

Section 9 of the principal Act sets out the composition of the board, and states that two persons are to be appointed on the recommendation of the Minister, one of whom nominated by the Minister at the time he makes the recommendation shall be appointed the chairman. Then there is the Director of Mental Health Services; two persons who are medical practitioners nominated by the Australian Medical Association; a person who is registered as a general nurse appointed on the recommendation of the Minister; a person who is a specialist in general education appointed on the recommendation of the Nurses Federation, and then the section goes on to set out the other representatives. They include a person who is the matron of a general hospital, to be appointed on the recommendation of the Council of the Federation—that is the nurses federation—and two persons representing community health services, again recommended by the Council of the Federation. Another representative is a person from the Mental Health Services, appointed on the recommendation of the body known as the Psychiatric Nurses' Association.

If the practice has been for 10 of the 15 persons on the board to be nominated by the profession, the association, or the trade union—if we can use the term fairly loosely—then surely it is not unreasonable to continue that very proper practice so that the two nursing aides who are to be appointed to the board—which I applaud—shall be appointed by the body which represents their industrial and professional interests; that is, the Hospital Employees' Union. If it is good enough for all the other representatives to be so elected or appointed, the practice should continue. I am sure that if there are any substantial reasons for the procedure, the Minister will tell us when he replies.

I again point out that on five occasions the Hospital Employees' Union has come out on top with regard to constitutional or industrial coverage which has been challenged by the Nurses Federation and the Minister. The court has decided after considering all the facts, that the Hospital Employees' Union shall be the representative body. I am not suggesting that the Minister had not already given the matter consideration, but the union suggested to the Minister that the nursing aides should have representation. On the 2nd June, the Minister said he could not agree and on the 19th August he introduced a Bill into this House.

I do not want to labour the point. Evidence regarding coverage has been supplied to the Minister for Labour and Industry, to the Minister for Health, and a letter has been sent to the Premier requesting that the matter be discussed further. That is not an unreasonable request. Precedent has already been set in relation to the people appointed under section 9 of the Act.

If the Government is not happy with my amendment that it should be a straightout nomination, we will agree to the presentation of a list of five names from which the Minister can make a selection. It is grossly discriminatory that the union which represents the nursing aides should be completely overlooked when, in point of fact, it advanced the proposal initially.

I understand it is not the intention of the Minister to complete the passage of the Bill tonight. I would not like the Government to finalise the Bill before the Premier has had a chance to reply to the letter which has been forwarded to him.

With those brief remarks I will resume my seat saying that we applaud the introduction of this measure and we are delighted with the fact that nursing aides will be appointed to the Nurses Board. We believe that to be essential, but we argue with regard to the way it will be done.

MR RIDGE (Kimberley—Minister for Lands) [9.56 p.m.]: The member for Victoria Park appears to be quite prepared to go along with the provisions in the Bill; that is, the proposal to increase the size of the Nurses Board by the addition of two people representing nursing aides.

I would like to indicate to the honourable member that so far as I am concerned I am quite happy to allow progress to be reported after the consideration of clause 2. I was prepared to see the matter finalised tonight, but in deference to the request from the honourable member I will accede to the request and arrange for progress to be reported. I commend the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Crane) in the Chair; Mr Ridge (Minister for Lands) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Progress

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

House adjourned at 10.00 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 22nd September, 1976

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

BILLS (5): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
2. Civil Aviation (Carriers' Liability) Act Amendment Bill.
3. City of Perth Parking Facilities Act Amendment Bill.
4. Motor Vehicle Dealers Act Amendment Bill.
5. Gold Buyers Act Repeal Bill.

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE**1. KWINANA FREEWAY***Hope Avenue Interchange*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Health, representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it intended to construct at some future stage the Hope Avenue interchange with the Kwinana Freeway?
- (2) Will this require river reclamation as initially proposed to accommodate the interchange and associated road-works?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) It has been omitted from the present scheme.
- (2) Yes.

2. TRAFFIC*Administration Cost*

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Minister for Health, representing the Minister for Police and Traffic:

What was the cost of administration of—

- (a) the Police Traffic Branch for its last year of operation; and
- (b) the Road Traffic Authority for the 1975-1976 year?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (a) The Police Traffic Branch was an integral part of the total Police activity and no separate accounts were kept.
- (b) Road Traffic Authority expenditure 1975-76 — total \$12 523 620, which includes the cost of traffic control and licensing previously carried out by the Police Traffic Branch and Department of Motor Vehicles respectively.

3. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES*Meter Deposits*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education, representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) What was the amount held by the State Energy Commission and collected as meter deposits as at the 30th June, 1976?
- (2) Are these funds held in a trust account by the Commission?
- (3) If not, how are they used or invested by the Commission?
- (4) What were the earnings from the investment of these funds for the 1975-1976 financial year?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) \$2 860 361.
- (2) No.
- (3) The deposits are used in the normal development and extensions of the Commission's system.
- (4) The deposits are not invested by the Commission.

4.**TOWN PLANNING***Whitford Nodes: Report*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) Has the report on the Whitford Nodes, being prepared by the Town Planning Department, been finalised?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) has the report been presented to Cabinet; and
 - (b) what decision has been made in respect to the Nodes?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

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

5.**LOCAL GOVERNMENT***Historic Buildings*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is a local authority empowered, under paragraph (m) of section 512 of the Local Government Act, to apply municipal funds for the purpose of restoring or preserving an historic building?
- (2) If such restoration or preservation may only be undertaken on the application of certain conditions—
 - (a) what are these conditions; and
 - (b) what section/s of the Act requires these conditions to be applied?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) The paragraph referred to is as follows:

"A Council in accordance with the provisions of this Act—

(m) may provide for the purchase, restoration and preservation of sites which have historical significance or value."

- (2) It is believed that the restoration and preservation should only be undertaken when the site has been purchased by the Council.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

HOSPITALS

"C"-class: Engagement of Undertakers

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

This question is further to my question of the 9th September relating to the engagement of undertakers by a hospital administration without reference to the deceased's relatives. The Minister's reply to that question was that he would take action if I would substantiate the allegations. As there is reluctance on the part of the relatives because of the situation where they have lost a relative and there is reluctance on the part of the people to—

The PRESIDENT: Order! Would the honourable member state his question without notice please?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Because of this reluctance of the relatives to become involved, can the Minister give an assurance that they would be protected if the further details of the allegations were made available? For the same reason, would it be sufficient for the Minister to be told only the name of the hospital involved which would totally protect the relatives from any harassment as a consequence of that?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I wish the honourable member would state his question. He is making a speech.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: There are two questions so far, Mr President.

Thirdly, so that neither of those two things would happen is it possible for the Minister to contact the private hospitals' organisation and by arrangement with it to ensure that this sort of situation does not arise at all? It should be part of the ethical code by which they operate.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, replied:

Mr Cloughton has caught me off balance on this question because I did not expect it, not having

notice of it. If the honourable member would like to take the matter up with the Commissioner of Public Health I can assure him that there will be complete confidentiality of any information passed on by himself or the person who made representations to him.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by the Hon. H. W. Gayfer, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings of the House granted to the Hon. T. O. Perry (Lower Central) on the ground of ill-health.

PSYCHOLOGISTS REGISTRATION BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health), and read a first time.

BILLS (3): THIRD READING

1. Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

2. Racecourse Development Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health), and passed.

3. Parliamentary Commissioner Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and passed.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MEAT INDUSTRY AUTHORITY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 14th September.

THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [4.48 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill on behalf of the Opposition. As stated by the Minister, the purpose of the Bill is to establish a meat industry authority to ensure the orderly development of slaughtering facilities and to advise the Government on abattoir and meat industry matters generally.

My party supports the principle contained in this Bill and if we had still been in office we would have introduced a similar Bill. The Tonkin Government established the Meat Industry Advisory Committee which was to be the forerunner to the authority which is to be set up under the provisions of this Bill. In fact the Tonkin Labor Government was very concerned with the meat industry as a whole which was left in a fairly unsatisfactory state after 12 years of Liberal-National Country Party Government. The Tonkin Government was placed in a very difficult position because of certain decisions taken by its predecessor.

For example, it was very seriously compromised by the decision, taken against expert advice, to let contracts to expand the sheep and lamb facilities at Midland.

However, the Tonkin Government took a number of steps. As I have already said, it appointed the Meat Industry Advisory Committee which is the forerunner of the authority to be established under the legislation before us. It allocated funds for marketing research; it sent people to the Middle East and South-East Asia to assess the meat markets in those areas; and it sent an officer to Canberra to evaluate the information coming into the Department of Overseas Trade which would assist in meat marketing. It also stepped up the training of slaughtermen and health inspectors and set aside a site at Baldivis for future abattoir facilities. Therefore I repeat that the Labor Party is concerned about the meat industry, and it provided some evidence of this when in office from 1971 to 1974, and had it been in office today it would have introduced a Bill similar to the one before us.

I find it rather ironical that in his second reading speech the Minister referred to the Towns and Austen report and the recommendation of those two gentlemen to establish this authority, because it would be about the only recommendation they made which has been accepted by the Liberal and National Country Parties.

If we look at the report of Towns and Austen who were commissioned by the Brand Government to come to the State especially to advise on future abattoir facilities, we find that they made a number of recommendations. They recommended that the Midland Junction Abattoir Board investigate the merits of employing a methods engineer. I wonder whether that recommendation has been adopted. They also recommended that both Midland and Robb Jetty appoint a quality control officer of graduate standard. I do not know whether that has been attended to. They also recommended an additional sheep and lamb facility which was required immediately. Of course, the classic was the firm recommendation that the sheep and lamb capacity at Midland be held at 8 000 a day. Not only did they form the opinion that the Midland abattoir should not be expanded, but the Midland Junction Abattoir Board itself firmly recommended that it not be expanded.

In the report on page 5, under section 4, the Towns and Austen report states—

The present position is that the Midland Junction Abattoir Board in a report dated 15th January, 1970, (Appendix No. 1), has made a firm recommendation that the sheep and lamb capacity at Midland be held at 8 000 per day.

Of course Messrs Towns and Austen endorsed that recommendation because they, too, were against expansion. But what happened? The Brand Government let contracts to expand by 50 per cent the sheep and lamb capacity at Midland Junction Abattoir thus increasing it to 12 000 a day.

I believe that Government has a lot to answer for to both the producers and the people of Midland and the surrounding districts for the tremendous resultant nuisance created in the district.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You qualify that statement by referring to the nuisance created in Midland.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: When I refer to the offence against the people of the district, I am talking about the disgusting, obnoxious smell problem which has existed at Midland and which has been exacerbated since the increase in the sheep and lamb capacity. It seems to have grown to unmanageable proportions despite the fact that time and time again the management has promised that alterations will be made to the equipment.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is the only reason you give for opposing the expansion of the works?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: That is one of them.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is the only one you have mentioned.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It would have been much better for the producer had there been a new, up-to-date facility established somewhere else.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Why?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Because surely Midland is—

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You qualify it; that is all I ask.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Midland is right in the middle of an expanding residential area.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Who is making the speech—you or Miss Elliott?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I am telling you.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You let her tell me.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Why not let her make her speech so she can?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Is the Minister trying to say that the farmers are happy with the development at Midland and that they would not have preferred a separate, up-to-date, modern abattoir?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I have heard no farmer make that statement.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Does the Minister say that those who suffered during the recent drought because of all the sheep that had to be slaughtered are happy with the overcrowding at Midland?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have not heard any farmer mention that.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: In normal times there are no complaints by farmers.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The Minister for Health would surely understand that modern abattoirs are built in rural areas these days.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: They have been at Midland for years.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Because of the overcapitalisation at Midland, the overheads are out of all proportion and this will adversely affect both the consumer and the producer in respect of costs. In the paper recently was a statement by Mr Dave Evans, a former Minister for Agriculture, in which he said that slaughtering charges at the abattoir had increased by between 49 and 110 per cent since August, 1974. Mr Old, the present Minister, tried to justify this by referring to the increase in the rate of inflation. No-one can tell me that either the increase in workers' wages or the inflation rate reached anywhere near 49 and 110 per cent.

As I have said, probably the most serious consequence of the decision by the Brand Government has been the pollution of the surrounding district by the foul smell which has made life unbearable for something like 40 000 people from Greenmount to Belmont. I wonder whether the Minister who has been interjecting would like to live in the area in which these people reside.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I have no objection to that aspect of what you are saying. I admit the smell is bad; but the abattoir board believes it can get it under control shortly.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I have been hearing that for some years.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: There has been a smell ever since the abattoir has been there. It is nothing new.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister can make his reply when the appropriate time comes.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Which came first—the smell or the people?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I recall that Mr Wordsworth asked that question the last time I spoke about the Midland Junction Abattoir. It seems to be the only contribution he can make to the problem—and it is a real problem. As I have said, something like 40 000 people suffer as a result of the disgusting pollution.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Smells never killed anyone, you know.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How do we know that?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Why do we have legislation to control air pollution if it does not affect the health of people?

As I mentioned earlier, I believe the Brand Government should not have increased by 50 per cent the sheep and lamb capacity at Midland. As a result of its action there is now an overloading of the system and that is why there are so many technical problems involved including the problems associated with the effluent disposal, and offal disposal by rendering.

If members opposite say the system is not being overloaded, I would like to know why in this day and age of technology, knowledge about machinery and up-to-date methods of disposing of effluent, and so on, these problems have not been corrected by now. It appears some rather serious mistakes were made in the first place in respect of effluent disposal, through the installation of inadequate equipment. I understand the situation is being overcome with the installation of additional aerators and the appointment of a chemical engineer.

A number of problems have always been associated with the dry rendering or offal cooking process, which I believe is the main offender in creating the smell problem in the district, because when the odour in the area is bad it is quite obvious it is a cooking smell which is polluting the atmosphere. Here again, I understand new machinery is being installed to try to correct the problem in the dry rendering process. I hope on this occasion it will be successful.

In January last year the board made a public statement in which it promised the changes being made to the condenser and the afterburner, which are part of the dry rendering process, would "once and for all eradicate all odours emitted by the dry rendering part of the operation". That was promised in January last year but since then breakdowns have continually occurred in the afterburner which is an essential piece of equipment. The temperature often drops 200°C lower than it should be. It should be around 760°C and it has been down to 540°C on a number of occasions when it has been checked, which renders it useless. On other occasions it has not been operating at all.

I hope at long last the right equipment has been found to handle the throughput of offal and that there will be no breakdowns in machinery and no build-up of offal so that it becomes bad before it is put into the cookers, which is another cause of the offensive smell.

From my reading of the functions of the authority it will be able to investigate this kind of matter, particularly under paragraphs (b) and (f) of clause 16 of the Bill, which read—

- (b) to record in respect of each abattoir its effective capacity and actual performance;

- (f) to encourage research directed towards the improvement of abattoir design, operation and practice;

The authority will be able to make recommendations to the Minister.

I have on the notice paper a couple of amendments which seek to include a consumers' representative on the authority. I will not deal with them now but will leave them until the Committee stage when I will give my reasons for the amendments.

I support the Bill.

THE HON. C. R. ABBEY (West) [5.05 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill. I have sympathy with some of the views expressed by the previous speaker, but for different reasons.

I suppose historically the Midland Junction Abattoir was established at the junction of several railway lines in order to supply the City of Perth with meat, and that it was not intended when the abattoir was originally planned that would handle export meat. I recall carting many loads of stock to the Midland Junction Abattoir when I first started farming. The abattoir has improved greatly over the years but in my view it has unfortunately been improved far beyond the stage it should have been.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott mentioned the period, mainly in the 1968-69 drought, when because of excess numbers of stock coming into Midland urgent measures were taken to expand the abattoir, despite recommendations in the Towns and Austen report, to which the Hon. Lyla Elliott referred. Nevertheless, in spite of the apparent urgency, I think it was a very short-sighted action. I was one of many who at that stage recommended to the then Minister that this kind of expansion should take place at Robb Jetty, and I think circumstances and history have proved that had that recommendation been implemented Robb Jetty could have been expanded and improved and it would not have had the effluent disposal problem because, being right on the coast, the large amounts of treated water could have been disposed of into the sea. I do not suggest that is the ultimate way to dispose of it but it is probably the best method we have at this particular time.

I think the Bill before us is a very far-reaching and effective measure to upgrade the structures of our service works. When the authority is finally appointed and becomes active it will have statutory powers. I, personally, have thought for at least 15 years this was one way to have effective control of meat processing in Western Australia. Meat processing is a very important part of the industry generally.

The appointment of an employees' representative to the authority will do a considerable amount of good. On too many occasions in the past the unions concerned

with meat processing have raised issues, gone on strike, and so on, during the busy period. This is a very unfortunate approach by the responsible people in the Meat Industry Employees' Union. I hope that through having a representative on the authority the union will have more understanding in its approach because it is a great shame to have a divisive attitude between the employees and the main employers, which are the State service works. It usually ends up with a confrontation which does nobody any good. I trust this situation will be recognised and handled in a much better manner in the future.

I hope the setting up of the Western Australian meat industry authority will bring a new era. The body will have teeth and some authority. When I say it will have teeth, that might be casting the net a bit wide, but at least it will have legislative authority and I trust that Governments of all colours will in the future take more advice than they have taken in the past from the various committees and advisory bodies which have been set up over the last 20 years to my knowledge.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott mentioned the Towns and Austen report. In my view it was a good report, and had more of it been put into effect and more notice been taken of it we would have had a better situation today.

This brings me to what I consider to be the real need for this authority and the commission which now runs the two service works; that is, loss of efficiency. We are rapidly reaching a stage where costs, if they are not contained, will force the producer in the industry out of business. It has been predicted that the Australian dollar will be devalued. Only the Treasurer of the Federal Government knows whether or not that will take place. It is essential that the proposed authority and the commission take into account the very serious effect of the continual rises in costs in the meat handling industry. I hope the meat commission will bring about rationalisation between the Midland Junction and Robb Jetty Abattoirs. We have a situation where very often both works are operating at less than maximum output and efficiency.

I think the *Hansard* reporter is having considerable difficulty in hearing me because of side noises.

THE PRESIDENT: Order! There is a little too much background noise.

THE HON. C. R. ABBEY: I think the *Hansard* staff will appreciate that. Perhaps in the past I myself have been remiss but I realised, watching the staff, they were having a great deal of difficulty in hearing me.

I was suggesting that the main need for the commission and the proposed meat industry authority is to seek more efficient operation of the works. Of course, this can be done through rationalisation by

determining which works will operate at different times. The export works at Robb Jetty were intended primarily to be geared for export but we now have a large section of the Midland Junction Abattoir also handling export meat.

I believe we have reached a stage in our history when we must recognise that the Midland Junction Abattoir is in the wrong position. Through nobody's fault it was sited there originally, and even though it will be very costly to finally consolidate the two works as I would suggest at Robb Jetty, I hope we will be able to come up with a better answer than that which has been suggested.

It is obvious that we must take into account that around the Midland Junction Abattoir housing development has been permitted to grow and has been approved by town planning authorities and by Governments in the past. This makes Midland Junction quite unsuitable.

It is very difficult to lay the blame on anyone in particular. The situation exists and it must now be recognised. I hope we will see a genuine move to finally remove this works which is at present situated on a very highly priced piece of real estate. I think the Government should recognise this. If there is to be a settlement of the present site of the Midland Junction Abattoir the Government of the day—whichever Government it might be—should be allowed to realise on that asset and finally place the abattoir in a more suitable situation.

I think we should keep this very firmly in mind; because I know what the situation is likely to be. If we accept the suggestion to move the Midland Junction Abattoir from its present site and put it somewhere else, everybody in the community will be thinking up ideas for using the site for some other purpose. In these circumstances if it is possible and feasible we should realise on the asset which is comprised in the Midland Junction Abattoir and the money should be used to establish a similar facility elsewhere. This is well worth considering.

I make the point that if there are obvious moves to take this site over as a community centre or something similar, it would jeopardise the ability of any Government to move the works to a more suitable site. I make these comments because I feel they are realistic; I make them because I recognise the situation has changed over the last 40 years and, in my opinion, this is what we should be doing.

When the Bill is assented to we will have established a statutory authority which will have a great deal more ability to impress on Governments the needs of the industry in general. I hope it will be possible for this statutory body to exercise its authority more effectively than has been the case in the past.

In his second reading speech the Minister made passing reference to the establishment of an abattoir at Esperance. This has been urgently needed for many years as, no doubt, the representatives of the area will tell us at a later stage. I fully support such a move because this area of Esperance which comprises the southern part of our great Western Australian seaboard, is a separate area altogether, and I feel a great deal more sympathy should be shown by Governments and more assistance given in the future than appears to have been the case in the past. I honestly believe the area is entitled to a considerable amount of help from the Government in the establishment of this facility. It is very obvious from the questions that have been asked by Mr Wordsworth that the area in question is not getting as much sympathy as it should, particularly from the water supply authorities.

I think the first purpose of the new authority should be to find ways and means to establish the necessary equipment and machinery for a classification system. In various publications we have seen a recognition of the classification system which has been tested and worked out by the Australian Meat Board. It is one of the best in the world. I will not bore the House by quoting from the publications which I have here, but anybody who is interested and who would care to read them will be able to examine the position for himself and see the proposals which have emanated from a considerable number of years of investigation by the Australian Meat Board.

From my recent investigations overseas I believe that when this system is put into effect—as it must be, and it will not be very costly to do this—it will probably be one of the most useful, effective, and far-reaching facilities in the world.

I hope the Minister in this House will convey the message to the Minister for Agriculture and say we believe that classification is one of the ways in which the industry can be helped realistically. Of course hand in hand with classification will come systems of selling on the hoof, auctions in meat halls and so on; and perhaps we will reach a stage which could be comparable to that which exists in the wool industry; because the wool industry is now rapidly recognising and using a method of revaluation of wool.

Wool does not need to be physically displayed on the floor as was the case in the past. I understand that something like 70 per cent of the wool that is sold today is sold on a method of classification. I believe the meat industry urgently requires a similar system to be introduced into the abattoirs of this State.

From what I am told I understand that unfortunately the meat trade—that is the handling trade—is somewhat

opposed to classification, because it completely takes the guesswork out of selling meat.

Perhaps I should explain the position, because when I refer to classification as such, it might not mean very much. It means, however, that the animal is taken into the works, killed, and classified into certain types. This could be done electronically or automatically. In other countries in the main it is done by employees skilled in the job, but this is a much slower process.

Classification as it is now understood in Australia is an automatic system, an electronic system which prints out the classification details which are available so that everyone in the meat trade can easily understand what is meant. For example if I were a retail butcher or a wholesale butcher and required 1 000 carcasses of lamb, mutton or beef, of a certain type or specification I could put in an order and know without any fear of having to check that the type of carcasses I ordered would be delivered at my door. If this sort of automation is introduced into the meat industry I believe it will have a significant effect on containing costs.

I think the Minister in this House and the Government generally will recognise the importance of this system of classification in the handling of meat. I am informed it is not a costly business, and I am told it would cost between \$20 000 and \$30 000—that is the figure being quoted at present as the cost of installing the necessary equipment. This will, of course, do away with a certain amount of manual handling.

When we consider the amount of money that has been spent on abattoirs in the past, this is really a very small sum and I feel it is time we quickly and effectively introduced this classification system.

I hope that when the new authority is established it will at its first meeting examine this matter as an urgent priority and make a quick and an effective recommendation to the Government.

That is all I have to say on the Bill, except to add that I support it. I hope the Government will be able to put this committee into effect; that it will meet quickly and, having done so, that the Government will be prepared to accept its advice.

Finally I would like to say I admire the present Minister for Agriculture for his intestinal fortitude in being prepared to make this forward move quickly. I congratulate the Minister and the Government for bringing in this very urgently needed legislation and I hope it will be as successful as I expect it to be.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [5.27 p.m.]: This legislation complements previous legislation we have passed concerning the meat commission

which was prepared for the purpose of running the two major State abattoirs. The lay members of the Liberal Party have looked into this problem for a considerable length of time, in an effort to help the Government which was seeking information on this issue.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: The who of who?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The Liberal Party is a very democratic party and its members take part in the determination of policy.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are not democratic. I asked you what you said, because I did not hear you.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I might add that the members of Parliament of the joint parties—the Liberal and National Country Parties—also formed a committee and did considerable work towards the preparation of this legislation.

I am a little disappointed, because I felt the Minister may have taken a little more notice of his department than did his fellow colleagues.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You have lost your authority.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: We very much agree with the concept of this authority. Perhaps we would like to have seen it different in composition, and to have had its duties spelt out a little more clearly. I see the authority is confined to seven members. I believe this could have been extended firstly to include a member of the livestock salesmen's association. Like Miss Elliott I also believe we could have had a consumers' representative on this expanded commission.

I think it would have been of benefit to the commission to have had on it the chief veterinarian, and I strongly believe the producers on this body should have their numbers and representation doubled. I note there is no method for the farmers' organisations to make a recommendation to the Minister in regard to the election of the producers' representative.

I would have liked to see the authority consist of twice the number of producer representatives, with the Minister having the right to select from panels of names submitted by each farmer organisation. Of course, these are only technicalities, but I believe it is worth putting forward the alternatives to the Bill.

If we had an expanded authority of 11 members, as I have suggested, there would be four producer representatives out of 11, instead of the proposed two producer representatives on the seven-man authority. After all, the producer is the one who is creating the need for such an authority, yet he will not have a very strong voice on that body. Should one of those representatives be sick, or even if the Government selected someone who was not of the strongest nature, we would find

the farmer would have very little voice on the authority, and that would be a great loss.

I am concerned that by not having a panel of names submitted by producers, one could well find future Governments purposely selecting people as farmers' representatives who perhaps were not the choice of the farmer organisations and indeed who may be quite contrary to their choice.

One of the reasons it would be of great advantage to have the Chief Veterinary Officer on this authority has to do with something about which we hear a great deal today; namely, a single standard of meat inspection. Currently, two standards are laid down, one for export and the other for local consumption. It is a favourite hobby-horse of many producers to refer to the high cost of maintaining two inspection services, as often a single carcase must be inspected by both services.

However, it is not quite as simple as it may seem to introduce a single standard for meat inspection. In the first place, the standards for other countries are laid down by those countries and at any time a single country can change those standards. So, the industry could be thrown into confusion if we decided to set our standard by the highest standard required by any country to which we export, because that standard could—and often does—change.

I do not believe it is necessary for meat produced for local consumption to be subject to the same standards as often are laid down by some of these countries. For example, in Scandinavia, the people eat quite a lot of their meat raw. I recall taking a German to one of our steak houses, thinking I was going to shout him to a very nice steak. He looked rather disgustingly at the meat on display and obviously did not think very highly of it. Finally, he said, "I think a steak tartare would be the best", and he asked the hotel to get the chef to produce the ingredients, which included raw eggs and different herbs and spices. We cut them all up and mixed in the eggs, and I was just walking back to the table to throw it on the fire and cook it—thinking we were to have some sort of hamburger—when I was informed by my companion that the idea was to eat it raw.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Very nice, too!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Indeed it was. However, I must admit that I was still tasting it several days later. Therefore, it is understandable that these countries set high standards. Frequently, meat which is imported is not consumed until several months after it has been killed, and it is very important to have high standards in regard to the prevention of bacteria.

However, I do not believe we need the same standards in this country because our usual practice is to eat fresh meat; seldom is it kept for more than a week.

Some countries place other restrictions on their meat imports. For example, if an animal has a swollen lymph gland, the carcase is not allowed for export. However, we have found that the swelling of the lymph gland is not reason alone for the carcase to be condemned. In fact, some of the inoculations administered for the control of diseases can result in the swelling of the lymph gland, and we find that portions of the carcase can be eaten quite safely. I understand the stringent conditions laid down by some of these countries are, in fact, often laid down by the producers themselves, who wish to cut down on the quantity of meat being imported.

Therefore, while I agree with the general idea of establishing a single standard of meat inspection in this country, I can see very many difficulties. Our committee discussed the matter with the Director of Agriculture in this State, who would be very happy to have all abattoirs manned by veterinary officers. He feels that in this way, the department would have a ready check on the introduction of exotic diseases into this country.

I wonder what would be the results if we decided that all meat produced in this State had to be examined by a veterinarian. A veterinary officer would have to be present at all stages from before the animal was killed until it was finally hung on the hook. With the many little abattoirs in operation in the country areas, the cost would be ridiculously high.

At present, meat inspection is carried out by qualified and trainee officers of the various shire councils—usually their respective health officers. They have the added advantage, having inspected the carcasses in the abattoir, of being able to follow them through to the retail shops or through the various systems. I believe such a system is more advantageous than searching for exotic diseases. We should think very carefully before we try to introduce a single meat inspection, or hand it over to veterinarians.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I could not agree with you more.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am sure the Minister for Health, who is in charge of the present inspection in this State, agrees with me; such a system certainly would double the costs.

I do not think anybody could doubt the very high standard of efficiency and hygiene maintained by our present system. I mentioned the high cost of inspection because we hear many complaints from farmers—and quite rightly so—that they are not receiving a sufficient proportion of the money spent by the consumer

on meat. Of course, this is a complaint common to other industries, such as Mr Gayfer's grain industry, where the grain grower receives only about 15 per cent of the money spent by the consumer on bread. I cannot give the House the exact percentages the producer receives from the sale of a carcass of meat, but it is certainly very low.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: According to a publication put out by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture, the farmer receives 37.2 per cent of the beef dollar.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is not bad, is it?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I thank Miss Elliott for her interjection; it serves to highlight the problem to which I have referred.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: The retailer gets 42.3 per cent.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: They have a bigger market in New South Wales, which brings down their margin.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I feel a lot has been brought upon us by the very high cost of killing these animals, and by some of the legislation which often passes through the Parliament relating to the control of abattoirs; in addition, of course, wages, workers' compensation and other factors all serve to increase the cost of killing our meat and getting it to the consumer. In the past, we have tried to jack-up the price the consumer pays to above that sustained on the export market, and we have always found this to be very difficult. It seems we must set our prices somewhere near the level we obtain on the overseas market. As members know, Australia is one of the major world exporters of beef and lamb.

I should like to see this authority widened to include not only the Chief Veterinary Officer but also a consumers' representative. Members will notice that we propose to put on the authority a member of the Meat Industry Employees' Union.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: That is not right.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am sorry; perhaps I had better read the Minister's speech again. It states—

... one member shall be a representative of the interests of persons directly employed in the processing of meat at abattoirs.

One would assume that person to be a member of that union.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Not necessarily.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I will be surprised if it is otherwise. Perhaps Mr Cooley can give the House his views on that point.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: They would be too strong for you.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: In the past, we have seen a lot of difficulty created by the meat industry union, particularly concerning the export of livestock. Its policy in this respect has greatly affected the areas I represent, Esperance and Albany, in that the export of live wethers from the Port of Esperance has been subject to stringent conditions. We have seen the ridiculous situation where the producer has been unable to export his stock unless he flies down a member of the union to inspect every animal. That union officer must be able to select animals at random, which must conform to a certain weight standard.

This course affects the type of animal we can send overseas and, indeed, is forcing us into producing a type of animal which the overseas consumer does not want—the overweight animal. In an endeavour to overcome this problem, the Government saw fit to send Max Burns overseas; on his return, he made a very good report based on his experiences and we have seen a greater understanding between the industry and—I will not say "the unions"—those directly employed in the processing abattoirs.

Obviously, we must widen our horizons in regard to the export of meat from this State and from Australia generally. It is ridiculous that we continue to export principally carcasses rather than looking more towards the export of live animals. We cannot break into some overseas markets with carcass meat. For example, Italy will take only store lambs, so that its farmers can fatten them and its own workers can carry out the killing operation; there is quite a market for live lambs in some of these countries. These animals must conform to the weight specifications laid down by the various countries. Of course, we know full well of the needs of the Middle East for live animals. The religious reasons are obvious to all; perhaps we can overcome this problem by a prayer in the right place.

The people in those countries can utilise the livestock much better than we can. When I was overseas I recall being in a market place in Afghanistan and seeing wethers sold for \$25 each. I wondered how a poor community like that could afford to pay \$25 for a wether. I then decided to find out what price the people paid for meat in the market. Much to my astonishment I found they paid the same price for meat as that paid by consumers in this State.

Of course, the reason is that in those countries they are able to get the meat to the consumer much more cheaply. The meat is sold within one hour of the animal being killed. There may be a whole carcass hanging up in the shop. As soon as half of it is sold, an employee is sent to

kill another animal. For that reason not a great number of carcasses are found lying around the place, and there is no need for the use of refrigeration.

Those people are able to make use of the majority of an animal, whereas in this country we sell something like 50 per cent of the live weight of an animal. In Afghanistan they sell 80 per cent of the live-weight, and furthermore they use the pelts of the animals very effectively. From those pelts they make coats like the ones we see worn by bodgies in this country.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You are behind the times. Bodgies have not been in fashion since the 1950s.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I must warn you to be more careful. I wear a sheepskin coat.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, but the Minister's lack of hair on his head gives him away! Undoubtedly the countries in the Middle East are utilising the by-products of an animal much better than we do. We should be looking more to the export of livestock than to the export of carcasses. The whole field of beef exports should be investigated thoroughly.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You should not urge the sale of more boneless beef to Russia at 24c per pound.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It would be much better if we could export the live animal.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Provided you can break the congestion of ships at the ports.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I do not think there is much congestion in the ports, particularly the American ports.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is quite different from what I have been told by a person who exports sheep from Albany.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: That does not happen in the case of cattle.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I am talking about sheep. There is a three months' wait.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: In some Middle East ports the facilities are not suitable. When I was in the Middle East I was told that shepherds were used to herd animals by whistling to their flocks. In one instance a ship in a congested port was moved to another port, but there were no facilities there for the penning of the sheep. The captain suggested that pens be built. The people concerned said they had their shepherds and they would have no need for pens. Consequently the captain of the ship unloaded the 11 000 sheep, but the three shepherds on hand could not cope with them. I am sure that they are still whistling today!

It is a pity that more representatives of the farming community are not to be appointed to the authority. I would like

to see the number of producer representatives doubled. When one looks at the composition of the authority one finds that the majority of the members represent the meat industry. I think the producers have two out of the seven members, and they will have a battle to put over their case.

I think it would be advantageous to have a representative of the livestock sales industry on the authority. Not only does this industry play a very important part in the sale of meat, but it is also the link between the farmer and the abattoir. Such a representative could look into the question of the export of livestock.

The functions of the authority are laid down fairly explicitly in part III of the Bill. One of the functions is for the authority to survey and keep under review the facilities available in the State for the slaughter of animals. Another function is for the authority to record in respect of each abattoir its effective capacity and actual performance, so as to ensure that the abattoir conforms with the requirements of the State.

With the establishment of this authority we should be able to overcome in the future the difficulties which Miss Elliott said arose when the State went through its greatest period of expansion, and the capacity of the abattoirs became inadequate. As a result of this the producers received depressed prices for their livestock.

It is bad enough to have depressed markets, but when one sees that there is a lack of killing space and lack of organisation to get the livestock to the abattoirs in an efficient and orderly manner, one expects the markets to be flooded and poor prices to prevail. If we can monitor the flow of the stock to suit the present capacity of the abattoirs we will see the maintenance of reasonable prices.

I would now like to deal with the question of the establishment of an abattoir at Esperance, and in this respect I thank Mr Abbey for his support. No doubt members will have noticed the questions I asked last week in regard to the connection of a water supply to the abattoir at Esperance.

I draw the attention of members to replies I received. Obviously any abattoir that is built at Esperance will have to compete with the other abattoirs in the State. The first question I asked was what would be the cost of connecting water to the proposed abattoir at Esperance. The reply was that the cost would be \$350 000.

I then asked what cost was involved in connecting water to the abattoir at Katanning. The answer was \$5 331. I asked what was the cost of connecting water to the abattoir at Albany operated by Borthwicks. The answer indicated the cost was about \$300. I asked what was the cost of

connecting water to the Linley Valley abattoir operated by Mr Williams. The reply was that the cost was \$238. The answer indicated that subsequently this service was enlarged at a cost of \$484. The Minister could not give the cost for connecting water to the abattoir at Harvey operated by Greens because this abattoir drew water from the Harvey irrigation scheme. From those figures we can see that the cost of connecting water to the abattoir at Kataning was the greatest, it being \$5 331, but the cost for the other abattoirs was less than \$1 000 in each case.

In no way can an abattoir at Esperance be operated economically if it has to pay \$350 000 for water connection. The Government should supply water to that site at the same cost as that charged to property owners when the water main runs past their properties. That is the basis of determining the cost of water connection in respect of the abattoirs at Kataning, Albany, and Linley Valley. We should not load one abattoir with a ridiculous cost of that magnitude.

I do not care if the Government is prepared to lend the money for water connection to the abattoir at Esperance. Unless the Government is able to make the money available free of interest that abattoir will have no hope of competing successfully. Even if the money is provided free of interest the abattoir will have to repay it at a later stage.

The Government should adopt a very lenient attitude in respect of the connection of water to the abattoir at Esperance. It should base the cost on an integrated water scheme to supply the towns north of the proposed abattoir site.

When one looks at the country areas one finds a great number of towns with their own water supplies, irrespective of how small or isolated they may be. It is rather interesting to note that towns in the remote areas of the Esperance Shire do not have reasonable water supplies. Only Esperance has a reasonable water supply. The towns to the north either have dams which provide very restricted quantities of water, or no scheme at all. Perhaps the Government should think seriously of providing a new water scheme in the Esperance district, and so connect water to the abattoir at a nominal cost.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I can recall the time when you were critical of the Labor Government for not doing that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: At least he is consistent.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It so happens that the Labor Government intended to provide the Esperance abattoir with a new water scheme at a much cheaper cost. I think the honourable member has underestimated the efforts of his Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I know what our Government did at Esperance.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: We can all see the 10-foot high granite tableau bearing the name of John Tonkin which indicates the total efforts of his Government. However, the honourable member should not boast too much about what his Government did.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It was a going concern if the locals at Esperance wanted to be embraced by that scheme.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I shall take the honourable member up on that point. Unfortunately the farmers and the locals were not able to raise the large amount of capital that was required. They were able to raise about \$900 000, but not the full amount. The costs escalated very quickly; in fact, within months. Consequently the whole project had to be put in mothballs.

Regrettably a decision has to be made at this stage, because the company concerned will have to be wound up and the capital returned to the shareholders if it is not able to get under way by the end of the year.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you think it will get under way?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, if the Government will update its guarantees.

The Hon. R. Thompson: If this Government puts things right!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: In view of the inflated costs, the producers will have to find more money. Undoubtedly the provision of a water supply will help induce an interested investor, who has overseas markets, to take up a shareholding. This investor might be prepared to invest money provided the water is made available at a reasonable cost, and the Government is willing to make housing available to the employees.

In respect of housing certain problems arise, because the State Housing Commission has adopted an eligibility criterion based on the salary that an applicant for housing is receiving. If an applicant is in receipt of an income higher than the criterion laid down he would be ineligible for State housing. I suggest that changes should be made to the criterion adopted by the State Housing Commission, so that all the employees become eligible.

The directors of the company are working very hard to find some means by which the abattoir can be built. I trust the Government will update its guarantees. At the present time the Government has before it a request. The establishment of an abattoir will certainly help the producers in that area.

I should point out that the cost of cartage in that region of the State is gigantic. When the producers first settled there they

found that the cost of cartage was less than 5 per cent of the price realised in the sale of an animal. Now, with the price of beef declining to half of what it was, and with freights being doubled, one finds that about 40 per cent of the ultimate value of an animal goes towards the freight cost.

So there is a greater need, still, for an abattoir at Esperance. The producers in that area did hope the Government would consider subsidising the freight until such time as the abattoir was producing. Unfortunately, their hopes for a subsidy are fading and, as a result, the necessity for the establishment of an abattoir is even greater.

Referring again to the functions of the authority, it will approve of all new premises which are to be constructed, and it will be responsible for the inspection of all abattoirs. It will also make recommendations on public meat markets. That, of course, will include the auction of carcase meat which, I think, will be the mode of selling in the future.

The authority will be charged with the responsibility of encouraging research, and the dissemination of information, particularly in regard to efficiency in the handling and transporting of meat. I trust the authority will carry out some research into shipping, and that it will also monitor the requirements of the different parts of Western Australia.

It is rather disappointing to see so much meat railed and transported by road out of Albany, rather than leaving by means of the local port. It is very difficult to organise shipping because there is such a multiplicity of markets which have to be supplied from each single carcase. If a whole carcase went into the one container, and to a single purchaser, it would be a different matter but unfortunately different parts of a carcase go into different containers which results in an uneven flow into the transport system. If an abattoir were established at Esperance, the Port of Esperance would become another pickup point for shipping. I realise that this problem does not exist only on the south coast, it exists also on the north-west coast, and at Geraldton. So, it is to be hoped that the proposed authority will look into the matter of shipping.

It has already been mentioned that one function of the authority will be to investigate meat markets, and I again make the point that a livestock agent will not be a member of the authority. The authority will also advise the Minister on methods of overcoming areas of conflicting interest within the meat and livestock industries. That is an important point. There is considerable breakdown and distrust between the producers and those who buy and kill the animals, and those who finally sell the meat to the consumers.

A number of organisations have carried out trials in which they have cut up carcasses in order to assess their value. Many of the trials have proved that the farmers are not being robbed to the extent they thought they were. So, there are other people in the trade who can provide expertise, and who can carry out very necessary duties. I hope the authority will be able to reduce the distrust which exists at the present time.

The authority should look into the conflict of exporting livestock versus exporting carcase meat, and also the method of marketing either by acquisition or by private enterprise, which is another point of argument in producing areas.

The Minister will be able to request the authority to investigate and report on any matter which he considers necessary. I consider there are a number of deficiencies in the list of functions of the authority, and I am rather disappointed because of those deficiencies. I suppose they could all be included in the category of those items which the Minister can request the authority to investigate.

I think the authority should monitor the charges at State abattoirs. After all, the killing charges laid down at those works become the standard for the rest of the industry. The smaller country abattoirs are more efficient than are the larger Government works.

We have already heard of the problems associated with odours coming from abattoirs, and the difficulties faced in trying to overcome these odours. Obviously, the abattoirs also experience labour problems. Another problem is that the abattoirs are situated virtually in the suburbs. I certainly hope we will see a trend away from city areas and into country areas. The animals should be killed where they are produced, and the carcasses then transported to the market. After all, we are trying to decentralise industry into the rural areas and it does seem ridiculous to transport livestock from country areas to the city area.

The problem of offensive odours will have to be overcome. I did ask, by interjection which was at Midland first—the people or the offensive odours. I did not ask the question in jest; I suggest the abattoir was established and the people then moved into the same area and complained about the offensive odours. I think many of those people probably were aware of the problem before they moved to the area.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: We had the same trouble with the construction of bulk handling facilities.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It is obvious that the abattoirs will eventually have to move elsewhere and while that will involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, the abattoirs have served us very well.

I hope the Government will give some thought and consideration to the establishment of an abattoir at Esperance. The problem of people living in close proximity to the abattoir would not arise at Esperance because the site which has been allotted for the establishment of an abattoir is some seven or eight miles out of town.

The proposed authority should compare the killing charges in this State with those in the other States of Australia, and New Zealand. Costs in this country have become unbelievably high. In some way we will have to try to overcome the high cost of labour before we can get back into a competitive position with other world markets. There should also be a thorough investigation to determine how private enterprise can make better use of the Government abattoirs.

Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Before the tea suspension I suggested that one of the functions of the authority which will be set up under this Bill should be to find better utilisation of the Government works at Midland and Robb Jetty. I believe the secret of the best utilisation of these works will be found with the co-operation of private enterprise. Private enterprise will get out and look for world markets; I do not believe it is the duty of a Government department to purchase meat on the local market and then look for other markets afterwards. So I hope the authority will give serious consideration to the better utilisation of our present facilities.

The next matter which I feel the authority should look into—and again this is not listed as one of its duties—is a classification scheme for beef. We use the export classification scheme for lamb which New Zealand has been using for many years. It took our Western Australian producers a little time to adapt their local production to the scheme, as at times it was a little hard to understand the different grades. An example of this was when a producer found that second grade lambs were worth more than first grade lambs. However, as long as producers understand what the market is looking for—and this is indicated by the price obtained for the different grades—then the classification scheme has achieved its object.

We do not yet have a classification scheme for beef. Various proposals have been put forward and one such scheme suggested by Charles of the Queensland University has been used widely in carcase-judging competitions. Currently the Government works in South Australia, Samco, has undertaken field trials for the Australian Meat Board on its proposals for a classification scheme. Regrettably this seems to be getting off the ground fairly slowly. Those in the trade tell us that a

classification scheme will not lead to a great increase in price and this is rather unfortunate. Nevertheless, I believe most producers would like to see a classification scheme implemented. At least it would give the farmer some guarantee that he is receiving a reasonable price for his product.

The farmer then associates that price with what he sees in his yard. At present all too often a farmer sends stock away and, having been informed of the price realised he cannot associate that price he obtains with his particular stock which he always believes to be of a higher standard. The producers are quite sure that with a satisfactory grading scheme they will be able to sell their stock on a weight and grade basis and the returns will increase. I am informed that the introduction of a classification scheme will involve another one or two men on a beef chain and it will cost a few more cents per pound. I can only hope that the benefits we will receive from such a scheme will make it worthwhile.

It so happens that the producers in Esperance usually sell on a weight and grade basis, the grade being determined by the purchaser in the producer's yard before the stock is consigned. This system has worked particularly well and it probably highlights the difficulties the Meat Board is having in setting trading standards. It is rather remarkable that we can determine the age, sex, the fat content on the third rib or any other particular place, of an animal, but one going up in condition can have the same specifications as an animal going down. One animal will be tender and the other one will be tough.

The Hon. G. W. Berry: Will the grading extend to the retail trade?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, the producer hopes the housewife will become accustomed to asking for a particular grade of meat, and this could be indicated by a red stripe or a blue stripe on the beef or package. As I was saying there are difficulties in implementing a successful grading scheme and we have not yet found a good substitute for the human eye. One can tell from the coat of an animal whether or not it is in good order and condition. Once the hide is off the animal it is very hard to determine it. Hence whatever grading scheme we finally introduce we will still need to use some human element to determine the grade before the animal is killed. Nevertheless, there is this feeling in the industry that the producer is not receiving what his animals are worth and that a classification scheme could alleviate many of his difficulties.

The next duty which I feel the authority should carry out—and once again this is not listed as one of its duties in the measure in spite of the fact that a

Parliamentary joint party committee informed the Department of Agriculture of its views—is to monitor the use and production of artificial meats in this country. When a housewife buys sausages, minced meat, or meat pies, she has no clue as to the amount of meat in her purchases. There is no registered trade name for meat, and in fact, one can buy a meat pie which has no meat in it at all. In this country we have no legislation relating to artificial meat and this whole field needs considerable investigation. I hope this authority will look into the matter.

As members know, there are two types of protein meat. One of these is called an extender and it is used in such things as meat pies, sausages, and the like. The protein mixture can be bought for about the same price as ordinary meat—approximately 60c a pound—but instead of having a moisture content of 80 per cent as does meat, its moisture content is about 20 per cent. So every one pound of extender used is equal to about four pounds of meat.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Very interesting.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Undoubtedly this extender is being used today, and there are no regulations in regard to quantities. I hope the authority will undertake some research on the use of meat extenders and artificial meat. All over the world plants are being built to manufacture artificial meat, and each one of these is capable of producing thousands of tons of artificial meat each year. Already some plants are operating in this country. Although they have had difficulty getting off the ground because of the low return for meat, we can expect that the use of artificial meat will increase rapidly when our prices rise again, and undoubtedly prices must rise to keep the industry going. Before we reach this stage, we should enact legislation to control the situation. I do not propose anything like the margarine quota scheme, but I certainly feel that goods such as sausages and meat pies should be labelled so that the housewife is fully aware of what she is buying. It is rather interesting to see from surveys of housewives and purchasers of meat that they are seeking further information on meat. Although these people are very ignorant about meat, they are nevertheless very suspicious of artificial meats and they do not wish to purchase them. Undoubtedly in their ignorance they are doing this.

Another field in which the authority should work is to encourage innovations in sheep slaughtering. Miss Elliott raised a question about today's steep slaughtering charges. I think she said that slaughtering charges have gone up from 49 per cent to 110 per cent. I believe I can give her at least one reason for the increase, and that is the limitation on the amount of work a person is

allowed to do in an abattoir in a given time. Members probably appreciate there is such a thing as a darg and that abattoir workers must work to that. I am told on good authority that sometimes employees finish their darg at 10.30 a.m. In fact, I will name the company—Johnston Smallgoods.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You had better explain what a darg is. Mr Cooley said before that he had not heard of it.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: No-one except the Liberals knows anything about it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They call it a tally in the meatworks.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Everyone in the trade knows about it.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It is all very well for Mr Cooley to say no-one knows about it; everyone in the trade knows it. Obviously it is something the trade unions want to hide.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The old game of union bashing again.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I know I am union bashing, and I do not apologise for it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: All the reprehensible actions masquerade under the name of improvements to the worker's lot.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They have had tallies in the meatworks for years.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: But they have been made ludicrous—finishing by 10.30 a.m.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: When they have reached their tally.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: If we go back to Solo Butchers—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is a bad name—we do not want them here.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: —the stock are drawn individually from the pens in much the same manner as with shearing. This, of course, is probably where the limits originated, and it was decided that no man should be allowed to do more than the average. When the chain came into vogue there was a limit which that chain could kill in a given time. So we have got to the present stage where by 10.30 a.m. the men and the women have done their tally and are allowed to go home.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What time do they start?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I do not know, but I am sure it is not 2.00 a.m. I think they start at 7.30 a.m.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is very interesting; I have never heard the managements of meatworks complain about the tally.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Obviously you have not talked to many owners of meatworks.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I have talked to owners; this will be an interesting discussion. In some areas if they do not work on a tally they go back to eight hours.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Sure, but that is not an improvement of the workers' lot.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Mr Wordsworth said they finish at 10.30. Tell me how many they kill.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I am quoting the exact words of Mr Johnston himself.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Oh, yes; old "Sausage" Johnston; a villain of the first order!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: He said that in his boning room the employees finished at 10.30, and they could do a double darg in less than 40 hours a week.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How many do they kill?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I do not think they kill any in the boning rooms.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The abattoir workers would be very interested to hear your comments.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I hope Mr Cooley gets up and gives us his view on the costly process of killing meat.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I wonder if Mr Masters will support you.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think the tally has been reduced since the cost went up, but I will check it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Of course it has.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: One thing that has happened and which has helped to increase the cost is equal pay for women; while I am not complaining about that, it has increased the cost.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What a backward step!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am glad you think so.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: In the old days the basic wage was designed for a man and his family to live on.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: That was in the beginning of the 20th century, about 70 years ago.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: If you get many more unemployed you can start killing people, and see what the tally will be then.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Obviously there is a lot of ignorance in the community, including members of this Parliament, on the matter of a darg and its effect.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You have not helped to alleviate that ignorance.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There is no way you can alleviate the ignorance of the ignorant.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You would know.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I feel this authority can fill a great need, and I would like to explain to members opposite what effect these dargs have on the industry. We would all like to find new methods by which to reduce the cost in our abattoirs. Undoubtedly many innovations should be introduced. It is now some time since we changed to the chain system of killing, which certainly speeded up the process.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What were you going to do with them when you killed them?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Eat them.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Have you seen the new beef floor at Robb Jetty?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, I have.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Where will you store them?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If you eat them there is no need to store them.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Obviously we are entering into this field of ground meat, and I am referring to meat not only for human consumption but also for pet food; and we must devise new methods of boning carcasses. We are still using knives for this purpose, and there must be more sensible ways of taking the meat off the carcass by using machines such as those used for plucking poultry. Unfortunately very little research has been carried out in this field, and I think it would be well worth while for this new authority to carry out some research in it.

Not only should the new authority carry out research into the killing of livestock, but also it should carry out research into the whole matter of handling livestock. When I was in the United States I found lamb was a popular dish, and I thought there was a great opportunity for Australian lamb to enter that market. That was seven years ago, and since then we have read more and more—

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Since then we have heard nothing from you except your world trip.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is the reason we sent him away; to give us the benefit of what he learnt.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It is taking seven years for him to tell us.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: When I was in the United States I found a large market to which I felt we could send our Australian lamb. However, I found

that the lamb we exported was not suitable for the American market because it was not suitably prepared.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I think it was because it wasn't labelled "New Zealand".

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Even New Zealand has trouble in this respect. I have in front of me an article headed, "Americans complain our lamb is too tough" and it comes from a New Zealand journal of agriculture. That article highlights the problem I found; that is, carcasses were being frozen too soon after slaughter, and were not being allowed to condition or age. In America when an animal is killed it is kept at room temperature for at least 24 hours before it is frozen. When we look at many of our country butcher shops we find they do exactly the same thing. However, at export abattoirs there is no hanging space, and carcasses are placed in the freezer before the employees go home in the afternoon at 2.00 o'clock.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: When it is still quivering.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: As Mr Gayfer just said, the meat is still quivering as it goes into the freezer. This knowledge has been available for six years, yet we have not adapted our ways to suit the American market. I am not sure whether this is done because regulations demand it, or whether it is because export abattoirs are frightened of blow-flies.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It might improve the meat if it is hung under trees.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Perhaps that is why we still see butchering taking place under the proverbial gum tree; at least it helps make the meat tender. Certainly no farmer would cut up meat on the day that he kills it; he ensures that it does not go into cool storage before 24 hours have passed. There must be some reason that this does not happen in abattoirs. Perhaps there are regulations to this effect, but certainly it would be a very worth-while function of the authority to consider the matter.

Another matter which I feel the authority should research is the work that was done on the hanging of beef. I am referring back to the time that the CSIRO first carried out research into the hanging of beef by the aitchbone, rather than by the tip of the leg. The CSIRO carried out extensive research on this matter and found that meat was considerably more tender when the animal was properly hung. Unfortunately, the rails in our abattoirs are designed to enable carcasses to be hung by the last joint in the leg, and for some unknown reason the research to which I refer has not been used at all. To me it is amazing that this work should be

done and the results proven conclusively, and yet the experience gained is not utilised.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: How did they suggest it should be hung?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: By the aitchbone, which is somewhere near the tail.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is what would be the pelvis in a human being.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, it is akin to the pelvic girdle; perhaps I should have read the article more closely to ascertain the scientific name. The CSIRO proved that the muscles of the animal do not contract when it is hung in this way, whereas when it is hung conventionally the muscles tighten as *rigor mortis* sets in and the result is tough meat.

There is a further technique which is used extensively in America, and that is the one involving a machine with literally 1000 needles which pierce the meat and cut the fibres, thus tenderising the meat. Obviously there is need for research into the use of this method here.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was used here, but it tended to make the meat lose a great deal of its succulence.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think they call it acupuncture!

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I feel I have highlighted the need for work in this direction, and I certainly hope the new authority does carry out such research.

The next matter I would like to mention is that of advertising. Up to now the advertising of meat has been left entirely to the Australian Meat Board. That board has not carried out this function particularly well, and certainly has not carried out a policy of advertising the advantages of a particular State product. I feel we in Western Australia have a great many advantages, particularly in regard to export lamb. We have always been able to produce export lamb out of season and before the rest of Australia and New Zealand. We can get it to foreign markets at least one month and perhaps two months before New Zealand can. Therefore, there is a need for advertising, and this is something the authority should consider.

I feel there is a need for more information to be made available to consumers. I said previously that housewives appreciate that they do not know a great deal about the different cuts of meat and how they should be cooked. One has only to attend the Royal Show and to inspect the meat pavilion there to see what can be done in this respect. In my opinion the authority certainly should look into the matter of advertising and consumer education.

A further avenue which I feel the authority should investigate is the feasibility of decentralising rendering and

by-product plants and, indeed, the whole of the pet food industry. It is ridiculous that today the meat we feed our cats is killed under conditions just as hygienic as those under which meat for human consumption is killed. The cost of this is enormous, and is illustrated by the fact that people can kill kangaroos and sell the meat in competition with beef and lamb.

The only reason that kangaroo meat can compete with beef and lamb is that kangaroo shooters can butcher the carcasses on the spot, and so the cost of production from the point of slaughter onwards is so low that this meat can compete with beef and lamb. I believe particularly in this time of drought we should be investigating ways of rendering down poorer types of animals for the pet food industry. This industry is worth tens of millions of dollars in this country alone, quite apart from what is exported; and yet we still continue the industry merely as a by-product of our meat industry.

I believe we ought to be investigating ways in which we can render down our poorer animals. It would be a good decentralised industry and would be of immense help during times of drought. I believe we could have a portable killing and rendering down plant on the back of a truck which could move from shearing shed to shearing shed and dispose of surplus older stock on properties, particularly in areas such as Esperance where the value of the animal will not pay for its freight to Perth. Yet if there were some way in which it could be slaughtered on site, it would have some value.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How many people are going to be on this authority?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Mr Dans always tells me that he reads the legislation.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I know how many we started off with, but you have given them so many tasks during the past couple of hours that I am beginning to wonder.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I have suggested there should be eleven.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: But you have not told us what is going to happen to the tripe. That is the only thing you have not got round to yet.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I thought he had brought it in here.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: I would think they could sell it to the Parliament House Committee because this is the only place that I know that still has tripe on the menu.

I have already mentioned the matter of shipping space. I think this authority could look into a whole field of activities in that regard. There is a great need to use our outports. It would be a good thing if this authority could go into the whole matter of trying to line up shipping for the trade from these ports.

I am a little disappointed that the Department of Agriculture is to be represented on this authority. I think it is high time that in this State we either set up another department or split the Department of Agriculture into two and have a marketing division, rather than have the Department of Agriculture assimilating a knowledge of production and a knowledge of marketing. I should like to see more emphasis given to marketing with perhaps a director of agricultural marketing being represented on the authority rather than the Director of Agriculture. But perhaps that is carrying the matter a little beyond the scope of this legislation.

I repeat that I am in agreement with this legislation and I certainly wish it well. I was rather interested to see that it will cover any kind of animal whether bovine, ovine, porcine or caprine. It took me some time to find out what "caprine" meant. In fact it refers to a goat. So the authority will cover the various sections of the meat industry including beef, sheep, pigs and goats. I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [8.04 p.m.]: I should like to express my appreciation to the members who have spoken in support of the Bill. The Bill is of such a nature that it can encompass a tremendous number of functions. That has given an opportunity to members to speak on a wide variety of subjects which, although remotely related in most instances, do have some relationship to some of the functions which will be the responsibility of this proposed authority. However, some speakers may have involved themselves in an examination of functions which are more appropriately the functions of the meat commission and of operations which may be more appropriately the responsibility of organisations other than that proposed in this Bill.

However, the functions of the proposed meat industry authority are very wide, bearing in mind that there is a limitation on the conduct of abattoirs. While it is to be called a meat industry authority, that may be a misnomer. People may be forgiven for thinking that this proposed authority will be concerned essentially with meat. It will be concerned essentially with abattoirs and will give advice to and make recommendations to the Minister and the Government on matters concerned with the conduct of abattoirs, including their establishment.

Having said that, I repeat that I appreciate the support given by the Opposition through the medium of the honourable Lyla Elliott. She took the opportunity to refer to a little of the background of this legislation, although not very much of it. She referred to the

Towns and Austen report. That report was of some significance, as both the Hon. Lyla Elliott and the Hon. Roy Abbey commented. I think one ought also to bear in mind the circumstances which applied in the agricultural industries at that time. I recall very well that we were faced with a tremendous glut situation in our abattoirs. We faced tremendous difficulty because of the depression in the agricultural industries, the seasonal conditions and the need to handle a tremendous number of stock, particularly sheep. That seemed to highlight the need for a new abattoir.

It also highlighted the financial circumstances of the Midland abattoir. It highlighted too what was in the mind of the Brand Government at that time which was encouragement for further private enterprise to establish itself in Western Australia in order better to handle that glut situation and the ever increasing stock numbers in Western Australia. We need to bear in mind that that situation changed very rapidly, as things are wont to do in the agricultural industries.

A piece of land was set aside for that purpose at Baldivis. I shall not enter into an argument as to the responsibility for setting aside that piece of land. I think it might well be that the negotiations for that land started in the time of the Brand Government, but the Tonkin Government followed them up. The essential purpose at that time was to provide a site for the establishment of an abattoir under the private enterprise system. It was not for the purpose of establishing a Government abattoir or a service abattoir. It was to provide an opportunity in the metropolitan region for a further private enterprise establishment.

That matter did not eventuate. I am sure members will recall that although we had been faced only a year or two previously with a serious situation in our abattoirs, during the period of the Tonkin Government that need for additional abattoir killing capacity faded considerably to the point where the then Minister for Industrial Development (Mr H. E. Graham) is on record as saying that no further killing facilities were needed. All this needs to be kept in mind when we consider the financial situation of the Midland Junction Abattoir.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How many abattoirs did we assist to construct in our three years of Government?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: If that interjection is to be taken as a challenge to me, I was not aware that I was indicating criticism. I was simply putting something on record. The matter I was approaching is the financial operations of the Midland Junction Abattoir. We have been criticised in this debate for encouraging the expansion of a service works at

Midland. I do not mind admitting that in the past I have been critical of the increasing capitalisation of that works. At the same time I like to think that I recognised then as I do now the difference between an abattoir that operates on a seasonal or other basis and one which operates as a service works, as Midland does.

I have always been in favour of the operation of Midland Junction as a service abattoir. In those circumstances it becomes extremely difficult for the management to meet the demand of a glut situation and at the same time try to maintain a work force. That certainly was one of the critical factors. It is also extremely difficult to meet the financial obligation, if the financial obligation can be interpreted as running at a break-even or profitable situation. If it is to operate as a service works it is just not capable of absorbing all the ups and downs in the supply of stock. These are the considerations that one must keep in mind. However, all that is history.

While some of us have been looking forward to the appointment of an authority which could advise the Government, we do not wish it to take over total control. I and the Government are not convinced that this is necessarily desirable. We would rather have a situation in which a fully representative and expert body which knows the abattoir industry well—I emphasise the words "abattoir industry"—can advise the Government as to what ought to be done, how we ought to anticipate the future, and do even more than that. In this regard I refer to the remarks of the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth when he put stress on the need for further marketing investigation and research. I and the Government agree with him that the all-important question is the selling of our produce. We have a far greater capacity for production than many other nations; and we can certainly produce very well, subject to the seasonal variations.

Inasmuch as the debate has concerned itself with matters related to the Bill, rather than the precise provisions of it, I think there is little need for me to add much more to these remarks.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It would help if you moved into Committee and we could get rid of it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am sure that would be the wish of the Opposition.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: The Opposition did not refer to it very much.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is true, but then of course that is not surprising because we know perfectly well that despite what it says to the contrary, the Opposition does not really have a tremendous interest in or enthusiasm for agricultural pursuits.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What do you want us to do? Do you want us to get up and support it for four hours or get up and oppose it?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: We want you to remain calm.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You get support and you want us to oppose it like your own members do.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I think members are getting quite carried away. I have already expressed my appreciation of the support the Opposition has given the Bill. However, as the Opposition is so keen to proceed with the Bill to get it through, I have no intention to slow that process down.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It would be a change for you.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are giving a pretty good indication that you are.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: If the Opposition thinks it can get away scot free with some of the observations it made during the course of the debate and which I am prepared to contest, I simply use this opportunity to indicate otherwise.

However, let me say in general terms that those worth-while matters which have been raised will be referred to the Minister for his consideration, and I am sure some regard will be paid to them. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Membership of the Authority—

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I move an amendment—

Page 4, line 1—Delete the word "seven" and substitute the word "eight".

I believe there is an omission from clause 8 as no reference is made to a representative of the consuming public and it is extremely important that such a representative should be on the authority.

Meat is probably one of the most important commodities sold today—important not only in respect of the health of families, but also their budgets. In addition it has an important bearing on the CPI or the rate of inflation.

To give an indication of the importance of the industry to the local market I would like to quote a few figures from the AMB with reference to the estimated domestic consumption of meat for the year ended

June, 1975. In this State for that year 54 kilos of beef and veal were consumed per head of population, 15 kilos of mutton, and 10 kilos of lamb.

Of the total amount of meat handled by the abattoirs 44.3 per cent of beef and veal was exported which means that over 50 per cent was consumed locally. Of the mutton handled, 67.3 per cent was exported which means that 32.7 per cent was consumed locally, and the figures for lamb were 47.4 per cent exported, and again over 50 per cent consumed locally.

I am aware that there is a consumers' representative on the Midland Junction Abattoir Board, but many other abattoirs are involved in the production of meat for the home market. I understand there are about 50 nonexporting abattoirs in the State as well as 14 which slaughter for export and also cater for the home market. As only 36.7 per cent of Midland's total kill is for local consumption, the major portion is being exported. A large part of the local market must be supplied by other abattoirs, and therefore there should be on the authority a person who could have some say in respect of the marketing of meat, not only the meat from the Midland Junction Abattoir, but also the meat from other abattoirs in the State.

Meat is an important component of the CPI. In August last year I asked the following question of the Minister for Justice representing the Treasurer—

Can the Minister explain why for the 12 months ended June, 1975, the inflation rate for Australia was 16.9 per cent, whereas the figure for this State was 20.1 per cent?

Mr McNeill replied—

The main reason for the differential movement in the consumer price index for Perth and the index for the six capitals combined between June quarter 1974 and June quarter 1975, is to be found in the behaviour of the food group of the index and more particularly in the inverse movement of meat prices.

Analysis of price movements in the meat subgroup reveals that prices for mutton and beef fell more sharply in other capital cities than in Perth. Moreover, whereas price levels for lamb were 12.5 per cent higher in Perth in June, 1975 than a year earlier, the corresponding change for the six capitals combined was a fall of 10 per cent.

It is to be noted that meat prices in general have not risen exceptionally fast in Perth; the meat subgroup of the index was only 3.2 per cent higher in June, 1975 than a year earlier. However, the average experience of all capitals was a fall of 8 per cent which served partly to offset price increases of other commodities.

I read that to indicate that there was a difference reflected in the inflation rate. The figure for Australia was 16.9 per cent as compared with 20.1 per cent for this State, and the difference was attributed by the Minister to the meat component in the CPI.

On the 5th August, 1976, there was an article in the *Daily News* as follows—

PRICES SHOCK FOR PERTH

Canberra, Today: Housewives pay higher prices for lamb in Perth than in any other Australian capital city...

This is revealed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics...

The figures showed a remarkable difference in the price of lamb cuts in Perth and the other capital cities.

For a 500g (1lb) leg of lamb the price in Perth was \$1. Canberra was the only city with a price anywhere near that—89 cents. The others ranged down to 67 cents in Melbourne.

The rest of the article deals with other foods.

On the 24th February, 1976, in the *Daily News* was the following—

Food Prices up—but W.A. not worst.

The major factors in Perth's food prices increase were bread and cereal prices (a rise of 6.1 per cent) and lamb prices (8.1)....

According to other figures released today Perth housewives pay more than most of their Eastern States counterparts for eggs, canned foods and lamb.

In *The West Australian* of the 11th September we read—

MEAT WILL COST MORE

The price of all meat will rise in the metropolitan area by at least 4c a kilo early next week.

Slaughter fees charged by the WA Meat Commission at its Midland and Robb Jetty abattoirs will increase from Monday by 12 per cent.

This will mean a rise of up to \$2.30 an animal for some types of cattle.

Next week it will cost \$3.50 to slaughter a 16kg lamb for the local market—an increase of 38c.

The president of the Meat and Allied Trades Federation, Mr H. King, said yesterday it was inevitable that the increase would be passed on to consumers.

The rise would cover all types of meat.

That article indicates that slaughtering fees have a very important bearing on the price of meat. The other statements I read were to indicate that lamb prices

were higher in this State than they were in the other States. The article I just read reveals that the prices reflected in the inflation rate are to a very large extent affected by slaughtering fees.

In the Minister's second reading speech—

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You are making a pretty good job of another second reading speech on this amendment. I am trying to relate the speech to the amendment and I cannot relate it at all.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): Order!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It has nothing to do with you.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Yes it has. I have to sit here and listen.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: In the Minister's second reading speech is another reference to costs at abattoirs and I believe this supports the argument I am presenting; that is, that a consumer representative is necessary on the authority we are discussing, because of the importance of slaughtering costs to the consumer. On page 6 of the second reading speech the Minister states—

Because of lower capitalisation and lower operation costs, stock can be processed at nonexport abattoirs for the domestic market at a lower cost than at export establishments, and some nonexport abattoirs have increased their scale of operations significantly because of this differential.

Here again is a reference to operational costs and the tie-up with the domestic market.

Yesterday I asked the following question of the Minister for Justice—

Which Statutory Boards or Authorities in this State have a consumers' representative on them?

Of the 13 boards listed in the Minister's reply, nine are involved with some form of food—potatoes, fruit, eggs, and so on. I believe it is a serious omission that the meat industry is not included in the list. I know we have the Midland Junction Abattoir Board but I do not think that is wide enough because that abattoir provides only a proportion of the State's meat requirements. Many other abattoirs are involved and consumers should therefore have a direct say in the operation of those other abattoirs.

I think it must be agreed that the functions of the authority have an important bearing on the consumer. I refer particularly to paragraphs (d) to (h) of clause 16, which read—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): I am afraid I cannot allow the honourable member to quote

from clause 16 at this stage because it is in advance of clause 8, with which we are now dealing.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: With respect, surely the functions of the authority have a very important bearing on the amendment I have moved.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member refers to the functions of the authority without enumerating clauses, I cannot stop her.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The functions of the authority are set out elsewhere in the Bill, and they include approving all premises where animals are slaughtered for sale for human consumption. Surely this is a question of health. Reference to sale for human consumption implies the premises must be of such a standard that there is no threat to human health. Therefore the consumer is involved.

The authority will also make recommendations to the Minister in relation to the provision and operation of public meat markets. I would have thought public meat markets affected the consumer. Another function of the authority is to encourage research directed towards the improvement of abattoir design, operation, and practice. I would certainly say that is needed after the experience at Midland. In my second reading speech I referred to the pollution that was being caused by the operations at Midland.

Another function of the authority is to encourage the dissemination of information to the meat industry so as to promote efficiency in the handling and transportation of animals and meat products. Surely transportation is an important factor in the costing of meat. Mr Wordsworth referred to the need for consumer education, and that could very well be a function of the authority in an effort to promote the industry.

Finally, the functions of the authority include keeping under review meat marketing and the marketing of animals in so far as such marketing may affect the meat industry in the State and in particular through consultation with relevant sections of the industry to keep under review trends and developments therein.

I believe any form of marketing must involve consumers and consumers' rights. Without consumers, of course, there would be no markets for the producers, no product for the abattoirs, and no jobs for the slaughtermen. All those people have representation on the authority; but without the consumer where would they be?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Do you think everybody might become vegetarian without a consumers' representative on the authority?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is a very good point. There is a world trend towards it.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In my opinion, consumers have for too long been denied a voice in too many areas which affect their welfare and the welfare of their families. They have been on the receiving end of policies adopted by Government and private enterprise in many areas, without having a say. I think there should be a consumers' representative on any authority concerned with the price, quality, and standard of hygiene of a commodity which is intended for sale to the public, and certainly one as important as meat.

The consumer's view should be carefully considered before major decisions which affect him are made. Consumers have a right to know why certain steps are taken and why prices are increased. Surely what is good for consumers is, in the long run, good for or in the best interests of the industry generally.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: In my second reading speech I said I thought there should be a consumer representative on the authority if it were expanded to 11 members. I was speaking of an expanded authority. I cannot agree with Miss Elliott's proposal to include a consumer representative and increase the organisation to eight members. The reason I suggested 11 representatives is that a representative of consumers can be included in a large organisation. The Government in its wisdom has decided a small body is preferable.

I am therefore unable to support Miss Elliott's proposal for eight members, although I agree there would be a place for a consumer representative if the authority were larger.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: On behalf of the Government I advise the Committee that I am opposed to the amendment proposed by Miss Elliott. We should bear in mind that we are debating a Bill dealing with the establishment of an authority concerned with abattoirs. I suppose it can be argued the authority has some relationship to the price of the product, health matters, and so on; but I think all that can be said is that it has some relationship.

The authority is not a price-fixing body. It is not concerned with the delivery of meat, despite the use of the term "meat industry" in the title of the Bill and in the name of the proposed authority. It is concerned with the establishment and operation of abattoirs as such and therefore has very little direct connection with and relationship to consumers.

If it is thought there should be some emphasis on the role of a consumer, let it not be forgotten that the authority will exist for the purpose of advising and making recommendations to the Minister, and the function of the Minister is to represent the public interest. Therefore the consumers' interests will be taken into consideration in any decision which may

be referred to the Minister. I do not think there is any necessity to increase the composition of the board by the inclusion of a consumer representative as such.

We should also bear in mind that presumably the seven members of the authority will be consumers, unless any are vegetarians. So there will be seven consumers on the authority.

In any case, the authority will be concerned with the operations and economics of abattoirs, and not specifically with slaughtering charges and so on, which I think would be more appropriately the function of the Meat Commission. What would be the role of a consumer representative on such a body?

For those reasons I am opposed to the amendment. It would serve very little purpose, despite the views of the Hon. David Wordsworth, who was referring to an expanded body of 11 members. I am one who believes a body of this nature is more effective if it is small. So long as the authority is concerned with the operation of abattoirs and is in a position to obtain such expert advice and information as is necessary for it to make proper determinations, I think the membership of it should be limited as much as possible, both in respect of the costs imposed on an industry by the existence of such a body and because a large body does not necessarily make for ease of operation and decision making.

The boards listed in the answer I gave to a question asked by Miss Elliott yesterday are concerned with the marketing or production of certain food products. It must be borne in mind that the producer of any kind of product will be concerned with the reaction of the consumer. I agree with Miss Elliott that without a consuming public which is on side and prepared to take the product, obviously the rest of the exercise is a waste of time. Of course, the authority will set itself out to meet the needs of consumers, which include the provision of a quality product and the cost of a product, neither of which is a function of the proposed authority. I therefore oppose the amendment.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I support the amendment moved by Miss Elliott. Seeing that Mr Wordsworth spoke at such length on expanding the authority to possibly 11, I should have thought he would place an amendment on the notice paper suggesting that the numbers on the authority be increased to 11 and that Miss Elliott's amendment be supported.

Although I did interject I must say that some of the propositions Mr Wordsworth put forward were quite valid. However the arguments advanced by the Minister are not valid, because if one looks at the composition of the authority one finds that just about every body is named and represented, and in this connection I would

refer members to clause 8 which outlines who the seven members of the authority shall be.

In paragraph (d) of clause 8 we find that one shall be a representative of the interests of the wholesale and retail meat industry. This is where the consumer comes face to face with some of the people on the authority; those in the retail industry. I take the point made by the Minister as to what the authority is set up to do, but surely the Minister is not suggesting that he is placing on that authority a representative of the wholesale and retail meat industry. I have no quarrel with there being a representative of the producers on the authority because they are the people growing the meat.

If we accept the Minister's argument as to what the authority shall or shall not do and say there shall be no consumer representative, I could advance a similar criterion and say there should be no representative of the producers; though I think the producer should be represented.

Paragraph (f) of clause 8 states that one shall be a representative of the interests of persons directly employed in the processing of meat at abattoirs; and I presume that means what Mr Wordsworth said it means—that there shall be a union representative; even though it does not specifically say so.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It would be too much to expect them to say that.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I would expect you to say that.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: We live in a very complex society today and there would be no harm in including on the authority a consumer representative, even if it were only to let the people see that we believe in the integration of all interests and the dissemination of all information so that the consumers might be cognisant of the costs involved. The longer we take to include all sections of the community on such an authority the harder it will be to get the message across.

I read the report of a speech made by Mr Hayden in Queensland in which he said that profits were needed, but there was a difference between profits and profiteering, and there was very little profiteering which could be covered by legislation.

As we have named just about everyone else to be represented on the authority there would be no harm in adding a consumer representative.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I was going to suggest that the Bureau of Consumer Affairs would look after them.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If we do not include a consumer representative on this occasion there is little doubt the Bill will be brought back later to include such a provision.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is a good idea. Let us leave it at that. You have some very good ideas.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Not very many.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: Seeing we are speaking about bovines I do not wish to look in Mr Lewis' direction!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I do not think any one of us can afford to throw stones.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: I hope the Minister will give this matter serious thought. Surely it would be a good idea to have a consumer representative. It would be an act of goodwill. By way of interjection and jokingly Mr Baxter suggested that we may all become vegetarians. There is no need to block out vegetarians because we rely a great deal on our primary industries and should do all we can to encourage people in the local market.

Things are getting tough overseas. If a rural president—Mr Carter—is elected in the United States he will lend a sympathetic ear to the American cattlemen's association, and this would undoubtedly boost the confidence of our primary industry.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Do you suggest the President of the United States should be the consumer representative? It would be a good idea.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: It would do a lot of good and be in keeping with the suggestion made by Mr Wordsworth who wanted four more on the board; but he did not move an amendment to that effect. I have not heard a good argument as to why a consumer representative should not be on the board, particularly when every other body appears to be represented.

I cannot support Mr Wordsworth. He took two hours to tell us what he thought about the matter.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Not that long.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: Well one hour 59 minutes. I ask the Minister again to give the matter serious consideration because if we ever need the confidence of the public it is now.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It has been my pleasure to support every meat Bill that has come before this Chamber. While some members have been completely opposed to the principles contained in those measures some of their provisions have been very successful. They have constituted attempts to do something for the primary producers and consumers.

Mr Abbey has acknowledged there will be a consumer representative on the board, even though he does not spell it out. This has been the policy of the Labor Party for many years; on many occasions we have attempted to place such a person on statutory boards in the hope of achieving uniformity and balance

and ensuring good working relationships. I congratulate the Government for doing just that. It is acknowledged by Mr Abbey as being a good thing and I hope it will help the industry.

Members will recall several years ago America and Japan stopped buying meat and the bottom literally fell out of the beef market. Farmers were in desperate straits; many of the producers of beef have not yet recovered. The consumers of Western Australia were asked to eat more beef and they responded handsomely. They have been educated to eat good quality beef.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I am glad you used those words.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Government should warmly accept the proposition that is before us. I know it takes the Government a long time to grasp things but in two or three years' time it will find that a consumer representative will be welcome on such boards.

As a result of the activities of a man named Negus in America we now find that very little goes on in America without the consumers having a major say in the operations. We should not be completely backward. We should give the consumers a representative. We are not saying who it should be; that will be for the Minister to recommend to Cabinet—it will be for Cabinet to select the consumer representative. It will be better to have a consumer representative on the board than to be accused of denying the consumer such a representative—and that is exactly what the Government will be doing.

I congratulate Miss Elliott on moving her amendment, and I feel it would be stupid if the Government did not accept it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: The Leader of the Opposition suggested that the Bill already provides for the representation of all other sections of the industry, but of course that is not correct. Who is the representative of those people who are directly associated with the operation of abattoirs? For argument's sake, a great many other people who may have considerable and significant financial connection with the industry are not to be represented. The people associated with the placing and building of such abattoirs are not to be represented. The appropriate part of the Bill refers to abattoir design, operation and practice. Perhaps the present abattoir representatives could advise on that, but there are experts in the field to whom reference generally is made. They are a very important group of people who will not be represented.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: But why are you opposed to consumer representation?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: We are talking about buildings and premises, not the stuff that goes through those premises. There is no reference in the Bill to other

people who may be considered by the Leader of the Opposition to have some relationship with the total industry; namely, the exporters and the ship owners. They are not to have representation on this body.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Put them in and make it 12.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: One could go through the Bill looking at all the various functions and saying, "There is somebody who should be represented on the authority." But that does not mean we should have surveyors, town planners or local authorities represented on this body. The function of these people is specifically mentioned in the Bill, but that does not necessarily mean they should be represented on the authority. I feel we should try to confine our minds to the precise purpose of the authority. I am well aware of the importance of what is described as consumerism, but I am not aware that this Government has been in any way opposed to consumer representation, where appropriate. In fact, there is consumer representation on other bodies, particularly in connection with agricultural and food products. However, such representation is not warranted in this case.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I was very surprised—following his comment during the second reading debate that he favoured a consumer representative—to hear Mr Wordsworth giving a spurious reason not to support my amendment.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He probably received a phone call.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It seems incredible that the reason he advanced was that the addition of a consumer representative would make the authority an eight-member body, which does not add up to 11 members. If Mr Wordsworth wanted 11 members on the authority, why did he not move an amendment along the lines suggested by Mr Dans? I would suggest this is further evidence of what the Labor Party has always maintained: This is not an independent House of Review; it is a House which votes along party lines. The Labor Party admits it, but the other side does not.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: A lot more of us seem to cross the floor than do you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): Order!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Isn't it handy when you can do that?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! I have called for order twice. I ask the Hon. Lyla Elliott to continue her speech.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It is significant that members opposite never cross the floor in sufficient numbers to affect the outcome of a Bill. The Minister when advancing arguments for not supporting my amendment talked about the sorts of

people who could be described as being eligible for representation on the authority; however, his argument did not do him justice.

He tried to tell us the Bill is concerned only with the physical side of an abattoir, implying it had nothing to do with the product which goes through the abattoir. However, the physical side of an abattoir is only one aspect of the entire meat industry. The industry is concerned with prices, marketing, health and transportation; and if that is not enough, one of the functions of the authority is to report to the Minister on any matter relating to the meat industry referred to it by the Minister, or on any matter that it considers necessary which has to do with the meat industry. That is not concerned just with the physical construction or operation of abattoirs. Anything to do with the meat industry vitally concerns consumers.

If what the Minister says is correct—and it is not—why would a farmer or a retail butcher know anything more about the complicated technical process of effluent disposal or the dry rendering process, which is another name for the offal cooking process than, say, a consumer? Surely the purpose of the authority is to form a body of people who will represent all the various major interests involved in the industry. I believe that to be an excellent idea, but a very important section of the industry is being overlooked; namely, the consumer, the very important person at the end of the line without whom none of the other people would be able to operate or make a living. To whom is the farmer going to sell his pigs, sheep and cattle if it is not to the consumer? For what other purpose are they being raised, if it is not to feed the consumer? What need would there be for slaughtermen if there were not someone to go to the butcher shop and buy the product?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: The farmer is not the least bit concerned that everybody may suddenly turn vegetarian. He knows they will still buy and eat meat. That is a poor old argument.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Mr Dans referred to the fact that the authority would have a representative of the retailers. There has been a great deal of animosity and friction between retailers and consumers in the past, and this is an ideal opportunity to promote communication and co-operation between these two sections of the community and perhaps overcome many of the present misunderstandings which exist. I hope the Committee will seriously consider the amendment and show the consumers of this State that it has their interests at heart by agreeing to my amendment, and adding a consumer representative to this authority.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I oppose this amendment, mainly because I think the Government has made a big mistake by

putting too many people on the authority. One has only to listen to the debate on the amendment to realise how silly it is to have large numbers of people debating small issues.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: The biggest one has joined in.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: No, the "littlist" just has.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why do you not debate it with Mr Wordsworth? He wants 11 on the authority.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am not very interested in what Mr Wordsworth may want; I am a free thinker. Mr Wordsworth has made many mistakes in the meat industry in the past, and probably will make many more. I can see no sense in having one representative of the Government abattoirs and one of the private abattoirs, or of having two producers' representatives. Of course, I know why they will be there, just as the Minister does.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Because we must have one for the Farmers' Union, and one for the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association; let us be completely frank about this: We could not do it any other way.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Well, what is wrong with the consumer?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will consume Mr Dellar in a minute.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Do not issue idle threats!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is amazing that members opposite do not take Miss Elliott's amendment seriously; they think it is a laughing matter. However, I do not; I think Miss Elliott is completely wrong in moving her amendment, just as I believe the Government is wrong in putting too many people on the authority.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Are you going to vote against the Bill?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It seems to me I remember Mr Thompson as Leader of the Opposition making scathing remarks about some of my comments relating to beef tagging. I stood alone, very small and quiet in the wilderness of this place, as the whole Chamber voted against me. However, it seems I was the only person who was right on that issue and perhaps I will be the only person who is right on this issue.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar interjected.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Little Sir Echo!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Answering the bull from Boyup!

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! The business of the Committee is being delayed by too many interjections.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I could not agree with you more, Mr Deputy Chairman.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You are inciting us.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If I am inciting Mr Cooley by what I am saying now, let him wait until I really get going. I believe the Government should take another look at this clause in the light of reducing the number proposed to be on the authority.

If the Government wishes to establish an effective meat industry authority, it should not consider for a moment increasing the number. I would prefer to see an authority of five members. I did not intend to enter the debate, but having heard the paucity of the arguments in support of the amendment, and being frightened that, with the free-thinking members on this side of the Chamber, the clause might be lost—

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It would be lost if they followed you.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If they followed me they would be on the right track. At least we would have a working committee to look after abattoirs and the marketing of meat. I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You oppose the Bill?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Dellar does not realise that we deal with a Bill in Committee clause by clause. When he has been here long enough he will know. I repeat that the Government should consider reducing the number proposed to be on the authority, rather than increasing it. I definitely oppose Miss Elliott's amendment, and I could never go along with the suggestion advanced by Mr Wordsworth.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Mr Lewis has put forward a rather novel suggestion. I would point out to him that we are dealing with an amendment to clause 8. The honourable member has enlightened us on why there are to be two producer representatives on the authority. I cannot understand the attitude of the Government. In times like these we should be doing everything possible to assist the industry, particularly when in so doing it does not cost a great deal of money to smooth out the rough areas.

This Government seems to have a vested interest in stirring up hornets' nests, rather than in following the moves that have been made in other parts of the world. Not one valid argument has been advanced by members opposite for opposing the amendment which will enable a consumers' representative to be appointed to the authority.

Miss Elliott has mentioned that the functions of this authority affect all sections of the meat industry. I am not opposed to any of the representatives set out in the Bill. I believe the shippers have a function to fulfil. Their function is transportation, and in any case I doubt

whether they would want to have a representative on the authority. The shippers will transport the meat when they want to.

We are now simply asking the Government to agree to an amendment to increase the membership of the authority by one, and so enable a consumers' representative to be appointed. I can see no reason for opposing this amendment.

Let me refer to the composition of the authority set out in the Bill. The clause provides that one shall be a representative of the interests of the wholesale and retail meat industry. I agree this representative has a perfect right to be on the authority.

The pastoralists and graziers are to have a representative, as is the Farmers' Union. The Minister has said, but not very convincingly, why he would not agree to a consumers' representative. I would like him to say positively, "We are opposed to a consumers' representative on the authority, and these are the reasons." The Minister has not yet given one valid reason to oppose the amendment.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He has said it was because of the provision in clause 16.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: I know what the Minister has said. I want him to repeat affirmatively, "We are opposed to a consumers' representative. We do not like such representatives on any authority. We have a vested interest to create as much strife, such as union bashing, as we can. We will not agree to a consumers' representative on the authority and to participatory democracy among the consumers." That is what the Government's attitude implies.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You are now playing politics.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: All the Minister has to say is that he agrees to the amendment; but by not agreeing to the appointment of a consumers' representative he is playing politics.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: What Mr DAns has said is rubbish. I shall not repeat all the arguments I have put forward. In the conclusion of his remarks Mr DAns drew a great number of inferences as to the Government's motives. Let me say quite clearly that he is really getting deeply into politics, and using this Bill as a means to peddle the sort of rubbish that he has been putting forward. It has no place in this debate or in the consideration of the Bill.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: I am talking about the amendment and not the Bill.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I have made the point quite emphatically in the Committee stage that the Government is not averse to the appointment of consumers' representatives on authorities. We have given

ample examples in our period of office that we are not opposed to consumer representation.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: On which page of the book is that stated?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: When the honourable member comes down to tin tacks and is able to understand this matter properly, I will be prepared to give credence to his remarks. I have said that our Government is concerned with having consumer representation, particularly in legislation dealing with agriculture and food.

The functions of the authority are spelt out in clause 16 of the Bill, and they make it clear that a consumers' representative has no place on the authority. There is no connection between the provisions of the Bill and the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the Opposition. I am sure he was delighted to have recorded his view on the attitude of the Government, but he knows perfectly well it is not correct at all.

Dealing with the remarks of Miss Elliott on the representative of the wholesalers and retailers, perhaps she does not know that they have a considerable interest in the operations, the techniques, and the designs of abattoirs, because usually abattoirs are associated with lairages. People who buy and sell stock are required to use them. Members of the Opposition are inquiring among themselves as to the meaning of the term "lairage".

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I know what it means. I am explaining it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Inasmuch as wholesalers and retailers have an interest in the establishment of ancillaries to abattoirs they should have representation on the authority. There is also something else with which wholesalers and retailers are concerned, apart from providing communication and liaison. They are, in fact, buyers through the abattoirs.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: And in turn the consumers are buyers from them.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: The wholesalers and retailers are concerned about the processes in abattoirs. I now refer to something which is of great importance in the construction of abattoirs; that is, cold storage facilities. Once again, the wholesalers and retailers have a special interest not only on their own behalf, but perhaps as part of the whole chain of events in providing the necessary communication and liaison between abattoirs, producers, and consumers.

I have no intention of contributing further to the Committee debate on the amendment. It is of little interest to me to know that members opposite are in favour of increasing the membership of the authority. I have remarked earlier that I favour a smaller rather than a larger authority. Mr Lewis has said that

he would like to see the membership of the authority reduced. At least the Government finds itself in the happy position of providing a compromise between what Mr Lewis desires and what the Opposition desires. That is why I think the membership of the authority should remain as set out in the Bill.

I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. **LYLA ELLIOTT**: The Minister is still implying that the authority is concerned only with abattoir construction. I do not want to keep on repeating the functions of the authority as set out in a later clause of the Bill.

The functions of the authority are to make recommendations on the provision and operation of public meat markets; to promote efficiency in the handling and transportation of animals and meat products; and to keep under review meat marketing, etc. Another function is to report to the Minister on any matter relating to the meat industry referred to the authority by the Minister, or on any matter that it considers necessary.

I cannot understand why the Minister keeps on saying there is no place on the authority for a consumer representative. Does the Minister support the appointment of a consumer representative on the Midland Junction Abattoir Board? Why is that so different from having a consumer representative on the proposed authority which will advise the Government on the meat industry generally?

In his second reading speech the Minister said that one function of the authority was to advise the Minister generally on the meat industry. He cannot blind us with science. Irrespective of whether or not we know the meaning of lairage, this is irrelevant to the question of a consumer representative being appointed to the authority, so that he will have a say on the future direction of the industry.

The Hon. **R. F. CLAUGHTON**: The comments of Mr Lewis started off as a comedy and ended up as a farce. During the course of his remarks he made what must be the quote of the week, "I am not interested. I am a free thinker." That is a fairly good indication of the general attitude of the Government. On this occasion we have experienced another example of what can be termed the Tresillian attitude.

The **DEPUTY CHAIRMAN** (the Hon. **R. J. L. Williams**): The honourable member should confine his remarks to clause 8.

The Hon. **R. F. CLAUGHTON**: You, Mr Deputy Chairman, will therefore have no complaints to make on my remarks, because they deal with the amendment to the clause. The fact is that the Government has said, "We have made up our minds and we do not intend to budge from our point of view, irrespective of the strength of your argument or of the merits of the case you have put forward."

There is no magic about the number "seven". Legislation which has come before this Chamber has provided for boards of all shapes and sizes. It has been argued from this side of the Chamber that a body which is to be responsible for the complete marketing of meat, from the producer to the consumer, should include a representative of the consumers. That representative would then be able to ensure that the interests of the consumers were taken into account, just as the representatives of the producers and the abattoirs will ensure that their interests are taken into account.

The Hon. **A. A. Lewis**: If the consumer is not happy the wholesale and retail butchers will not have a job, so they will not be represented on the authority.

The Hon. **R. F. CLAUGHTON**: The member opposite talks about nothing at all. He is a big gasbag of no account.

The Hon. **A. A. Lewis**: You are only a little one.

The Hon. **R. F. CLAUGHTON**: The Government has made up its mind. This is not a case of whether there is any value in our argument; the Government has the numbers and it will use those numbers brutally.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—8

Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. R. T. Leeson
Hon. D. K. Dana	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. R. F. Cloughton
	(Teller)

Noes—17

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. M. McAleer
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. H. W. Gayfer	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. A. A. Lewis
Hon. G. E. Masters	(Teller)

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs	Hon. V. J. Ferry

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 27 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

CRIMINAL INJURIES (COMPENSATION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. **I. G. Medcalf** (Attorney-General), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan—Attorney-General) [9.39 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill contains certain desirable proposals to amend the Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Act, 1970, which have resulted from consideration given to the 1975 report by the Law Reform Commission, following its review of the Act's present provisions.

It has been recognised that the existing legislation is inadequate in some respects, but at the same time it is doubtful whether legislation of this kind can ever afford the victim of crime full compensation for injury sustained, as would occur in a civil action for damages.

Currently, the Act provides for a \$2 000 limit on compensation which, as a result of the passage of time, must now be considered to be too low.

It was also felt that some provision should be made for those cases in which the person responsible for causing the injury was not brought to trial for some reason, or was acquitted on the ground of insanity.

The Bill is based substantially on the report and recommendations of the Law Reform Commission, and one of the most significant proposals is to increase the maximum amount which may be awarded from \$300 in the case of simple offences, and \$2 000 for indictable offences, to \$7 500. This is, as far as can be ascertained, the highest compensation pay-out figure of any State and, in these circumstances, because of the increased category of possible claimants, it has been found necessary to ensure that only one award of that amount may be made. This will apply irrespective of the number of individual offenders concerned in the commission of an offence against the victim, or irrespective of the number of offences committed against the same victim, whether by one or more persons, if the offences are related to one another. Common examples are assaults and rape, or assaults of varying degrees involving different participants, but taking place more or less simultaneously.

It is also proposed to extend compensation to certain other claimable areas apart from personal injury. These will include loss of earnings, damage to items of personal apparel, spectacles, artificial teeth, artificial limbs, and like appliances. Such losses must be occasioned by or arise directly from the injury.

Provision is made for the right by the estate of a victim of a crime who has died to claim compensation.

In this regard, an application may be made by the personal representative of a deceased person who dies as a result of

an unlawful act of another, in respect of loss incurred by persons who are related to the deceased. The category of relatives is the same as that provided for many years under the Fatal Accidents Act.

It is relevant to draw attention to one fundamental difference between the assessment of loss under this Bill, and the assessment of loss under the Fatal Accidents Act. Where a personal representative sues in civil proceedings under the Fatal Accidents Act, the damages which may be awarded are specifically not reducible by reason of any amounts payable under any contract of insurance, superannuation, provident or like fund or scheme, or by any social security type benefits. The Bill proposes the opposite, and the Under-Secretary for Law, when acting under section 7, will have to certify as to the value of such benefits; and the Treasurer's authority to pay will be limited to the difference between the sum ordered by the court, which in most fatal cases would be \$7 500, and the aggregate of all amounts recoverable by law from the offender and the insurance, superannuation and social security benefits.

Here again, the sum of \$7 500 is the maximum that may be awarded to all dependants, and the same rule applies; that only one award may be made where the victim's death was caused by multiple offenders, or was attributable to a number of distinct but related offences.

The court making the order to a personal representative is to direct the way it is apportioned amongst the eligible relatives of the deceased.

One problem involved in this apportioning should be mentioned. For example, the court might have found that the victim's wife suffered a loss of \$100 000 and each of his two children \$50 000. One would assume that the court would order \$3 750 to the widow and \$1 875 to each of the children. However, when it comes to the application being made, the Under-Secretary for Law is required to state what other amounts from any source the beneficiaries are entitled to, including, as I have mentioned, amounts in the nature of superannuation, insurance, etc.

It is more than likely that cases will arise where the widow, for example, is to receive \$50 000 from an insurance policy effected on the deceased's life. In the hypothetical example taken, that would exclude her from any entitlement payable by the Treasurer. What, then, is to be done about the children?

It has been decided that in these circumstances the Treasurer may increase the amount payable to the children but in such a way that the total amount paid does not, in the aggregate, exceed \$7 500. In the case quoted, the children would be paid \$3 750 each.

I now turn to the new provisions whereby it will be possible for a claim to be made, even though the person responsible for the injury or loss has not been brought to trial. The new provisions fall into two categories; namely, cases where the offender is acquitted on the grounds of insanity, and cases where he is never brought to trial.

At present, under the Act, a certificate may be granted by the court to the victim of an offence if a trial has taken place, the defendant acquitted, but the court satisfied that the victim suffered injury by reason of the actions of some other person. That does not create any entitlement where the accused is acquitted on grounds of insanity, and the Bill seeks to provide an entitlement in those circumstances.

Consideration was given as to whether, when a certificate is granted on the acquittal of a person on the grounds of insanity, the insane person ought to be ordered to pay the amount to the victim as in the case of a convicted person. It was finally decided not to so provide, because it would create serious anomalies when the cases of the unascertained offender, or the offender who is not tried at all because he is unfit mentally to plead, are taken into account.

Then there are the cases where the offender is never brought to trial. There may be a variety of reasons that a person is not brought to trial and tried for a criminal offence which caused injury or death. The most common would be—

where the offender has not been ascertained;

where the identity is ascertained, but he cannot be found;

where the offender has been identified and apprehended, but is either found to be insane on a pre-trial examination in custody, or is put to trial but the jury, as a preliminary issue, finds him unfit to plead on the grounds of his insanity;

or because the victim does not co-operate with the police and thus insufficient admissible evidence is available to put the offender on trial.

In such circumstances as the latter, no application should succeed for payment from Crown sources, and the Bill provides accordingly. In all other cases the application will be made to a judge of the District Court, and if the court is satisfied that a person did suffer injury or has died as a result of the commission of an offence, it may grant a certificate on the same principles as if the offender had been convicted.

Members will notice that the Bill provides that, except where the offender is known to be dead, no claim shall be made in situations where no-one has been brought to trial until the expiration of 12

months from the time of offence. This is to give the Crown a reasonable opportunity to apprehend the offender and bring him to trial.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the Treasurer's absolute discretion to decide whether or not to make any payment at all has been retained. Because the maximum amount of \$7 500 will now apply to simple offences as well as indictable offences, whereas previously compensation in simple offences was limited to \$300, the Bill provides that the Treasurer can vary an amount if the original order was made by a court of summary jurisdiction, but not if it has been made by the Supreme Court or the District Court. The only exception to the latter is the Treasurer's authority to increase the amount in the circumstances mentioned earlier where a number of dependants are entitled to the benefit of the order but the proportions have gone awry because one or more of them, but not all of them, has or will receive payments from other sources.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. Grace Vaughan.

BETTING CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [9.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is to enable bookmakers to operate at greyhound meetings conducted in Western Australia under licence issued under the Greyhound Racing Control Act, 1972.

It also makes provision for the Totalisator Agency Board members to be relieved of the responsibility of administering the Betting Control Act, and for the administrative functions to be carried out by a Betting Control Board.

When the Betting Control Act of 1954 was first brought into operation, it was administered by a body known as the Betting Control Board, consisting of five persons: One member representing racing nominated by the Western Australian Turf Club, one member representing trotting nominated by the Western Australian Trotting Association, and three other members, including one member to occupy the office of chairman of the board, being chosen by the Governor.

The Betting Control Board carried out all functions in respect of the licensing and control of off-course and on-course bookmakers, until the Totalisator Agency

Board was established in accordance with the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act, 1960.

In view of the constitution of the Totalisator Agency Board at the time, and its pending involvement in the replacement of the 206 licensed premises betting shops then in operation with an off-course totalisator agency system, it was deemed appropriate that the Totalisator Agency Board carry out the functions previously exercised by the Betting Control Board, and legislation was amended accordingly.

The Totalisator Agency Board has administered the Betting Control Act since the 13th December, 1960, and in the ensuing years virtually fulfilled its charter to replace premises bookmakers with totalisator agencies.

At present the Totalisator Agency Board's main involvement with the Betting Control Act lies in the licensing of on-course bookmakers, the hearing of betting disputes between bookmakers and on-course punters, and the disciplining of bookmakers when necessary.

None of these functions is related to, or compatible with, the operations of the off-course totalisator system. Therefore it is preferable that the licensing and control of bookmakers be placed in the hands of a Betting Control Board, constituted along lines similar to the original board of 1954.

The introduction of bookmakers for greyhound racing makes it advisable that the interests of greyhound racing is represented on the body that is to be responsible for the licensing and control of their bookmakers. This Bill makes provision for the Betting Control Board to be reconstituted, giving the Greyhound Racing Control Board equal representation to that enjoyed by racing and trotting interests.

The appointment of the Chairman and General Manager of the Totalisator Agency Board as *ex officio* members of the new Betting Control Board will ensure continuity of the Government's interests in the matter, and the appointments of the racing, trotting, and greyhound representatives will ensure the protection of their respective interests.

The Totalisator Agency Board itself, whilst not continuing to license and control bookmakers, will provide a secretary, office, and other facilities as a matter of administrative convenience, to enable the Betting Control Board to carry out its functions and to keep down costs.

The parent bodies of racing and trotting in this State, mainly for the purposes of control and the zoning of bookmakers, have always licensed bookmakers to operate at either racing meetings, or trotting meetings, but not at both types of meetings.

This system has worked well in this State for more than 20 years. It has provided effective control where it was

needed, and it has allowed zoning to operate for the benefit of clubs, the public, and bookmakers.

This Bill allows the same provisions which have worked so well for racing and trotting to apply to greyhound controlling bodies, their public, and the bookmakers who are to be licensed to operate at their meetings.

Whilst generally bookmakers at race meetings for galloping horses have been permitted to bet only on races for galloping horses, and bookmakers at trotting meetings have been permitted to bet only on races for trotting horses, there have been some occasions in the past where trotting bookmakers operating at country daylight trotting meetings have been given permission to bet on galloping races held on the same day at some other racecourse.

The Government recognises the occasion could well arise at some future time when it could be to the advantage of a club and its patrons if its bookmakers for a particular meeting were permitted to operate on some form of racing other than that being conducted on its racecourse that day.

The Bill makes provision for the board, if it is satisfied that special circumstances exist, to authorise a club to permit its bookmakers at a meeting to be held by the club, whether a racing club, a trotting club, or a greyhound club, to bet on another form of racing other than that to be conducted on its racecourse.

The view has been expressed by a number of people that greyhound racing will not prosper in this State under existing conditions, and it is considered that to allow some bookmakers to operate at greyhound meetings will assist in relieving that situation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. S. J. Dellar.

PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) {9.55 p.m.}: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

At present, under the Painters' Registration Act, contractors who carry out abrasive and mechanical cleaning of steel, followed by painting with protective paint, are not subject to the provisions of the Act while the steel is only a component of a building and is being processed in a factory yard. However, once the contractor

treats steel which has been incorporated in a building, it can be argued that the Act applies.

This makes for a ridiculous situation, as by far the greater tonnage of steel used in building is protective coated before it is placed in the structure.

It is relevant also that firms engaged in the industry are principally carrying out work to strict specifications for large organisations that have the technical back-up and inspection facilities which render the protection afforded to consumers by the Painters' Registration Act superfluous.

It is not intended that painters who clean the exterior of dwellings prior to applications of a protective coat of paint will be exempt.

A similar situation exists in regard to signwriters. These specialists rarely, if ever, carry out contracts for ordinary citizens. Their work is principally for companies or businessmen who do not, in normal circumstances, require the protection of consumer-oriented legislation such as the Painters' Registration Act.

It is also a fact that at present it is not clear whether signwriting comes within the ambit of the Act, and it is proposed to remove this grey area to enable administration procedures to be streamlined.

The Bill now before members is to amend the Painters' Registration Act to place beyond doubt that two categories of painting are exempt from the provisions of the Act; namely, protective coating of steel or other material which does not form part of a dwelling, and signwriting.

The proposed exemptions are supported by the respective trades associations and the Painters' Registration Board.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. S. J. Dellar.

TRANSPORT COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [9.58 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

It is proposed in this Bill to provide amending legislation to three separate areas of the Transport Commission Act, one of which, concerning the submission of evidence by way of affidavit, has already been foreshadowed in the introduction of similar legislation recently to

amend the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, and the Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act.

The first proposal seeks an amendment to section 47 of the principal Act to provide authority for the Commissioner of Transport to attach such other conditions as he thinks fit to impose, in the public interest, when granting a licence in respect of an aircraft.

At present the Act provides such authority for the Commissioner in respect of the licensing of omnibuses and commercial goods vehicles only.

However, in the case of the licensing of aircraft, the Commissioner may make conditions relating only to the aircraft operation, the routes and the area, specified timetables, specified fares and safety features, and the keeping of records and statistics to be supplied to the Commissioner.

It is unusual that there is no opportunity for the commissioner to consider public interest in a manner similar to the other two classifications of vehicles, and it would seem appropriate that, in the light of the involvement in the provision of air services in Western Australia, and the limitations imposed upon the Federal authorities in relation to the licensing of regular passenger services, we should provide the same authority under the Transport Commission Act, in the public interest, as is already applicable to omnibuses or commercial goods vehicles.

In regard to section 49 of the Act, the present provisions specifically relate to the responsibility of the driver of a vehicle when defining the powers under which authorised officers are able to ascertain whether the Act or regulations are being contravened.

However, in no way does the Act require the owner of a vehicle, or other persons involved in the use or operation of the vehicle, to provide information.

This, in itself, places an unreasonable onus on the driver if he is an employee of the owner, and it has become more noticeable in recent years that owners or other persons involved in the operation of commercial goods vehicles have hidden behind this obvious weakness in enforcement. The purpose of the amendment is to place the onus on the owner in a similar manner to that which already applies to the driver.

Presently a condition of some goods vehicle licences requires the production of documents such as manifests. It is proposed to clarify the responsibility in relation to the production of such documents, and ensure that they are available for scrutiny by an authorised officer. It has been found desirable in some instances to determine the format of these documents and the Bill will give the authority necessary to make regulations to cover this aspect.

The commissioner is frequently required to pursue investigations in relation to the payment or non-payment of appropriate fees. The Act now provides that on conviction the court may order the convicted person to pay to the commissioner licence fees which should have been, and were not, paid. Up until now these investigations have been well nigh impossible in certain cases because of the lack of authority in the Act for the commissioner to obtain certain information. The amendment will remove this difficulty.

As mentioned in my opening remarks, the Bill also provides similar measures to those already considered by this House on other legislation relating to the submission of evidence by way of affidavit in the case of uncontested prosecutions, and also that where the accused has previous convictions, a statement of those convictions should be prepared and served with the summons.

The amendments to section 56A are designed to ensure that adequate time is provided for the making of the necessary administrative arrangements for court hearings.

In practical terms, it has been found that the period of seven days allowed for the defendant to return a notice of election prior to the date of a court hearing of a complaint is barely adequate to enable planning for transport commission officers to be available to attend court where this is necessary. The amendment provides for this period to be increased to 21 days.

Similarly, at the present time the Act requires that a complaint must be served on the defendant at least 14 days before the date of hearing. This has been found to be insufficient in practice, and it is proposed that the term be extended to 28 days.

The amendment to section 56B will ensure that the court does not gain knowledge of prior convictions before a conviction, and will therefore provide a degree of protection to persons charged with an offence under the Act. I commend the Bill to the House.

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

ACTS AMENDMENT (JURISDICTION OF COURTS) BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

IRRIGATION (DUNHAM RIVER) AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [10.05 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Under the provisions of the Irrigation (Dunham River) Agreement Act, 1968, Goddard of Australia Pty. Ltd. undertook to develop a pilot area containing some 4 046 hectares (10 000 acres) adjacent to the Dunham River in the North Kimberley with a view to ascertaining whether it was both practical and economically sound to develop holdings of approximately 404 hectares for agricultural purposes.

In addition, and for the purpose of irrigating the holdings, the company also undertook to construct a dam on Arthur Creek, a tributary of the Dunham River, and provide a distribution system capable of conveying an adequate supply of water to the 10 farms into which the pilot area was sub-divided.

The original concept was to provide an irrigation scheme for the fattening of livestock on irrigated pastures and crops, for growing of grain sorghum and other crops, and for establishing closer settlement holdings.

The scheme provided for two phases in its operation, the first being the development of the pilot area previously mentioned, while the second phase envisaged the development of some 13 750 hectares to be sub-divided into 34 holdings, to be irrigated by a major dam to be constructed on the Dunham River.

In fulfilment of its obligations under the agreement, the Company has expended considerable moneys, constructed the Arthur Creek dam and distribution system, and satisfactorily developed seven of the 10 pilot farms. The remaining three farms cannot be developed for irrigation, as experience since the inception of the scheme has shown that the catchment area of Arthur Creek is incapable of providing sufficient water to supply the dam with the quantity of water needed to irrigate all 10 farms.

Because the insufficiency of water supply, in effect, means that the pilot area cannot be developed in total for irrigation purposes, the company now seeks to halt further development, finalise the pilot phase, and relinquish any rights it may have under the agreement to develop the larger area as proposed by phase 2.

Embodied in the company's request, and requiring consideration, are such matters as the sale of the farms which have been successfully developed and irrigated, utilisation and development of the three farms for which water is not available, and control and management of these three farms, the Arthur Creek dam and drainage channels.

Following receipt of the company's request, the matter was examined in detail by an inter-departmental committee under the chairmanship of Mr R. A. Hamilton, Director, Office of the North West, and comprising members of the Public Works, Agriculture, Crown Law, and Lands and Surveys Departments. This committee, having regard to the present economic situation, and in the knowledge that there is insufficient water to irrigate all 10 farms, has adopted a realistic attitude, and has made a series of recommendations which it suggests should form the basis for varying the existing agreement.

These recommendations are reflected in the executed agreement, as set out in the schedule to the Bill, and may be broadly summarised as follows—

Authority for the sale by Goddard of Australia Pty. Ltd. of five of the 10 farms, for which Crown grants have previously issued. (Farms 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6);

provision for the amendment of the boundaries of farm No. 8;

provision for the issue of Crown grants for farms 7 and 8;

provision for the retention, for the time being, by Goddard of Australia Pty. Ltd. of farms 7 and 8 but with the right to lease for any term not exceeding three years;

provision for the surrender to the Crown of existing leases over farms 2, 9 and 10, with the intent that alternative leases be issued enabling the land to be utilised solely for dry land holding areas for stock;

consideration of acceptance of responsibility for the control and management of Arthur Creek dam, the drainage channels, the water distribution system and farms 2, 9 and 10 being passed to Arthur Creek Irrigation Company Pty. Ltd., the shareholders of which would comprise the respective registered proprietors for the time being of farms 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8;

consideration of assignment by Goddard of Australia Pty. Ltd. of a significant part of the agreement to Arthur Creek Irrigation Company Pty. Ltd.;

recognition of the fact that phase 2 development will not proceed.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. F. Cloughton.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

CHILD WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 21st September.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [10.10 p.m.]: This amending Bill to the Child Welfare Act contains 137 clauses and some amendments to the schedules. The main points of the Bill are the children's (suspended action) panel, of which I will speak a little later, the apprehension of children in danger, misbehaving or playing truant, drug offences, the imprisonment of children, the role of parents, the age of criminal responsibility, and so on.

At the outset I should like to give full praise to the Department for Community Welfare and its officers for the work they have done over a number of years in bringing this legislation to fruition. Actually it was ready for introduction in the Parliament during 1973. We ran into difficulties towards the end of October before full clearance from the various departments was given so that the legislation could be drafted. Because of the legislative pressure Cabinet in its wisdom deferred the legislation until such time as a draftsman could be made available. It was impossible to have it drafted and with hindsight it is possibly just as well that it was not proceeded with at that stage, although I think three years is rather a long time for the department to have to wait for the legislation. Admittedly the Bill was not printed at that stage, but even now there are mistakes in the Bill which has been presented to us. It is not surprising that this is so when we consider the magnitude of the amendments to the principal Act.

I said that I should like to commend the officers of the Department for Community Welfare, particularly Mr Keith Maine, the Director, and Mr Gorton, who has worked tirelessly on this Bill over a number of years. He has studied similar legislation around the world and has compiled amendments to the parent Act which would be the equal of any legislation in the world.

I know that when the contents of our proposed legislation were made known at ministerial conferences, the other States were most eager to get draft copies of it, and these were supplied. It was realised that the officers in the Western Australian department were on to something of a progressive nature which would be of benefit to Australia.

While on my recent overseas study tour I obtained a copy of the legislation operating in Vancouver and the legislation operating in Norway and I indicated some of the provisions which would be in our new legislation. As soon as the Act is

reprinted I will forward copies of it to those places at their request. This will give an interchange of ideas. They have been most helpful to me and the literature and reports I have received from them will be passed on to the department.

This is not a political Bill and should not ever be considered as one. It is a departmental Bill and the departmental officers should be given full credit for it. There was a misunderstanding between the Crown Law Department and the Education Department and queries were raised by the Health Department and in several other areas. I know that even before I submitted the draft to Cabinet the Law Society made observations as to the meaning of some of its clauses. The society replied to me on the 20th August, 1973, I think it was. All the opinions were taken into consideration and possibly during the reign of Mr Baxter, the current Minister, further representations were made, followed by a further updating of the legislation.

The Act has stood the test of time. I am not saying it is perfect, because objections have been raised about it by some departments. For instance, the age of criminal responsibility is an aspect which I feel should have been dealt with a little more leniently. However, in dealings with the Crown Law Department, a department such as the Department for Community Welfare does not have a great deal of success. I am not saying that interest is not shown, because it is. However, the interests of the Crown Law Department become paramount rather than those of the welfare agency charged with the responsibility of the care and rehabilitation of children.

The Minister is possibly as disappointed as I am in regard to the age of criminal responsibility. In other countries the age is 16 or 18 years, and very few countries are at the low level applicable in this country. However, that is not a criticism of the Bill, but rather a criticism of the thinking of some of the other departments. Whether it be Mr Baxter, myself, or anyone else, in order to get legislation through a Minister must, at some time or another, bow down and compromise, thus ending up with legislation such as that which we are discussing.

Objections were raised about the children's (suspended action) panel courts. I have sat on those courts and the personnel who comprise them were experienced and the results they achieved speak for themselves. In the years of operation something like 80 per cent of those young offenders who went before the panel courts were never seen again either before the panel courts or any other court. A friendly atmosphere prevailed and at least one of the parents was always present. The offenders were not growled at, but merely asked to explain their actions, whether the crime was committed intentionally and whether

others were involved. The offenders were also asked whether they would commit the offence again.

On many occasions, and quite rightly, parents were given a severe talking to because in most cases it was not the children at fault, but the parents because they were not giving adequate supervision in the home, and left their children unattended for too long a period during the day or night. As we all know, idle hands make mischief.

Another good aspect of the Bill is that it does not take all the responsibility away from the parents. Whereas previously the court made an offender a ward of the State, now the attitude is more tolerant and more responsibility is placed on the parents. This is a good thing.

In this day and age I feel that most of the blame for children who are arraigned before the panel or the court should be levelled where it belongs; that is, on the parents who, by frequenting the hotels, race meetings, and other forms of entertainment, neglect their children.

Many people think that the children who are arraigned before the court come from working class families. In fact that is not the case, and records are available to indicate where the offences are committed, and where the problem areas are found. They include many of the good suburbs.

At any Community Welfare office one can see at a glance from the master board the case loads. One can easily ascertain whether the cases relate to foster care, offences, wardship, etc. These cases are documented carefully.

The responsibility of the parents is to look after the child. By placing more responsibility on the parents, some of the burden will be taken off the director. The parents will be involved to such a degree that the director will be able to discharge his duties by making parents play the game, before taking drastic steps to place the children under foster care or under full wardship.

I think this legislation should be supported. As I have mentioned, I recently returned from an overseas tour. I came back convinced that we in Western Australia have nothing to learn about child welfare from the countries I visited, not because the policies adopted in those countries are not good but because of the fragmentation that is evident.

In the overseas countries there could be a state, a city, and a regional welfare agency within a radius of 20 miles, with the work being duplicated. This is applicable in England, Canada, and Norway; and the same system seems to be adopted in those three countries. The Ministers

and directors of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany meet quite regularly; and virtually the same system operates in the Scandinavian countries.

I think in Western Australia we have the right idea. We have one agency controlling the welfare work at the Government level with Government finance. We should be very proud of that.

I can sympathise with the Minister, because I know the tribulations he has to go through when the State Budget is drawn up. It is in the direction of child welfare that the State has been miserly with funds. Irrespective of the political colour of the Government in office the money allocated to the Community Welfare Department for the carrying on of its programme has been inadequate.

If Government expenditure is to be reduced, the officers of the Treasury seem to pick on the Community Welfare Department. Possibly there is a reason for that. I think the Treasury claims that this is a nonproductive area. It may be as far as revenue is concerned, but it is very productive in dealing with human beings, particularly the young ones that need much care. I trust that in future the Treasurer and the Treasury officials will look more favourably at the programmes put forward by the Community Welfare Department.

It is a department which has been starved of funds for a number of years. It has been in operation in its present form since 1971, but it really got off the ground in 1972. Since then it has made tremendous progress. This has been achieved only through the dedication of its officers, and that dedication is illustrated by the excellent legislation that is before us.

I commend the Bill. I could go on dealing with it clause by clause, but I cannot see any good reason for so doing when I support it. I still think there are a few machinery amendments to be made, but I would not like to see the passage of the Bill delayed, just to see whether I am right or wrong.

In several of the provisions I see difficulties arising from the wording, but I am not saying the basis of the drafting is wrong. I have picked out several provisions which may have to be redrafted. However, trial and error is the name of the game when we deal with legislation of this nature. I am not being critical, but I would have liked to see the whole Act repealed and re-enacted, rather than to have amendments in bits and pieces, because the Bill before us is largely a re-writing of the Act.

I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

THE HON. R. J. L. WILLIAMS (Metropolitan) [10.30 p.m.]: The hour is late but under no circumstances would I let this Bill pass without associating myself with both the Minister and the previous speaker. I think perhaps this is a milestone in legislation for child care and welfare in this State. Four names come to mind when I look at this Bill. They are the names of colleagues of members of this House, and I refer to the Hon. Les Logan, the Hon. Bill Willesee, the Hon. Ron Thompson, and the Hon. Norm Baxter. Those members have been associated with child welfare over many years and have continually requested amendments to the Act.

As the previous speaker said, one should also mention the officers of the department and, in particular, Mr Peter Gorton who has spent almost the whole of his working life in attempting to improve the Act.

The provisions contained in the Bill before us are very good, but they still have to be proved. I am very pleased with several aspects of the Bill. The begetting of a child is a pleasurable experience, but the responsibility which goes with that child is not always appreciated by the parents. The child sometimes becomes a nuisance, becomes neglected, and becomes distressed. I am particularly pleased to see that under the provisions of the Bill it will be possible for a child to be taken into care where the parents, or a parent, are declared to be habitual alcoholics, or drug dependants. Some of the accidents which occur to poor little mites in arms when their parents are so affected have to be seen to be believed. One of the latest examples reported to me happened in the United States where a young girl of 19 years, while on an LSD trip, put her three-month-old baby in an oven and roasted it. Many people affected by alcohol and drugs do not go to that extreme, but even so they become affected to the extent where they no longer have control of themselves, and their children are then placed in great jeopardy. So great is that jeopardy that Bills such as the one now before us have to be introduced. It is a sad reflection on society that we should find it necessary to introduce this type of Bill.

One should sometimes look back into history and take an example from it. I am sure the Bill we are discussing tonight will be hailed as the equivalent of one of Shaftsbury's Bills introduced in the House of Commons during the 19th century. During the 18th century, Defoe and others wrote—

Scarce anything of five, but, if its parents do not mismanage, it can earn its bread.

The creatures were set to work as soon as they can crawl.

Those references were to Defoe's contemporary England. The abuse of the Elizabethan law in the 1600s allowed batches of young children to be sent to work under virtual slavery in textile mills. It is extraordinary, when one reads back through history, to learn the number of hours children were limited to work. They were limited to working 67 and 76 hours a week in the textile trades. Quite often, those children were eight, nine, or 10 years of age and they dropped into that so-called new-fangled machinery and were injured, maimed, mangled or killed. The attitude of the parents was that every mouth had to be filled, and every pair of hands was an earner.

I think that Western Australia and, indeed, Australia can think itself lucky that the social deprivations which have existed in other parts of the world never really hit Australia because of the shortness of our history.

Australians talk about the great depression of the 1930s, and the poverty and the hardships which occurred then. However, that fate was shared by the rest of the world. Out of that miserable experience in other parts of the world, and especially in the United Kingdom, came an Act something similar to the one now before us. In 1933 the Child and Young Persons Act was introduced. That was the first advance made ever, of any note, towards the protection of children. One can go back to Kingsley and Dickens who wrote about the conditions under which apprentices and young children had to work.

Under the provisions of this Bill there will be no further exploitation of children, although the labour laws in this State have been sufficiently strict to prevent exploitation for a number of years. I was pleased to read in the Minister's second reading speech that first and foremost was the welfare and interests of children, but at the same time the Bill sought to give appropriate regard to the responsibility of parents.

Most of our social misunderstandings, and most of our social malaise in this day and age are the result of parents who, quite frankly, could not care less about their offspring. They find their children to be an embarrassment and an impediment, and they want very little to do with them. One has only to inspect certain institutions in the City of Perth to see the fate of some of those poor little children. One has only to walk through the Princess Margaret Hospital and look at the selection of photographs, and even the occupants of some of the beds who are suffering from the battered baby syndrome. I think the ills of society today are the result of selfishness and greed on the part of the parents, and it is not confined to any particular socioeconomic group. It exists right through the community.

I am pleased to note the approach of the department is that it will no longer be labelled as a dictator as far as children are concerned. In the past that has been the case, sometimes fairly but in the main, unfairly. In the future the department will seek the co-operation of the parents, and it will do its best to not rehabilitate just the child, but also rehabilitate the parents.

Training is available for many occupations, professions, and trades. However, one of the hazards of being a parent is that there is no training available other than by example. We have had the example in recent years of people writing books on how to bring up children. One writer of notoriety, who made a considerable sum of money writing such books, was Dr Spock. In recent years he has had to recast everything he said about bringing up children. Unfortunately, thousands or millions of parents throughout the world swallowed what Dr Spock had to say and as a result they have children on their hands whom they cannot control.

Dr Spock's theories were the greatest lot of bunkum ever foisted on the people of this world. However, he did have the courage to retract what he had said. He said, that as a result of further research, what he had previously said was quite wrong.

It is pleasing to note that the department will assist the parents as well as the children. The director will not become the "parent", because if that occurred it is quite obvious many parents would claim that they had no responsibility in the matter of looking after their children because the director had been appointed the guardian and, as a result, they should not have to worry. A parent might say, "Where I fail the Government will take care of it", or alternatively, "What is the Government going to do about it?" The Government is doing something about it in this Bill.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: So I heard.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I am sorry if I am taking too long but I want to go through the Bill.

The provision enabling a panel to treat juvenile offenders whose parents are not in court is pleasing because it means where a serious crime is committed the full weight of the law will be brought to bear and the decision of the law will be upheld in any court.

Do not let us think of all children as being little angels; that is far from the truth. There is no age barrier to those who want to commit criminal offences. From time to time society becomes outraged at the age of some of the offenders who are apprehended by the police. At the same time, the day has now passed when the policeman's boot or belt landed fairly and squarely on a child's backside and the

threat was muttered, "If you don't behave yourself I will inform your parents." That was a form of chastisement. It is illegal today. No doubt custodians of the law sometimes feel like doing it and in some cases I would support their doing it, but it is illegal.

We now have the situation where naughtiness as such becomes a crime. Some of the childish pranks and activities which I indulged in—as I am sure you did, Mr President, and other members did from time to time—have now become a matter of law, and no matter how trivial they are kept on record and in the years to come when the offender perhaps applies for a job it is noted he was once convicted for larceny at the age of 13, 14, or 15, having been charged under a section of the Criminal Code for simple larceny. I was guilty of simple larceny a thousand times as a child. It was a great temptation when passing an orchard and seeing the fruit on the tree to help oneself to a couple and nip off. If some members do not approve of that and did not do it themselves, I am sure they must have headaches because their haloes are so tight. I was one of those children.

I am glad to know that kind of offence will now be expunged from the record of juveniles. The provision will apply to young drug offenders, the number of whom is increasing in this city. When I say "drug offenders", I mean those who take drugs. As we know, drug-taking is very prevalent today among the youth in this State. Many of them do it for experimentation purposes. They are caught, and before they go much further they should be treated. Under the existing law, if they are caught they must be prosecuted. If they are prosecuted the prosecution is recorded, and here again something a person did as a juvenile, and perhaps only once in his life, taints his record not just for a matter of a few years but for many years to come.

In speaking in that vein I am not referring to the traffickers. I give a solemn warning to members of the House that when trafficking in drugs becomes a more serious offence in this State—ere long, I suspect—worldwide example will tell us that our younger people will become more and more involved in trafficking in amounts which will not actually lead to their indictment as traffickers. This is the world pattern. I warn members very seriously that this year we can expect a further rise in the statistics of those caught for using drugs. I warn members that in two or three years' time the incidence of trafficking by juveniles will increase, despite the penalties for trafficking. Nevertheless, it is pleasing to see that those who have committed a simple mistake—perhaps on a dare or because they wanted to keep up with their peer group—will no longer be tainted for the rest of their lives.

May I mention that although the law sometimes apprehends these drug offenders—that is, the drug-takers—not every case comes to court. The Department for Community Welfare has on its staff an able person who can advise juvenile drug offenders, and the Alcohol and Drug Authority is always willing to listen without any question of prosecution. I am letting out no secrets when I say the Police Force is extremely reluctant to prosecute juvenile offenders. The offenders are often taken to a panel, and in 98 per cent of the cases they forget they were ever associated with any form of drug abuse.

In the Children's Court, when a child is brought before a children's magistrate—one of whom I knew personally and who was an extremely humane and kind man—too often the parents are not present. What an indictment of a parent! Some of the excuses given for not being present are valid but some of them are so weak and pathetic that one might say, as previous speakers have said in this House, "God help us, it is not the children but the parents who are the offenders." I have no doubt that any member of this House whose child had the misfortune to have to appear at the Children's Court would be sitting in the court while his child was charged. Under this Bill the court will ensure the parent is present, no matter what.

I heard one parent say one day, "I will not go to court with my kid. Why should I lose a shift? After all, it was the kid who committed the offence." What kind of legislation can we possibly make for people who think like that? I welcome the fact that under the Bill the parents will be made to attend.

I also notice that in the future due note will be taken of the punishment already meted out by the parent for the offence. These days most parents are extremely indulgent, and the word "punishment" needs to be defined. It does not mean smashing a child to pulp because he has committed an offence; nor does it mean locking him in a dark cupboard or forbidding him to do this or that. In point of fact, the punishment meted out at the time is far more effective than the punishment meted out by a court, sometimes three or four months later.

Not many Bills come into this place about which one can say it is a pleasure to see them here. Certainly I am aware of the long hours that have gone into the preparation of this measure by draftsmen, officers of the department concerned, Ministers, and workers in voluntary situations who help with these children. Hundreds of people in this State gladly give homes to those who need them; those who are slightly emotionally upset. Also, a number of institutions care for these children.

I do not know the overall figure, but I believe the number of children not with their original parents for other causes than the demise of their parents is a sad and shocking reflection on our society today. It does one's heart good to know that there are people who care, and in caring try to repair and not dictate. Many Government departments are accused of dictating, and I must say that the child welfare section of the Department for Community Welfare deserves the commendation of this House. Not only the institutions it manages directly but also the institutions it keeps under consideration also deserve the commendation of this House. The attitude of some parents within this State deserves the condemnation of this House because of the necessity for the existence of these institutions.

It gives me great pleasure to support the second reading of the Bill.

THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN (South-East Metropolitan) [10.52 p.m.]: I want to add a few words to the remarks made by the previous speaker in congratulating the Government and the department in presenting what is quite an outstanding measure. It validates a number of practices which have proved to be very effective, and I refer particularly to the panel system.

We should not express support for this Bill without commenting on the efforts made over the years by a departmental officer, Mr Dan Fogarty, and also by Gwyn Hitchin, who unfortunately passed away a few days ago. Both these officers were instrumental in ensuring that the panel would work.

In the days before computers, Dan Fogarty worked very hard to convince all concerned that the panels were really working. He painstakingly compiled many statistics to prove his point.

A great step forward is the provision that the director will have the right to take a child under control rather than have the child committed to the care of the department. I know for quite a long time the officers of the department have been hoping that such a provision would become law. Making a child a ward of the State often reduces the motivation of the parents to be interested in the child, so for the director to be able to take control of the child for a period as he sees fit is an important step forward.

Another significant provision in the same vein is that a child will be able to expunge a conviction by serving a period of probation and showing that he or she will not offend again. Then the future career of such a child will not be affected by a conviction.

The subject of tattooing is one that has worried officers concerned with the welfare of children for a long time. It was quite a habit amongst children to have their

loved ones' name tattooed on their arm. Sometimes children would have tattooed, "I love so-and-so", or "I hate so-and-so". Later on when the child becomes conscious of his or her appearance, he or she very much regrets having had the tattooing done. It is then a quite painful and expensive matter to have the tattoo removed. So the measure now makes it an offence to be concerned with the tattooing of a child.

Many features of the Bill have been covered by other speakers. One provision I found extremely important was that concerning child abuse. It will now be possible to detain a child for 48 hours in a hospital without any fear of the parents taking legal proceedings against the department.

In closing I would like to comment on something which could have been misconstrued from the remarks of the Hon. Ron Thompson and the Hon John Williams in regard to parents. I want to say a word for parents. The nuclear family in our modern society receives very little support from anyone. Quite often relatives are in other parts of the nation or other parts of the world. It is up to us, as members of society, to support parents and to give more in the way of service and encouragement. More and more responsibilities are falling onto Mum and Dad, rather than the whole of the family, including grandparents and aunts and uncles. I know that the Department for Community Welfare does the best it can and often members of Parliament are able to fill the bill in this regard. However, it is very easy to blame the parents whereas quite often we need to blame the system.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Community Welfare) [10.57 p.m.]: I would like firstly to thank the Hon. Ron Thompson for his contribution to the debate and for his support of the Bill. Of course, the honourable member had a great deal to do with the preparation of the brief for this measure in 1973. The drawing up of the brief that would eventually go to the Parliamentary Draftsman took a very long time.

When I first saw the brief it rather frightened me; it was so large and looked so complicated. I thought that some hours of work would need to be spent on this measure, and that was certainly the case. I spent hours poring over the amendments because although there are 138 amending provisions in the Bill, the Bill itself is almost as thick as the parent Act which contains 149 sections. It was not so much the number of amendments but rather their complexity and their application to the principal Act.

When the measure is passed, the Act will have to be consolidated to avoid causing difficulties to the people who operate under it. It will not be easy to piece the many amendments into the principal Act.

I join Mr Thompson, Mr Williams, and Mrs Vaughan in expressing my thanks to the officers of the department who were responsible for drawing up the brief for the Bill. This work took not days or weeks, but months. A great many documents and legislation from other States and other parts of the world were studied in an endeavour to compile child welfare legislation that was workable, that would make allowances, and that would look after the interests of the children. Also, we must endeavour to see that the legislation creates no hardships for the parents or the children.

For many years the department has been accused of being a child snatcher. Sometimes when it has been decided that a child under the control of the director should not go back to its father or mother the officers of the department have been accused of being very hard. However, usually such a decision is made for the simple reason that neither father nor mother is capable of looking after the child.

On the other hand, there are occasions when children are fostered out and efforts are made to keep the family intact as far as possible by giving the child and the parents access to each other from time to time so that they continue to know one another. When the time comes that the child can be returned to the parent or parents, as Mr Ron Thompson would well know, it gives the Minister a great deal of pleasure to sign the simple papers to bring the family together again, because it makes him feel the department is getting somewhere and that it has helped to make a family intact once again, and has contributed to its future well-being and happiness.

I express my appreciation to those who have supported the Bill. It has taken a long time to bring this Bill to the Parliament; it is now over three years. It has also taken a great deal of work on the part of many departments. Mr Thompson outlined the departments concerned, and they include Crown Law, Police, Health, and Education, and also the Law Society. Some of the departments raised objections to certain proposals, and out of all this the Bill was put together. I would include also the group of people who scrutinised the Bill, and here I would pay compliment to the Attorney-General who played a part in studying the Bill and assisting to a great degree in some of the later amendments to make this a good piece of legislation.

It gives me a great deal of pride and pleasure to present this Bill to the House. I do not take all the credit, although I did do some of the work and spent long hours vetting it. I am sure when the Bill is incorporated in the Act we will have an excellent Child Welfare Act which is second to none in the world.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) in the Chair; the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Community Welfare) in charge of the Bill.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: In accordance with Standing Order 253, if the Committee wishes to take this Bill as a whole it is necessary for the Minister to move a motion. I ask him to so move.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I move—

That leave be granted to take this Bill as a whole.

I have in front of me a file containing a great deal of explanation of each clause for use in the Committee stage, but it will not now be used. It will be filed in the department as a record of the Bill. I put in a lot of work at home on this file to get it ready, and my office stenographer also put in a great deal of work on it.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is that the Bill stand as printed.

Question put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [11.07 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 5th October.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.08 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 22nd September, 1976

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

BILLS (5): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act Amendment Bill.
2. Civil Aviation (Carriers' Liability) Act Amendment Bill.