered to be safe enough to be sent into general practice. There is also the cost of research.

At the moment all these costs are debited against the patient. I would like to see the costs broken up into separate areas, but this could prove to be difficult. The costs could be broken up into the amounts that are expended on research; on teaching including the cost of tutors; on the students; and on those doing post-graduate courses. By doing that we would get a more realistic costing of patient care and treatment in teaching hospitals; thus, we would get a true picture. We would also be able to compare the costs with those of 1950.

I firmly believe that we should adopt what has been done at the Sydney Hospital, which is Australia's oldest hospital. For some three years business consultants had been engaged at the Sydney Hospital to make feasibility studies into the costs and other factors, such as whether to put patients into "A," "B," or "C"-class beds, and moving the staff from one area to another. They were able to achieve fantastic results. By March, 1971, they were able to put into effect the results of their studies, and reduce the cost per patient per bed to less than what it was in March, 1967. This reduction in costs was achieved despite inflation and rising costs in the intervening period. On top of that patient care was improved.

Mr. Davies: I missed the figure you mentioned.

Dr. DADOUR: I did not quote a figure. All I said was that the cost per patient per day in March, 1971, was less than the cost in March, 1967. I could make my

notes available to the Minister if he so desires. I believe that we in Western Australia should adopt what has been done in Sydney Hospital, and apply the same methods to our teaching hospitals so that improvements can be made; because with the way the hospitals are run they are being costed out of existence. If the cost of running these institutions continues to increase at the rate of 30 per cent. per annum, they will in time crumble and there will be no way to get out of the difficulty.

We cannot ignore the fact that considerable savings have been effected in the Sydney Hospital, and the same can be done in the hospitals in Western Australia. At one time business consultants were engaged to make an investigation into one of our hospitals. Unfortunately I have not been able to get the Minister to table the report. Although I know what it contains, I am not permitted to speak about it; so the Minister has got me there.

I believe that much of the harm that was done in the past was in allowing the Royal Perth Hospital to be developed in the way it has; it faced many teething problems. It ended up with having to provide treatment for highly-sophisticated cases, and in day care and intensive care areas. These are very costly services. Steps should be taken to engage business consultants to undertake a full and independent study of the cost of running the Royal Perth Hospital. They should not be engaged by the hospital itself; and they could present the results of their findings to the Minister who could put their recommendations into effect.

The next aspect to which I wish to make reference is the composition of the teaching hospitals advisory council. At present it comprises two members representing the Public Health Department or Medical Department, two members not employed by the department and nominated by the Minister, two members nominated by the Senate of the University of Western Australia, one member nominated to represent the interests of the board of management of each teaching hospital—and there are five teaching hospitals in the metropolitan area—and one member nominated by the W.A. Branch of the Australian Medical Association. I believe that the composition of this council is a little cumbersome. It comprises no fewer than 12 members of whom one is to be the chairman; so there are to be 11 members and a chairman who is to have the same vote as the members.

We should not have two persons nominated by the University of Western Australia. I do not agree with this proposal, and personally I would like to see one person nominated by the university, because I consider one to be adequate. If there are two nominated by the university

and they represent different factions, we will possibly find intrigue, disagreement, and lobbying taking place.

I think the two members representing the interests of the department could remain on the council. In regard to the two persons who are not employed by the department and who are nominated by the Minister, I consider that one of them should be the chairman, because the chairman should be an independent representative and not a member of the department or a representative of a hospital or the A.M.A.

What worries me very much is that, generally speaking, the people who have been dealing with health problems for years and understand the workings of the hospitals are doctors; yet it is possible that only three doctors will be appointed to the advisory council, out of a total of 12 members. There could be four or five doctors on that council, but the number could be as low as three. With all due respect to the lay members, I believe that what we should do is to give more representation to the doctors. I would not exclude lay representatives on the council; I think we need them, but I do believe if at all possible more doctors should be appointed to the council.

I believe that in many cases the medical superintendent would be a better representative of a hospital board than the chairman of that board. I say that because many of the medical superintendents have far more knowledge of these matters than lay people. However, it is for the Minister to get around this problem in some way, if it is at all possible for him to do so.

Mr. Davies: I think we might be able to overcome this by waiting to see which nominees the teaching hospitals will put forward. I will then try to balance the committee with my nominations. I agree there is a need to keep a balance.

Dr. DADOUR: We should retain a balance in the council. I emphasise the point I made previously that the chairman should come from one of the two independent nominees. The person required for appointment as chairman should be a retired or semi-retired doctor who has had vast experience and has time on his hands.

The council will have to work very hard during the initial stages. A large amount of research will be required which will be time consuming. Staff will have to be found and adequate quarters provided—whether on the first floor of the Treasury or somewhere else. These are some of my thoughts.

There could be many issues of contention between the various teaching hospitals. If the council includes two university rep-

resentatives I think lobbying will occur, whether one likes it or not. The different hospitals will vie for the facilities which are available. It is possible that only one of each facility will exist and it will have to serve the other hospitals so that there will be no duplication.

It is feasible that the representatives of four teaching hospitals could lobby with the two university representatives, and make up a voting force of six. The fifth hospital could be excluded in that event. This is a possibility which cannot be overlooked because I have seen such a situation occur previously. I will not elaborate on that point!

I will now refer to the importance of decisions reached by the teaching advisory council. Those decisions will be so important that I was wondering whether it might be necessary to have a 75 per cent. majority before a decision is taken to the Minister. Such a majority would overcome the situation I have already outlined.

I did not intend to go off at a tangent but I do not think it would be feasible to have a departmental representative.

Mr. Davies: As chairman?

Dr. DADOUR: Yes. If the chairman is to be a departmental officer he might find that it is not necessary for him to call on the council. What has worried me has been the sudden appearance of a department within the Public Health Department. It is called the Community Health Services. I am not saying it is not necessary but it has worried me that the matter was not discussed by the State Health Council.

I know the department has not been finalised, but it will be. It was born in January, and conceived some time prior to that. However, the birth notice appeared in January of this year and to me it is an illegitimate offspring. It seems to have sprung up out of nowhere. I have checked every possible source of information and I have discovered that the formation of the department was not discussed by the State Health Council.

The announcement was made in January in the form of a circular, which reads as follows:—

Community Health Services
Public Health Department,
16 Rheola Street,
WEST PERTH, W.A. 6005.
Telephone 21-6161
Letters: P.O. Box 265, West Perth.

Community Health Services was formed in January, 1972 to upgrade the health and prevent disease in aborigines and other depressed socioeconomic groups and by a process of education to improve the standard of living in these groups.

Of course, this refers to a Bill in another place which deals with community welfare. The next paragraph of the circular reads as follows:—

The service has state wide orientation but confines its activities to those not already handled by other services or to areas where such other such services do not extend.

Taking the above into consideration Community Health Services has specific aims in the fields of:—

The circular then sets out the 17 areas with which the service will deal. I am not decrying the fact that the Community Health Services have appeared. I have no objection to their formation. It is possible that those services are necessary and as I do not know the full circumstances of their formation I will hold my tongue.

I have attempted to find out what happened to the department which initially existed as the Public Nursing Service. It was set up by the Nursing Federation because the federation would not permit its girls to come under the Public Service Act. Had the girls been able to come under the Public Service Act they would have received more money, but the Nursing Federation would have lost some of its members. That is why the department was necessary.

A departmental doctor is the convenor, or the chairman, of the State Health Council and I wanted to know whether or not the new department was ratified by the State Health Council. After looking at the feasibility study I found it was not. I also know that the position of senior medical officer was not advertised. To obtain the best possible applicant the position should be advertised. However, it was a ministerial appointment and I know the doctor who holds the position. I can vouch for him but I would like to know why the position was not advertised.

I have attempted to find out the cost of the department and I have found that five medical officers have been appointed. The senior medical officer receives \$15,530 per annum. He has dropped \$2,000 to \$3,000 per annum by taking the position because while working in the north he received a car and house allowance. Four other medical officers receive \$13,540 per annum.

Considerable expense is already involved in the department unless some of the officers were seconded from other areas.

Two could have been seconded but the other three officers could be new to the department. Perhaps the Minister can advise me when he replies to the debate. What I am really getting at is that I do not think we should have a departmental officer as chairman; that is one of my arguments.

It is possible that departmental officers could ask all the questions and supply all the answers so that there would be no

need to call together the people concerned. I would not like to see that occur because I believe this council will be the stepping stone to something better and bigger in the future.

By way of diversion, one of the specific aims of the Community Health Services will be family planning. It will deal with Aborigines and depressed socio-economic groups. It occurred to me that it could be rather hilarious trying to teach Aborigines the rhythm method of contraception. At this stage only surgical and mechanical methods could be contemplated. I did get a laugh from that point. However, I impress on the Minister the importance of not appointing a departmental man.

Proposed new subsection (3) to section 6 of the Act covers new ground. I have read the Minister's notes in conjunction with this amendment and I believe it is very necessary. This is a new area and it is not in any way related to the appointment of staff by individual boards of management. It is necessary that the Minister should have his own people checking the respective hospitals, so that those appointed can be farmed out to hospitals which may require their specialised services.

The duty of the advisory council to the Minister is set out in new section 6A (5). The subsection is very clear and it is a necessary provision. I have on the notice paper an amendment to clause 20. Proposed new subsection (2) to section 18 of the principal Act reads as follows:—

(2) The Minister may, after consultation with a hospital board, give to it directions as to the exercise of its functions.

The Minister made it clear that this provision was to allow for the direction of hospital boards in matters of urgency, and where that direction was absolutely necessary. I take it that the Minister was referring to the teaching hospitals advisory council.

Mr. Davies: Yes, in various areas. I think there are one or two of them.

Dr. DADOUR: I realise that but I felt I could not go along with it. Perhaps I have a suspicious mind but I can see that the Minister could actually direct the council to remove the means test.

Mr. Davies: That would be a good thing if the council did not want to do it.

Dr. DADOUR: It could be that someone is thinking that in the very near future there could be a change of Federal Government. Such a change would make it very easy for the Minister. These are points which worry me.

The Minister referred to boards and I think his reference could be considered obnoxious. I feel that somebody could be

forecasting a change in the Federal Government. As the Minister said, when introducing the Bill, when a Labor Minister for Health contemplates a change everybody becomes suspicious.

Mr. Davies: He is suspect.

Dr. DADOUR: I believe that to be rightly so because after reading the Federal Labor Party platform regarding health I have no doubt of what will occur.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The honourable member should be highly informed.

Dr. DADOUR: The main worry behind the Bill is the saving of money.

Mr. Bickerton: You are the first doctor I have met who did not worry about money.

Dr. DADOUR: Where will the money come from? Everyone remains quiet. Is there any need for me to say that we have to be suspicious?

Mr. Davies: Did you see Mr. Hayden on Viewpoint the other night?

Dr. DADOUR: He can say what he likes; he is only a shadow Minister.

Mr. Davies: He was worth seeing.

Mr. Brown: He was more than a shadow the other night.

Dr. DADOUR: I still do not see where the money will come from.

Mr. Davies: That is an old argument.

Dr. DADOUR: We know the problems which exist at the moment and that is why I find the clause obnoxious. I know it will be difficult for the Minister to implement his directions. The hospital boards may agree to do what he requests. However, the Minister will have one call card up his sleeve because he will be able to cut off their supply of money. Boards have no chance of functioning if the Minister cuts off the money.

Mr. O'Connor: Cuts off what?

Dr. DADOUR: The money. In this way there is no trouble getting around boards and in the long run this method must win. This is another reason for thinking this obnoxious; I think it is a stepping stone to something else.

Mr. Davies: I can allay your fears on that.

Dr. DADOUR: The next clause is a "beauty." Section 21 of the principal Act is to be amended by the addition of a new paragraph (g). Each teaching hospital is allowed borrowing powers up to a maximum of \$300,000 each year, which is much the same principal as that applying to local government. The Minister wants the hospitals to be able to lend this money to him so that he can build centralised facilities. We already have centralised X-ray and laboratory facilities, but I would like to see a feasibility study undertaken

on the economics of centralised catering and laundry facilities. I would like to know the cost per pound of laundry at the Royal Perth Hospital compared with the cost per pound charged by private enterprise.

Mr. Davies: If you look at the answer given to the member for Cottesloe in reply to a question, you will see that some of it is outlined.

Dr. DADOUR: That does not tell us the cost.

Mr. Davies: It indicates that a committee is working on a feasibility study to find out the exact cost per pound.

Dr. DADOUR: It is necessary to cost out steam and many other factors in a hospital. The costing must be full and complete. I would like to see an independent body do this, because in this way we would probably know where we stand.

Mr. Williams: The Minister for Decentralisation should get hold of it.

Dr. DADOUR: I know the person in charge of the laundry at the Royal Perth Hospital has been put in charge of the new venture. I also know that a few people have been to the Eastern States to study this.

Mr. Davies: Two have been overseas.

Dr. DADOUR: My God, I should be in the laundry business! One man is also in Adelaide at the moment, is he not?

Mr. Davies: I could not say whether he is there now, but one man visited Adelaide and we have had people from Adelaide visit us. I have been to Adelaide, too.

Dr. DADOUR: The Minister has accepted centralised laundry facilities.

Mr. Davies: So has the board.

Dr. DADOUR: Has the building been started?

Mr. Davies: No.

Dr. DADOUR: Has the ground been cleared?

Mr. Davies: No.

Dr. DADOUR: Have tenders been called?

Mr. Davies: No, because of the feasibility studies you asked for.

Dr. DADOUR: Would the Minister make those studies available to the House?

Mr. Davies: I do not know what value there would be in that, but the honourable member is welcome to look at them.

Dr. DADOUR: Not in your room, but here in the House.

Mr. Davies: I do not think we should table them, because it is a matter between the department and the hospital.

Dr. DADOUR: Is there any way of comparing the cost of a semi-departmental laundry system with that of private enterprise?

Mr. Davies: Private enterprise has had it for 12 years.

Dr. DADOUR: If this is the case, I would like to know honestly what it cost.

Mr. Davies: Private enterprise could give you its costs. We could tell you how much it was per pound that the department paid.

Dr. DADOUR: I have unofficial figures, but they are too unofficial to quote in the House. I do not want to be like the Premier and make "boo-boos."

Mr. Davies: We will do it more cheaply.

Dr. DADOUR: That is not possible. If there is a centralised laundry at Bentley it will be necessary to double the amount of linen in each hospital. This will cost an enormous sum of money.

Mr. Davies: Exactly the opposite will happen, because there will be less laundry.

Dr. DADOUR: There will also be transport to and fro. There are many other factors which should be costed out. I simply do not believe it could be done more cheaply by the Government, because I have not yet seen any Government department produce anything more cheaply than private enterprise.

Mr. Davies: You will see this one.

Dr. DADOUR: It is impossible, and it simply does not work out.

Mr. Davies: Look at South Australia.

Dr. DADOUR: South Australia is different from us.

Mr. Davies: South Australia is doing it more cheaply, and we will do it more cheaply and more efficiently.

Dr. DADOUR: South Australia is probably more conscientious in this field, but we are different.

Mr. Davies: Don't knock your mates.

Mr. Bertram: Is the member for Subiaco saying that South Australia is better?

Dr. DADOUR: I am not saying South Australia is better but I am saying it is probably more conscientious in this field. Perhaps people in that State have not learnt our bad ways yet, but probably will in the near future.

The other point I wish to make refers to new section 37 (2) (d) which states, in part, that the Governor may by regulation—

(d) prescribe the fees that shall be chargeable in relation to any other matter under this Act.

I presume this refers to the cost of domiciliary nonhospital care such as prosthesis and aids in the home; in other words paragraph (d) does not really mean what it says—far from it. I refer the Minister to section 31 (1) of the principal Act. The second paragraph reads—

Provided that any person receiving such treatment shall, if he is able to pay the fees for medical or surgical

attention by the medical practitioner bestowing such attention, be liable to such practitioner accordingly, in addition to the payment for hospital service under section thirty-three.

Members will see that the clause relates to medical practitioners' fees.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much talking in the Chamber.

Dr. DADOUR: To say that the Governor may prescribe the fees that shall be chargeable in relation to any other matter under this Act necessarily includes the principal Act and refers to medical or surgical fees. It is therefore feasible that this provision could relate to medical or surgical fees. For this reason I feel an amendment or an alteration of some kind is necessary. It is too wide open at the moment.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much talking in the Chamber.

Dr. DADOUR: With those exceptions I support the Bill. I am sure we will deal with points of contention later on, but I wonder if it would be out of place to ask the Minister whether he intends to introduce any amendments.

Mr. Davies: No, I have no amendments at this stage.

Dr. DADOUR: I assume the Minister is not going to introduce amendments himself.

Mr. Davies: No, I would have put them on the notice paper had I intended to move any. I have had the Bill for a long time.

Dr. DADOUR: It is too late now for me to put amendments on the notice paper, but I shall deal with this when the Bill is in Committee. I have summed up the situation as I see it and shall wait to hear what the Minister has to say.

MR. W. G. YOUNG (Roe) [8.55 p.m.]: I rise to offer my general support to the measure under discussion. I have not had the opportunity or the experience of my learned colleague from Subiaco to delve into the Bill from a medical point of view, but I have made some inquiries of the administrative side of the hospital organisation. I find ample time was given to the hospital administrative staff to study a draft of the measure prior to its being brought before Parliament. I also understand that some of the points in the draft measure to which the administrative staff objected were corrected before the Bill was presented to the House and, in the main, the administrative staff supports the measure.

The member for Subiaco made the point that new section 37 (2) (d) may revert to a price control of doctors' fees, but I do not quite agree with him in principle. However I would like to hear the Minister address himself to this point when he replies.

Generally, I wish to indicate that the Country Party supports the measure. We think it will tidy up the parent Act and, for this reason, I indicate our support.

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [8.56 p.m.]: I was interested in the question asked of the Minister by the member for Subiaco about any intention on the Minister's part to introduce amendments to the legislation which is before the House. The Minister has assured us that he does not intend to move any amendments. I assume I understood him correctly on this point.

Mr. Davies: That is right. I have thought about the Bill for a long time, and the Opposition has had it since last Thursday. No representations have been made to me to change the Bill from its present form.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I think the question that has been asked and the answer given are important, because the member for Subiaco and I have found difficulty in trying to discover whether or not there is support for all of this Bill. From conversations we have had, we half understood that boards and medicos were still discussing this with the Minister. I do not know whether this attitude is because of the blast the Minister gave them in his second reading speech, but this is what the Opposition has found.

Mr. Davies: They have had the Bill as long as you have. It has been publicly available and I think it was up to them to make submissions.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: We understood some additional submissions had been made. I submit that those who are vitally interested in this legislation, such as teaching hospital boards and medicos, have had knowledge of this Bill—quite intimate knowledge—for very much longer than I have had.

Mr. Davies: Not this Bill, no, no, no.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I understood they did.

Mr. Davies: Not this Bill, as it has been presented. They had copies of the first Bill I put up.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: This is what I am saying. I have just learnt that there have been a number of discussions—in fact discussions over months and months and months—about the form of the legislation. This is my understanding and it is pointless for the Minister to say we have had plenty of time to study this because we have not. I am merely trying to point out the difficulties we faced in trying to discover whether he would agree to any further submissions which we heard were being made to him.

Mr. Davies: You could be talking in French for all I understand you.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I certainly do not want to speak in French. I am only trying to make a point which is legitimate for the Opposition to make.

I must say, I would have taken exception to the Minister's introducing amendments to this Bill because we did not know about them prior to our standing up in this Chamber and attempting to give our ideas on the legislation presented to us. We would have been operating in the dark had he had this in mind and I would have taken strong exception to it, as I expect would most other members in the Chamber. However, the Minister tells us that there are no new amendments so we can discuss the Bill as it is presented.

I find myself generally in support of the legislation, although I believe that one portion of it should be deleted. Although there are quite a number of amendments of greater or lesser consequence, to my mind there are three amendments of greater consequence.

I refer firstly to the fact that a teaching hospital advisory council is to be established and, secondly, that the Minister is to be given almost complete powers of direction to the hospital boards. Thirdly, it is the desire of the Government and the Minister to create a Government centralised laundry and linen establishment, catering facilities, and named in the Bill, X-ray laboratories. I must be consistent in my approach to a centralised Government laundry.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. Bickerton: I agree with you, Mr. Speaker, particularly from the member on his feet.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I believe there are many people like me who do not appreciate further Government institutions being foisted on the public.

As a new Minister in the Brand Government, I was largely responsible for the abolition of State hotels in Western Australia. These State hotels operated for quite a long period at a substantial loss to the State.

Mr. I. W. Manning: That is surprising—I thought hotels always made a profit.

Mr. Taylor: They provide a substantial service to the community they serve.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Yes, but it was a service which could be provided by private enterprise. And that is the ideological difference between the Minister and me.

Mr. Taylor: True.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I was a Minister when the State sold the State sawmills and I believe that was a good move also.

Mr. Jamleson: It was considered very strange.

Mr. H. D. Evans: You have to be kidding!

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I do not wish to give support to attempts to establish a Government centralised laundry which would cost maybe \$2,000,000 or \$3,000,000 as a capital outlay—at least it would be a very substantial sum. And this substantial sum would be drawn from the hospital boards with their meagre means of raising finance. The establishment of the laundry would be at the expense of money for other purposes. Therefore, I am not enamoured of this idea to say the least.

Mr. Davies: I do not think you really appreciate the way it will be financed. It will not limit the hospitals in any way.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Speaker, the Minister told us during the course of his second reading speech that the on-lending clause permitted or enabled the Minister to take the borrowing power of hospital boards and convert the money that they could rake up to the building of a Government centralised laundry. Am I right? Now, if the hospital boards use this money raised by ways and means outlined in the parent Act for this purpose, and I am only reiterating what I have just said, this money cannot then be used for other purposes.

Mr. Davies: You know the hospital boards do not always take up all their borrowing powers.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: As a matter of fact, the teaching hospitals nearly always take up all their borrowing powers. It is only very rarely they would miss out on taking up opportunities to raise finance. Indeed, as the Minister ought to know, his departmental officers keep on the wheels of the boards to ensure that they do take it up because it assists the department in planning additions, and so on. This is provided under the terms of the Act. As I say, there is a sharp ideological difference here.

We have been informed from time to time, and I, as the Minister for Health, was informed from time to time, that a Government centralised laundry would be an economical and more efficient way of dealing with hospital laundry. The Government of the day rejected this proposition and as far as possible laundries were established in the large hospitals. However, where it was possible to farm out laundry to private institutions this was done, and it is still the practice today. Many private laundries harness their work to a large extent to Government hospitals and private institutions. And I say this is a happy arrangement—a happy blending of Government and private enterprise.

Mr. I. W. Manning: And it has been working very successfully.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: That is so. Melbourne has a large centralised laundry, which launders the linen of Government institutions and most of the Government hospitals, including some country hospitals 50 or 100 miles removed from the metropolitan scene. This makes us wonder what could happen to small decentralised laundries in country towns, not forgetting that the more sophisticated laundries in the metropolitan area would also be affected.

Therefore, I feel the establishment of this laundry is fraught with many difficulties in so far as the department's operations are concerned, and it is also fraught with decentralisation problems in that employment could be affected by the centralisation of this service.

Mr. I. W. Manning: Certainly employment in the country centres.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I would say so. It would certainly affect the metropolitan private enterprise services. This provision is contained in clause 12 where the Minister is given general power under the rewritten section 7 to establish and conduct centralised catering, laundry, and other services and facilities for any public hospital.

I asked the Minister today whether it is possible for the Minister or the Government to establish a Government centralised laundry under the terms of the parent Act. His answer was that it was doubtful whether the Government could do this. Apparently there is an area of doubt about the extent of the Minister's powers in this regard. Yet, despite this doubt, there have been a great number of moves directed towards the establishment of this Government centralised laundry.

I suggest to the Chamber that the Government is jumping the gun. We have learnt that site work is to commence in the Bull Creek area near the Murdoch University site. I understand appointments have been made and research is being carried out into the establishment of the laundry. I ask the Minister: Has any ground or site work been commenced at the present time?

Mr. Davies: Not to my knowledge, except the viewing of the site. As far as I know there is no heavy machinery for levelling the site or anything of that nature. I will check up and find out for you.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The situation is that there is doubt in the Act that the Government can establish this laundry, but the Government blithely goes ahead and then subsequently introduces a Bill to the House to enable it to do this. What will the Government do if the Bill is rejected by Parliament?

Mr. Davies: Well, of course, it does not need an Act of Parliament at all. This is only establishing the right. The Government can go ahead and establish a

laundry just as it established a catering service under the former Government. This Bill is to set out the Minister's duty and clearly state the position.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: What the Minister has just said is revealing, because this is one of the reasons for my question on today's notice paper.

Mr. Davies: You do not need to be a Solomon to work that out.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I find it difficult to align this with the Minister's answer to my question. The Minister's statement is anomalous. A moment ago the Minister accused me to talking in French. I do not know what language he is using—perhaps gobbledy-gook. I say again the Government has jumped the gun. If the Minister says there is grave doubt under this Act—

Mr. Davies: But he does not need an Act if he does not want it.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Why put it in?

Mr. Davies: This ties up with the catering service which your Government instituted and the laboratory services which we have established.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: If the Minister can do it, why include it here?

Mr. Davies: It clearly sets out the position and puts it beyond doubt. It makes you happy.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I am happy to hear this as I hope the Minister will not oppose my suggested amendment.

Mr. Davies: Let us have a look at it.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I intend to suggest we delete paragraph (b) on page 8. We do not need this paragraph. The Minister is creating a song and dance about something which is not necessary. I half believe he has the power already, and it looks to me as if the real reason for the inclusion of this provision relates back to the on-lending clause. Perhaps the Minister cannot obtain the agreement of all the boards to harness their borrowing powers to establish this laundry. This is the point, and it tosses the whole of the legislation back into the barrel again.

Mr. Davies: In your mind.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The Minister has established this by the words he has uttered. He said there was no need for this to be passed, because the Minister can do it now. He can establish laundries in the same way as the Minister's predecessor established a deep-freezing works in a part of the metropolitan area. Those on this side of the House would have no objection to the establishment of an advisory council for teaching hospitals. This is not in question. What I do question severely is the Government's desire to establish a Government laundry.

I would also like to know why the Minister mentioned X-ray laboratories in his speech. The Minister no doubt noticed I used the words "X-ray laboratories" in the question I asked of him. It was noticed that there is an X-ray laboratory in the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and I know something of its functions. When the Minister answers the second reading debate he might mention why the X-ray laboratories were mentioned.

Mr. Davies: You have already answered your own question, really.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Perhaps the Minister might mention it again anyway. It will be gauged, from what I have said, that I do not approve of the construction of a Government centralised laundry. I do not mind State X-ray laboratories. These have a function to perform throughout the State. I can also see the need for extra catering services up to a point, but not taken to the full extent. However, I am being consistent in my opposition to the establishment of a Government laundry.

I agree with the point raised by the member for Subiaco—that is, that the third powerful amendment in the Bill is the one which grants the Minister powers to direct a hospital board in the exercise of its functions. It is true the Minister has included the phrase, "after consultation with the hospital board" and I applaud that, although I imagine he might have done this even without the inclusion of that phrase.

Mr. Davies: It would depend on what mood I was in.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: How true! Anyway, the Minister wisely included that phrase. The member for Subiaco has an amendment on the notice paper which, having regard to teaching hospitals, limits the directions the Minister may give to hospital boards. The words in question are contained in paragraph (5) of clause 10 on page 7 of the Bill which reads—

It shall be the duty of the Advisory Council to advise the Minister upon such matters relating to the provision, co-ordination and utilisation of the clinical and teaching facilities, services and resources that are or ought to be available in the teaching hospitals for clinical teaching and research . . .

It was felt that this was perhaps another safeguard to ensure that some remnants of the board's autonomy remain. The Minister may tell us that his powers and direction apply to all hospitals, but in regard to teaching hospitals I think his powers should be confined to those matters which have been clearly stated, and should be only those matters on which the Minister can direct the board.

In actual fact, the Minister has, under the existing Act, great and grave powers. If he so desires, the Minister may abolish a hospital board. That has been done on two occasions that I can think of.

Mr. Davies: There was an instance of one that was not reappointed when its term expired, but I have not heard of another one.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: There was a case of one back in the war period in the days of the Willcock Government, I think. I have not heard much about that one, either, but it was a case of the board of the King Edward Memorial Hospital being virtually sacked. Its term expired and that was the finish of it.

Mr. Jamieson: It is a pity the Minister for Lands does not have this power.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Yes, I am inclined to agree. It depends, of course, on which particular board it is against which he might like to wield his power. I was saying there is no doubt the Minister has very great power and that he can, if he so desires, abolish a board.

Mr. Davies: That is too much power.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I agree, and that is why I take no exception to a form of direction. The Minister is entitled to a form of direction over hospital boards, because of the financial interest the department has in them. As the member for Subiaco pointed out, a hospital board could not function without the financial support of the department, and so it is imperative that the Minister should have these powers.

I am trying to point out that the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Subiaco is one that has merit in trying to enable the boards to keep some of the autonomy which, over the years, they have prized very greatly. I know that over the years Ministers have had arguments with boards, and there is necessity for co-ordination between the Minister and boards, particularly with teaching hospitals where expenses are so great. Therefore I hope the Minister will have a look at this aspect. The member for Subiaco would probably be amenable to any suggested change in his amendment which might improve its phraseology. I notice that the member for Subiaco nods his assent. I believe the idea has merit and it is proffered to the Minister for his consideration. Apart from those parts of the Bill to which I have raised objection, I support the measure.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [9.23 p.m.]: In general, I support the legislation before us, and I also support the comments made by the member for Subiaco and the member for Cottesloe relating to the Government's centralised tendencies as indicated by the

Bill. However, at the outset, I would say that the issues have been canvassed and covered very well and I have only a suggestion or two to add to those already made.

I would like to encourage the Minister to return to his old form of presentation. When he first took over his office as Minister for Health he was developing a very good public relations attitude, and he was certainly very co-operative. He now seems to have replaced this with an attitude by which he avoids the issues and distorts the facts.

Mr. Davies: Where did I go wrong?

Mr. RUSHTON: I invite the Minister to return to the straight and narrow path. I thought he was doing very well in the first couple of months he was in office, but lately his performance seems to have fallen away.

Mr. Davies: Thanks very much.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will return to the statement the Minister has just made.

Mr. Jamieson: Let us talk about you; it is more interesting.

Mr. RUSHTON: The position happens to be the other way around at the moment. At the outset I referred to the effects of centralisation that were now being felt as a result of the Tonkin Government taking office, and the Minister said that the priority was money. All I want him to do is give a straightforward answer so that we can see what he intends to do. The Government cannot have it both ways. It cannot woo people with empty promises and then win favour with people on the other side. Obviously the Government could win favour if its decision was to centralise its efforts on, say, the Royal Perth Hospital or some other institution. If this were done the Government would win points and lose points, but it cannot do this at all places if it has available to it only one sum of money. However, what we do want when we ask a straightforward question is a straightforward answer to what is going on and what is to happen.

As I have said, the Minister appears to make far less of these questions now than of the ones I asked earlier when one judges his performance since the election and over the past 12 months or so. I refer particularly to the Rockingham-Kwinana Hospital. If one goes back to the 1970s—

Mr. Davies: Go back to the statements you were making during the election.

Mr. RUSHTON: I would be quite happy to do that. I have a letter before me which came from the Minister's predecessor and it would be interesting to read it to the House. Firstly, it would be interesting to relate the gymnastics the Minister has been going through in this period of time. Obviously this shows through answers to

local shires and others during the departmental reorientation of priority of hospital needs south of the river. The local authorities and the people in the areas south of the river, particularly in the Rockingham-Kwinana region, are very anxious about this, and I might say that the member for Cockburn is most interested, too. They are interested in seeing whether the Government intends to continue with the previous priorities because, in fact, the Government originally expressed this intention.

I made mention of this previously. The intention was that by the end of May, 1971, the sketches, and so on, would be completed. Of course, the questions that were asked about this were not clearly answered, but it is interesting to quote a few comments from the letter dated the 4th May, 1971, from the Minister for Health when he stated, among other things—

Whilst it is true that originally it had been hoped that tenders could be called during this financial year, planning has not progressed as rapidly as had been hoped and consequently the dates which were quoted in my previous letter are correct as at the present time.

The sketch plans were considered in detail at a Departmental Planning Meeting on the 30th April and a number of alterations, several of them of a major nature, were requested. Re-planning of these areas is proceeding, but inevitably time is involved.

It had been intended that the actual designing of the building would be done in the Public Works Department and the project placed in the hands of commissioned private architects for the preparation of contract documents. This is still the intention.

Work will proceed on the preparation of the documents as quickly as possible, but the calling of tenders will still be subject to the availability of adequate loan funds.

Nobody disagrees with that. It is a question of loan funds all the time. Continuing—

I still hope that it will be possible for tenders to be called during the first half of 1972.

That gives the facts very clearly, the point being that the issue should be loan funds, and not that the Government cannot complete the plans and specifications. This was indicated back in the 1970s; that is, that plans and specifications were on the way, or that the hopes were that tenders would be called in 1971.

Now we have this evasive situation arising. Let us get the plans and specifications completed as they should have been done well before this, and make loan funds the issue.

If the Government prefers to select one hospital in preference to another, that is its decision, but it should let the people know of its decision. That is what I am suggesting the Government should do. I will now refer to a letter written by the previous Minister in December, 1970. It makes interesting reading when we relate it to the letter written by the present Minister on the 4th May, 1971. The following letter is dated the 10th December, 1970, and was written by the previous Minister:—

Planning is well advanced on a scheme to provide a 3-storey building containing 68 beds (40 general and 28 maternity beds) on the 45 acre site west of Lake Cooloongup.

Included in the building will be an operating suite containing two operating rooms, a birth suite, x-ray, casualty and outpatient departments, kitchen and cafeteria, a laboratory, an administration area, workshop and plant rooms. The building will be air-conditioned.

Service areas are being designed to cope with extra ward accommodation, which will be added as required to meet future needs.

Everything possible is being done to press on with detailed plans and specifications with a view to calling tenders immediately this is possible. It is hoped to do so in mid 1971.

The SPEAKER: I hope the honourable member will tie this up with the Bill.

Mr. RUSHTON: I certainly will. This Bill covers all aspects of hospitals. The letter continues—

Construction should take from 18-21 months, in which case the hospital should be completed and ready for occupation early in 1973.

No firm estimate of cost is available, but probably it will be in the region of \$2,000,000.

That indicates the change which has taken place in the Government's intentions regarding hospitals. It is now changing to a centralised outlook. If the present Government has a different set of priorities let it say so. A centralisation scheme is being adopted in regard to hospital laundry and catering. It is actually being reflected in the whole gamut of hospital administration in this State, which is under review.

I continued my inquiries because those in the area were most upset about this aspect. I was given evasive answers, but I did not realise at the time just how evasive they were.

On the 25th August, 1971, I asked a similar question as follows:—

Has the Public Works Department completed the design of this building?

The answer was that it had not, but the design was expected within two months. That was in August last year and yet we are still being told that the design cannot be done. Why can it not be done? It is because the priorities have been changed. That is why.

All I say is that the Government should let the people know its priorities. The Government cannot have it both ways. I might add that following the work of the electoral commission which is carving up the electorates, I am sure the hospital will be programmed for next year; but it was to be finished by then. When we consider that south of the river something like 2½ beds per thousand are provided while 7½ beds per thousand are provided in the north, we must realise the need south of the river. This is what I want the Minister and his administrators to study closely.

The SPEAKER: I am afraid I cannot see the connection between what the honourable member is saying and the Bill.

Mr. RUSHTON: The amendment is to the Hospitals Act.

The SPEAKER: It is amending only part of the Hospitals Act.

Mr. RUSHTON: I thought it related to the administration of the hospitals, the Medical Department, and all their ramifications. If I do not require your guidance further, Mr. Speaker, I will continue. What I am saying is that the Bill relates to the Medical Department practices in this State; and it is a matter of choice of priorities, firstly by the Government, because it directs the department what it must do when it is told. I will not go further with that.

It is a matter of priority of allocation of Government funds. Previously it was intended that the hospital under discussion would cater for the naval personnel from the naval base at Cockburn Sound; and I am wondering why the Government did not pursue this matter.

Mr. Davies: Because the Navy does not want to use that hospital. It wants to use Hollywood Hospital.

Mr. RUSHTON: Why does the Minister not do more about it? It was in the original sketch and plans I saw. What negotiations has the Minister undertaken?

Mr. Davies: They do not want it. Can you not understand that? The Navy said, "No."

Mr. Jamieson: The Minister you supported changed his mind a dozen times on this.

Mr. RUSHTON: On the sketch I saw a sick bay was provided which was nearly as big as the Rockingham-Kwinana hospital.

Mr. May: What did you sit in on?

Mr. RUSHTON: The inquiry on the Garden Island naval facility. It was interesting to ascertain the medical needs of the naval facilities.

Mr. Jamieson: They change every few minutes because recently a Commonwealth officer told me no personnel would be living there at all.

Mr. RUSHTON: If the Minister read the reports, he would have a better understanding of the matter. Surely the Minister for Works should get himself fully acquainted with the facts.

Mr. Jamieson: My information is more recent than yours.

Mr. RUSHTON: We will wait to see the report.

Mr. Gayfer: Where do they intend to do their washing?

Mr. May: Dirty?

Mr. RUSHTON: When the Minister replies to the debate I want him to tell us frankly the situation on this matter. I would like the glory he enjoyed for the first two or three months to be restored to him. I felt then he was making great steps.

Mr. Davies: Flattery will get you nowhere.

Mr. RUSHTON: All I ask of the Minister is that he be frank, and tell us the intentions regarding the hospital. If under the Tonkin Government's priorities it is not to be constructed until 1976, let the Minister tell us. If it is to be 1973, tell us. If it is not to be until 1975, tell us that.

Mr. May: I wish we could tell you it would be soon.

Mr. Jamieson: The previous Government kept telling you a later and later date, and you know this.

Mr. RUSHTON: No it did not.

Mr. Jamieson: Yes it did. You be fair and factual on this.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will be.

Mr. Jamieson: You had all this information.

Mr. RUSHTON: The Minister is just being evasive.

Mr. Jamieson: I am not being evasive at all. The last communication from your Minister referred to a later date than he had previously stated. You cannot deny that.

Mr. RUSHTON: I have been following this matter since 1965 and I know what has taken place. I have been present at deputations to the Medical Department and to the Minister, and I have spoken to the Premier.

Mr. Jamieson: Your Government procrastinated too, but you will not admit anything.

Mr. RUSHTON: If the Minister had listened he would have heard me read the actual statement which was in black and white.

Mr. Jamieson: You did not read the final one.

Mr. RUSHTON: I read the last one from the previous Minister.

Mr. Jamieson: No you didn't.

Mr. RUSHTON: I would like the Minister to answer me, and at the same time I am trying to restore his halo in respect of public relations. I also want him to tell me about another matter. Why, although during the early days following his appointment he was ready and willing to speak to those who were helping his department—that is, the Armadale-Kelmscott District Memorial Hospital Auxiliary—does he now avoid them? I do not know why he could not meet these good people who worked keenly for his department and contributed a tremendous amount of money but, more importantly, they contributed their time. Why did he not find time to speak to them when they had only one or two points to finalise with him? I urge him again to make arrangements with the auxiliary of the hospital to finalise these few odd points instead of discriminating against small groups while favouring large groups.

MR. NALDER (Kataning) [9.40 p.m.]: Rumours have circulated concerning the handling of laundry from country hospitals, and I would like the Minister to clarify the position. I know the Bill refers to the metropolitan area, but the member for Cottesloe in his contribution to the debate stated that the system in Victoria has resulted in an extension of the laundry facilities in the metropolitan area to areas up to 50 and 100 miles from the Melbourne G.P.O. I would like the Minister to indicate whether under this legislation he intends to extend this facility to country hospitals within a radius of 50 to 100 miles of the Perth G.P.O.

I cannot speak with any authority on this matter because I just do not know the position, but I have heard it said that some hospitals, like the regional hospitals, have linen facilities which are utilised by the smaller hospitals within a radius of 30 or 40 miles.

Mr. Davies: I understand one or two are doing this now, but we do not encourage it.

Mr. NALDER: The Minister is not encouraging it and has no intention under this legislation of encouraging it?

Mr. Davies: No.

Mr. NALDER: The Minister has indicated that this is not his intention and that answers the query I raised.

Mr. Hutchinson: Could not the activities extend into the country districts?

Mr. NALDER: The Minister says he has no intention of doing that. I take it his word is sufficient on this matter, and that was my only query.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park—Minister for Health) [9.42 p.m.]: I would like to thank all members who have taken part in this debate. They all had something of interest to say and I enjoyed listening to them.

Firstly, the member for Subiaco, who led the debate, gave the Bill general support and said he felt it might be the first step towards an overall hospitals commission. I had not thought as far ahead as he apparently has on that aspect. I had studied the position in Victoria and New South Wales and in some instances I was not as impressed with their systems as with our own. In other instances I believe they can show the way.

The honourable member said this Bill could be a valuable pointer towards whether or not the management of hospitals could be dealt with more efficiently by a commission rather than under the present system. The administration is dealt with by the Medical Department and boards, and in some cases, the Minister acting as a board.

The Bill has a lot to commend it. We have problems different from those in some of the other States inasmuch as we must maintain hospitals in more isolated areas and at greater distances from the metropolitan area than is the case in the Eastern States. Nevertheless, I come back to the point I made a moment ago. This indeed could be a pointer towards a change in our overall hospital management. It certainly could not be made quickly, but would take a number of years because I do regret the fact that the advisory council has not yet been established. I would have liked it to be established before, but circumstances dictated otherwise. It will take a few years to ascertain how the system will work, but I would like to be able to assess results quickly and I would like the system to operate efficiently.

Without using any foreign language, could I explain just what happened in connection with this Bill since pen was first put to paper on it? After a number of discussions had taken place and the matter had been considered by Cabinet, the Bill was drafted and presented to the teaching hospitals, the university, and later—I overlooked it at the time—to the A.M.A.

This was the first draft of the Bill upon which I sought some guidance. As I stated the other evening, eventually I did receive some guidance from those bodies. At all times the A.M.A. has been most co-operative, and I have enjoyed talking to Mr. Hayward who, I know, has put in a tremendous amount of work personally. My feeling is that the first Bill was almost completely rewritten and a new Bill has

come to Parliament in its present form. The Bill before us was made available to no-one before it came to Parliament because I felt I had gone as far as I needed in asking for suggestions and in amending the first draft as far as was possible and reasonably in accordance with the suggestions that had been made. I felt it was Parliament's business—nobody else's—to know first what was in the final Bill. Consequently the final draft of the Bill was brought to Parliament last Thursday at which time it was made available to anyone who liked to ask for a copy or buy one from the Treasury. I hope this clearly explains how the Bill has developed into its present form.

I said the other night—and I repeat now—that much of the contents of the Bill was initiated by the previous administration. As the member for Cottesloe well knows, there is a great deal of time between the thought and the eventual reception by Parliament of a Bill.

Mr. Hutchinson: As I said, I support the general proposition.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. I appreciate, as does the member for Cottesloe, the general support which has been given. I hope I have cleared up that point. I felt we went off the rails somewhere, but there was certainly no intention to be secretive. As I have said, I first received a considerable body of opinion—and I will not deal with how I received it or how I felt—and then I thought that my responsibility was to Parliament. I considered Parliament should be the first to know the contents of the Bill so that members could give me their thoughts upon it.

Mr. Hutchinson: If I may interrupt for a moment, the misunderstanding came about over the question as to whether you intended to introduce any amendments to it.

Mr. DAVIES: I see. Since the Bill was made public I have had a quick informal discussion with one gentleman who mentioned several points which have been raised in the House tonight. I consider my explanation should satisfy members who have raised queries as well as the gentleman who raised certain points with me. For that reason I see no need to amend the Bill in any way; I think the Bill, as printed, is satisfactory.

I agree with the member for Subiaco when he said that the cost of preventing sickness is far less than the cost of trying to cure it. He reflected much of what I have read over the past 12 months about the need to keep people out of hospitals and to get them out of hospitals, but to see they receive proper domiciliary care. This, of course, is relevant to one of the clauses in the Bill which refers to charges for such care.

The member for Subiaco spoke of the appalling cost of hospitalisation, particularly in the teaching hospitals, and sug-

gested some of the costs were unfairly weighted because of the very nature of the hospitals and their association with teaching. I agree there is probably a great deal in what he says, but I wonder whether it matters in the overall picture. Somebody has to pay to run a hospital and teach students. Although we argue at considerable length with the University Commission each triennium, and although it costs the State a great deal of money, the overall health picture is the really important factor. But do we get satisfaction from knowing just how costs measure up? This will not reduce the actual cost to the community, but I will be interested to hear something about the Sydney system.

Dr. Dadour: I will let the Minister have a copy tomorrow.

Mr. DAVIES: Thank you. The member for Subiaco also spoke of the advisory council and the method of selecting the various people who will be appointed to it. This method was altered slightly as a result of some of the representations that were made. The member for Subiaco thought the council could be imbalanced if two members are appointed from the department, two by the Minister, two by the university, and only one from each teaching hospital and one from the A.M.A.

I appreciate there could be dangers, and discussions have been held as to whether it could be weighted unfairly with either administrators or medical men. I am anxious to keep a balanced council. I know the names of some people I would like to see on the council but it is my intention to let others nominate first and I shall use my nominations to strike a balance, if necessary.

I heard on the grapevine that informal discussions have been held by interested bodies since the Bill was brought down. I understand that those concerned are quite happy with the arrangement and I hope teaching hospitals will perhaps meet around the table and try to balance out their own representation. If there is a doctor nominated who is considered to be the best I hope someone else will appoint an administrator and *vice versa*.

I can understand the fears expressed by the member for Subiaco and, indeed, I have some myself. I believe we can only hope for a sane approach and try to strike the balance which lies within our powers. Deputies will also be appointed for each of these and they may also provide another means of striking a balance. I hope the council will be balanced, whether it consists of doctors or administrators.

The honourable member also spoke of Community Health Services. This is part of the explanation of the scheme which was started recently when the Medical Department sent public health sisters into

the north. It is a ministerial appointment and I felt the man I selected had excellent qualifications. I did not make the appointment without undertaking some extensive inquiries as to the doctor's capacity and suitability. It seems he is a very good man for the job and some remarks that have filtered back to me already indicate it was a good step.

Dr. Dadour: I was not decrying the man.

Mr. DAVIES: No, but the method and the cost. The honourable member also referred to the Community Welfare Bill. Indeed there is a parallel and we are hoping to interlock all of the services and perhaps provide a better service at less cost. I hope this will come to pass and that after the system has been in operation for 12 months we will be able to see a vast improvement. I certainly hope I will be able to receive some money to expand those services, because I think the method is the best yet for trying to help the community, particularly the Aboriginal population and other less fortunate sections. I do not claim all the credit for this myself because the system was initiated, in part, before my appointment. However, I believe it is something we can expand upon as soon as we have more money.

I said in my second reading speech that we must have the goodwill of doctors for any medical scheme a Government intends to run.

Like the member for Subiaco I lauded the work that has been done in an honorary capacity by some men who, one might think, would be far too busy to take on work on hospital boards. I think I said in my second reading speech that I have no criticism whatever to level at teaching hospital boards and any criticism I had related to some of the distant country hospitals which, perhaps by their very remoteness, were not as efficient. They did not always seem to work in the right way or perhaps did not have the same access to the department which hospitals in the metropolitan area have. For this reason it was difficult for them to seek guidance and they sometimes found themselves in a difficult position.

I do not want to take up too much time, but the last part relates, generally, to the points raised by the member for Subiaco rather than, more precisely, to the points raised by the member for Cottesloe when he spoke of ideology.

Dr. Dadour: Before the Minister proceeds will he refer to the matter of a chairman?

Mr. DAVIES: I did receive some representations on this point and I gave them a great deal of consideration. I want to be able to pick the person whom I consider to be the most suitable for the job. This will be a fairly hard task. I hope

to have a number of excellent people on the council and the chairman could come under the provisions of either proposed new subsection (2)(a) or (2)(b) of proposed new section 6A. If he is appointed under (2)(a) he will be departmental, and if he is appointed under (2)(b) he will be my nominee. However, he can still come from another source. It will be far better if I have the right to choose rather than be pinned down to a selection from four persons.

Dr. Dadour: If we could just delete the reference to the department I would be happy.

Mr. DAVIES: I think the honourable member will have to leave that to me because it could be necessary to have a departmental man for the very purpose of co-ordination. However, this could cause some worry which I well and truly appreciate. I would rather leave the situation open so that I can pick the chairman myself.

The final matter relates to services provided by the Government, and also the method of financing. First of all, I want to disabuse the minds of those who think that these moves might be associated with the likely outcome of the next Federal election. The form of this Bill was devised some 18 months ago and I think members opposite will agree that the stocks of the Federal Government were far higher then than is the case now. No ulterior motives were involved.

Dr. Dadour: I did not say the Minister had any ulterior motives, but I can read them into the Bill.

Mr. DAVIES: I can appreciate what could happen but I want to say that I did not greatly change the actual wording of the previous proposition. I am sure members would have taken the opportunity to check what I have said. The fact that the stocks of the Federal Government have dropped somewhat does not mean they will remain that way when the Federal election comes around later this year. We can only wait to see what happens. I have to confess that I am kept far too busy to worry very much about what is happening on the Federal scene. Also, long ago I gave up trying to select the winners of elections because I have been proved wrong so many times.

I assure members that this Bill has no relationship to any likely change of Federal Government. As a matter of fact, from my reading of the Federal Opposition platform, if there was a change substantial alterations would be necessary to legislation in this State. However, whatever Government is elected I hope it will decide to pay more than \$5 a day towards the cost of keeping pensioners in hospitals. That situation is appalling; I have said so before and I do not want to miss an opportunity to say it again.

We have reached the situation where there has been a desire to establish central laundry services, central catering facilities, and central X-ray laboratories. A central catering service has been established and a freezing tunnel has been operating at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital since 1970.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much talking in the Chamber.

Mr. DAVIES: Approval was given for that service on the 18th November, 1970. Of course, the State X-ray Laboratories have operated for many years.

While dealing with hospital and medical matters we investigated the powers of the Minister. The Minister's powers set out in the previous Act were outlined in about three lines. They were very brief and because they had not been clearly defined there has always been this area of doubt as to whether or not the Minister had power to act. The original Act has not been amended since 1969 and opportunity has now been taken to clearly set out what the Minister can do.

What the Minister desires to do has nothing to do with ideology; the only reason for my taking this action is, mainly, to provide a better and continuing laundry service. Because there is a need for this service to be a permanent part of our hospital system we have included it as a specific item. I do not think we desire to go over the whole of the history of the laundry services but it might be recalled that in 1959 the Government—which was of the same political colour as the present Government—decided there was a need to build a central laundry. I think it was decided, at the time, to build the laundry in the vicinity of what is now Selby Clinic or it might have been in the grounds of the Claremont Hospital?

Mr. Williams: Had Cabinet agreed to that decision?

Mr. DAVIES: The previous administration had decided to take this step. Of course, we know what happened when the Government changed hands and the axe fell on anything which appeared to be socialistic. The mere fact that the new Government took over the Midland Railway Company, appointed many boards, and increased the Public Service by two-thirds—the greatest increase ever—is something we will not argue tonight.

Mr. Hutchinson: Those services were required because of the expansion of the State.

Mr. DAVIES: We will not canvass those matters tonight, as I have on other occasions. However, we have reached the stage where it is necessary to have an efficient laundry service which will be cheaper to operate than the present system. On the last occasion that this decision was made the member for Cottesloe

—then Minister for Health—decided otherwise and since that time a file has built up which is now eight or nine inches thick.

We have now reached the position where in less than 12 months' time we will not be able to get all our hospital laundry done in Western Australia because the Repatriation Hospital will not continue to help us in the future as it has done in the past. The position was known to the previous Government, but I will not detail what is contained in the file in regard to that.

The provision of a laundry service is now a matter of extreme urgency, and that is why we went ahead with our planning. We did not wait until the Bill was passed. We carried out a feasibility study which the member for Subiaco had rightly demanded, and which I demanded, and which the public would desire. That is why we went ahead and did what was necessary to establish a laundry to ensure that we had the best possible facilities to do the best possible job at the cheapest possible price.

On the research which has already taken place, I am convinced we are heading in this direction and making excellent strides.

I believe that towards the end of last year there was an exhibition of laundry machinery at Earl's Court, London. This was brought to my notice when I was passing through South Australia. I took an extra day to go out to have a look at the system operating in that State. The exhibition at Earl's Court was mentioned to me by the manager at the South Australian establishment, who suggested we should send someone there. Two officers of the Public Works Department went to the exhibition while they were over there on other matters, and they supplied an excellent report on the latest types of laundry machinery available. We hope to establish our laundry with similar machinery in the near future.

The situation was becoming intolerable and would have been desperate in less than 12 months because of the attitude adopted by the previous Administration. We asked the hospital boards for their opinions and found that all the teaching hospitals, with the exception of the Fremantle Hospital, wanted us to do their laundry. I even had an informal approach from a private hospital. With the complete co-operation of the managements of the hospitals that are run by boards, and because the need exists, we have decided to go ahead and provide a central laundry and linen service. The only hospital which will be excluded is the Fremantle Hospital.

Naturally, we will not be able to say, "As from 'D'-day all your laundry will be done here." It will be phased in gradually, and I would imagine the Royal Perth Hospital, which has quite an efficient laundry at the present time, would be one of the

last to be taken over. All the matters mentioned by the member for Subiaco—steam, transport, and employment—have been looked at, and I will consider whether in due course I can make some of the information available to him. I have no fear of doing so, except that some Government matters must be dealt with on a confidential basis.

Excellent work is being done and excellent forecasts are being obtained. The other metropolitan hospitals I have mentioned desire to go ahead with this scheme because, in the long run, it will mean a saving to the Government. As I said when introducing the Bill, all the measures contained in it are designed to save the Government money. I know it can be said, "Look at the butchers' shops in 1928, and look at the State hotels." However, in many cases the Government has established services in areas where no-one else would go and it has been up to the Government to step in. The Government established hospitals and nursing posts when no-one else would do so. The Government has a responsibility towards the community at large. It must provide these services.

As far as the private laundries are concerned, I understand there is plenty of demand for the capacity they have at the present time. I must say they missed the boat badly. They had 12 years from the time the previous Government intended to build a central laundry; and, according to the file, in those 12 years not one feasible plan in regard to laundry services was presented to the previous Government. No wonder the hospitals got into their present situation.

Because of what I found out in South Australia, and because of what we are doing, I have no qualms about this being an excellent service. It will provide many employment opportunities, and I am looking at the likelihood of providing opportunities in some areas, perhaps, for mentally handicapped young people who may be able to do the repetitive type of work a laundry can provide. I do not know whether this will be possible but at least it is being investigated. Of course, any such employees will be paid full wages and will not be used as a form of cheap labour.

The last matter causing some concern was the right of hospitals to provide on-lending in regard to the provision of a laundry service. I think the member for Cottesloe may have been a little confused when he said hospitals took up all their borrowing power each year. I was able to do a quick check on this and I found it is the exception rather than the rule for the Treasury to approve of the hospitals using their borrowing power.

The power exists but it is exercised only in unusual circumstances. It was used in connection with the nurses' quar-

ters at the Royal Perth Hospital, and I understand the Fremantle Hospital also used it on one occasion. The Treasury is always reluctant to give permission but, knowing the nature of the service that will be provided, if the hospitals want to use this power and their boards are agreeable, the Treasury will give them approval to borrow moneys, which could help the loan funds as far as the State is concerned.

Mr. Hutchinson: There is an administrative reason for the boards not taking up their loan options. It is probably done by arrangement with departmental officers in the Treasury, as you point out.

Mr. DAVIES: No. The Treasury has discouraged it. The member for Cottesloe knows that, unfortunately, Ministers are tied to the Treasury. This is a method of borrowing which I believe will ease the position on the Treasury. It will not cause any hardship to the boards. I do not think there is any need for concern, particularly as so much has been achieved in regard to co-operation with the hospital boards and we have taken notice of their feelings.

A matter was raised in connection with clause 37 (2) (c), on page 15 of the Bill, dealing with the charging of fees. This was discussed outside the House with an interested party, and I think it has been fully explained.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is not clause 37. Do you mean clause 30?

Mr. DAVIES: Clause 30 of the Bill repeals and re-enacts section 37 of the Act. This relates to the matter mentioned by the member for Subiaco; that is, the need to charge for domiciliary service if and when necessary.

Dr. Dadour: Paragraph (d) deals with the prescribing of fees that shall be chargeable in relation to any other matter under the Act.

Mr. DAVIES: Did the member for Cottesloe raise this matter?

Mr. Hutchinson: I did not raise it, but that is the way it reads in my copy of the Bill.

Mr. DAVIES: I am dealing with paragraphs (c) and (d). Paragraph (d) reads—

(d) prescribe the fees that shall be chargeable in relation to any other matter under this Act.

This clause is not related, as it has been suggested, to setting doctor's fees. I wish to give that assurance; there is no need for any concern.

This ensures that private practitioners will not be prevented from charging fees and that private practitioners can charge fees in hospitals. We deleted all reference to medical fees from the earlier Bill which was circulated and which the honourable member may remember. In the

present Act private practitioners are permitted to charge fees but these clauses are not related to the general charging of fees as the member for Subiaco suggested. We decided not to touch that section so there would be no argument about it. The whole thing remains the same.

Dr. Dadour: I take your point but I am not convinced.

Mr. DAVIES: I have covered the main points except, of course, the right of the Minister to give directions. This was the final point mentioned by the member for Subiaco and the member for Cottesloe.

The member for Subiaco indicated that the amendment may relate only to teaching hospitals and that directives could be given only to teaching hospitals in regard to matters decided upon by the advisory council. If that is the honourable member's interpretation, my answer is that I do not believe one can differentiate between hospitals. The Minister has to take the blame eventually, and if there is an area of dispute, I believe a decision should be made after the Minister has spoken to the board. There are many instances in which a Minister could be required to give some direction to the hospital board. I have not had to do this during my 12 months' term of office, but the occasion could arise.

One or two hospitals have written to say that they did not wish to charge the new hospital fees and their boards did not intend to. Of course, that is untenable. We cannot have the situation where one hospital says, "We will not charge these fees." In the ultimate the responsibility for any shortage comes back to the Minister, so the Minister has the right to say that the hospitals will charge standard fees which have been agreed to by the Government. Obviously the Minister will have listened to the reasons put forward by the board and he will make his decision in the light of these.

As members probably know, we have the only Medical Department in Australia which has a methods and operations system, and I would say we have one of the most efficient methods and operations systems of any Government department of which I am aware. Again, I cannot take credit for this as it was in operation before my term of office.

The decisions to be made by the section relate mainly to staff, staff movements, and the necessary measures for a more efficient hospital. There is a wide range of other matters to be considered, including internal procedures, store control, and systems which a hospital board may be reluctant to introduce. The Minister will discuss problems with the board and make a decision as to the best and least expensive system to use. The Minister must always keep expense in mind and have the right to direct, for instance,

that a hospital uses a certain medical line which is used throughout the length and breadth of the State.

The hospital may have decided that it did not like this line, but the Minister is aware that it is a standard line which can be purchased in bulk and supplied at a cheaper cost than an alternative product. Here again I feel the Minister has the right to make a direction of this kind, if the whole board wants to stand alone and is unable to supply any good reason for standing alone.

I can recall the instance of a small country hospital which advertised extensively and expensively for staff. It continued to advertise even after we pointed out that it was not necessary. This is a gross wastage of money and I believe in such circumstances the Minister should have the right to direct a hospital to take a certain course. However, he has to be very careful. As the member for Cottesloe says, he can sack the board if he wants to. However, that is far too drastic when there may be one single area of disagreement for which a solution has to be found.

The blame for any breakdown in hospital or medical services comes back to the Minister and the Government, and the Minister must have the right to direct the hospital boards. I do not want to interfere with the day-to-day running of the boards, and in fact I will not interfere with it. I previously intimated that I have had many applications from various people suggesting I might put in a good word for them because they had applied for such and such a job. On every occasion I refused to assist anyone because that is not my province. The board runs the hospital and I believe it will continue to do so.

I thank members for their general support. Everything in the Bill is included because we feel it is essential to provide the best medical service at the least possible cost. That is our objective in framing all these amendments.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. A. R. Tonkin) in the Chair; Mr. Davies (Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Long title amended—

Mr. RUSHTON: I especially wish to take the opportunity to rise on this clause to express my regret that the Minister did not even extend the people involved the courtesy of answering the queries which were raised. That is all I wish to say.

Mr. DAVIES: I thought I dealt with the important matters contained in the Bill. I understand the honourable member is bringing a deputation to me at some time and I will be pleased to talk to him about it. I do not think the honourable member fully appreciates the work involved in planning a hospital, and I do not think he appreciates the need—

Mr. Rushton: I do not like them to be disregarded.

Mr. DAVIES: I do not think the honourable member appreciates the other pressures brought to bear on me by members who are not quite so vocal but who are more understanding of the matters relating to the planning and control of hospitals. They will all receive attention as soon as possible.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 9 put and passed.

Clause 10: Section 6A added—

Dr. DADOUR: I move an amendment—

Page 6, line 25—Add after the word "Minister" the words "one of whom shall be Chairman."

I believe the Minister was most sincere in saying that he would like to have room in which to move when selecting the chairman he thinks best suited for the position. I agree with that, but I do not know who may be the next Minister for Health. Therefore, I would like to add those words as a safeguard. I do not think any hardship will be caused to the Minister because I am certain he has his own nominees. I am sure he has a number of people from whom he could make a choice. That is the reason I have moved my amendment; not because I doubt the integrity of the Minister, but because I am worried about future Ministers.

Mr. DAVIES: Whilst appreciating the compliment paid to me I cannot agree to this amendment for the reasons I outlined. I want to have room in which to manoeuvre. I want to be able to pick from the 12 people the person I believe will be best suited. I appreciate the motive of the honourable member and, being aware of it, I should be able to do something about it. However, I do not think this is the way to accomplish what he intends.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I can understand the Minister wanting to be able to make a choice from the persons who are eventually selected. I think the Minister said earlier that the people referred to in paragraph (b) of proposed new section 6A (2) would be selected subsequent to the rest. However, I think it is of great importance that the man selected to be chairman should be a man of outstanding ability, with plenty of time. He should not be a doctor or a departmental officer.

The purpose of this amendment is to obtain a good man, and we will need a good man with plenty of time; there is no doubt about that. A departmental officer would not be a wise choice. My experience of those officers is that they are very busy and some of them do not like having to serve on a hospital board. Sometimes we find that the director or his deputy is nominated as the chairman of a board, and this situation could occur here. We need a man who will spend a great deal of time and effort in endeavouring to understand the situations of the teaching hospitals and their requirements. The amendment is genuine, and I think the Minister could well adopt it.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 11 put and passed.

Clause 12: Section 7A added—

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I move an amendment—

Page 8—Delete paragraph (b) of new subsection 7A.

I do not intend to go over the ground I covered previously. However, I wish to say that I believe the establishment of a Government centralised laundry is all very well in theory; but in practice I believe it could prove to be an incubus on the economy of the State. In his reply to the second reading debate the Minister mentioned that he had a file about so thick—and he made gestures to indicate that it was about 12 inches thick.

Mr. Davies: It is a couple of volumes.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: If that much departmental work had been devoted to trying to find private enterprise to do the job—

Mr. Davies: This is made up of submissions by private enterprise.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Well, I am not at all sure that the desire was there; because I remember when I was the Minister the department did not wish to engage in a Government centralised laundry. I believe this work should properly be done by private enterprise. I point out that at present there are laundries in the metropolitan area which to some degree are geared to handle hospital work.

It will bring hardship to bear on these places. In addition, I believe the size of the building—which will be consequential—could lead to work from country hospitals being taken in also. This is intended to be a centralised laundry established by the Government. There is no doubt that with the passage of years the laundry vans will travel farther and farther afield, because that is the aim of a centralised laundry. I issue a warning now that the same sort of situation could be created as has been created in Victoria where the

work of country hospitals is carried out in a centralised laundry which covers a radius of about 100 miles.

The Minister has said that this is not an ideological matter, but to a great extent it is. He referred to those State services that have been discontinued by the previous Government, so in all consistency it is impossible for me to support a centralised Government laundry. In the end I believe the work would be performed much better by private enterprise. The Minister has said this is urgent, but it was supposedly urgent 12 years ago. During that time the State has managed quite well and it will manage quite well in the future under a system that should not be loaded with a burden it cannot carry.

Dr. DADOUR: I support the comments made by the member for Cottesloe. I know the difficulties experienced with laundries in the larger hospitals in the metropolitan area. As I said in my earlier speech, I was unable to check the figures that were supplied to me. What concerns me more than anything else is that if we get a centralised laundry run by the Government it will operate at a loss in the same way as other Government departments. This is inevitable. I do not have the facts, but for all I know the Royal Perth Hospital laundry is running at a loss.

I was wondering what the true figures are. The figures given to me from one of the larger teaching hospitals show that the dearest item laundered by a private laundry is a doctor's gown, and this costs 8c. However, the information obtained from the Royal Perth Hospital is that the smallest item of laundry costs 10c. Of course, the other hospitals may not be obtaining satisfaction from a private laundry.

The problem is that we will be committed to a great loss if a centralised Government laundry is established. I know that one hospital will have to double its stocks of linen if it uses a centralised laundry established on the proposed site. Inevitably this will increase costs. Many items of hospital linen do go astray as a result of their being transported from the hospital to the laundry and returned. I know that the labour ward at King Edward Memorial Hospital is trying to standardise its linen with that of other hospitals, because its work is unique.

I could not agree with the establishment of a centralised laundry until I know more about it. Perhaps it will have to come eventually and we will be forced to accept it, but to ask a member to vote on a matter such as this without disclosing the full facts is asking too much. Therefore I must vote for the amendment until I know what is going on.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I am willing to support the amendment, because by granting private enterprise an opportunity to undertake a service of this

nature we are giving it some encouragement to carry out such work, not only in the metropolitan area but also in the major country centres. Private enterprise has done quite a deal to assist in providing similar services and will continue to do so in the future. At the same time if private enterprise carries out this work it may save the State the expenditure of several thousands of dollars in setting up a centralised Government laundry which, in itself, could pose many problems.

If we agree to the clause as printed we will deny to private laundries the opportunity to undertake Government contract work. I am disappointed that the Minister does not see more merit in that line of approach. The many discussions I have had with various people suggest to me that this work could be done adequately by private enterprise, and if it were given the opportunity to undertake the work this would give private enterprise quite a boost. I feel strongly on the matter and I urge the Committee to accept the amendment.

Mr. RUSHTON: This clause is vital in the sense that it is a question of spending money, and I hope on this occasion the Minister will not evade my query as he has on previous occasions. To establish this laundry for central services the cost could be \$2,000,000. The project that I seek will also cost \$2,000,000. In this instance, however, the money will be spent on a laundry instead of a hospital. So I ask the Minister to reconsider his previous decision and accept the amendment.

For obvious reasons we have matters of greater priority than the one he has suggested.

Mr. MENSAROS: In supporting the remarks made by the member for Cottesloe I want to canvass one point. Has the Minister realised what a potential danger a centralised laundry could be? Apart from anything else, what would happen if, as a result of an industrial dispute, a decision was made to strike?

When there is a strike will all the hospitals have to go without clean linen and sterilised accessories and sheets? If we establish such facilities in the small centres, including the country, the potential dangers which I have pointed out will be minimised. We might find that the determination of conditions and wages in this Government enterprise will be at the mercy of the unions, should the Government be compelled from the employer's point of view to succumb to any demand in order to continue with the service.

Mr. DAVIES: If this amendment is agreed to then members should also delete the provision for setting up centralised catering services, approval for which was given in September, 1970, by the previous Government. I would point out that the

State X-ray laboratories have not come under criticism before, and no proposal has been made to dispense with them.

We have not gone into this matter lightly. We are absolutely convinced that we can provide a better and cheaper laundry service. Since I have been Minister for Health individual approaches have been made to me in respect of laundry services. I was prepared to listen to them, but after six months nothing came of the approaches and the Government decided to go on with its plan. For 12 years during the term of office of the previous Government the hospitals were in the acute position of being hard pressed to provide laundry services.

This step has been taken only because all the major metropolitan hospitals, with the exception of Fremantle Hospital, which has its own laundry service, have asked for it. I refer to major hospitals like the Dental Hospital, Mt. Hawthorn Hospital, and the Home of Peace. One private hospital has also made approaches to me, but I informed the board of that hospital that we were not intending to provide a laundry service for private hospitals.

All the matters that have been raised have been considered by the Government, and it has come to the conclusion that this is the only reasonable step that can be taken to overcome the existing situation. My reading of the files indicates that this was the thinking of the previous Administration, after 12 years of frustration in regard to laundry services.

Mr. O'Connor: Are you not concerned about the tremendous cost?

Mr. DAVIES: No. After all the costs have been analysed, we find that the establishment of a centralised laundry is the cheapest method. The capital cost will be over \$4,000,000. That is nothing in such a vast scheme. In speaking to the amendment the member for Dale used a nasty debating tactic.

Mr. Jamieson: He knows nothing different.

Mr. DAVIES: The member for Dale said that in answer to the questions asked I did not take any notice of him.

Mr. Rushton: You were disrespectful to the people.

Mr. DAVIES: I hope he will listen to what I have to say, because I have received some complaints about him from his electorate and they include one from the ladies auxiliary. What is the good of having a hospital at Rockingham if there is not a laundry service in the rest of the hospitals in the metropolitan area?

The other point I emphasise is that if we look at the questions that have been asked in this House and the answers given it will be seen that we have said we will

do our best in the planning of hospitals; but there are always contingencies. The member for Dale should read the questions and answers carefully; and if he keeps on asking more I will answer them to the best of my ability; but that will not get him a hospital at Rockingham any sooner.

As soon as it is possible for the Government to build a hospital at Rockingham one will be provided; but I believe the hospital at Rockingham has nothing to do with the establishment of a central laundry, because the methods of financing are completely different.

Mr. Rushton: Will you explain the methods?

Mr. DAVIES: If an ex-banker did not have sense enough to follow what I said earlier as to how the central laundry will be financed then I am sorry to see him sitting in this Chamber.

Mr. O'Connor: Can you give some indication of the number of people who will be working in this central laundry service?

Mr. DAVIES: Factors such as this have all been covered by the feasibility studies. A committee of three persons has been working on these studies. The proposed central laundry will provide a better service, because after its establishment it will not be necessary for hospitals to carry double stocks of linen, whereas at the present time they have to carry double stocks. The feasibility studies indicate that less linen stock will have to be carried, that the linen will be more readily accessible, and that hospitals will be supplied more quickly; but this service will not be extended to the country.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The reference by the Minister that the proposed central laundry will cost over \$4,000,000 emphasises my opposition to the project. It means the expenditure of \$4,000,000 for a Government service that can adequately be provided by the existing services and by harnessing private enterprise to a greater degree for this purpose.

Mr. Davies: There was a dismal record in the 12 years of office of the previous Government in regard to hospital laundry services.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: That is what I believe should be done. The alleged dismal record is not such a dismal record as the Minister has made out.

Mr. Davies: It is absolutely so.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I do not believe that for one moment. The expenditure of \$4,000,000 on this colossus, which will prove to be an octopus, will take away work from many facets of private enterprise. It is a proposal with which we cannot agree, and I oppose it out of hand.

Dr. DADOUR: The sisters in the three hospitals of which I can speak desire a centralised laundry. They want to be relieved of the need to attend to the laundry

requirements. In one case the plant has just about broken down, and it will not be long before it has to be renewed. By providing a centralised laundry, more space will be available in the hospitals.

The only argument against the proposal is the cost factor, as compared with the cost of providing a laundry service by private enterprise. In moving his amendment, I think the member for Cottesloe was thinking along the same lines. We realise that we may have to accept the fact that a centralised laundry will be established, but we want to know more about the facts.

Mr. RUSHTON: The new facility should not cost \$4,000,000. I understand that the financing thereof will be met through the borrowing powers of the various hospital boards. The Minister is no doubt aware that the Shires of Kwinana and Rockingham have offered their borrowing powers to provide \$800,000 for a new hospital. This should have a great bearing in establishing the priority for a hospital at Rockingham.

If the Government is to expend \$4,000,000 on the establishment of a central laundry service, this must have an effect on the funds that are available to build hospitals. I am aware that in certain cases the laundry services of some hospitals are not what they should be. However, is it not possible to retain the people who are at present employed in the various laundry services of the hospitals, without expending \$4,000,000 to set up a centralised laundry service? Could not some changes be made which would not impose such a heavy financial load on the medical services of the State?

He is correct in that the \$4,000,000 cannot be used in some other way. It clearly indicates the attitude of the Minister and his Government towards the centralisation of our medical services, but I am asking the Minister to reconsider this matter. It would be an act of good faith for him to accept this amendment and then we would be in a position to know that the services were not to be centralised in the way the honourable member indicated.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Can the Minister give us some idea of the total annual cost of the laundry service?

Mr. DAVIES: I am terribly sorry I cannot give the information requested. If I had known such kerfuffle would occur, I would have had some figures with me. The fact remains that the service is needed, the board agrees, and, on the initial figures, we will be able to provide it cheaper.

In regard to the point raised by the member for Subiaco, I do not know whether we could give the cost per article because laundry is done at so much per pound and the weight of the garments would affect the total cost. On the studies I made, I am satisfied.

We have heard all the old socialistic bogies tonight. It has been stated that the service must fail. As long as I am Minister it will not fail because we will have some of the best men in the service running it and the hospitals have requested it. As the member for Subiaco said, no other service in the last 12 years has proved capable of meeting the need. The hospitals have asked for this system, we are giving it to them, and we are happy to do so.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I appreciate the fact that the Minister has said he will make sure the service works, but he does not know whether he can do so, because he does not know the cost involved. This is important because if this Bill is to be passed members are entitled to know the cost involved and the Minister should be able to tell us.

If the cost will be some \$4,000,000 on the original outlay, at 8 per cent., the interest alone will be \$320,000. The cost involved for the staff and running the service could be \$1,000,000 a year. If the present staff involves \$500,000, the difference in cost is tremendous and the scheme would be a waste of money.

The Minister cannot supply the figures which are important and therefore I suggest he defer the Bill until he can supply the information requested.

Mr. DAVIES: I have spoken on figures before and said we have the best committee possible working on the matter. On the information already available to me, the schemes I have seen working elsewhere, and the research I have made personally into laundry services here and in the Eastern States, I am satisfied the scheme will work here and that the hospitals will get what they want and will be happy with it.

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

Ayes—18

Mr. Blakie	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Reid
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Thompson
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. Williams
Mr. McPharlin	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. Mensaros	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. Nalder	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Noes—20

Mr. Bertram	Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Brady	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brown	Mr. Jones
Mr. Bryce	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Burke	Mr. Moller
Mr. Cook	Mr. Norton
Mr. Davies	Mr. Sewell
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Taylor
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Harman

(Teller)

Pairs	
Ayes	Noes
Mr. Ridge	Mr. McIver
Mr. Court	Mr. Bateman
Mr. Stephens	Mr. Hartrey
Mr. O'Neill	Mr. Graham
Sir David Brand	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Grayden	Mr. May

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 13 to 19 put and passed.

Clause 20: Section 18 amended—

Dr. DADOUR: I move an amendment—

Page 11, line 22—Insert after the word "functions", the passage—

provided that such directions are concerned only with the advice of the Advisory Council upon such matters relating to the provision, coordination and utilisation of the clinical and teaching facilities, services and resources that are or ought to be available in the teaching hospitals for clinical teaching and research.

I enumerated my reasons for this amendment earlier. At present the Minister has the power to direct most boards of hospitals in various ways and when I first considered the Bill I thought that its provisions referred only to teaching hospitals, and this prompted me to give more thought to the clause. Otherwise I would have voted against the whole clause. If the proposed teaching hospitals advisory council advised the Minister on a certain subject, and the Minister agreed and desired to have his idea adopted in the teaching hospitals, but was having trouble with the board, I believe he should have the power to direct the board to do what he desires.

I feel the Minister has enough power under the present legislation. He can direct any board of any hospital to do anything he wishes.

Mr. DAVIES: I believe the member for Subiaco is using a club where the flick of a finger would be sufficient. His proposed amendment will only include extra verbiage, and will relate the clause to advisory councils in teaching hospitals. He acknowledges that the Minister can now take action in regard to a board. We must have some authority in between. I do not want to interfere, but I have quoted a number of instances where it could be necessary. We should have something in between the two extremes and for that reason I would like to retain the simple wording contained in the Bill.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I support the amendment. The Minister spoke about the necessity to have some power in between the two extremes—that of being able to dismiss a board, and having no power at all, presumably. The amendment to clause 20 will give him that power somewhere between the two extremes. I believe this

is a worth-while amendment. Whether it is phrased correctly I do not know but we were limited because we did not know what amendments were likely to be made to the Bill.

Mr. DAVIES: The proposed amendment would limit the powers of the Minister to teaching hospitals. However, the Minister must have more power and that is provided in the Bill. I suppose of all things the last thing with which we would want to interfere would be teaching hospitals.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is where you want your co-ordination.

Mr. DAVIES: That is right. If a hospital board will not agree with an advisory council the Minister should have the power to direct.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is catered for in the amendment.

Mr. DAVIES: The amendment will apply to all hospital boards.

Mr. Hutchinson: But it will not have application to all hospital boards.

Mr. DAVIES: If the honourable member would like to re-phrase the amendment perhaps it can be examined in another place. As I see it the power of direction of the Minister will be limited to teaching hospitals. We must have other powers of direction if the hospital system is to run efficiently. I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 21: Section 21 amended—

Mr. HUTCHINSON: This is the on-lending clause and it harnesses to the Minister the borrowing powers which are at present held by the boards. The clause reads as follows:—

The on-lending to the Minister or any person or organisation of moneys borrowed in accordance with the provisions of section seventeen of this Act where those moneys are required to finance a service which, in the opinion of the Minister, can more effectively or economically be provided to the hospital by the Minister or that person or organisation rather than by the board.

This provision only caters for the financing of services. Is that all that was intended?

Mr. Davies: Yes.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The Minister, in his introductory speech, said that the purpose of this provision was to finance a Government centralised laundry and linen service.

Mr. Davies: That is how it would appear to the honourable member.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: It appears that immediately that is done the Minister runs out of things to do.

Mr. Davies: That is right—catering.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: As the Minister knows, I was opposed to the idea of a Government-operated laundry, but the Committee has determined on that point. I think the provision would be more valuable if the words "or hospital facility" were included after the word "service."

I do not really believe we need the words under discussion, or half the Bill, for that matter. In fact the Minister agreed with this point when I spoke to the second reading. It seems the Minister has no real need, as he indicated earlier, of many of the words in the measure.

As the Bill is worded the value of the on-lending provision will be confined to the provision of finance for a service. I invite the Minister's attention to this point. Perhaps he should broaden the provision to cater for a time when the service, or services, he wants to provide have been provided.

Mr. DAVIES: I am not quite certain that I understand the member for Cottesloe. It is not my opinion—nor that of the Crown Law Department—that the wording in the clause limits it to one service. There may be one, another one after that, and so on.

Mr. Hutchinson: Why not a hospital facility?

Mr. DAVIES: This is referring to a service to be provided for a group.

Dr. Dadour: A swimming pool.

Mr. DAVIES: A single hospital would not want to borrow money and on-lend it to the Minister for a service for that hospital. The hospital itself would do this provided it had Treasury approval.

The provision is meant to cater for the position of a number of hospitals which agree to the provision of a service; in this case, a laundry service. For this purpose the hospitals will use their powers to borrow money and will on-lend it to the Minister so that he may provide the service for them. This has the approval of the Crown Law Department.

If any member feels the clause falls down in any way, I will ask Crown Law to look at it.

Mr. Hutchinson: Are you saying it is purely to assist a group and not to assist individual hospitals?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, it would enable the Minister to do something for a number of hospitals. I will use Royal Perth Hospital as an example. If that hospital wanted to do something, it would ask the Treasury for permission to borrow money and, as a board, it would have the power to do what it wanted. The clause is referring to other services, such as a centralised laundry service which could be more effectively or economically provided for a hospital by the Minister. If somebody else can provide it more effectively the board is allowed to on-lend. However, where it is possible for

a hospital to do this, provided it has Treasury approval, it would not want to on-lend.

If there is any query on the wording I will ask Crown Law to look at the clause before the Bill is dealt with in another place.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 22 to 29 put and passed.

Clause 30: Section 37 repealed and re-enacted—

Dr. DADOUR: I refer to proposed new section 37 (2) (d) which reads—

prescribe the fees that shall be chargeable in relation to any other matter under this Act.

I intend to move for the deletion of this paragraph. I have dealt with this point previously and I do not intend to harp on it or go over ground I have already covered. I think we have all had enough for one day. I refer the Committee to the second paragraph of section 31 (1) of the principal Act which states—

Provided that any person receiving such treatment shall, if he is able to pay the fees for medical or surgical attention by the medical practitioner bestowing such attention, be liable to such practitioner accordingly, in addition to the payment for hospital service under section thirty-three.

As the Committee will realise mention is made in the principal Act of medical and surgical attention and fees. Consequently paragraph (d) to which I have referred must relate to that section. I therefore move an amendment—

Page 15, lines 11 to 13—Delete paragraph (d).

I do not think it is the intention of the legislation, or of the Minister, to fix medical fees. However this is a possibility in view of the wording of the present Act. Perhaps the provision could be worded in a better way, but at the moment I consider there is no alternative but to delete it.

Mr. DAVIES: This relates to regulations which may be made by the Governor. The provision, as it has existed, is I believe stated in a cumbersome way whereas this is stated much more precisely. It has nothing to do with fixing medical fees and I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 31 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 Mr. Davies (Minister for Health), and transmitted to the Council.

STATE TRADING CONCERNS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont—Minister for Works) [11.25 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the State Trading Concerns Act, 1916-1968, to give the State Implement and Engineering Works authority to borrow funds from sources other than the State Treasury. Members will recall that this Act was amended in 1968 to give similar authority to The West Australian Meat Export Works.

Several months ago the Government set up a committee to examine the future of the State Implement and Engineering Works. The committee was under the chairmanship of the Director of Engineering of the Public Works Department, and the other members were—

- the Under Secretary for Works;
- the Assistant Under-Treasurer;
- the Mechanical and Plant Engineer of the Public Works Department;
- the Deputy Co-ordinator of the Department of Development and Decentralisation;
- a representative of the Chamber of Manufactures; and
- a representative of the Trades and Labor Council of W.A.

The Government felt that it was an appropriate time to review the role of the works because it was obvious that some machinery needed replacing and some of the buildings needed upgrading.

That committee has now submitted its report and with your permission, Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of this speech I will table a copy of the committee's report for the information of members. Broadly speaking, it recommends that the works should remain on their present site for the time being. It is the intention of the Government to remove industry from this area eventually, but this is necessarily a long-term proposal and, in the State's present financial circumstances, it would not have been possible, financially, to relocate the works at the present time.

The committee also recommended that the works should be maintained at about the present size; that is, with a work force of up to about 320 men. It was felt that this was necessary to enable it to provide the service required of it both by Government departments and by private industry—particularly by small private firms in the Fremantle area.

Finally, the committee recommended a programme of replacement and rehabilitation of amenities, buildings, and machinery, which is considered essential for

the works to continue to operate efficiently at about the present level of output. It is estimated that this programme will cost in the vicinity of \$860,000.

The Government has accepted the committee's recommendations and this Bill is designed to enable the works to borrow funds to finance part of the work.

I think it is interesting to recall that these works were set up in 1913 as a State trading concern to manufacture agricultural implements and machines to supply the needs of the new farming areas which were then being opened up in the State. They continued this manufacturing role until, during the depression years, it was gradually phased out and the works became a repair and manufacturing concern for various Government departments, including the State Shipping Service.

During the war, the works were reorganised and expanded and, for some time, were employing between 700 and 800 men. They carried out refits and repairs to vessels of the Australian, British, Dutch, and American navies. In addition, they produced Bren gun carriers, including malleable iron tracks. During these years considerable additions were made to workshop machinery.

Today, about 300 men are employed at the works. Although improvements have been made to the factory over the last 10 years, the stage has been reached where a major re-equipment programme needs to be undertaken just to allow the works to continue to operate efficiently at the present level of output. It is proposed to undertake this programme over the next three years.

The work would be financed partly from the internal funds of the concern and partly from money it would borrow under the authority proposed by this Bill. It is estimated that about \$120,000-worth of the work could be financed from internal sources, leaving the balance of \$740,000 to be borrowed.

One of the reasons that the re-equipment programme is to be phased over three years is to keep the amount raised by the works in any one year to \$300,000 or less, which would place them in the category of smaller authorities for Australian Loan Council purposes. Under this arrangement it would not be necessary to direct to the State Implement and Engineering Works any of the State's scarce capital funds which have been allocated by the Loan Council for its own works and housing programme and for the works of the larger authorities.

It is interesting to note that in the last year a great deal of work has been undertaken for a number of private companies of both local and overseas origin. They are Pegasus Engineering, John Holland (Constructions), Forwood Down, Cheynes

Beach Whaling, Blue Iron Supply, Vickers Hadwa, Santa Fe Pomoroy, Steel Mains Limited, J. & E. Ledger, Bradford Kendall, Harper and Swift, Dravo, Fabricated Products, Structural Engineering, and Daymar. Members may not be aware of the fact that some of the engineering that is undertaken is of world standard.

The die bases for undersea drilling rigs which are being made for the Blue Iron Supply Co. represent repetitive orders which are growing for these items. It is the first time this equipment has been manufactured in Australia. The die bases are dropped to the sea bed and used to guide the drill stem in underwater oil exploration.

The stainless steel work undertaken for Dravo had been offered to other firms in Australia, but only the State Engineering Works were able to handle the job to the required tolerance for size and welding straightness.

The plate rolling equipment at the works has the capacity to roll heavier plate than can be rolled by any other firm in Western Australia, with the exception of the Western Australian Government Railways. Consequently, the works receive a number of orders in this field for private industry.

Mr. Williams: Do you know, off the cuff, whether they made a profit last year?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes. They have made a profit of several hundreds of thousands of dollars for a considerable number of years. The annual report of the works will be supplied when the Budget is presented. The works have served the State well. If one were to walk around the works one would see a considerable amount of machinery which was placed there by the American forces and still retains their label to this day. Much of it has become unserviceable and antiquated and needs replacement.

Mr. Williams: The Bill also mentions the W.A. Meat Export Works.

Mr. JAMIESON: This was done a couple of years ago. The Bill simply includes the two as one. I commend the Bill to members.

The report was tabled.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Williams.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Constitution Acts Amendment Bill.
2. Legal Contribution Trust Act Amendment Bill.
3. Housing Loan Guarantee Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 11.35 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 4th May, 1972

The PRESIDENT (The Hon L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS

Press Report

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Did the Minister see the report on page 4 of today's issue of *The West Australian* which was headed, "Government fails on native land rights."
- (2) Did the Leader of the House read that portion of the article which stated—

The clauses would have given Aborigines exclusive rights to natural resources on reserves and absolved them from the payment of royalties or rent to the State for using the land or its natural resources?

I would like to know whether the Minister shares my concern at the inaccurate report of the proceedings which took place last night, in the knowledge that this sort of inaccurate reporting gives the public of Western Australia a totally incorrect impression of the proceedings of Parliament?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) and (2) I have read the article and I believe it gave the wrong impression. My impression of the result of the Bill which was passed here last night is that land rights had been given to the Aboriginal people of Western Australia with regard to their reserves but mineral rights will not go with that land. As regards royalties, it was never suggested at any time that the Aboriginal people should pay them. The question was whether they should collect them. That is my interpretation of what happened in this Chamber.

2. REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Kimberley

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Does the Minister plan to upgrade the Derby Junior High School to the status of a regional high school?
- (2) When will the Kimberley region have a regional high school?