

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Sir David Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 8.36 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 22nd April, 1970

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

MINISTER FOR MINES

Birthday Greetings

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE, to the Minister for Mines:

Is the Leader of the House (the Minister for Mines) aware that today, being his birthday, those of us in the Chamber wish him many happy memories of this occasion? I could possibly add to the question that the Bill we discussed last night has nothing to do with what I think at this moment!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

I am very glad of both of the thoughts expressed by the honourable member, and I would like to thank him and also my parliamentary colleagues in the House very much for the remarks which have been made in connection with my birthday. I hope to have a similar question asked of me, in a year's time!

QUESTIONS (3): ON NOTICE

FARMERS

Financial Problems

The Hon. F. R. WHITE (for The Hon. E. C. House), to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) As the Minister for Agriculture is aware of a serious financial problem existing in the rural community, and far greater than generally appreciated, would he agree that this has been caused by—

- (a) falling prices of wool and meat;

- (b) restriction on wheat production; and

- (c) revaluation of farm land and country town sites?

- (2) If so, would the Minister give some statement on the action he proposes to take?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The Minister for Agriculture is aware that some farmers have financial problems due to the incidence of drought, falling prices of wool and, seasonally, of meat and to the restriction of wheat production. There is less significance arising from revaluation of farm land and country town sites which have been revalued on the basis of sales effected.

- (2) All these factors, together with other associated problems, are receiving day-to-day attention by the Government.

Already action taken by the Government which is of assistance has been—

- (a) Virtually eliminated land tax on developed properties in country towns.
- (b) Reduced electricity charges in country areas.
- (c) Announced reductions in country water rates to operate from the next rating year.
- (d) Undertaken a review of probate duty for consideration when the 1970-71 Budget is framed.

2.

WATER SUPPLIES

Shortage at Carnarvon

The Hon. G. W. BERRY, to the Minister for Mines:

At what stage are the investigations being undertaken to solve the serious problem of water shortage for plantations in Carnarvon?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Public Works Department is investigating the water potential of the sands of the Gascoyne River from Carnarvon to a point some 12 miles upstream of Rocky Pool. Drilling upstream of Rocky Pool is complete and work is proceeding downstream.

Drilling to test a deeper aquifer is in progress between Rocky Pool and Kennedy Range.

Investigations are following recommendations by Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners and are expected to take a further 12 months.

3. **POSTAL DELIVERIES***Perth to Japan*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that mail between Perth and Japan is routed through Sydney, so that it takes four or more days before delivery in Japan?
- (2) In view of the direct air service now operating between Perth and Japan, would the Minister make representations to the Postmaster-General to utilise this service for the transport of mail?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

This is really a question which lies in the hands of the Federal Government, but I would answer it by saying—

- (1) and (2) The Postmaster-General's Department informed me that air-mail to Japan is dispatched daily excepting Mondays via Singapore. Letters posted up to 12 noon on a Tuesday should be delivered in Japan on Thursday morning. The volume of mail does not justify the use of the additional air services on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Report

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [4.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the report of the Committee be adopted.

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on two matters raised by Mr. Ron Thompson. He compared our Workers' Compensation Act with the Act covering Commonwealth employees.

That, of course, is no real comparison because payments under the Commonwealth legislation are made by the Commonwealth Treasury direct to the employees of the Commonwealth Government. In no sense is that legislation similar to the all-embracing workers' compensation legislation such as exists in all the States. The State Acts cover private employees as well as Government employees.

The other matter raised by Mr. Thompson relates to the compensable payments under the first schedule. Mr. Thompson asked me to discuss this matter with the Minister for Labour, which I have done. The Minister for Labour has pointed out that the present Bill was agreed to by those concerned who were fully aware of the changes which are made from time to time in the different States. The payments in some States are still below those in Western Australia, and some, of course, are above.

As members are aware, the first amendment introduced by the Minister after he was appointed as Minister for Labour was for the purpose of adjusting these payments. He has watched the payments very closely ever since and no doubt adjustments will be made from time to time. Of course, the differences existing between the States could cause the States to chase one another in an ever-increasing sequence of events.

It was also pointed out that a member of the committee, who also happened to be the workers' representative on the board, was the gentleman who brought to the attention of the Minister the fact that some of the calculations made in the letter from the Trades and Labor Council were, in fact, not correct.

I hope the Committee will be prepared to accept the Bill and it will pass with a unanimous decision.

Question put and passed.

Report adopted.

Third Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [4.44 p.m.]: What the Minister has said in relation to the figures worked out and sent to the Minister by the Trades and Labor Council is correct, to a point. The base compensation payable is \$26.10, being the Australian average when the committee made its determination. However, I think the committee took a percentage and added that figure to the wife's allowance and the dependants' allowance which did, in fact, put the figures slightly out of balance.

I accept that a mistake was made because I have since checked the figures myself. I think it was a credit to the employee who drew the attention of the Minister to the error.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He is a very responsible citizen.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes. With reference to the Minister's comments about compensation payable to Commonwealth employees, I do not think we can take this matter out of its correct perspective. When a Bill of this nature is introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament it has four complementary Bills. In actual fact, the legislation covers four other awards.

The Commonwealth legislation applies to all of the workers within the Northern Territory; all the workers in the Commonwealth territory—that is, Canberra—to seamen who come under the Commonwealth award; and to employees of the

Commonwealth whether they be employed in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, or South Australia. So it can be seen that four complementary Bills are associated with any Commonwealth compensation Bill.

The provisions in the Commonwealth Bill which was introduced on the 19th March, this year, are the same as those we are concerned with in this State. During my second reading speech I mentioned what was desired to bring our Bill into line with the legislation of the other major States, particularly New South Wales, and Tasmania.

I do not intend to quote all the ramifications of the lengthy Commonwealth Bill, but I will mention the points I raised which are incorporated in the measure. The new legislation is to apply, or be applied by regulations, to additional classes of persons. The provisions of the Bill will apply to the Air Training Corps, the Australian Cadet Corps, the Naval Reserve Cadets, and the Australian Sea Cadet Corps, volunteer bushfire fighters in the Australian Capital Territory, volunteers attached to units of the Civil Defence Organisation, members of the repatriation volunteer workers' groups, and volunteers taking part in air or sea search and rescue operations. The Bill also determines the rate of pay because the volunteer workers would be on various rates of pay. A standard rate of pay is set down to which people would be entitled if they became compensable.

I have already pointed out the increases which were effected; from \$28.15 to \$31.80 for a single person. That figure will be supplemented by \$7.70 for a dependent wife, and \$2.80 for each child. The only allowance below that applying in Western Australia is for a child. The Western Australian allowance is \$3, so the Commonwealth allowance is 20c less. I pointed out that under our present scale of compensation in Western Australia a man with a wife and two children would receive \$39. If he were paid under the Commonwealth award he would receive \$45.10.

The Commonwealth legislation sets out most of the major compensable items, and deals particularly with disease, which is virtually omitted from our legislation. It is worth pointing out to members that the disease provisions have been liberalised to allow prescription of diseases of an occupational nature in accordance with International Labour Organisation conventions. Those diseases will be automatically accepted as due to the nature of the employment.

From the viewpoint of employees a significant advance is that an employee will no longer be in danger of being disqualified from lodging a claim for compensation if he is not able to give notice

of his injury or disease before he leaves the Commonwealth employment. Should he wish to seek damages he will now have three years instead of 12 months in which to institute proceedings. In Mr. Bury's concluding remarks he said—

We think it a very good Bill and a major advance but we stand prepared to consider on their merits suggestions for amendment during its passage. I commend the Bill to the House.

We realise that this Commonwealth legislation is a major break-through as far as workers' compensation is concerned. The Minister, in one passage I did not quote, said that the Bill would be subject to review. Its provisions are even subject to appeal from the commissioner.

Although our Act is gradually being brought up to the Commonwealth standard it still leaves much to be desired. I trust the Minister in control of the Bill in this House will go back to the Minister for Labour and tell him that we accept this legislation in the spirit in which it was brought to us but we hope that within the next 12 months the committee will meet again to review the possible changes, because on the base rate alone, as previously mentioned, we are at the present time 90c below the Australian quantum as far as workers' compensation is concerned. I support the third reading.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [4.52 p.m.]: I shall do what the honourable member asks and convey his message to the Minister for Labour. I would like to thank members for their attitude towards this Bill.

I must say that I still stick to what I said with regard to the Commonwealth legislation. It is not an insurance scheme, as is State workers' compensation. It is a different sort of Bill, and I think we have said enough about Commonwealth-State relationships to know where the money is. If we took any State Bill and discussed it in detail like this, and compared it, we would, of course, find faults in it; and there are faults in it. The acceptance of the Bill in this form has, I believe, reinforced the attitude of the Minister for Labour with regard to the setting up of a committee such as the one that has examined this Bill, and I think in its way this was a break-through, with all interested people sitting around a table and working out a reasonable compromise in the best interests of everybody. I think the acceptance of this Bill in its present form has possibly reinforced the Minister for Labour in his belief that this was a good idea.

We have all probably got friends, if not close relatives, who work in various capacities that bring them under the Workers'

Compensation Act, and we have that interest, quite apart from our legitimate interest as legislators.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

Ayes—16

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. A. F. Griffiths	Hon. F. R. White
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. Heitman

(Teller)

Noes—9

Hon. R. F. Cloughton	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. Lavery	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. T. O. Perry	

(Teller)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

Personal Explanation

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan) [4.59 p.m.]: Mr. President, may I request your permission to make a personal explanation?

The PRESIDENT: You may.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I wish to refer to some remarks made in the Committee debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill when it was suggested, either directly or by implication, that I had the handling of that Bill.

I wish to say, Sir, that this is an incorrect reference to me; that at no time have I had any discussion with the mover of the Bill concerning his Bill, either before or during the debates. I was unaware of anything in the Bill, the substance of the Bill, or what the mover proposed to move. My entire attitude throughout has been dictated by my own views and my own conscience, and the addresses I made to the Chamber were directed entirely to the substance of my amendments, except when I answered questions of a general nature which were put to me by members of the House.

SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

For members to appreciate more readily the necessity for the introduction of this measure, it is desirable that I recall to mind some substantial amendments made to the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act last year. The amendments introduced on that occasion were for improving the benefits of contributors to the superannuation fund and to update pensions paid to widows and former contributors to the fund.

The maximum number of units for which an employee could contribute was increased on that occasion, and a system of non-contributory unit entitlements was introduced into the scheme for the first time.

At the same time it was appreciated that, with the passage of time, the real values of pensions are eroded unless the cost of living remains constant. Action was therefore taken last year to improve the position of former Government employees, particularly those who had been pensioners for a long time and who were suffering hardship because of the rise in living costs since their retirement. The principle adopted was to give the largest pension increases to those who had been on pension the longest.

The method of updating used was to increase the Government's share of pension by the movement in the consumer price index between 1953 and 1968. Pensioners who became eligible for pension after 1953 but before the 1st January, 1968, received the percentage increase appropriate to the period they had been on pension between those dates.

The adjustment was dated from 1953 in recognition of the fact that there had been previous increases in unit values in 1948 and 1951, which took into account changes in the cost of living up to that time.

Only the Government's share of the first 20 units of pension was eligible for updating, because pensioners holding units in excess of 20 received the benefit of the non-contributory unit scheme.

The updating resulted in substantial increases in pension. For example, a 20-unit pension which was first paid in 1953, was increased by \$564 a year.

When introducing that Bill last April, I said it would be necessary within the next 12 months to introduce further legislation to cover future movement in the consumer price index and the manner in which this

should be done was under study at that time. The Bill now before the House is to give effect to that undertaking.

As I have explained, last year's amendment applied to all persons who were in receipt of pension on the 31st December, 1967, and took account of movements in the consumer price index up to the December quarter of 1968.

Consumer price index figures are now available for the December quarter of 1969. These show that during the 12-month period to December, 1969, there was a 3.62 per cent. rise in the index for Perth. The purpose of this Bill, then, is to apply this percentage increase to the Government's share of pension that was payable on the 31st December, 1968.

The effect of the Bill will be to increase by 3.62 per cent. the previously updated portion of pension and also to increase by the same percentage, the Government's share of pension of those people who became eligible for pensions for the first time during 1968.

As at present, updating will apply only to the first 20 units of pension because the benefits of the non-contributory scheme apply to pensioners with units above that number.

The proposal will result in a maximum increase of \$70 a year for pensioners who retired before 1954 with 20 or more units of pension, with the increases ranging down to a maximum of \$49 a year for persons who become pensioners during 1968. The maximum increases for each year can be seen by comparing the table in section 46C of the present Act with the table in clause 3 of this Bill.

The increases proposed in the Bill are to be payable on and from the first fortnightly payment of pension in January of this year, which means that they will date from the 2nd January. The cost in this financial year is estimated at \$50,000.

I would make the point, then, that the Bill now before members is concerned only with updating of pensions according to the movement in the consumer price index during 1968. The Treasury is continuing its review of the State superannuation scheme and other improvements to benefits are being considered for presentation in the next session of Parliament.

The Bill is commended to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition).

KEWDALÉ LANDS DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 21st April.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [5.6 p.m.]: I thank members for their general

support of the measure, and I was particularly interested to hear Mr. Willesee's comment that the Government now had an opportunity to buy land before the land sharks began practicing their speculative activities which have increased the price of land considerably over the past few years. Such activities have created a drain on the community. It has been an unfortunate trait during the last few years that speculative activities on the part of some people have, in many instances, put the price of land out of all proportion to what it is worth. That, of course, has had repercussions on members of the community and on the Government, because, after all is said and done, the Government is the community and it has been obliged to pay increased prices for land as a result of such speculation in land.

There are one or two comments I want to make, because there has been some misconception over some valuations in a few of the areas in question. First of all, the area that was taken over by the Kewdale Development Authority—it is much easier to call it the K.D.A.—was zoned industrial under the regional scheme. Therefore the prices that were paid to the owners were based on industrial land values, and they were paid on the 1968 values and not on the 1966 values. The values were fixed at the time of the resumption order, which was made about the 20th October, 1968. However, in the K.D.A. area there were not—if there were any they would not number more than two or three—any actual resumptions. Most of the area would have been purchased on negotiated prices, and having seen the prices that were paid I can assure the House that the owners were well rewarded.

If one cares to check back through the figures on the valuations that were fixed by the local authority and make a comparison with the prices the owners were ultimately paid, I feel sure one would be satisfied that the owners were well recompensed. The area outside, and that tract of land which was referred to by Mr. Willesee, are not in the area taken over by the Kewdale Development Authority, but in the Forrestfield marshalling yards area, which was zoned as rural. Although the same department deals with them, they are two separate areas.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: They were rezoned.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, but they were zoned "industrial" and not "rural." Resumption power should not be given to this authority, because it would be wrong to grant such power to the Education Department, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, the main Public Works Department, or any other authority to carry out its own resumptions. That is why the power is channelled through the resumption section of the Public Works Department. Whether the values fixed by

that department are always correct, I do not know. Perhaps I could criticise them myself, sometimes.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I can assure you they are not.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Of course, some of the prices paid could never be high enough according to the estimates placed upon the land by the owners. I see a good many of the valuations, of course, because I have to sanction every amount over \$10,000 paid out by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority. In my view, many of the valuations placed by owners on land that is sought to be resumed by the Public Works Department are just ridiculous. However, this is human nature. On the other hand, in certain circumstances, possibly the value placed upon the land is not as high as it might be. As I have said, certain circumstances might not have been taken into account when fixing the valuation. Nevertheless, at the moment, there are some values which, in my opinion, are still too high.

The valuations placed upon many blocks of land are too high, because under the present valuation set-up if there are people who have something to sell, and the Government is in the market to buy it, for some reason everyone is applying pressure on the Government all the time to give a little more. How can anyone, particularly the Government, get down to the basis where a developer or home owner can purchase a block of land in urban areas at a reasonable price whilst this pressure continues to be applied? It is not possible.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think it is fair to say that every owner is entitled to receive replacement value.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes; but one can refer to the replacement value of the land mentioned by Mr. Lavery and Mrs. Hutchison. On the replacement value paid in that instance, double the area of land resumed could have been bought elsewhere.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That is, the replacement value paid on the industrial areas only.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The owners in question were in an industrial area, and with the replacement value paid to them they could have bought, in a rural zone, double the area of land held by them. One must keep in mind that the Kewdale industrial area land was not very good. The owners could not have used it themselves for industrial purposes, because there were no roads and the land had not been drained. Half of it was under water. It was considered that someone should do something about it, and therefore the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority was approached to service it.

Mr. Willesee and I know a little about the Newburn area, which I assume is the one referred to by Mr. Lavery and Mrs. Hutchison. Had we allowed the people interested in this area to turn it into a housing estate, as they wanted to do, they would have been in a much worse fix than they are now. One can imagine the situation that would have developed had such a proposal been implemented and had people built houses on the area, with the Commonwealth authorities following up and saying, "I am sorry, we want all this area for airport extensions." As the position now stands there are not many houses built on that area. Most of it would be in broad acres and the number of people likely to be affected by the extensions to the airport is considerably less than if the area had been turned into a housing estate. This was the original intention, but the people concerned returned the second time and wanted the land declared an industrial area.

If the Commonwealth authorities had not made up their mind about this, perhaps one day in the future it may have been declared an industrial area. We have known for a long time that the Commonwealth authorities would, one day, require this land. We presumed that the Commonwealth wanted the land, and the statement that was made the other day on the airport extensions only confirmed what we considered would happen.

I think it is fair to say that the Commonwealth authorities, having made this statement, will attempt to plan the whole of the area so that they will know exactly what extensions are required. I am certain people will be allowed to remain on the rest of the area that will not be required by the Commonwealth and so they will be enabled to plant their vegetable gardens and they can even indulge in some type of industry, because it is well known that this will not affect the overall extension to the airport itself.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would they be allowed to sell some of it?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: A great deal of it will be purchased by the Department of Civil Aviation.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Many of them do not want to sell.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No; that is so. I know one market gardener who has erected a new house in the area within the last few years, but unless it is in the way of the airport extensions it will not be affected. I venture to say that the Commonwealth will not effect the extensions to the airport for another 10 years. It is merely making provision for them now to ensure that, in the meantime, no expensive buildings will be erected on the area.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: There is a section 5,000 feet east of the present runway which is affected and these people will be right in the middle.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am certain that the Department of Civil Aviation will not want this land for some time.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: You must admit that it is a terrible worry to people, and it is not very fair.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know the age of the man concerned, but probably by the time the authorities want his land he will have a desire to leave where he is now. It is hard to say what will happen in each individual case.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: This is the second time this man has had to establish a garden. He was shifted once before.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That sort of thing has happened. I can tell members of people who have been affected by resumptions under the metropolitan region plan on four occasions. It is unfortunate but these are some of the facts of life and they cannot be avoided. However, I do believe the provisions of the Bill will be a great help because they cover the whole State and not just the metropolitan area.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: This allows for forward planning.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes. Once again, I thank members for their support of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [5.18 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.19 p.m.]: I think it appropriate to quote, in support of what I was saying yesterday about individual owners to whom the Minister has referred as having property adjoining the Kewdale area, an article that appeared in the *Daily News* of yesterday's date. Although, as the Minister said, these people live in an area which adjoins the Kewdale area, they live there in the belief that they are actually in the Kewdale area because there is no division, except on a map, between land that is zoned industrial, and for

which I agree people were well paid, and the adjoining land for which the owners were poorly paid.

I did not go into detail yesterday about the people concerned, and about whom I have had discussions with the Minister over the past six months, but it so happens that the article to which I have just referred quoted the case of one man, and this is a good example of what has happened to many of the people in that area. The article states, under the heading "Kewdale man upset over resumption"—

Farmer Fred Everitt has accused the Public Works Department of callousness towards people affected by land acquisition for the Kewdale marshall-ing yards.

He seeks what he terms justice and fair prices for the land, and urges all WA people dissatisfied with compulsory acquisitions to stage a mass protest.

Mr Everitt said he had been fighting for a square deal for 10 years on the 90-acre farm he bought in 1957.

He was first affected when 12½ acres were taken for the railways project. The initial offer for the land was £1,700. After seven years it was settled at \$17,000.

Now 13½ more acres are needed and he has been offered \$22,000.

"This is banditry," said Mr Everitt. "The land has water and electricity and is less than a mile from High Wycombe with a big school, shopping centre, doctor and chemist.

"The land has a quarter-mile frontage to Newburn-rd and I had applied to have it rezoned light industrial.

"Uncleared bushland adjoining mine is zoned urban and quarter-acre blocks are going for \$3,000, yet I've been offered \$1,440 an acre," he said.

"We got notice in February, 1967, that the land would be needed, yet the valuation was based on a period before that when there was little activity in the area."

That is perfectly true. The article goes on—

Mr Everitt said that all the people who were unhappy at the way their land had been taken over were to stage a mass protest, the government would get a shock. In the Kewdale wrangle alone he had a thick file of letters from others involved.

That is the basis for the case I quoted on the second reading. These people have not had justice done to them in regard to resumptions—Mr. Everitt is only one of many.

He wrote me quite a lengthy letter which I passed on to the Minister for Local Government, and, subsequently, he passed it

on to the Minister for Works. The Minister for Works replied in lengthy terms and I passed his letter on to Mr. Everitt. However, nothing satisfactory came from the negotiations. I want to quote the Minister's reply, on behalf of the resumption authorities. It is as follows:—

Mr. F. N. Everitt has requested that the date for valuation be brought forward, but this would be quite unfair to those claimants who have readily settled on the basis adopted, and such action as asked has been refused in the past by successive Governments as it is quite impracticable.

Although Mr. Everitt's land was zoned "rural," he persists that he should be compensated on the basis of higher values (industrial or residential) although there has even yet been no change in surrounding zoning.

That is not strictly correct. To continue with the letter—

Although the claimant has reduced his original claim of \$6,000 per acre to \$4,000, both the Departmental and the independent valuer assessed this land at approximately \$1,000 per acre.

The independent valuation of \$20,900 was below the Departmental assessment of \$22,200, and an advance payment has been made of this amount.

In respect to the previous resumption, Mr. Everitt's claim of \$40,000 was settled at \$13,200 plus interest on the opinion and decision of one valuer acting as Arbitrator. This figure was considered excessive by other valuers concerned and was greater than that submitted by Mr. Everitt, however, the Department having agreed to accept it as final was obliged to settle accordingly.

So members can see that there are two different opinions—that of the valuation department, acting under the authority granted to it by Parliament, and that of the people whose land is affected. The valuation department officers are acting within their rights and it could be said, in the terms of the Minister's letter, that they were acting generously.

However, when the owner of land finds the person adjoining him is getting an industrial price for his land whereas he is getting only a rural price for his land, naturally he feels aggrieved. That is the basis of the problem and I wonder whether, in future, we might be able to reach the stage of adopting something similar to the system adopted by local authorities. When a local authority wants to take land from people what is not required is returned to the owners and whatever profits are made from the rezoning is also returned to the former owners.

I believe that this is the sort of scheme we should adopt when the Government resumes land for certain purposes. Firstly,

this would prevent people from becoming dissatisfied in regard to the price that is offered; and, secondly, it would overcome any objections the department might have about the prices asked by individual property owners.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (North-East Metropolitan) [5.26 p.m.]: I support Mr. Willesee's remarks because they emphasise the objections I raised last night. I have been visiting people in this area for some considerable time and what is being done to them is not fair. I would like the Minister to take heed of what I say and to try to do something fair and reasonable for the people who are concerned.

Some of these people in that area make their living by operating market gardens. This is not an easy life and I can assure members that these people are not loafers. They work hard for what they get and it is terrible when a Government can step in and take their land without awarding them proper compensation. People whose land is resumed should be adequately compensated and given plenty of time to make arrangements to move. As a matter of fact, had proper care been taken in the first place much of the trouble would have been obviated. Had the people been told, before it was established, that the Perth Airport was to be built there, and had they been told the truth, it would have made a considerable difference. Unfortunately, that was not done.

People should be told, before anything happens, and so that they are given plenty of time, that their land is to be sold and that it is worth so much. Unfortunately, the first they hear about a project is when the Government takes over their land at whatever valuation the Government decides upon. I do not think it is fair or reasonable that people such as these, who are working hard and establishing excellent gardens, with very good produce, should be treated in the way they have been treated. They ought to be compensated generously by the Government. As it is, some of these people have had to start all over again and it is difficult when a person is trying to maintain a family.

These men do not earn a fortune, and it is not easy work. In this regard I am speaking of people I have known ever since I have been a member of Parliament, and when I first came here there was no thought about such an area of land being taken over for the building of the Perth Airport. However, my belief is that if the Government errs it should err on the side of being generous. That is not the case at the moment; the Government is taking over people's land and is not paying a fair and reasonable price for it.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [5.29 p.m.]: Mr. Willesee, of course, raises the eternal question, but let us have a look at the situation and take it to its logical conclusion. Certain land is zoned rural; alongside that other land is zoned industrial; alongside that still other land is zoned as single residential; and alongside that still more land is zoned for high rise development; and alongside that again land is zoned as commercial. What value can one put on the land that is zoned rural? Each area is contiguous to the other.

If we were to base values on commercial properties we would not get anywhere. Everyone living alongside another person is demanding a higher value until, of course, the time comes to pay the rates, and then it is a different story.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: If the land is rural and is to be purchased for industrial purposes—

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If the honourable member wants to buy a block which is zoned rural, with the intention of establishing an industry on it, he would pay the rural price. He would be a fool if he did not. This is the same situation with the Government which represents the community. We cannot get away from that.

This is the age-old problem of what value to place on a property. If we go from place to place we get these differences in value all the time. However, we cannot get away from the fact that if land is zoned rural it is rural. If it is subsequently rezoned, then the owner gets the benefit from such rezoning. This has been the situation since time began and we cannot depart from it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

TAXATION (STAFF ARRANGEMENTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 15th April.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [5.32 p.m.]: Every time we see a Bill commencing with the word "Taxation" we become alert and suspicious. However, this is a Bill of three pages, containing four clauses and there is nothing formidable about it. This is a very unusual aspect of a taxing measure.

Members will recall that the Taxation (Staff Arrangements) Act was introduced only last year. It was designed for the purpose of arranging, after the State Taxation Department was created, to have the appropriate legislation ready so that the department could be administered. As this was necessary it provided the means

of the taking over of the Commonwealth office and the officers who wished to accept employment with this new State department.

Those affected by this Bill are those who were the employees of the Commonwealth Taxation Department and who, in the main, were engaged on State taxation matters. The Act of last year made special provision for the transfer of leave rights, but special authority is now needed to make adjustments to the superannuation rights of those officers and, particularly, with regard to some aspects associated with refunds. This Bill provides that if dependants are entitled to refunds from contributions, these refunds are authorised to be paid, that provision being contained in clause 2.

The next clause deals with the only other provision in the Bill which is for ex-Commonwealth officers who were contributors to the Commonwealth Provident Account to be contributors to the State Provident Account. Members will find clause 3 in this Bill quite explicit in that particular and, indeed, if they care to look, they will realise that there is a distinct relationship between this clause and section 13 of the Act.

I repeat that this is a very simple Bill and I think there is no need for me to say any more about it except that it has my support.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **The Hon. A. F. Griffith** (Minister for Mines), and passed.

ACTS AMENDMENT (COMMISSIONER OF STATE TAXATION) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 15th April.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [5.38 p.m.]: This also is another very formidable looking Bill, when we consider the title, and when we realise it contains 65 clauses. However, it is indeed simple in what it proposes, and concise in the terminology used. It is unlike many Bills which are introduced and contain only one sheet of paper; very small Bills. They are the ones which on examination are found to require a careful and extraordinary study of their history. I always find that little Bills are dangerous.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It depends upon where you are sitting.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is true to a degree. This Bill is, in fact, a most interesting one. If members have looked at it carefully, or at all, they will have found it has been most unusually constructed. It is a Bill of 13 parts, 12 of which deal with separate State taxing laws, laws for which the Commonwealth has been responsible as the collecting authority. These separate laws include very many important taxing measures of the State all under varying controls—for example, the Acts relating to betting control and the Totalisator Agency Board under the Commissioner of Stamps at present; the Administration Act under the control of the Commissioner of Probate Duties; and, I think, the Land Tax Assessment Act, the Vermin Act, the Noxious Weeds Act, and the Local Government Act are some which have been controlled by the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation himself. I think the balance have been under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Stamps.

When this Bill becomes law we will have a State Taxation Department and the State Commissioner of Taxation will have the task of administering the Acts to which I have referred. We know the gentleman who has been appointed from our own State Treasury, and he is an excellent officer.

This Bill will give him the power of delegation, and it will also ensure he can exchange information with Commonwealth taxing authorities.

Let us for a moment have a look at those three particulars. We know of Mr. Ewing's appointment as commissioner, and I think he will do an excellent job for the State. We have been told there are positions for a staff of 319 taxation officers to be appointed under this Bill in the interests of revenue collection for the State. It has been stated publicly, and I think by the Minister, that the office accommodation will be situated in separate places. In this regard I wish to raise one aspect.

We all know that staff in any organisation involves a great deal of money, and I am concerned that it has not been referred to. If the Minister has the information available, I am sure he will be pleased to answer the question I am about to ask. I am deeply concerned whether this new organisation, with its 319 officers, will cost the State more than has been involved under the former arrangement. Is there any chance that it will cost the State so much more that it will be necessary for some other tax to be levied in order to service the collection of State taxation, which task is to be taken over from the Commonwealth? This is a very interesting point about which I believe we should have some information.

It may be that the vast revenue from the totalisator taxation and other revenues associated with gambling will meet the

bill. I hope they do. It would be interesting for members and for the public to know just what is the anticipation in regard to revenue to be derived from State sources and the cost of its collection under the new system. Considerable costs were incurred by the Commonwealth in collecting State taxes and there was a definite arrangement between the State and Commonwealth departments. I hope the Minister can give to us on some appropriate occasion the information I am seeking.

I believe the power of delegation must be considered to be important because one can anticipate the volume of work involved under a Bill of this kind in connection with the many Acts the commissioner will have to administer. He must have the power of delegation which is expressly stated in this Bill. Obviously the commissioner could not handle it all.

To my mind the most interesting clause is the one which seeks to add a new section 79A to the Land Tax Assessment Act. It contains an authority for the commissioner in this State to exchange information about revenue collections in a tax sense. The clause to which I refer might cause some people a great deal of worry, especially if they have been at all remiss in admitting certain profits from enterprises which are not necessarily associated with income tax. For example, land tax assessments can show exchanges and transfer of land. The profits from the sales of these might not have been disclosed and people might have omitted them inadvertently from their income tax returns. I can picture the considerable consternation this might cause in the minds of people who have omitted inadvertently to make such statements.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Don't look at me.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I was looking directly at the honourable member.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: I realise that.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I feel the provision is a safeguard to protect the revenues of the State. The authority is clearly given, although the information will be confidential between the commissioners. This could mean many "please explains" to people who have overlooked their responsibility.

Generally, the proposed Act will adjust, within our own existing law, many things which are automatic, but which require a change in the wording of the existing law. Although the Bill contains 65 clauses, its principles are quite clear. I consider it has been drafted very carefully and it meets the purposes outlined by the Minister. I support the Bill.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.48 p.m.]: When I moved the second reading of the Bill, I indicated that provisions already exist in the Stamp Act for the exchange of information.

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

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This matter has been referred to by Mr. Wise. I imagine it will not be as great a surprise as we might think to those people who are informed. In the circumstances, it is necessary to have an exchange of information between the commissioners.

So far as cost is concerned, I think we have to face this matter, because the Commonwealth requested the State to take over its own taxation. When I talk on this sort of thing, I am always tempted to make reference to the Commonwealth in some other direction. As it happens, I feel a little sore at the moment over certain other actions of the Commonwealth in respect of State rights.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Looking westwards.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, looking westwards. We will leave that to another day, and I hope that the other day to which I am looking forward will come.

I am advised that the 1969-70 Estimates show that, in 1968-69, the State paid the Commonwealth an amount of \$666,114 for collecting State taxation. It is estimated that the comparative cost in 1969-70 will be \$739,000, but this figure includes an estimate of \$40,000 incurred in the appointment of a commissioner, an administrative officer, and staff to negotiate and work on the taking-over process. One of the salient features is the fact that the Commonwealth requested the State to effect the takeover. The State has made offers to take over Commonwealth staff members and they will be paid no less than their present Commonwealth salaries.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That does not seem a very sharp increase to have our own independence in this matter.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is fortunate that the increase is not more, but I have not finished the story yet. The costs in the major area of salaries are expected to be the same. When the State is running its own department, it may be able to effect economies.

I am glad to hear the remarks made by Mr. Wise in connection with the man whom the Government has appointed to the position of commissioner. I am sure he will do a good job in this capacity.

At this point, it would be difficult to produce a comparison of likely costs, but figures will be prepared as soon as practicable. We must not overlook the fact that not only will we be looking after the

Commonwealth's previous share of activity but also we will be encompassing stamp and probate work. Certainly it will not be cheaper, as extra duties are involved. It is fair comment, at this point in time anyway, to say that the increase does not appear to be unreasonable or excessive. Perhaps it would be wise to remark that as extra duties become involved extra costs might also become involved.

I think Mr. Wise mentioned the question of accommodation. Some of the commissioner's staff will be occupying offices in the Treasury Buildings which are now occupied by my staff in the Mines Department. In the first week of May, or thereabouts, the staff of the Mines Department will be moving to a building which will be known as Mineral House, which is in an unfinished state at the moment but which will soon be finished. The whole of the Mines Department will move into that building. In turn, the new Commissioner of State Taxation and his department will be able to occupy at least some of the space in the Treasury Buildings which is now occupied by the Mines Department staff.

I thank Mr. Wise for his analysis of the various clauses in the Bill and also for his support of the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. District Court of Western Australia Act Amendment Bill.
2. Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Assembly without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [6.1 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 28th April.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.2 p.m.