

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 11 November 1986

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

MIDLAND ABATTOIR SALE

Alternative Offer: Standing Orders Suspension

MR COWAN (Merredin—Leader of the National Party) [2.17 p.m.]: I move, without notice—

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as will prevent me from moving forthwith the following motion:

That this House calls upon the Government to immediately accept the offer of \$600 000 for the purchase of the Midland Saleyard facilities made by the Livestock Transporters Association.

In order to move the substantive motion we must first seek that Standing Orders be suspended and my purpose in seeking their suspension is that, although two Select Committees have inquired into the sale of the Midland Abattoir, the Government has given no guarantee that the livestock selling complex will be retained, a complex which is absolutely essential to the primary producers of Western Australia. We may have an interim use of the facilities for six years but immediately after that time they may not be available, and certainly the Government has given no guarantee that an alternative site will be established if the abattoir complex is sold, as is proposed by the Government.

We also understand that there is very serious doubt about the validity of the offer and acceptance signed by the Minister for Agriculture on behalf of the Government for the sale of the land to the extent that only two weeks ago, on 31 October, the Minister had gazetted a completely new diagram of the land designated as the land involved in the sale, and that diagram shows quite clearly that the original plan accompanying the offer and acceptance was wrong.

Therefore I seek the support of the House in having the Standing Orders suspended so that we can debate the substantive motion and ask the Government some very serious questions concerning the saleyards. Firstly, why is the Government not prepared to sell to a higher bidder? Secondly, if it is not, who is to main-

tain the saleyards? Thirdly, does the Government have an alternative site available? Fourthly, has the Government made any commitment that it and not the industry would bear any relocation costs? Fifthly, what guarantee has the Government given that people selling livestock will have access to the effluent disposal area? Many questions deserve to be answered in this public forum, the Parliament, where the Minister has the responsibility to answer these questions from people concerned about the future of this livestock selling complex.

Two Select Committees have inquired into this matter; one has reported and another is in the process of reporting. However, generally no public statement has been made by the Government about the future of a livestock selling complex in Western Australia.

The Livestock Transporters Association, which is vitally concerned for the retention of the Midland selling complex, has submitted an offer for it to the Government. It wants the livestock saleyards excised from the abattoir site and made available for sale. We want to know whether the Government is prepared to give serious consideration to the association's offer. This matter is very important to people in primary industry. I ask that members support my request for a suspension of Standing Orders.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [2.22 p.m.]: I second the motion. I emphasise that it is very urgent that Parliament discuss this matter because the sale has not been completed. It is no good the matter coming before the Parliament and the Government saying that the sale has been finalised and we have left our run too late.

Mr Brian Burke: The sale has been completed.

Mr STEPHENS: We were not aware of that, and I am sorry to hear that comment if it is correct.

The Government has failed in its duty to rural producers of Western Australia. Only the other day I received a letter dictated by the Minister in response to a circular put out by the Pastoralists and Graziers Association in which the Minister said, *inter alia*, that it was not contemplated that there would ever be any need to shift the site of the yards. If that is correct there is no reason why the Government could not excise this area from the land it is selling and make it available permanently as a saleyard. It would remove all doubt. At the moment rural Western Australians have serious doubts about the Government's inten-

tions. If the Minister's statement is correct there is no reason why this House cannot suggest to the Government that the land on which the saleyards are sited be excised and separated from the deal which the Government has done with Mr Ellett.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Leader of the Opposition) [2.24 p.m.]: The Opposition supports the suspension of Standing Orders for the purpose of debating this motion. I would like to hear the motion explained in full by the Leader of the National Party, and to join the debate.

There is continuing concern in the community about the Midland abattoir deal, not only about the sale, but also the question of the saleyards and their continuity and protection. At the Liberal Party's meeting today the member for Murchison-Eyre was given the party's support to take action in this House on this issue because of that continuing concern coming from people involved in transport and production, and from the associations representing those people. We believe it is an issue of some urgency that ought to be debated, and it is proper that it be brought forward in this way.

An interjection was made about the contract having been concluded. If it has been concluded it has been rushed through in the last few days. It is significant that I put a question on notice last Wednesday asking the Minister if the contract had been completed, and that question was not answered on Thursday. Although I have the answers to a number of questions in front of me today I still do not have an answer to that one. It is all very well for interjections to be made across the Chamber, but a precise question on notice in this House has not been answered.

Mr Grill: You will get that today. We did not sit last week.

MR HASSELL: We support the suspension of Standing Orders to debate an issue of concern and substance which is not going to go away. Many people are concerned, particularly those involved in industries directly affected by the Midland saleyards facilities.

MR PEARCE (Armadale—Leader of the House) [2.27 p.m.]: The Government has been very generous in the past in allocating Government time for private members' matters, so it is with some regret I have to inform the House that the Government will not allow the suspension of Standing Orders on this occasion. There are two reasons, both pretty simple.

Firstly, we are looking to conclude this session by the end of November, and given the amount of time we have spent on Government business and the fact that the Environmental Protection Bill took a week and a half and the electoral reform Bill almost two weeks, the time has come when we must start to get a little more efficient in allocating priorities to legislation. I will be moving some motions about that shortly.

The second matter bears on the purpose of suspending Standing Orders in the first place. As has been indicated there is no great urgency for the National Party to put its point of view with regard to this matter. Contracts have been finalised with regard to the abattoir sale, and there is nothing to prevent the National Party giving notice of this motion to be dealt with in private members' business tomorrow. I guess that has occurred to the National Party already, judging by the early move to suspend Standing Orders.

The Liberal Party has already given notice of its intention to seek to debate a matter of public importance this afternoon and, because Government legislation has fallen behind schedule, we are not prepared to allow Government time for the debate on this motion.

House to Divide

Mrs BUCHANAN: I move—

That the House do now divide.

Question put and passed.

Motion Resumed

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 18

Mr Blaikie	Mr Lightfoot
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Cash	Mr Nalder
Mr Clarko	Mr Rushton
Mr Court	Mr Schell
Mr Cowan	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Thompson
Mr House	Mr Watt
Mr Lewis	Mr Williams

(Teller)

Noes 4

Mrs Beggs	Mr Marlborough
Mr Bertram	Mr Pearce
Mr Bridge	Mr Read
Mr Brian Burke	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Evans	Mr P. J. Smith
Dr Gallop	Mr Taylor
Mr Grill	Mr Thomas
Mrs Henderson	Mr Troy
Mr Gordon Hill	Mrs Watkins
Mr Hodge	Dr Watson
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Wilson
Dr Lawrence	Mrs Buchanan

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Burkett
Mr Laurance	Mr Peter Dowding
Mr Trenorden	Mr Bryce
Mr Grayden	Mr Parker
Mr Tubby	Mr Tonkin
Mr Crane	Mr Terry Burke
Mr Spriggs	Mr Carr

Question thus negatived.

CLOSING DAYS OF SESSION

Standing Orders Suspension

MR PEARCE (Armadale—Leader of the House) [2.30 p.m.]: I move, without notice—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Bills to be introduced without notice and passed through their remaining stages on the same day and Messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the same day they are received.

I indicated to the House earlier that the Government hopes to conclude the session by the end of November so as to not inconvenience members' Christmas arrangements. This is a standard motion for that purpose. It is our intention to deal with a number of Bills which will be introduced, and Bills introduced will be adjourned for at least a week after the Minister's second reading speeches. I have discussed this matter with the Acting Leader of the House for the Opposition, the member for Kalamunda.

I indicate also to members that the House will sit on Thursday evenings until the conclusion of the session.

MR THOMPSON (Kalamunda) [2.33 p.m.]: In my new position of Acting Leader of the House for the Opposition, I indicate that I have had discussions with the Leader of the House for the Government and I am happy to support this motion. We recognise that, as we get towards the latter stages of a sitting, as has been the case in previous years, this kind of motion

needs to be passed to facilitate the business of the House.

I ask the Leader of the House: Is there any possibility of any Bill of substance being introduced in the next three weeks? We understand that there is not very much time-consuming legislation on the Notice Paper or yet to be introduced. The legislation on the Notice Paper is fairly inconsequential and will be dealt with fairly expeditiously. I know it is the Government's intention to introduce a number of other Bills and we would be concerned about this motion if the Government presented legislation which is likely to be controversial and which is likely to take up a significant amount of the time of the House.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [2.35 p.m.]: As the Leader of the House for the National Party, and also as one who was not consulted by the Leader of the House for the Government, I indicate that we are not very happy with this motion. I acknowledge that the Government has been very—I was going to say generous—proper in the time it has allowed for private members to raise matters of concern to them, and I congratulate it for that. However, there are about 30 items on the Notice Paper, not including notices of motion, and there is only three weeks left of this session. The Budget debate really has not yet begun.

I remind the Government and all members that we are paid to work for 365 days of the year and I am not keen to see legislation rushed through without its being given proper consideration and then creating work for ourselves in the next session by having to amend it.

Although the National Party is not prepared to divide the House, I believe the Government should give consideration to sitting for longer periods of the year. I believe that legislation should be considered adequately but at the same time private members should not be deprived of the opportunity to introduce matters of concern to them.

MR PEARCE (Armadale—Leader of the House) [2.37 p.m.]: I accept the points made by the Leader of the House for the National Party. The sittings this year have been shorter than normal. However, I think members will agree that the efficiency with which the House has operated has been an offsetting factor in the capacity of the House to attend to matters that are really important and to skate over trivial matters which might have occupied much time for little purpose.

The reasons for the short sittings are partly to do with the constitutional anomaly which meant that, after the election, we could not have sat before 22 or 23 May because the Legislative Council to some extent was rejected by the people at the election, and newly-elected Legislative Councillors could not take their places until after those dates. Also, the death of a member meant a by-election had to be held. As the Premier just whispered to me, it has been normal, after previous elections, for the House not to sit at all in autumn. Our calling an autumn session was a departure from what has been the norm in election years.

As a result of the lateness of the autumn session, the spring session also started late and with Christmas coming upon us, all members have indicated pressing commitments which make it awkward for them to sit in December. That is common.

In relation to the member for Floreat's question on notice, I indicate that, before the House rises for this session, I will circulate to all members a proposed list of sitting dates for the remainder of this Parliament; that is, for all of 1987 and 1988. The Government will provide for a longer parliamentary year for each of those two years, better balanced between the two halves of the years, but with plenty of time for members to go overseas, complete studies, or fulfil other commitments in the recesses. The concerns of the member for Stirling will therefore be allayed.

Mr Mensaros: Last time you wrote a letter to all members I went into hospital to have a cataract removed and missed the session.

Mr PEARCE: Although that is true, it was brought about by the death of a member and the by-election which resulted. Under those circumstances, the session was put back and that caused some difficulty for members. We can plan ahead only on the basis of what we know at the time and unfortunately eventualities of that kind do intercede.

It is not the intention of the Government to pass legislation without undue consideration. I assure the member for Stirling and the member for Kalamunda that in the event of either Opposition party seeking a greater level of consideration for a Bill than the parliamentary timetable allows, the Government will consider lengthening the session or holding the Bill over until the autumn session next year, when it can be given full and proper consideration.

Mr Thompson: Is it your intention to prorogue Parliament between the end of this session and the autumn session next year?

Mr PEARCE: Yes, it is the intention of the Government to prorogue Parliament at the end of the year to allow a formal opening and an Address-in-Reply debate to occur. We are reverting to a normal set of parliamentary arrangements; that is, a formal opening and an Address-in-Reply debate each year.

Mr Thompson: Has the date for prorogation this year been determined?

Mr PEARCE: No, it has not. Although we are aiming to finish in three weeks, I understand that there is a lot of business on the Notice Paper and the Budget is still to be dealt with.

Mr Thompson: Will the Government ensure that any committees of either House will have the opportunity to complete their work before prorogation?

Mr PEARCE: That is certainly the Government's intention. If the Opposition has specific concerns about that, it is open for consideration in the normal way.

As far as the prorogation of Parliament is concerned, the Government is trying to revert to the standard arrangement—Parliament sits during the year, is prorogued at the end of that year, and commences with a formal opening the following year. That is what the Opposition parties have asked for in discussions I have held with them.

Mr Thompson: We do not want you to close the joint down and leave committees which are doing useful work without life.

Mr PEARCE: That is true, but equally no committee is intending to sit past the first week in December. Committees which are sitting know that and I am sure they will have their work completed in that time. I am not aware of any committee, certainly not of this House, that has a life which extends beyond 20 November. The member may know differently. I am aware of only one committee of this House and its date to report to this House is 20 November. If the committees cannot get their work done in the time allowed, they can hardly expect the Government not to prorogue Parliament on the basis that the committees are unable to complete their work in the given time.

Many of the concerns of the Opposition should be allayed in the way we go about discussions relating to the workings of the House in the next three weeks or so. I give members

an assurance that there will not be any Bill which is not given the proper consideration.

Question put.

The SPEAKER: To be carried, this motion requires an absolute majority. I have counted the House; and, there being no dissentient voice, I declare the question carried.

Question thus passed.

POLICE FORCE

Recruitment: Matter of Public Importance

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett): Honourable members, I advise that today I received a letter from the member for Mt Lawley which reads as follows—

In accordance with the relevant Sessional Orders of the Legislative Assembly, I give notice that at the commencement of the sitting of the House today, November 11, 1986 I wish to move the following motion as a matter of public importance.

THAT this House calls on the Government to redirect resources from the following suggested areas or other such areas which would provide the necessary funds to enable the police force to recruit the additional officers necessary to maintain adequate policing levels in Western Australia following the recent determination by the Western Australian Industrial Commission granting police a 38 hour week.

Suggested areas from which the funds could be directed:

- (1) Ministerial and other Political advisers \$1 000 000.
- (2) Allocation from the State's share of the \$100 000 000 national drug offensive.
- (3) Interest on earnings from taxpayers funds invested on the short term money market.

Mr Speaker, this is a matter of public importance and in my view is properly brought forward within the Sessional Orders of the House.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE CASH MLA,

Member for Mount Lawley.

Eight members having risen in their places,

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Sessional Order, half-an-hour will be allocated to each side of the House for the purpose of this debate.

MR CASH (Mt Lawley) [2.49 p.m.]: I move—

That this House calls on the Government to redirect resources from the following suggested areas or other such areas which would provide the necessary funds to enable the police force to recruit the additional officers necessary to maintain adequate policing levels in Western Australia following the recent determination by the Western Australian Industrial Commission granting police a 38 hour week.

Suggested areas from which funds could be directed:

- (1) ministerial and other political advisers \$1 000 000;
- (2) allocation from the State's share of the \$100 000 000 national drug offensive,
- (3) interest on earnings from taxpayers funds invested on the short term money market.

I raise this matter of public importance this afternoon because of concerns expressed by the Police Force in Western Australia and the public and, I am sure, by all other interested people in Australia who have recognised that the recent statements by the State Government have indicated its absolute contempt for the Police Force, the public, and the Industrial Relations Commission.

A number of matters have been raised in recent days and on each occasion it has been absolutely obvious that both the Premier and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services have nothing but contempt for the Western Australian Police Force. On 16 October when the Budget was brought down, the Premier suggested that although there would be major cuts in most Government areas, the Police Force would be an exception. It was suggested at the time that an additional 215 officers would be recruited by the Police Force to make good the police numbers in this State.

At the time the Opposition was pleased to support that move, but within a week of that announcement being made, most Opposition members received calls from members of the Police Force or concerned members of the public, who advised that no more officers were to be recruited by the Police Force after 16

October 1986. As a result of those comments, I took it upon myself to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services a question in Parliament. Before advising the House of the answer to that question, I will read from a media statement dated 16 October 1986, the day of the Budget. The statement was issued by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and the opening statement reads as follows—

Another 215 police officers will be recruited as a result of the Police Department allocation in today's Budget.

I said that the Opposition was prepared to support that comment if it were true. However, we soon found out that the Minister had deceived the Police Force and the public. On Tuesday, 28 October, I asked the following question—

How many persons are to be recruited into the Police Force between Tuesday, 21 October 1986 and 30 June 1987?

The Minister's reply in part reads—

... it is not planned to recruit further until after 30 June 1987 as officers who would normally have been recruited to that date have already been recruited ...

That answer put the lie to the Minister's earlier statement that an additional 215 officers would be recruited into the Police Force after the Budget was brought down on 16 October 1986. What does that say? It says that the Government has nothing but blatant contempt for the Police Force in Western Australia. It never intended to increase the numbers after 16 October, but it put out Press releases that gave that impression.

The best that can be said for the Government is that it double counted, that it juggled the books with respect to the numbers. The worst that can be said is that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services deliberately misled the public of Western Australia and the Police Force in Western Australia.

I refer now to the recent release of crime figures for the past year within Western Australia. There has been a dramatic increase in serious crime. The figures were released last week and were picked up by the media, which was obviously startled by the current situation. The number of breaking and entering crimes increased by 10 per cent during 1985-86. Between 1983-84 and 1985-86 there was an increase of 25 per cent in that crime category. Motor vehicle thefts increased by 24 per cent in the last year. Most parents in this State are concerned about the drug problem, yet crimes

involving drugs increased by a massive 74 per cent during the last two years and 29 per cent in 1985-86.

Mr Laurance: What is the Minister doing about it?

Mr CASH: The Minister is doing absolutely nothing about it. Only today in this House, the Minister was asked whether the Western Australian Police Force would take part in Operation Noah this year. The Minister replied that he was not interested in having the Police Force take part in Operation Noah, as he believed that it had more important things to do. Those supposedly important things included the policing of the America's Cup activities at Fremantle and involvement with the forthcoming papal tour. That is absolute garbage to present to the House, in view of the fact that people in the community are losing their lives as a result of the drug problem.

Only a few days ago the Industrial Relations Commission made its determination in respect of the Police Union's request for a 38-hour week. The determination of the Industrial Relations Commission is interesting because it raises some very interesting facts. It also points to certain activities that were conducted by the Government against the Police Union. One of the very important facts noted by the commission in its determination was that on 3 February 1986—just a few days before the State election—the then Minister for Police and Emergency Services wrote in glowing terms to the Police Union, telling it that he was pleased to advise that the Government intended to offer the Police Force a 38-hour week. Obviously, the Police Force was quite happy with that situation.

However, on 30 September this year, the current Minister for Police and Emergency Services wrote to the union and said that there was no way that the Cabinet intended to stand by the earlier agreement for a 38-hour week. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services reneged on the deal. What does that say of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and the Government in which he operates? It says that the Government cannot be trusted. More than that, it says that this Minister is not prepared to stand up and support the Police Force in Western Australia. He is prepared to knock the Police Force and to continue to knock it, even though the Opposition and many Government members recognise that the Police Force in Western Australia is doing a tremendous job under great pressure.

The commission in its determination also revealed that the Government argued that it would cost \$2.1 million if there were to be a 38-hour week for the Police Force in Western Australia. The Government argued at the time that it did not have the money and it wanted the Police Union to defer its claim. What absolute hogwash the Minister for Police and Emergency Services presented to the Industrial Relations Commission! The Minister for Industrial Relations should share some of the blame because his representative tried to sell the commission the same proposition, that policing in Western Australia could not be carried out efficiently because the Government did not have enough money. What an absolute joke!

In moving the motion this afternoon, I included some areas from which the Government could obtain money to assist the Police Force. I did so in an attempt to help the Government make a decision that would assist not only the Police Force, but also the public. Members of the public expect the Government to stand behind the Police Force and to do the right thing by it. With respect to drugs, we have suggested that the Government has an opportunity to get in touch with the Federal Government and ask for an additional allocation from the \$100 million national drug campaign in order to fund the Police Force in Western Australia. There are many other opportunities for the Government to seek additional money.

There is no question that if this current Minister for Police and Emergency Services carries on making the kind of statements he makes in public, the morale of the Western Australia Police Force will continue to plummet. Some time ago I raised certain matters in this House and in reply the Minister said that he enjoyed the best of relations with both senior officers and the Commissioner of Police in Western Australia. I wonder whether that is true. In the latest article of the official newsletter of the WA Police Force, *Newsbeat*, we read the following—

The Commissioner, Mr Bull, has stressed that he is not opposed to the introduction of a 38 hour week for police officers.

"My position on the issue is unchanged and has always been clear cut", he said.

"I have no objection to the implementation of a 38 hour week provided that sufficient police officers are recruited to

allow the Department to maintain existing policing levels."

Mr Bull said an additional 172 recruits would be needed if the 38 hour week was introduced. This is over and above the 300 recruits agreed to by the Government over a three year term, and most of these have already been absorbed.

Without the additional staff, Mr Bull said that a 38 hour week would increase the work load on existing police personnel, "and that is a situation which both myself, and my Assistant Commissioners, find unacceptable," he said.

The Commissioner of Police and his senior officers and assistant commissioners, are telling the Minister that they need more people in the Police Force in Western Australia if we are to have a proper system of policing. It is about time the Minister started listening to the senior officers and the Police Force and that he try to gain their confidence.

At the moment there is no question that not only senior ranks but also other ranks within the Western Australia Police Force have nothing but contempt for this Minister. He fails to support them on the important issues; he reneges on deals made by this Government prior to the last election; and, he admits in the Parliament that his Press statement was a deceitful statement. This has done nothing more than bring down the Government in the eyes of the Police Force and the public in Western Australia. It is no wonder morale is so low.

Mr Blaikie: He is an embarrassment to his own frontbench colleagues.

Mr CASH: The member for Vasse raises an interesting point: The Minister is an embarrassment not only to his frontbench colleagues but also to his backbench colleagues. The member for Mandurah, for instance—who does not appear to be in the House today—loves to interject when the matter of the Police Force is raised in this House. But he has had enough, he has walked out; he no longer supports the current Minister for Police and Emergency Services. There is not too much support for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in this House—certainly not much from Government members, very little from the Opposition because of the activities and actions in recent weeks and, without question, none whatsoever from the public of Western Australia, who look to the Minister to lead a strong and effective Police Force.

It is time that this Minister for Police and Emergency Services stopped knocking the Police Force and started giving it support. One way he can support the Police Force is to get into the Cabinet and find the additional money required to bring the force back to the level of police numbers prior to the decision last week by the Industrial Relations Commission to grant a 38-hour week.

It has been said by the Commissioner of Police that because of the Government's inaction, he may have to close one-man police stations and abolish the two-man patrols. If the Minister forces the commissioner into that position, let the Minister remember that he will be breaking an industrial agreement. Some time ago, as the then Minister for Police and Emergency Services, he agreed and was a party to an agreement with the Police Union which stated that—

However, a real and genuine effort is to be made throughout the State by Regional and Divisional Officers and by Officers In Charge for police officers on patrol to have proper and adequate support in the performance of their duties. In particular, there should be a recognition of potential dangers for police officers patrolling alone at night.

What shall we have? This Minister forces his commissioner into a situation in which he is in breach of an industrial award. That is not on, and it is time that this Minister woke up and decided to support the Police Force.

We are talking about drugs and violence and the latest figures on violence in our society this year clearly indicate an increase. For example, the number of serious assaults last year increased by 12.6 per cent. What sort of support is that for the members of our community? None whatsoever. The number of rape cases rose considerably in the years 1983-84 and 1984-85 and tonight we read the headlines in the *Daily News* indicating that four young ladies have lost their lives in Western Australia as a result of the actions of some individuals who are yet to be prosecuted by the Police Force.

It is no longer the sort of society in which people feel relaxed, and there is no question that this situation has occurred as a result of this Government's inaction and contempt for the Police Force in Western Australia.

The time has come for the Government to start supporting the Police Force and to find the additional \$2.1 million that will enable the

Police Force to put on a further 172 recruits to restore its strength to that prior to the Industrial Relations Commission's determination last week. But, more than that, we are calling on the Government and, in particular, this Minister for Police and Emergency Services to recognise that the community wants a strong and effective Police Force. The Opposition will continue to strive in this Parliament for that sort of Police Force.

Let it be on the Minister's head if crime figures in Western Australia continue to rise at the dramatic and startling pace of the last 12 months. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services must lift his game and the Government must recognise that the Police Force in Western Australia needs its support.

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [3.09 p.m.]: In seconding the motion I will make a few points, although a great deal of ground has already been covered. The 38-hour week has now been granted to the Police Force and this has happened at a time of crisis for this country.

At the moment we face two crises: One is the economy. Every day of the week in every newspaper we read about the devaluation of the dollar and how Governments are overspending while taxpayers must come up with those extra dollars.

The second crisis—we have already heard some statistics—relates to the crime rate. I refer to statistics relating to the frequency of various crimes, such as: Serious assaults and robberies, every 6.5 hours; breaking and entering, every 18 minutes; theft, every 12 minutes; vehicle theft, more than one an hour.

That is happening in the State of Western Australia and it must be of concern. I refer also to the horrendous news we have heard tonight of some obscene murders. The community demands protection.

The police officers demand support. Those two things go hand in hand; one cannot be taken without the other. The reactions of the community are equally important.

Mr Bull has stated he needs 172 additional officers. They must be made available. Country people will not tolerate the closing of one-man stations. I ask the Minister to assure country people that these stations will not close down.

Mr Laurance: You cannot leave the whole community without protection.

Mr TRENORDEN: Particularly communities which are two or three hours from the nearest police station. It is just not acceptable. For

the cost of \$2.1 million, this is something which should not happen; Western Australia needs these extra officers and needs them immediately.

The argument is, where can this money come from? If we are serious about our concern for the state of the nation and putting this country back on the road, and if the Premier is serious about repealing the 17.5 per cent leave loadings, cutting superannuation for public servants, and a number of other plans he has put forward this year, then the Government should legislate to put all Western Australian public servants on a 40-hour week. It is time this country came to its senses and started to do what is necessary to survive.

People need a little less bad news and a lot more good news. We need to show the people of Western Australia a positive attitude and direction. That must first come from the Government.

The reduced hours for the Police Force will be taken in the form of 12 days' extra annual leave. I am sure that will be gratefully received by the Police Force. If I were a policeman I would not mind having seven or eight weeks' holiday a year.

We hear a lot about stress amongst public servants and in the work force. Another sort of stress we tend to ignore is that suffered by the many people who foot the bills, particularly small business people, and in particular small business people in the country, who are really carrying the can. They are being asked to pay the bills and they are facing bankruptcy at an alarming rate.

It is time hard decisions were made by the Government. The 40-hour week has been adopted by many Western European countries. The 172 additional officers Commissioner Bull has asked for, and the \$2.1 million required to fund the increase, are not requests; they are demands from the public.

MR GORDON HILL (Helena—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [3.14 p.m.]: I have a feeling of *deja vu*. The member for Mt Lawley has raised this issue on two previous occasions, and I have had to correct the misinformation which he presented to the Parliament on both those occasions. On many other occasions the member for Mt Lawley and Opposition members have presented arguments which were factually incorrect. The only conclusion I can come to, as these matters are raised so frequently by the Opposition, and particularly by the member for Mt Lawley, is

that the member for Mt Lawley is trying to beat up an issue.

I will refer to two points. Firstly, it is my view that the member for Mt Lawley has embarked upon a campaign which, if pursued, would have the effect of reducing public confidence in the Police Force. That is the aim of the member for Mt Lawley in pursuing this matter here today, as on previous occasions. The member for Mt Lawley is acting purely from political motives. He is leading this campaign to try to sow dissent within the Police Force.

Secondly, it is an attempt to undermine the efficiency of the Police Force, the work of the Police Force, and the decisions of the commissioner.

Mr Cash: Senior officers have no confidence in you.

Mr GORDON HILL: The attempt to reduce the morale of the Police Force in this State—which is what the Opposition is trying to do—and to dramatise issues, can only lead to a lack of confidence by the public in the Police Force, and to undermine its effectiveness. I stand before this Parliament again to defend the right of the commissioner and of senior police officers to make decisions without political pressure; the kind of pressure which the member for Mt Lawley has been wanting to impose.

Today the member for Mt Lawley referred to Operation Noah, as he did two or three weeks ago in this Parliament. The other night he told a lie on television when he said, in addressing this issue, that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services refused to allow the police to take part in Operation Noah. That is absolute nonsense.

I remind the member for Mt Lawley that it is not the duty of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to deal with operational matters; that is the duty of the commissioner. It is the responsibility of the Minister and the Government to provide resources to the commissioner to assist him in that duty. I will continue to defend the commissioner and his right to make decisions on operational matters without any political interference. It is not appropriate for politicians to direct the Police Force on how it ought to be conducting its business.

I remind the House that the Commissioner of Police advised me it was his decision this year not to proceed with Operation Noah. I will not interfere in his right to make that decision. The decision was based on the fact that, because of the America's Cup, Western Australia

is participating in the biggest policing exercise this State has ever seen.

It might interest the Opposition to know that the South Australian Police Force—not the Minister but the South Australian Police Force—also very nearly decided not to participate in Operation Noah. The reason was simply because of a one-day activity—the Grand Prix. In Western Australia we are talking about an event lasting four or five months; the America's Cup. On the basis of that single event lasting one day, South Australia was very nearly in the position of not participating in Operation Noah.

That is the advice the Commissioner of Police gave to me. He said to me that he felt it was not appropriate for Western Australia to participate in Operation Noah this year.

That is the commissioner's decision.

Mr Cash: Do you support the decision?

Mr GORDON HILL: Heaven forbid that the member for Mt Lawley should ever become Minister for Police and Emergency Services! I can imagine the style of the then Government in terms of interfering in police operational matters. The member has signalled his intention in that respect here today, as he did three weeks ago. There will never be any attempt on my part, nor on the part of any member of the Government, to interfere in police operational matters. I have said that before and I will continue to say that, and to support the police in that respect.

The member for Mt Lawley claims that the Government has knocked the Police Force, and in particular he tries to personalise the matter and suggest that I, as Minister for Police and Emergency Services, am continually knocking the Police Force. I cannot understand that because there is no evidence to suggest it; in fact, the evidence is to the contrary. The simple fact is that the Government has provided an unprecedented increase in police manpower in this State. That is a fact; I have said it before, and that's why I say I have a feeling of *deja vu*. I have to continually remind the Opposition, and perhaps one day it will sink in, that at the commencement of our first term of office we undertook to increase the size of the Police Force—I am talking about the real strength of the force—by 300 officers. We gave the same commitment in our second term and we have provided for that advance recruitment in this Budget. The member for Mt Lawley knows that, and I suggest that either he is ill-informed and unprepared to accept the truth or he is

trying to be mischievous. I suggest possibly it is the latter.

The member for Mt Lawley, and all members of the Opposition, know that in the last three years of the Liberal Party's term of office in this State, it increased the size of the Police Force by 144 police officers. In 1981—two years before we came into office—there was no increase at all in the size of the Police Force in this State. It is worth noting that during that time the present Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Police and Traffic. In 1981 not one additional police officer was recruited into the Police Force in this State. Members should compare that with the increase that has taken place during the time of this Burke Labor Government. There has been an increase to date of 565 officers, which represents a real and substantial increase in the size of the force—a 20.5 per cent increase. During the last four years of the conservative Government in this State there was a mere 7.9 per cent overall increase, and in one of those years there was absolutely no addition at all to the force. I have quoted these facts previously, and I repeat them.

The point is that this Government has given unprecedented support to the Police Force in our State, and that support is extended to other areas. This Budget represents a substantial increase generally, even though the Government is faced with difficult financial constraints. In fact, in this Budget the estimate over the actual expenditure of the last Liberal Government in this State represents an increase of 55.9 per cent.

This Government has quite dramatically supported the Police Force. Not only has it increased the force's real strength, but it has done so at a pace that has outstripped the growth of population in this State. I will explain that. In 1980-81, when the Liberal Party was in Government, there was a decrease in the police to population ratio. In other words, there were fewer police per one thousand members of the population. In 1982, again while the Liberal Government was in office, the figures remained fairly static. Since that time there has been a steady improvement in the ratio of police to population in this State. If it is the argument of the Opposition that crime will decrease with additional police officers, these figures do not show support for such a policy. The ratio of police to population has steadily declined to a point where, at the time of our coming into office, there was one police officer for every 496 people, whereas today there is

one police officer for every 460 members of the population. That has been achieved during a time when the population has grown quite dramatically. We have increased the real strength of our Police Force to a point where the police to population ratio has improved, to the benefit of the community at large and the Police Force.

Unlike the Opposition, which argues that we have neglected police manpower, I have every confidence in the performance of our Police Force and in its ability to do the job properly. The facts are borne out by the statistics I have given. The Opposition shows its lack of support of the police by continually harping on these matters.

There are many areas in which the Government has given assistance to the Police Force in this State, but one important area of which I am very proud is that of the new facility which I will tomorrow hand over to the Police Force in our State; that is, a new computer fingerprinting system. We are entering into the biggest advance in criminal investigation that this State has ever seen. Let me give the House an idea of the ability of this computer fingerprinting system. The system will be able to match up millions of fingerprints in seconds—I 400 fingerprints per second, to be precise. That is a staggering fact and one which will enable the Police Force to match the prints and pick the suspect in a fraction of the time it took previously to sort through manually literally hundreds of possibilities. I have witnessed the system in operation in New South Wales, and it is an incredible system that will give the police the ability to match a partial fingerprint in seconds where previously it may have taken months. In the past, many fingerprint clues were not even pursued by the police because they were regarded as being impossible to match.

The system is very dramatic. To give the House an example of its capabilities, I advise that in California the police were able to match 380 000 fingerprints and identify the notorious "Night Stalker" killer within three minutes.

The San Francisco Police Department also reported that this system, in its first 10 weeks of operation, resulted in the solving of 220 felonies and 140 burglaries, and led to the capture of 10 murderers, six rapists, and 18 robbers—a result which would have taken more than four years to achieve using conventional fingerprint matching methods. I cite this as an example to show the Opposition yet again that

this Government has given enormous support to the Police Force in this State.

This new national fingerprinting system is the biggest step forward in criminal investigation in this State in the last 150 years. The Government is very proud of this new facility and, as with the additional police officers, it has provided for this system in this Budget. As I have said, the Government has recruited in advance of its normal programme to provide the police with additional strength. This has meant that the Government also has recruited in advance of retirement, which is in itself quite extraordinary.

The Government has provided unprecedented levels of support for the Police Force in this State. I refer to the provision of equipment and facilities. The Government has consistently supported the police, and it is alarming to me that the Opposition wants to politicise policing in this State in the way in which it has. It can only be of concern to the community at large that the Opposition has signalled that if ever it gets back into office it will direct the Commissioner of Police on operational matters.

The Government is concerned about the crime rate. However, it is also important to note that there have been some tremendous successes. For example, this State has recorded one of the best clean-up rates in Australia of the crime of breaking and entering. In fact, the Western Australian clean-up rate is double that of the State closest in size to WA, South Australia. I understand the Western Australian clean-up rate is approximately 17 per cent, while the South Australian rate is around nine per cent. That is an outstanding achievement, and, unlike the Opposition, I have every confidence that the Police Force will be able to continue to detect and pursue criminals in this State with success.

Some emphasis has been placed upon the drug question. Of course the Government is concerned about drugs and about fighting the evil of drug trafficking. It is worthwhile noting that in the first three months of this financial year there has been an increase in heroin dealer arrests of 11 per cent when compared with the first three months of last financial year. In fact, the Government has consistently provided the police with overtime, manpower, and resources necessary to assist the police in pursuing the evil of drug trafficking, as it has in many other areas where the police need assistance.

The member for Mt Lawley suggested on previous occasions as well as today that the Government should be increasing the size of the drug squad. I remind the member for Mt Lawley that this is an internal police matter. Despite his claims to the contrary, the drug squad has been increased, although it is not the role of the Government to direct the Commissioner of Police as to where he is to deploy his manpower. That is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police, and I will defend his right to do so. I will defend his right to autonomy in operational matters and I will not allow the Police Force in this State to be directed by politicians on either side of the political fence. It is inappropriate for the Parliament or for politicians to direct the Commissioner of Police on operational matters.

I oppose the motion.

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Premier) [3.35 p.m.]: I would like to try to lay before the House some of the facts that give the lie to the claims made so tritely by the member for Mt Lawley. The member for Mt Lawley can argue about his claims if he wants to, but he can argue successfully only if he is able to contradict them with other facts, and so far he has been unable to do that.

I would simply point out to members one of the glaring deficiencies in the argument of the member for Mt Lawley. In his motion—and we expect that he would tell the truth to the Parliament—he said we would save \$1 million from ministerial and other political advisers. Yet in the *Daily News* he says that we can save \$2 million. Who are we to believe? Are we to believe the member for Mt Lawley as reported in the *Daily News*—which he was no doubt hoping we would not see in time—or are we to believe the member for Mt Lawley in his speech to the motion?

Mr Lewis: What has that to do with it?

MR BRIAN BURKE: It has a lot to do with the credibility of the member for Mt Lawley. It is all very well to come here and say all sorts of things, but we are entitled to expect some modicum of consistency, and the member for Mt Lawley consistently displays a lack of honesty when it comes to stating a position.

Members may have seen his reported comments in today's paper to the effect that we could save \$2 million while in the motion he says we can save \$1 million. One might argue that this is a minor matter. One might say that it is something we should gloss over. But it seems that the member for Mt Lawley has a

great deal of difficulty saying the same sorts of things when he is asked more than once to repeat his position on a particular issue.

Now we will see what the comparative performance of our Government is compared with that of the Liberal Party when it was in Government. We have heard the holier than thou and trite sayings of the member for Mt Lawley, but let us look at the record. Let us just see how much credit can be assigned to the argument of this member when it is realised that over the last four years during which his party was the Government it increased the strength of the Police Force by 7.9 per cent. There is no running away from that fact. Let the member for Mt Lawley contradict it if he wants to.

Several members interjected.

MR BRIAN BURKE: Under the member for Mt Lawley's party when it was in Government the increase was 7.9 per cent. The member for Mt Lawley cannot deny that because it is the truth. In 1981, the year after the election, there was no increase in recruiting. It is all very well for the member for Mt Lawley to claim that the Government has gone soft on crime and on drugs, but I would tell the member that the percentage increase under his party's Government was 7.9 per cent, no more and no less. That was the increase in the manpower of the Police Force during the last four years in Government of the Liberal Party. That is a fact and the member for Mt Lawley cannot contradict it, and he has not contradicted it.

Several members interjected.

MR BRIAN BURKE: It is terribly difficult in a short space of time, when the member for Mt Lawley does not like the treatment he is being accorded, to overcome all the interjections. Nevertheless, I repeat that the increase in the manpower of the Police Force during the last four years of the Liberal Government was 7.9 per cent.

In the first four years of the Labor Party in Government in this State, the increase in manpower has been 20.5 per cent. Who is soft on crime? Who is soft on drugs, or on anything to do with law enforcement when we have increased the manpower of the Police Force by almost three times the amount by which the Liberal Party chose to increase the force's manpower? The Opposition cannot run away from it. The member for Mt Lawley thinks he can gain some cheap publicity by trying, in effect, to attack the Police Force, but he has failed to address the substance of his position; that is,

under the Liberal Party the force was neglected as to manpower, facilities, and resources generally. The Opposition cannot argue about that.

Mr Mensaros: What is the present number in the Police Force?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The present number is 3 236.

The member for Mt Lawley says those sorts of things and thinks some enduring political support will come his way. I guess I am as old as he is, or perhaps a touch younger or older, but one thing is for sure: He is going nowhere fast with this sort of superficial and unappealing law and order nonsense.

Mr Cash: You would prefer us not to talk about it.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: No, I do not mind, because the member cannot answer the facts. For three of those four years, the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Police, and he presided over the disintegration of the Police Force in terms of recruitment. Members opposite cannot answer facts like that with high flown rhetoric that tries to appeal to people's baser motives or instincts. The Opposition cannot ever run away from the fact that for the last four years of its period in office, it increased the strength of the force by 7.9 per cent, and in four years we have increased the strength of the same force by 20.5 per cent.

Mr Lewis: The crime rates have changed dramatically.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The crime rates may have changed, but if they have done so from the first of the four years of the Liberal Party's period in Government to which I referred, and if they have changed from the first of the four years of our Government, the change has been consistent or has certainly not been commensurate with the decision in 1981 not to increase the Police Force at all. The Opposition cannot wriggle out of it; it brought on the debate. It wanted to be the pillar of law and order. The truth is that in Government the Liberal Party starved the Police Force. On the other hand, we have increased the strength of the force immeasurably. We have introduced, in terms of working conditions, retirement at 55 years and we have opposed the 38-hour week. The Police Force now gets eight-and-a-half weeks' annual leave.

Mr Lewis: Why did you repudiate an agreement?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am not talking about the 38-hour week because it is not a 38-hour week. I am talking about the eight-and-a-half weeks, annual leave period. The member for Mt Lawley is convicted by his own Government's lack of action.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Leader of the Opposition) [3.44 p.m.]: In the 10 minutes the Premier has spoken he has done nothing except talk about the relative recruitment performance of the Labor Party and the Liberal Party. His first point was an attack on the member for Mt Lawley over an alleged inaccuracy between what was in the motion and what appears in the *Daily News*. Let me deal with the figures quoted by the Premier to make this point about accuracy.

He said the Liberal Party increased Police Force numbers by 7.9 per cent and the Labor Party had increased them by 20.5 per cent. He did not mention that the figure of 20.5 per cent is wrong because the Police Force has just been reduced by 172 officers as a result of the introduction of the 38-hour week.

Mr Gordon Hill: That is not true.

Mr HASSELL: That is the impact of the 38-hour week.

Mr Brian Burke: At the end of next year.

Mr HASSELL: The force is being reduced by 172 officers; one has to take that into account in quoting statistics.

Secondly, the Premier wanted to carry on at length about the recruitment of police officers. The point is that the problem is to do with the 38-hour week. The Premier piously said that the Government had opposed the 38-hour week. I remind the Premier of what the Minister for Police and Emergency Services said to the Police Union five days before the election in February this year. The Premier cannot use the excuse that he was in Opposition and he did not know the figures. He was the Treasurer and he knew what the budgetary position would be and what the impact of the 38-hour week would be. This is what the Minister for Police and Emergency Services said to the force on behalf of the Government five days before the election; this is in a letter to the secretary of the Police Union—

Dear Mr Stingemore,

I formally inform your union of the advice received from my colleague, the Minister for Employment, that agreement has been reached for the implementation of a 38 hour week for police officers on terms

agreed to between the union and the Office of Industrial Relations.

The Premier should not give us any of his pious humbug in this place about how he has opposed the 38-hour week. When it suited his purpose five days before the election he was prepared to put in writing, under the hand of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, a commitment to a 38-hour week because it suited him and he wanted votes. He should not talk about the member for Mt Lawley in political terms. Why was that letter written on behalf of the Government? It was written because the Premier thought it would help him win the election; he thought he would buy votes. No sooner was the election over than he thought he could forget about that promise. The Industrial Relations Commission has kept the Premier honest by forcing him to give the Police Force a 38-hour week, but now he says he did not agree to it. He did, and he knew the situation and the impact it would have on the force, and he knew the financial implications.

Every piece of relevant information was in the Premier's possession five days before the election when he officially agreed, on behalf of the Government, to a 38-hour week for the Police Force. Now he comes to this House and accuses us of politicking. What nonsense! There has not been an increase of 20.5 per cent in the Police Force under the Labor Government because its strength has just been reduced by the 38-hour week to which the Government agreed.

The Police Force needs the extra manpower not only to replace that which it will lose under the agreement about the 38-hour week, but also to deal with the rising tide of crime. It is no good the Government devoting its 30 minutes in this debate to talking about manpower and forgetting about the crime figures and the massive problem which has emerged in this State. That problem requires special measures. That being so, this is not the time to say it does not suit the Government to carry out its promise about the 38-hour week, and having been forced to do so, to then say it is not going to provide the extra manpower.

The real issue is the level of crime and the priorities the Government assigns to the community. The priority the Government ought to be assigning is to make sure that the public has adequate legal protection. The Government has its political advisers; is it better to have Mark Cuomo and a lot of trainee Labor Party candidates and students working on the public

payroll or to have policemen? Is it a good idea to have a \$100 million drug offensive which uses money only on advertising? The Government should get its priorities right; they are to give proper protection to this community.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 18

Mr Blaikie	Mr Lightfoot
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Cash	Mr Nalder
Mr Clarko	Mr Rushton
Mr Court	Mr Schell
Mr Cowan	Mr Stephens
Mr Hassell	Mr Thompson
Mr House	Mr Watt
Mr Lewis	Mr Williams

(Teller)

Noes 24

Mrs Beggs	Mr Marlborough
Mr Bertram	Mr Pearce
Mr Bridge	Mr Read
Mr Brian Burke	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Evans	Mr P. J. Smith
Dr Gallop	Mr Taylor
Mr Grill	Mr Thomas
Mrs Henderson	Mr Troy
Mr Gordon Hill	Mrs Watkins
Mr Hodge	Dr Watson
Mr Tom Jones	Mr Wilson
Dr Lawrence	Mrs Buchanan

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Burkett
Mr Laurance	Mr Peter Dowding
Mr Trenorden	Mr Bryce
Mr Grayden	Mr Parker
Mr Tubby	Mr Tonkin
Mr Crane	Mr Terry Burke
Mr Spriggs	Mr Carr

Question thus negatived.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Grayden, and read a first time.

ACTS AMENDMENT (PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Brian Burke (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Treasurer)
[3.55 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.
I inform members that I have arranged for an explanatory note to be distributed to them.

In order to facilitate the passage of the Bill, I refer members to the explanatory memorandum.

The Bill is arranged in two parts. The first part deals with amendments to the Parliamentary Superannuation Act in the expectation that the trustees of the fund would continue to have the general responsibility of administration of the fund and some incidental matters.

The second part of the Bill covers amendments to the Salaries and Allowances Act so that certain matters relating to parliamentary superannuation will be brought within the jurisdiction of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

Part 1 of the Bill seeks to amend the Parliamentary Superannuation Act 1970 to provide—

- (a) recognition of de facto spouses;
- (b) members of the fund who retire voluntarily after completing 12 years' membership or who have served in four complete Parliaments to be eligible for a pension;
- (c) loss of endorsement by a political party to be a ground for the emergence of a pension;
- (d) pensions to be increased twice a year in accordance with movements in the Consumer Price Index;
- (e) members of the parliamentary superannuation fund to have the right to elect to convert to a lump sum payment up to 100 per cent of their annual pension entitlement;
- (f) an increase in the conversion factor from 10 to 12 for calculating lump sum payments when members decide to commute part or all of their annual pension entitlement; and
- (g) withdrawal of the spouse's benefit in respect of whatever portion of the pension is commuted to a lump sum.

Other amendments in the Bill in part II are to the Salaries and Allowances Act 1975, to give the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal jurisdiction to—

- (a) determine rates of contributions, pensions and benefits of members of the fund;
- (b) determine the rate of pension accrual;

- (c) adjust basic pensions in recognition of higher offices occupied by members of Parliament; and

- (d) determine the age at which the reducing commutation factor applies.

None of the proposals in the Bill will give the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal any jurisdiction to determine matters with retrospective effect.

After the Bill has completed its passage in Parliament, I will ask the Chairman of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal to conduct, as soon as possible, an inquiry into those aspects of parliamentary superannuation which are within the tribunal's jurisdiction. I will emphasise the importance of the tribunal issuing a determination soon after the inquiry is concluded.

The Government's consulting actuary has given the Government advice on estimates of cost savings which will flow from giving full commutation rights to retiring members of Parliament and an increased conversion factor of 12.

The savings which can be achieved are dependent on the following two factors—

- (a) the average age at which the retirement takes place; and
- (b) the extent to which members exercise such an option.

The actuary has calculated the savings assuming various average retirement ages and 100 per cent participation by members. This will result in savings to the taxpayers as demonstrated in the following table—

Average at Retirement	Capital Value of Savings \$ million	Annual Savings \$
50	6.510	369 000
55	7.122	404 000
60	6.557	372 000
65	4.731	268 000

On average, under a conversion factor of 12 the annual actuarial savings would be of the order of \$300 000.

The current actuarial deficit of the fund would be reduced by members commuting larger proportions of their pensions. In time, this would reduce the amount the Government must pay in real terms to offset the actuarial deficiency. However, the effect of the savings reducing the liability of the fund would not emerge until after the actuarial valuation for

the three-year period ending on 30 June 1989 is completed.

Bearing in mind the cost savings we are achieving under the Bill and the need for responsibility and restraint in current economic circumstances, I will advise the tribunal that, in conducting the inquiry, a conservative approach to the review should be adopted.

Although the minimum pension payable under our State's parliamentary fund is the lowest in Australia and our maximum pension is some three per cent below the Australian average of maximum rates, I will suggest to the tribunal in strong terms that new rates determined by the tribunal should be very close to the average rates applicable in other Australian parliamentary funds.

I mention to members that they are not fettered in any way from making individual submissions to the tribunal in respect of superannuation issues when the Bill has been passed. In commending the Bill to the House, I will summarise by saying that removed from the ambit of members of Parliament will be all the controversial aspects of the fund—contribution rates, retirement benefits and those sorts of things.

The commutation that has now been provided for will mean a saving to the taxpayer, depending on the average age of retirement, of something like \$300 000 a year and the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal will be asking to set the pension benefits at about the average of similar parliamentary funds, as they apply in other States and nationally.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Rushton.

SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Brian Burke (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Treasurer) [4.03 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill amends the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act 1938 to allow members to exit the existing State superannuation fund.

Currently, although membership of the State superannuation fund is voluntary, once a person elects to join the fund membership can be terminated only by resignation from Government employment.

The past practice of some State Government employers has required compulsory membership of a superannuation fund, and many people joined the State fund on this basis. Subsequently, this practice of compulsory membership has been discarded. Nevertheless, one consequence of the practice of compulsory membership is that the fund acquired a number of involuntary members. Because of the unit-based design of the existing State fund, involuntary members have been able to satisfy the employment condition of superannuation coverage by holding the minimum of two units which, for all intents and purposes, results in no effective superannuation benefit for the people involved.

Members of the House will be aware that a number of public sector employees who have reduced their unit holding to a minimum have made alternative superannuation arrangements. These people have not been able to claim their alternative superannuation contributions as a tax deduction because the Commissioner for Taxation has ruled that technically they remain in an employer-sponsored scheme.

The proposal to allow members to exit the State fund should be of assistance to these people in that it will provide them with the opportunity to enter into alternative superannuation arrangements which attract tax deductions.

In addition, the proposal to allow members to exit the existing fund has been framed in the context of finalising the design of new superannuation arrangements for public sector employees. One of the options under consideration is to offer contributing members of the existing State fund transition to a new fund, the basis of which is being finalised. Importantly, if members elect to exit the existing fund prior to the introduction of the new arrangements, they will be given no credit for past service if they seek to enter the new fund. Those members who wish to have continuity of superannuation cover in joining the new fund will be advised to wait until the new arrangements, including any transitional arrangements, are announced.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Hassell (Leader of the Opposition).

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN EXIM CORPORATION BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Brian Burke (Treasurer), and read a first time.

AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Grill (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR GRILL (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Agriculture) [4.08 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of the legislation is to change the structure of the Agriculture Protection Board.

The 11 member board at present comprises five representatives of the Country Shire Councils Association, two representatives of the Primary Industry Association, one representative of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association and three Government members. The Government members are the Director of Agriculture who is chairman of the board, the Chief Executive Officer and a Treasury representative. The board is responsible for determining State-wide policy on the control of various pest, animal and plant species.

Prior to 1970 the board was funded by a rate on agricultural and pastoral properties which was matched by the Government. Apart from a rate on pastoral properties which is matched by the Government and specifically used for operational work or pastoral leasehold properties and a special levy on grain producers which is used for the eradication of skeleton weed, the board is now virtually fully funded from Consolidated Revenue sources. Over 90 per cent of the board's funding comes directly from Consolidated Revenue and the board is accountable in the same way as any other Government agency. Treasury representation on the board is no longer justified and the legislation provides for this representation to be deleted.

It is proposed that membership of the board be retained at 11 and the Bill provides for non-Government representation to be increased from eight to nine. The Government represen-

tatives will be the Director of Agriculture and the Chief Executive Officer.

Also, it is proposed that the method of nomination of non-Government members be altered and the ratio of members be changed. The three present parent bodies will still have representation and in addition the zone control authorities which are established under the Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act and which recommend on policies and programmes for zonal areas will be represented by one or more persons. Nominations will be called so that persons whose names are submitted will represent a different zone throughout the State, thereby enabling a spread of representation. The spread will be wider than is the case at present.

The Bill provides for the Governor to appoint non-Government members to serve for a three-year period on the basis of—

- (a) One or two persons from the names of seven persons submitted by the Primary Industry Association. Five of the nominations shall represent different zones in the agricultural areas and two shall represent different zones in the pastoral areas.
- (b) One person from the names of six persons submitted by the Pastoralist and Graziers Association. Two of the nominations shall represent different zones in the agricultural areas and four shall represent different zones in the pastoral areas.
- (c) Between two and five persons from a panel of names of nine persons submitted by the Country Shire Councils Association with each person representing a different zone.
- (d) Between one and five persons from a panel of names comprising one nomination from each of the 11 zone control authorities of a person able to represent the zone. A nominated person who is a member of an authority shall resign before accepting appointment to the board.

The agricultural and pastoral areas referred to are defined according to local authority districts in a schedule to the Bill.

Another amendment proposed in the Bill is to increase to \$100 000 the value of contracts which require sanctioning by the Governor. At present any contract exceeding \$10 000 or which may extend over three-years requires the sanction of the Governor. Raising the level is

necessary as many of the board's routine contracts such as aerial baiting, fence maintenance, and building extensions exceed the lesser figure. The three year provision is also impractical.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Cowan (Leader of the National Party).

LOAN BILL

Second Reading

MR BRIAN BURKE (Balga—Treasurer) [4.13 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks the necessary authority for the raising of loans required to help finance the State's capital works programme as detailed in the General Loan and Capital Works Fund Estimates of Expenditure tabled on 16 October 1986.

Borrowing authority is being sought this year for the raising of loans of \$260 million.

The level of borrowing authority required is determined after taking into account the unexpired balances of previous authorisations as at 30 June 1986. It is also necessary to have sufficient borrowing authority to enable works-in-progress to be maintained for a period of up to six months after the close of the financial year pending the passing of a similar measure in 1987-88.

For the first time this year, borrowing authorisations are affected by the Financial Administration and Audit Act which came into operation on 1 July 1986. As all members would be well aware, this has resulted in a more than doubling of the capital works programme subject to parliamentary appropriation, and this is the reason for the increase in the level of borrowing authorisation now being sought. Of course, this does not mean that the Government is increasing its reliance on borrowings. In fact, the opposite is the case.

This year's capital works programme uses \$517.3 million of our global Loan Council borrowing allocation for authorities—25.4 per cent below the amount raised in 1985-86.

In addition, new money programmes for the States in total have been reduced by 23 per cent. Our share of these programmes consists of borrowings of \$71 672 000 and a grant component of \$39 735 000.

Again this year the opportunity has been taken to nominate our total State Government borrowing allocation for public housing. However, because of the constraints I have outlined, the amount available has been reduced from \$93.1 million last year to \$71.7 million in 1986-87.

These funds for public housing are advanced by the Commonwealth at the concessional interest rate of 4.5 per cent and are repayable over 53 years.

The balance of the borrowing authorisation will be raised by the WA Treasury Corporation.

In accordance with clause 4 of the Bill, the proceeds of loans to be raised under this measure must be paid into the General Loan and Capital Works Fund recently created under the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. As a result, it is appropriate to streamline procedures by simply ensuring that approval is being sought for the raising of loans for public purposes. It is no longer necessary to continue the previous cumbersome and not very helpful practice of designating particular works or purposes.

Furthermore, as all members would now be aware, no funds can be expended from the General Loan and Capital Works Fund without an appropriation under an Act passed by this Parliament.

In addition to seeking to provide the authority for loan raisings, the Bill also permanently appropriates moneys from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to meet interest payments and sinking fund contributions under this and previous Loan Acts. It also seeks authority to allow the balances of previous authorisations to be re-appropriated from previously designated items and applied for public purposes.

Schedule 1 of the Bill sets out the amounts to be reappropriated and the Loan Acts which authorised the original appropriations. The amount of \$146 884 501 shown on page 45 of the General and Capital Works Fund Estimates of Expenditure includes \$30 486 468 allocated from loan repayments and Commonwealth capital grants. As loan repayments and Commonwealth capital grants do not require legislative authorisation, the amount to be reappropriated is reduced to \$116 398 033. This amount is to be re-appropriated in accordance with clause 6 of the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Hassell (Leader of the Opposition).

Message: Appropriations

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

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading

MR HODGE (Melville—Minister for Environment) [4.18 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [4.19 p.m.]: I want to make some final comments during the third reading stage of this Bill before it is transmitted to the Legislative Council.

The Government has proceeded with its intention of rewriting the environmental legislation that has served the State so well since 1970. Time and circumstances in the future will determine how satisfactory this legislation is in meeting the future needs of Western Australians.

I believe the Bill will have some shortcomings but it has some positive aspects as well. One is that the Government has at least ensured that local government will have a more positive role in future environmental legislation in this State and, more importantly, local communities will be advised in a more positive way as a result of the amendments the Opposition has made to this important legislation.

That is part of the redresses. It is my firm view that the question of referrals that is contained within this legislation—where it is understood that they will operate in conjunction with the new and expanding definition of the word “environment” which is now called “social surroundings”—will prove to be a minefield of frustration for any person or body proposing to undertake any sort of development in the future. The Opposition argued long and hard on this very matter. The Government put forward its point of view, and I would simply like to have it recorded that the Parliament will be amending this legislation again in due course.

The question of referrals is one which I believe will prove to be a minefield for the community. It is all very well for legislation to allow for community involvement, but I believe the Government may have gone overboard. However, this will be recorded in *Hansard*, and

I will be the first person to admit to the Minister, 18 months to two years down the track, that his summation and direction have proved to be correct, if that is the case. However, when we look at the new terminology of “environment” in respect of referrals, I believe it will prove to be a weakness.

The autonomy of the authority is another matter which gives some concern. The authority's autonomy, with its chairman being the chief executive officer of the new body, will also prove to be a matter of some conflict in future. The Chief Executive Officer of the new authority will carry out the policies of the Government of the day, while on the other hand that person should have autonomy as the chairman of the five-person Environmental Protection Authority. In this capacity he still has an obligation to have regard for the policies of the Government of the day. I believe that these posts should be separate and again the Opposition argued long and hard over this very issue. However, it came down to a matter of the Government's direction, policies, and philosophies as against what the Opposition sees as a disadvantage in the legislation which is on its way to the Legislative Council. It is the Opposition's view that having the head of the department also acting as the chairman of the new authority will prove to be a weakness.

Being a fairly generous sort of person, I have already indicated that the events in the next 18 months to two years will certainly indicate which side of the political spectrum has been right—whether the philosophies and direction of the Government have been right or whether the concern of the Opposition has proved to be well-founded.

I now refer to the Swan River and how the activities of recent days have turned out to be a matter of great community interest. The issue of building and development on the river has caused a great deal of concern and emotion, and it all turns on the matter of conservation and environment as against development which is recognised as being needed for the future. In today's *The West Australian* the editorial carried the headline, “Swan's future”, and it read as follows—

The State Government's first steps towards bringing a semblance of order to the development of the Swan River are long overdue.

The editorial continued as follows—

... The need to protect the river for the benefit of all West Australians.

That means putting a higher price on conservation than on the needs or greeds of developers. The present fractured process is totally inadequate.

I do not really believe that the Government's intention to have a single managing authority for the Swan River will overcome those problems. In fact, I believe that what the Government is proposing for the Swan River will fall far short of this—

Mr Hodge: We are not necessarily proposing that.

Mr BLAIKIE: Well, flying a kite.

Mr Hodge: We are going to examine the possibility.

Mr BLAIKIE: When questions about the environment and conservation are raised—whether they concern woodchipping, the Swan River, the Hillarys boat harbour, or the development or otherwise of Rottnest Island—they are matters which generally are of great public concern and interest.

Mr Hodge: You just said earlier that we are going overboard with public involvement.

Mr BLAIKIE: It is always to the great consternation of any Government as to what it should or should not do—Governments are damned if they do and damned if they do not, irrespective of any decisions they make.

As to the future, I would like to see the Parliament taking a much higher profile and a much more positive role. Precedents have been established over many decades in relation to forests, for example, where only the Parliament can determine whether land is to be excised from State forests. I believe that as far as national parks are concerned, the same matters should be decided by the Parliament. In relation to conservation and environmental matters, I believe the Parliament itself will need to take a far higher profile and a more decisive role in determining some of the more important issues rather than leaving it solely to the Government of the day. That is the next phase I believe we will be moving into. So if the Government intends that a certain area of the State will not be subject to environmental reviews because of the importance of the area, the Parliament will need to make an evaluation and either accept or reject the Government's recommendation.

It is my firm view, for all the reasons which I have stated—such as the emotions that are generated over these matters of environment and other conservation interests—that a very

important role exists for members of Parliament to be involved in a Standing Committee of the Parliament. In this respect I refer to both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council being involved in conservation and environmental review committees where members may take recommendations back to the Parliament, not on a party political basis, but in the best interests of the State. This will mean that the very inflammatory issues which come to light from time to time—and they are happening with far greater frequency now—will have a lot of the heat removed from them because at least members of Parliament would have a preview of the matter, in the clear light of day, and would be able to take recommendations back to the Parliament—recommendations that the Government of the day could act upon as it sees necessary.

The environmental protection legislation is very important legislation. The original legislation, which is now some 15 or 16 years old, has served the State extremely well. History will tell us of the wisdom or otherwise of this Bill and how it will serve the State. As I have already indicated, there are some shortcomings in the legislation which is now being transmitted to the Legislative Council.

MR RUSHTON (Dale) [4.30 p.m.]: We are facing an incredible situation where, having debated at length the environmental protection legislation and questions having been asked and commitments made by the Government, the Government's credibility is now in question over the Mosman Park development. This morning's *The West Australian* contained an apology to the developer for implying that something which was wrong had been done. The Government has been so confusing on this issue, and the Minister and the Premier have misled the House—the Premier in his Press statement, and the Minister when we were debating the Bill.

Mr Hodge: Which Minister are you referring to, me?

Mr RUSHTON: Yes.

Mr Hodge: How have I misled the House?

Mr RUSHTON: I will show the Minister. This Bill is to rectify problems in relation to the environment which fall within different jurisdictions by enabling Ministers to take them to Cabinet so that it can make a judgement. If ever there was an issue which needed that treatment it is the Mosman Park tearooms development. That has not happened.

Mr Hodge: Why?

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister was saying to us that he did not know anything about it and that it was someone else's responsibility. I am saying it was his responsibility.

Mr Hodge: I carried out my statutory responsibility.

Mr RUSHTON: It needs coordination. That is why the journalists from the paper found themselves in the position of having to apologise.

Mr Hodge: They made a mistake; that is why they are apologising.

Mr RUSHTON: No they did not. They were misled by Ministers.

Mr Hodge: They made a mistake. Tell me how I misled anyone.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister misled us. He gave us to understand that the Swan River Management Authority had approved the development when in fact it had not.

Mr Hodge: It did.

Mr RUSHTON: Not this development.

Mr Hodge: It approved the project.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister must be naive to go on with that.

Mr Brian Burke: What did you approve in 1978 with the local member's concurrence?

Mr RUSHTON: I looked up the record so I could point out the facts in this House. The Premier misled the public on a radio programme. I heard what he said, and Howard Sattler attempted to bring him back to reality, but he left the impression that the previous Government had approved this development. I have heard the Leader of the House say the same sort of thing—that I, as Minister for Transport, approved the Peppermint Grove development, implying it was the same sort of situation as that at Mosman Park. That was not so. I have taken the opportunity of the week's adjournment to dig out some records to prove what the situation was.

The Government, through the Premier's Press statement on 20 October, said the developers had received all the necessary Government approvals for the work currently being undertaken. Everything had been done that was necessary to build the structure. That was not so because the Minister for Transport had not given his approval. Approval for a tea-rooms was given by all parties in March. It has been changed since then. The people who gave approval in March have not approved the change.

Mr Hodge: I am waiting for you to relate this to the Bill.

Mr RUSHTON: I am. I am saying that if the Minister had carried out the intent of this Bill we would not have the debacle at Mosman Park. Now he is suggesting we need another authority which will involve more expense.

Mr Hodge: No I am not. I am not suggesting that at all.

Mr RUSHTON: The Government is flying a kite along those lines. It wants to get out of this unsatisfactory situation and allay the public concern.

Mr Hodge: We are conducting a review of the present Acts and procedures to make them more efficient.

Mr RUSHTON: The Government is saying to the public, "We have dropped the bat on this issue and we will see if we can do something better." The Minister has the powers; he should have declared a policy relating to the foreshore.

Mr Hodge: How many did you declare?

Mr RUSHTON: I can illustrate to the Minister what we did. It will give him a better understanding of how he should have gone about it. The sad thing about the present situation is that people have been slandered with the term "cronyism" because of the ineptitude of the Government. People want to get a development going, but because the Government set up a Curtin Foundation and makes demands on people at election time, everybody is supposed to be a crony.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Lawrence): Order! Can we keep to the point of the Bill? I have been listening for some time and I have some difficulty relating the member's remarks to the Bill before the House.

Mr RUSHTON: I am speaking to the third reading of the Environmental Protection Bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have asked you to keep to the point of the Bill. I appreciate that your remarks have relevance, but you will have to make the point and not just allusions and expect us to make the connection.

Mr RUSHTON: My point is this: The Bill provides that where there is a dispute over an issue, the Minister can sort it out at Cabinet level. I am suggesting that this should have taken place in this instance. It has not, and it does not matter what authority the Government creates, it will not work unless there is goodwill and good sense. So I pursued that issue.

Mr Hodge: Quite erroneously.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister does not seem to understand. He misled the newspaper.

Mr Hodge: I have been listening for 10 minutes and wondering whether you are going to talk about the Bill.

Mr RUSHTON: I am talking about its intent. *The West Australian* was confused about who was in authority and who had responsibility for giving approval, and a number of Ministers confused the journalists.

Mr Hodge: You are under the impression that this Bill has gone through the Parliament and that we are operating under this new law.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister has the administrative powers to discuss the issue in Cabinet and draw all the interests together.

Mr Hodge: The issue never went to Cabinet. There was no need; there was no conflict.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister has just confused the whole thing. No conflict over the Mosman Park development? Goodness gracious! Let me recite what took place in earlier times to set the record straight.

Mr Hodge: What part of the Bill does this relate to?

Mr RUSHTON: The environment as it relates to this Bill and to ministerial responsibility.

We now have two issues—firstly, the Peppermint Grove boat shed which has not been given any consideration by this Government and is still up in the air.

Mr Hodge: It is in the water, not up in the air.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister is being facetious. The tearooms is a very important issue relating to the environment, and it is not far from the Mosman boat shed which should be given the same consideration.

Mr Hodge: If you want to make a speech about the boat shed why not do it on the Budget?

Mr RUSHTON: I am talking about the treatment of the foreshore. Many people in this State believe that in the past the foreshores have been protected for public use. That is the sort of thing to which we addressed ourselves when in Government, and I took matters to Cabinet and got decisions on that basis. I protected the foreshore, and I will give an illustration. I am putting right the implication that the previous Government gave certain approvals. We retained the status quo in relation to the environment and the boat sheds in ques-

tion. The public raised very strong objections to both issues, and if the local shires had wanted to they could have purchased both establishments.

The Minister would not be old enough, or may not have walked around those areas, but when I was a youngster and used to walk about there I saw people buying the things that children like at those tearooms.

Of course the whole situation has changed today because there are a tremendous number of motor vehicles on the road and not too many people ride bikes or walk. As far as the local people are concerned it is a disastrous situation because people will be driving their vehicles on restricted streets.

The decision relating to the development in Peppermint Grove was made after consultation with the local shire. The MRPA had given approval subject to the presentation of design. I, as Minister, had given approval subject to the status quo being maintained. My advice to the local shire was that if it believed that the area should be maintained for public use its negotiations should reflect that belief. Otherwise, it did not seem just to me that the Shire of Peppermint Grove would want me to foreclose on that lease. The area could be purchased to protect the foreshore and the interest of those concerned. It was a matter of maintaining the status quo in order to protect the foreshore.

I refer now to what was known as Smith's boat shed at Mosman Bay. Once again, through consultation with the local authority and the then Swan River Management Authority I advised that the status quo was to be maintained. The final decision was that the proposal for the extension of the licence for the mooring area and the rearrangement of the jetty system, not the buildings, would be approved and a new jetty licence would be approved for five years.

Mr Hodge: You approved a big increase in the mooring area.

Mr RUSHTON: It was just a moderate area and I have the plan which shows it.

Mr Hodge: It was a large increase, was it not?

Mr RUSHTON: It could not cater for normal-sized boats.

Mr Hodge: My advice is that the Liberal Cabinet approved an increase in the licensed area from 2 755 square metres to 3 330 square metres.

Mr RUSHTON: The actual area related to the moorings and the jetties and not the buildings. I hope the Minister has that straight. The

Swan River Management Authority agreed to that.

If the Government had done its job properly it would not need to take the action it now intends. The Minister has made a decision based on policy and not on commonsense.

It is my understanding that the Town of Mosman Park is faced with the problem of a restaurant development being approved on this site. During my term as Minister a proposal was put forward on 15 January 1979 to carry out all sorts of development on this site, including a restaurant. I rejected that proposal. Two years later, on 21 January 1981, the same company submitted a proposal for foreshore redevelopment of the property which included the extension of the jetty area and the re-arrangement of the jetties. I have already read to the House my decision at that time. The developers had withdrawn their request for a restaurant. The local people were fearful of what would be requested in the way of future developments. A limited area of parking is available and the original development intended for the area was a tearoom only.

The Government has not given a clear indication of what the development, in the long term, will include. The current approval involves an area suitable for a sizeable restaurant and that is what the local people are questioning. The answer is vital to the environment of the area. We now find that people are pushing for another committee which the Government has agreed to create. There is no need for it. It needs only good administration by the Government to resolve the problem. If it does not, we will find that the whole situation will be nothing but a mess.

Mr Hodge: Could you explain what adverse effect will occur to the environment because of the amended plan? The amended plan is smaller in area.

Mr RUSHTON: Yes, I can. What the Opposition is seeking is the terms and conditions of the lease and the Government has not been prepared to provide a copy of it.

Mr Hodge: There was an original plan which was approved by everybody. That was amended and you are saying that it will have a serious effect on the environment. I would like you to explain to me what difference to the environment there will be between the amended plan and the original one.

Mr RUSHTON: The original plan provided for a tearoom which would hold 20 people. The amended plan will hold 150 people inside the

building and approximately 130 people on the jetty area—280 people in total. There will be a great influx of people into the area and when one relates that to the number of vehicles involved it makes a difference.

Mr Hodge: How will that affect the environment of the river?

Mr Court: There is a house 30 feet away.

Mr Hodge: My recollection is that there is a car park in the area.

Mr Court: There is a car park further up.

Mr RUSHTON: Has the Government completed its agreement regarding the use of the building?

Mr Hodge: What do you mean?

Mr RUSHTON: A jetty licence has been issued, but I do not know the terms and conditions which will apply.

Mr Hodge: I do not issue those licences.

Mr RUSHTON: Does not the Minister know what is going on?

Mr Hodge: You will have to ask the Minister for Transport.

Mr RUSHTON: I am suggesting that Government Ministers are part of the same team and one would think that they would all know what is going on.

Mr Hodge: Do you mean that we should understand each other's portfolio? I suggest you do.

Mr RUSHTON: The same situation which applied to the development in Peppermint Grove should apply to the development in Mosman Bay. The terms of the lease put by me to the developer of the Peppermint Grove complex were as follows—

With respect to the use of the building, I emphasise that the new license document to be prepared following final approval of plans will incorporate provisions restricting operations to that of boat hire, tearoom and kiosk services. Further provisions will determine minimum hours of business, and provide for revocation of the license should the boat hire, kiosk and tearoom operations be closed down at any time.

Is that to happen in this case? It is pertinent to the issue and to the environment. It continued—

The license will also provide that the sale and servicing of alcoholic beverages will not be permitted on the premises and will contain good order provisions

restricting noise and other matters which could be considered a nuisance.

Of course, it depended also on sewerage and reticulated water. It appears that the Government is increasing the area of the tearoom or restaurant and I ask whether that is the case.

Mr Hodge: It is not increasing the area. The total area is smaller than that on the original plan.

Mr RUSHTON: The area of the proposed tearoom or restaurant which will be used by the public has been increased.

Mr Hodge: The original area was 532 square metres and the current area is 507 square metres.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister is looking at the boundaries.

Mr Hodge: I am looking at the buildings.

Mr RUSHTON: That has now been changed and the internal use has also been changed. The comments I read about the previous Liberal Government's requirements with regard to the Peppermint Grove building apply in this case and similar action should have been taken with regard to Smith's boatshed. If that were the case there would be less public concern.

The agreement has not been presented and it should be.

Mr Hodge: You are supposed to be commenting on the third reading of the Bill.

Mr RUSHTON: I am doing that and I am also responding to the comments made by the Minister's colleagues in relation to this matter.

Mr Hodge: You have not touched the Bill.

Mr RUSHTON: I said that none of this bad administration should have taken place and it is proof that the Government's Bill is not intended to do other than put in a centralised control. If the Government does not have good intentions of carrying it through, together with good administration, it means nothing. The Government has centralised its powers over transport, the arts, the environment and planning. It has centralised them so that it can make direct decisions.

I am suggesting that in legislation such as this a Liberal Government would have provided for the delegation to local government of many matters within the environmental responsibility.

Mr Hodge: It is interesting to note that you did not do that in all the years you were in office.

Mr RUSHTON: That is not an adequate comment by the Minister. We would have been reviewing the legislation by this time and would have moved along those lines. Obviously, we need to be in Government in order to carry out a review but our policy was to include the delegation of power to local authorities in environmental matters.

Mr Hodge: The only time you amended this legislation was to water it down.

Mr RUSHTON: The Government has taken power from local authorities and it has increased its powers, certainly in planning areas.

I have made the point very strongly that the legislation before us is only words; the Government is very free with its words but we need action. The Government has been found wanting. It has done what it wanted to do but it is not practical legislation. I support the comments made in the Press that we need a policy which protects the river and foreshores, which protects the public interest. The Cabinet and Government of my day did that by having a single Minister responsible, who referred matters to other Ministers involved.

My records indicate the commitment of the previous Liberal Government and I was pleased to confirm that that is contrary to the comments made by the Premier and the Leader of the House. It will be interesting to note what happens from now on; it is deplorable for developers and people in the community to be abused and attacked because of the limitations of the Government's administration. The comments in the Press relating to Mr Dempster and the apology to him for inferences drawn was spot on. That article very strongly and rightly made the point about the confusion of the Government Ministers' positions which put journalists in the predicament of having to apologise to Mr Dempster, who had not transgressed.

MR HODGE (Melville—Minister for Environment) [4.54 p.m.]: The member for Vasse made a number of points in his contribution in this third reading debate, most of which had been covered pretty exhaustively during the second reading and Committee stages of the debate. However, I wish to put the record straight on a couple of points.

The member for Vasse referred to the Chairman of the EPA carrying out Government policy. That is not the role of the Chairman of the EPA; he is not subject to Government direction and, therefore, will not be carrying out Govern-

ment policy as such. His role is to chair the EPA and convey advice and recommendations from the EPA to the Government.

In his role as chief executive officer the only area in which I would expect him to be carrying out Government policy is in regard to pollution control, which the Bill makes quite clear. The chief executive officer is subject to the direction of the Minister in that regard.

The member for Vasse mentioned the potential for conflict in the roles of Chief Executive Officer and chairman. We discussed that at great length in the debate and I do not see much point in canvassing it further today. The Government is confident that there will not be any serious conflict and has gone to great trouble to set out quite clearly in the legislation the respective roles and obligations of the chairman, Chief Executive Officer and the Minister. We believe the potential for conflict has been minimised.

The member for Vasse also criticised the assessment procedure and, although I was listening closely, I could not quite ascertain what precisely he was critical of. The current assessment procedures have been developed over many years and work quite well, although they are not provided for in the present Act. We have sought to set down in the new legislation the current procedures and practices, which are working well. I am not sure of the Opposition's concern in this regard.

The member for Vasse made some conflicting statements; he talked about the Government going overboard on public involvement in the environmental assessment procedure and a few minutes later he talked about strong public interest in environmental matters, particularly matters relating to the river. I agree that there is strong public interest in the environment, and so there should be; that is precisely why the Government has tried to provide a role for the public. I have been most surprised and disappointed throughout the debate to hear the criticism by the Opposition of the Government for providing for public participation. I would have thought all political parties in the 1980s would acknowledge the need for strong public participation in matters involving the environment.

The member for Vasse mentioned that exemptions from provisions of the Bill should perhaps be referred to Parliament and that Parliament should have an increasing role in the procedure. That sounds very fine in theory and quite statesmanlike. The member for Vasse

suggested we could have a committee, that we try to keep politics out of it and that the committee report to the Parliament. One would be battling to oppose that proposition in theory but I note with interest that during all the years I was in Opposition in this Parliament and the member for Vasse was on the Government's side, no such moves ever came forward from the Liberal Government.

Mr Blaikie: I said that in my view this would be the future direction that we would take, where Parliament would be more involved.

Mr HODGE: I acknowledge that the member for Vasse said that. I am saying that his track record when his party was in Government does not demonstrate that.

If the member for Vasse has seen the light and is prepared to turn over a new leaf, I will accept that.

Mr Blaikie: If you check on my previous track record you will find it is not sad at all.

Mr HODGE: I cannot recollect that sort of track record, but I would point out to the member for Vasse a certain degree of difficulty in providing exemptions from the legislation only with the approval of Parliament. Parliament sits only for certain weeks and months of the year, and quite often exemptions that come before the Government require fairly urgent consideration. Under the present system, when Parliament sits again it has to be informed of the exemptions the Minister gives, and they are tabled in this House. It would be very difficult to hold exemptions up—in an election year, maybe for six months—until Parliament meets to consider the exemption. I really think there would be a practical difficulty in implementing that.

The member for Dale used the opportunity of this third reading debate to give a long, rambling speech about his view on the Mosman Park tearooms, to set the record straight about what he did when he was a Minister, to comment on what the Premier said on the Howard Sattler show, and a number of fairly irrelevant issues. I listened closely to what he said, but as he really did not relate any of his comments to the Bill I shall not comment further on his contribution.

This Bill has been the subject of a long, fairly tiring, and very thorough debate. The Government has again demonstrated its flexibility and willingness to amend legislation. I introduced this Bill last session with the express purpose of its lying on the Table of the House so that it could be subjected to proper scrutiny by the

House and members of the public. I am very pleased that did occur. Many sensible amendments were made to the legislation by both the Government and the Opposition, many at the request of industry, conservation groups, and individuals. I think we have a better piece of legislation as a result of the contributions made by all concerned, and I thank everyone who participated in the debate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ACTS AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 24 July.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [5.03 p.m.]: The Opposition does not oppose this Bill, which is a consequential measure following directly on the heels of the Environmental Protection Bill. It proposes to amend a series of Acts to bring them into line with the changes that will now be made to the environmental protection legislation. The Opposition has no objection to the proposals made by the Government.

MR HODGE (Melville—Minister for Environment) [5.04 p.m.]: The assessment of this legislation as outlined by the member for Vasse is correct. It is a mechanical-type Bill that seeks to amend a range of other Acts as a result of the new Environmental Protection Bill passing through this Parliament. It is not a contentious Bill and I see no reason for holding up the progress of the House by debating it at length. I thank the Opposition for its support of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mrs Henderson) in the Chair; Mr Hodge (Minister for Environment) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 23 put and passed.

Clause 24: Section 40 amended—

Mr HODGE: There is an amendment standing in my name on the Notice Paper which has been recommended by the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare to make it clear that all reference to the former Noise Abatement Advisory Committee is to be deleted. The way it was drafted in the Acts Amendment and Repeal Bill made it unclear. This was a drafting deficiency, and I propose

this small, mechanical amendment to make that clause more explicit.

I move an amendment—

Page 7, lines 17-19—To delete paragraph (b) and substitute the following paragraph—

(b) in subsection (5)(a) by deleting “the Advisory Committee and every person who is, becomes or has been a member of the Advisory Committee,” and substituting the following—

every person who is, becomes or has been an

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 25 to 40 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Hodge (Minister for Environment), and transmitted to the Council.

AGRICULTURE AND RELATED RESOURCES PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 7 October.

MR CRANE (Moore) [5.10 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill.

It always saddens me when we make more laws that introduce stiffer penalties, because with every law we pass in this place we take away a little more of the freedom people now have. However, laws are made for the guidance of wise men and the obedience of fools and therefore I consider that this Bill is reasonable.

Its purpose is to increase the penalties of the 1976 Act. Those penalties have not been increased since that time and inflation has gone on considerably, and it is felt that a number of penalties should be increased to deter those fools to whom I referred, the people who need to obey those laws.

Penalties have been increased for people who introduce into WA declared plants and declared animals. We go along with this because we must look after our agricultural industry. When we consider the problems the industry faces today because of plants and animals

which were introduced to WA many years ago, action is obviously necessary. Some animals were introduced for sport, and some plants for quite stupid reasons. For instance, the double-gee was introduced because it was thought that its leaves would make a very good substitute for spinach with which to feed the convicts. The leaves proved not to be satisfactory. The leaves are quite unpalatable and the plant has proved to be a very serious pest. Although the double-gee is not a declared plant at present, it is a great nuisance to agriculture, as anyone associated with the industry knows. The member for Kalamunda may not be aware that the plant has some good qualities apparently in that in some areas it is used for contraceptive purposes! The double-gee has a sharp, thorny, three-pointed seed, and I am told if one puts a seed inside the heel of one's boot, it makes one limp.

At times we do some stupid and idiotic things which affect agriculture and we really do run away from our responsibilities to protect the industry. I have in mind legislation we passed when I first came here. We will rue the day that we passed legislation legalising the ownership of entire Alsations in this State, although the member for Karrinyup may not agree with me. We on this side introduced the legislation and Government members, as the then Opposition, supported it. Many dangerous incidents occur now where children are attacked by Alsations, Dobermans, or other large dogs. The member for Avon will agree with me that these dogs are a menace in agricultural areas and I am sure he will know that landowners adjacent to the Town of Northam are faced with the problem of these marauding dogs killing their sheep. We really should be more willing to recognise our responsibilities to agriculture just as we are on this occasion by our moving to increase these penalties.

We made another serious mistake recently, and it will be something which must be addressed before many years pass. Only recently it was made possible for people to keep rabbits. Rabbits have been a great scourge to agriculture in this State for many years. In times past they were of some help in that I can recall that in my early days on the farm we hunted and trapped rabbits for their meat. Nonetheless rabbits have always been a problem and have devastated wheat crops. We as responsible members of Parliament should perhaps face penalties for passing such a stupid law as that which allows people to keep rabbits, which can escape quite easily and multiply at

an alarming rate. While we are being responsible on this occasion by increasing these penalties, we should also be responsible on other occasions when we pass other laws.

I agree with the provision in the Bill with which it is intended to correct an anomaly concerning different penalties for local authorities on one hand and individual landholders on the other. The legislation will provide the same penalty for the same offence, which is as it should be.

This brings me back to the rabbit problem, because in my farming days I farmed alongside an "A"-class reserve. This reserve was the home of thousands of rabbits. They lived there during the day and came onto my property at night to eat the grass and the crops. It seems that, at that time, I was responsible for the rabbits. Really it was the Government that owned and kept them, yet I was responsible for them it seems.

This brings me to that part of the legislation concerned with the obstructing, misleading, or assaulting of an inspector. If an inspector comes along to a farmer and tells him he needs to trap or poison the rabbits or erect a rabbit-proof fence, and the farmer tells him he does not have any rabbits except after sundown when they come in from the "A"-class reserve adjacent, and then the inspector gets a bit obstreperous, the farmer could be excused for getting into second gear and responding likewise. But that does not mean to say we should settle our differences in the manner of our colleague in another place who settles his differences in the north-west style! The officers who have to enforce these penalties and lay the charges need to be protected by the law, and we therefore agree that it is necessary that the Bill contain these powers.

In some instances penalties have been doubled and some have increased even more. Penalties for failing to control declared plants or animals have increased from \$50 to \$250 for a first offence—as it should be—and from \$100 to \$500 for subsequent offences. I think this is reasonable.

I reiterate that it ought to be the policy of Government departments to encourage landowners and everyone else to be responsible in their attitude to the welfare of our agricultural industry. If a responsible approach were adopted by departmental officers we would see a better understanding between landowners and the department and we would see a great deal more cooperation. It might then not be

necessary to fall back to the penalties provided here.

Unfortunately some people arriving here from other countries bring in plants, animals, and birds which can be very damaging to Australian agriculture. We must be careful to control the Ceylon crow, the sparrows—which are already well and truly established in the Eastern States—and the starlings. Starlings and other birds come across in the holds of ships, where they are often fed by the crews of those ships while travelling here.

I believe that we need these pieces of legislation to protect our agriculture in the future. For that reason, and for that reason alone, I am always sad to see penalties being increased and the hand of the law coming down more strongly on the people.

I ask that a certain amount of commonsense prevail in these matters so that there can be a better understanding between the landowners and those people who are responsible for agriculture in this State and those people—the citizens of Western Australia—who are the benefactors of the great agricultural industries that we have here.

With those comments, I indicate that the Opposition is very happy to support this legislation.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [5.21 p.m.]: I would also like to say a few words in support of the legislation before the House.

The Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act caused a considerable degree of anxiety around the pastoral areas of the State when it was introduced because it instituted a major change and concern was felt as to how effective it would be. It has been extremely effective and I believe it is a credit to all the people concerned with it—the members of the Agriculture Protection Board and of the regional and zone committees, which were the local bodies. It required a real commitment in terms of time and effort on behalf of the local people who were involved. They are the beneficiaries so no doubt they had a very close interest in its outcome; nevertheless, it has been a real success story.

Over the last 10 years or so we have seen a marked turnaround, particularly in my area of Gascoyne, in relation to dingo control. In the mid-1970s, the dingoes were almost out of control. They seemed to be on the move everywhere—so much so that some traditional sheep stations, which had been operating for decades, decided to go into cattle. It is far easier to

combat dingoes when one is running cattle than when one is running sheep. This was a real problem a few years ago, but now, 10 years down the track, we find that the dingo problem in the Gascoyne area has been virtually overcome. This is a tremendous success story. I am not aware of the situation in the Pilbara area, but I understand that it, too, has had considerable success. Certainly in the Gascoyne area what was a real problem 10 years ago has been largely overcome.

I would like to pay tribute to the people who were involved in the various bodies—the regional committees and the zone control authorities. I commend the Government for bringing forward a Bill which will increase the representation on the APB from those zone control authorities because it means that there will still be representation from two major producer bodies. Unless the Government provides a cross-section of people, who represent various interests around the State, and who are actively involved on the zone control authorities—

Mr Grill: That is in another Bill which I introduced today.

Mr LAURANCE: Are we not dealing with that one now?

Mr Grill: Basically today we are dealing with the penalties and next week we will deal with the restructuring. I don't mind dealing with it now, if you want.

Mr LAURANCE: My comments are relevant to both Bills and my contribution now will save me making some comments next week.

I would particularly refer the Minister to the success of the contract dogging scheme. This is a lesson for a government of any political colour. The people running these local contract dogging schemes have had tremendous success because the legislation brought about a change in dog management in this State. These people were given the option of joining together to employ their own doggers. As the Minister would know, previously the doggers were employed by the APB; they were virtually public servants. I am not knocking public servants; but the doggers then came under the Public Service Act and they worked 10 days on and four days off, with travelling time, and so on.

Where a local contract dogging scheme applied, the local people went out as a group and employed their own doggers. This meant that management was at a local level and it was extremely effective. Having local pastoralists come together and contract to employ their own doggers who went around to all of the

properties caused a revolution in the control of wild dogs in this State. With this direct involvement of the pastoralists and the doggers, came tremendous results, which just were not being obtained previously.

If we get away from centralised control and give control back to local people, allowing them to make decisions in their own small area and be responsible for their funds, the results will be much more effective. There has been no difficulty in the utilisation of the funds; these local groups have used them wisely and they have in fact returned funds when there has been an excess at the end of the financial year. As members know, in many Government departments, people rush out and spend excess funds in order to justify the fact that they have expended their budget for the year and are able to ask for just as much or a bit more the next year. If members look at the record, they see that these people have not done that at all. These people have run their operations very efficiently and where they have not required all the funds available, they have been allowed to roll them over into the next financial year so that there is not such a drain on Government funds.

I make the point that this is a tremendous example for Governments of any political colour. Instead of saying, "The Government knows best; the Government must employ these officers to go out into the field", it is better to allocate funds to a local group and say, "Here is the money, you spend it. You are paying taxes in order to provide some of this money anyway, so the Government will give you a budget and you can spend those funds and get the results you want." In this case the people have the result they wanted, and it has been a remarkable one. The system has changed dramatically in the 10 years it has been working in the Gascoyne region, and I presume that other regions have been as successful.

I pay tribute to the people who have participated in those local regional councils, the zone authorities, and also the individual pastoralists who have run those contract dogging schemes which have revolutionised dingo control in this State. They deserve tremendous credit for being able to do that.

With those few words, I support this measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Questions taken.]

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.15 p.m.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Grill (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

RURAL HOUSING (ASSISTANCE) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 7 October.

MR TUBBY (Greenough) [7.23 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill, which will extend the assistance of the Rural Housing Authority to the special leaseholdings now being allocated for horticultural purposes in the Kununurra area.

This will be the sixth amendment to the rural housing legislation which was introduced in 1976. In 1978 the legislation was amended to include leaseholders of perpetual lease farms—the old war service settlement scheme. In 1981 the Act was widened to include full-time farmers who built houses for employees, relatives, and members of their families. In 1982 an amendment was introduced on account of the Companies (Consequential Amendments) Act. In 1984 the Act was extended to cover existing houses to allow them to be extended, and in 1985 the Financial Administration and Audit Act further widened the avenues for which funds could be available to finance the scheme. Now it will be extended again to leaseholders on special purpose grants.

Under the existing legislation the definition of "holding" is—

- (a) land of which an approved farmer is the holder of the fee simple estate; or
- (b) land of which an approved farmer is the lessee under a conditional purchase lease or pastoral lease granted under the Land Act, 1933; or
- (c) land of which an approved farmer is the lessee under a perpetual lease granted for the purposes of the scheme as defined in section 4 of the War Service Land Settlement Scheme Act, 1954;

There is a deficiency in this definition in that those with land held as special leases do not qualify. Where a special lease is issued under section 116 of the Land Act, certain conditions must be met. Among those, in the Kununurra area, is the building of a house on the land. It has been found that leaseholders are not able to build a home and fund a property so that a living can be made from the property. The amendment will permit leaseholders to get assistance from the Rural Housing Authority.

Normal commercial lenders have always lent for development, but rarely for housing on rural properties. This meant that farmers developing new land properties were forced to live under extremely poor conditions or live off the property in a town. Anyone who has developed a property will realise it is tremendously important to spend as much time as possible on the property during the early stages of development, and it is a great handicap for a family if it is not living on the land being developed. This has to take place before the Rural Housing Authority can assist because the viability of the operation and the ability of the farmer to repay the loan must be proved.

I can speak from experience in relation to the need for housing on new land and early developing properties. When I was developing my property, assistance for rural housing was not available, and we were forced to live in a tent for two years before I could scrape up enough funds to build part of my home which still exists on the property today. It was very difficult indeed because a young family on a rural holding will look at their friends in cities and country towns who are able to get assistance to buy and build new homes. It made it very difficult indeed for farmers developing these properties to keep their families contented while they were living under those conditions.

It was not until 1976 that the then member for Roe (Mr Grewar) and I pressured the Court Government to the extent that legislation was introduced in that year to set up a rural housing scheme and the Rural Housing Authority. Mr Grewar had experienced a very similar situation in the area around Esperance, which was being rapidly developed at that stage. In the 10 years since, 417 farmers have been assisted and more than \$13.3 million has been allocated. I would like to congratulate the authority for the wonderful job it has done during those years.

The authority pioneered the scheme and in my opinion it did a tremendous job. The authority's officers travelled throughout the State

and spoke to the local authorities and generally kept in contact with the areas they had to serve.

I would also like to make special mention of the authority's field officers who have been with the authority since the commencement of its operations. The first field officer was Mr Adrian Broun, who is an ex-farmer from Coorow. He has a vast understanding of the needs of country people and a great ability to communicate. He did a wonderful job in travelling throughout the State and keeping in continual communication with shires and country members of Parliament. He was constantly looking at areas where assistance could be given. We found in fact that in a lot of cases many people in rural holdings did not realise that there was a Rural Housing Authority from which they could receive financial assistance other than from their bank. At some later stage, they were able to take advantage of this assistance. With that avenue to enable its officers to get right into the areas of concern, the RHA was able to give greater assistance to these people.

The second field officer was Roy Rayner, who is also an ex-farmer from Carnamah. He was able to be of great assistance in that respect. Adrian Broun is now the secretary of the RHA and Roy Rayner is its main field officer. It is rather unfortunate that between 1976 and 1986 a series of droughts occurred throughout large areas of the wheatbelt and there was a downturn in the economy. If it had not been for that downturn, the number of houses built by the authority would have doubled.

In the very near future I believe there will be a further downturn in the rural areas and, in particular, the main wheat growing areas. I hope that, with the development which is now taking place in Kununurra, the amendments to this Bill will allow the authority to extend into other areas and that will keep it busy. I hope there will come a time when the authority is able to return to the main wheat and sheep growing areas of the State, but it is very difficult to visualise that at this stage because of the number of farmers who are leaving the rural industry and the number of vacant homes in country areas. I think it is of concern to many people that there are so many people who need housing, and yet there are so many vacant homes in country areas.

With those few comments, I would like to indicate once again that the Opposition fully supports this Bill.

MR WILSON (Nollamara—Minister for Housing) [7.34 p.m.]: I would like to thank the Opposition, and in particular the member for Greenough, for their support of this Bill.

It was wholly appropriate that the member for Greenough, in view of his own experience in the hard realities of developing a farming property and his understanding of the difficulties that farming families have in establishing a decent home under those conditions, should have been the member who indicated the Opposition's support for this Bill. I also thank the member for Greenough for his complimentary remarks in respect of the officers of the authority, remarks with which I fully concur.

I have travelled on field trips with the officers and I have witnessed at first hand the effectiveness of their work and the fine way in which they are able to communicate with people in rural areas. I have witnessed also the deep gratitude of the people who have benefited from the services of the RHA—gratitude which those people have been able to convey to the RHA. I am very pleased to have the Opposition's support for this Bill, which will now extend those advantages to horticulturists in Kununurra who are lessees of special land on the Ord River irrigation scheme.

I again commend the Bill to all members.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

MR WILSON (Nollamara—Minister for Housing) [7.37 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [7.38 p.m.]: I would like to take a moment or two to endorse the remarks of my colleague, the member for Greenough, in his support of the Bill.

On at least one previous occasion I have given my support to the work of the Rural Housing Authority and I am delighted to see that the Government has come forward with another measure which will extend its charter even further. I want to make a couple of points in endorsing the remarks made earlier about the significant influence the authority has had on housing in the rural areas of this State. We will be able to look back in a few years' time

and say that this legislation was a watershed in making good housing available in country areas. It was always difficult to try to provide funding to farmers and pastoralists in remote localities.

This is one of the things which has contributed to the remorseless movement of people from country areas to the city. Steps can be taken to reverse this trend and I believe that this is one of them. As well as funds for good housing for pastoralists in the northern areas of this State, the improved communications that have been put into place in recent years through the satellite, which has given them television, telephone services, and so on, mean that these people are starting to enjoy some of the benefits that people in the urban areas of the State take for granted. I believe this legislation will assist people to remain in the future.

It has taken some time for this legislation to come before the House. In fact I recall some years ago, when I was the Minister for Housing, the difficulty of providing housing for horticulturists at Kununurra on the Ord River was looked at. The then chairman of the authority, Mr Bruce McKenzie, went to Kununurra about five years ago to meet with farmers and to investigate their special needs. This legislation has taken quite a while in its gestation. I know that although Mr McKenzie has since retired, he would be happy to know that this measure is now before the Parliament because he really spearheaded it quite some years ago.

It is a matter of regret that the authority is receiving a small number of applications only for housing from people in the wheatbelt. All members of Parliament would understand that the reason for that is the difficult economic circumstances.

However, this Bill provides the opportunity for pastoralists to be encouraged to make application for loans for homes on their properties in the next year or so. Most of them are having a better season this year than they have had for some time—wool prices are much better than are wheat prices. A few of the pastoralists have experienced a reasonable season.

I am pleased to learn that the number of homes being financed by the authority in the pastoral areas is starting to grow. It is only a small number, and almost without exception assistance has been given to those people who have young families. The assistance will help to keep those people on their properties and give them a better future to which to look forward.

I advise pastoralists that I am sure funds will be available from the authority and at a time of adversity in the wheatbelt areas there could be more opportunity for them to take advantage of this scheme, not only for new homes, but also for alterations to existing homes. I am sure the authority will do everything in its power to spread this message throughout the pastoral area. For that reason, I am happy to support the third reading of this Bill.

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [7.42 p.m.]: In the life of Parliaments and members of Parliament there are some pieces of legislation that we see come to fruition. In this case, I speak of legislation to establish the Rural Housing Authority and I pay special tribute to a former member of Parliament, Mr Geoff Grewar, for the role he played in its establishment.

The work the authority has done for rural Western Australia is a great credit to it and I pay a special tribute also to the Minister of the day for the understanding way in which he has allowed the authority to develop.

The Bill before the House will allow the authority to move into horticultural centres in the north of the State and I give the Minister credit for bringing the legislation before the House.

The authority was established initially to help new land farming, but concern was expressed that the existing housing was unsatisfactory and the farmers were not in a financial position to improve it. My own electorate of Vasse bears sound testimony to the impact of housing on farmers.

Despite the economic difficulty facing farmers in the agricultural area of our State, it is an important social fact that they must have some form of adequate housing. Governments must be given credit for understanding that there is a social dilemma in rural Western Australia where adequate housing is not available.

The rural areas of Western Australia have been accommodated by the Rural Housing Authority, but another aspect which could be addressed concerns employees. In some country areas it is not possible for the private sector to provide housing for its employees, especially in view of the current climate of adverse taxing measures. I do not believe Governments have the resources to provide housing in country areas, but I believe the Rural Housing Authority may be one avenue by which stock firms and farmers may well be encouraged to provide housing in country towns. I hope the

Minister will take this matter on board and consider it in due course.

With all the legislation and goodwill that members of Parliament may attempt to put into practice, the end result rests on the work carried out by the officers of the Rural Housing Authority and they have given dedicated service to this State. Many people whose houses have been well below standard have been prepared to welcome to their lounge rooms the officers from the authority to discuss the conditions in which they live. They have bared their souls to the officers of the authority and they deserve some credit because their information has resulted in the success of the scheme.

I support the third reading of this Bill and compliment the Government on its move.

MR COWAN (Merredin—Leader of the National Party) [7.48 p.m.]: I would like the opportunity to comment on a provision in this Bill.

The **SPEAKER**: Are you aware that this is the third reading of the Bill?

Mr **COWAN**: Yes, I am aware that it is the third reading. Unfortunately, I was unable to be present for the second reading debate. The comments I wish to make will be brief and they relate to conditions contained in the amending Bill whereby special leaseholders will be able to gain access to funds made available by the Rural Housing Authority.

In the Minister's second reading speech he made it clear that this provision was made available primarily to satisfy those people who live in the Kununurra region, but in response to a question put to the Minister he said that the advice he had been given was that special leaseholders in other areas of the State were also eligible for assistance under this scheme.

All members may not be aware, but many of the members of this House, particularly those in country electorates close to mining areas know that there are many agricultural properties that are based on special leases and the occupiers cannot be granted freehold titles because of the mineral potential of the land. For that reason, the Land and Surveys Department has been prepared to grant a special lease and now, for the first time, these people—I do not claim there will be a large number of them—will have access to this type of finance. The Government and the Minister must be commended for taking this action.

Over the years there has been a steady decline in the number of people who have been assisted by this particular measure. I suggest to the Minister that he can anticipate this decline will continue. The reason is that the people for whom the Rural Housing Authority was first established are now going away from capital investment; they are in the position where they will not be able to make any capital investment at all. The other half of the farming community, those people who in the past have had money available to them from normal lending sources, will be the very people who will be eligible for assistance under this scheme.

It will be found that whereas once the authority was assisting people in the Esperance, Lake Grace, Ravensthorpe, Jerramungup, and other marginal areas of the agricultural regions in this State, people from the more established regions will be applying for assistance. Once it becomes widely known that they can do so, an upsurge can be anticipated in the number of applications from people seeking to renovate existing homes or to build new homes on properties established for a long time.

Whichever way it goes it is a worthwhile exercise and we support it, just as we support the expansion of the provisions of this Bill in giving special leaseholders the opportunity to gain access to this type of funding. The National Party supports the measure introduced by the Minister.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

CONTROL OF VEHICLES (OFF-ROAD AREAS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 7 October.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [7.52 p.m.]: The purpose of this Bill is to increase the membership of the advisory committee appointed under the Control of Vehicles (Off-road areas) Act from five to seven. It is proposed to add a person with appropriate experience in the operation of four-wheel drive vehicles and another person with appropriate experience in environmental matters. The current advisory committee of five members includes a chairman, who is an officer of the Department of Local Government, a person nominated by the Local Government Association, a person nominated by the Country Shire Councils Association, and two other members from user groups. At present one of those last two mentioned is

associated with a motor cycle club and the other with dune buggies.

During the eight years since this legislation was introduced, there has been an enormous expansion in the number of four-wheel drive vehicles registered in Western Australia. Many of these vehicles operate off-road; they operate in the bush and on the beach. I am informed that the four-wheel drive vehicle association is a most responsible organisation which arranges all sorts of activities for its members. Therefore, the Opposition supports the inclusion of a representative from that organisation because it is very much affected by this legislation.

The legislation was introduced in 1978 in response to many complaints from local authorities. The local authorities in the outer edges of the metropolitan area contain numerous reserves which have not yet been developed—I even include the City of Stirling in this category because it has a very large bush area. These bush areas were very attractive to juveniles who took their trail bikes and raced around the reserves, particularly after school and at weekends. They caused a great deal of disturbance to householders living adjacent to the reserves; they created noise and dust in some cases, and they damaged the vegetation. A great deal of trouble occurred and aggression developed.

Many people thought the answer to the problem was for local authorities to provide land somewhere in their municipalities which these people could use. But, it does not work like that; as most of us would know, many of the young people merely wanted to trundle their bikes along the footpath to the nearest bush country, which was close to residential properties. The problem was not solved.

After eight years only nine permitted areas have been set aside—I am not sure whether that is just in the metropolitan area or goes outside it. The opportunity was not taken up by local authorities as had been hoped by the people introducing the legislation. No doubt the councillors were very wary of ratepayers' objections when choosing areas and, perhaps in some cases, the local authorities did not have sufficient areas to make available for this sort of activity.

Lancelin is the biggest area set aside for the use of these vehicles and it is largely used by dune buggies. Too often when a dune buggy turns over, somebody is killed or seriously maimed and there has been great opposition to the use of the buggies at Lancelin. I am told

that those people who belong to the dune buggy associations or clubs are in the main responsible and that generally the trouble comes from individuals who lack experience and support and advice from a club; they are the people who tend to get into difficulty. A great deal of personal responsibility is involved in the use of these vehicles and perhaps some of the drivers are at an age at which they are still interested in seeking thrills and their activities are dangerous under any circumstances.

A serious noise problem arose from the use of trail bikes in local municipalities. I once spoke to an expert in the area of motor bikes and the like and he told me there was no advantage to the operator in having a noisy exhaust system. He said that in some cases it was more expensive to remove a device than to keep it, and he implied that there was no gain other than the driver imagining he was winning the Le Mans, or racing in Adelaide.

In 1970, when I was a councillor of the City of Stirling, I was plagued by ratepayers asking me to go to undeveloped reserves to listen to the noisy trail bikes and the like. I remember one man who lived close to Star Swamp—some members will have heard of Star Swamp over the years and I will not go into my noble part in saving the area—who was suffering immensely. He told me that his wife was on the verge of nervous exhaustion as the young boys—I cannot remember girls being involved—rode around the area. He told me that if I could not fix the problem, he would do so himself. He said he would put piano wire across the trail as they used to in Holland against the German Donau bike riders when he was a member of the Dutch resistance. That certainly motivated me into activating the City of Stirling.

Mr Pearce: If you have constituents like that, I would not boast about it.

Mr CLARKO: What was I boasting about?

Mr Wilson: It indicates how horrible the noise was.

Mr CLARKO: The fellow may have been tongue-in-cheek but he was most annoyed by the set-up and his wife was a bundle of nerves because of this problem.

Mr Watt: Regarding the use of piano wire, that actually happened in Albany, but fortunately it was discovered by a jogger rather than a trail bike rider, and serious injury was avoided.

Mr CLARKO: As well as the piano wire which was threatened—and how seriously I do not know—people in the area did dig holes in

the trail bike paths and put broken bottles and things of that sort at the bottom—shades of Tarzan! That was a measure of the worry that those people suffering the noise problem had reached. It is most reprehensible behaviour, but that is the point at which they had arrived.

When this legislation came forward it did so in an emotional atmosphere that goes with that sort of problem. What interests me is that when I read the newspapers these days, or participate in media stories and so on, I do not hear much about this problem any more. It is only 15 years later. Perhaps times have changed—perhaps young people are interested in other things.

Mr Carr: You do not read about it in the newspaper, but you should read the complaints that come to my desk.

Mr CLARKO: I would appreciate the Minister giving us some measure of the problems that do occur. I take it that because the Minister does not have other amendments to the legislation, he cannot come up with any other means by which to take further action. That is not meant as a criticism. I take it that the committee has tried to devise other measures. However, if there is a permitted area two miles away and a boy does not have a driver's licence, how does he get there? That is not the solution.

I am interested to hear the Minister say that complaints are still coming in to him. Perhaps he could tell us whether he believes there should be greater efforts to expand on those nine—if nine is the correct figure—permitted areas, and whether the Government believes it can exert its influence on local authorities in order to increase that number; and if so, would that solve the problems that are, a little to my surprise, apparently still continuing?

In addition, councils feel that if the legislation we introduced in 1978 is to work properly, it needs a considerable amount of supervision, and many councils cannot see their way clear to providing the rangers necessary to sufficiently distribute them to prevent these unpleasant occurrences.

I have discussed the problems of noise and, in some areas, of dust, and the other one, which leads on to the second part of the amendment we have before us tonight, is the question of damage to the environment. This was always a matter of concern to people. I think the people who were most disturbed were those who suffered a noise problem, but the most broadly-based group were those concerned with damage

to the environment. This argument initially centred around damage to what I would call the bush, but recently the emphasis has changed somewhat, I am told, in that people are showing a great deal of concern about damage to the coastal dunes. The dunes can be damaged by trail bikes in the ordinary way, but when four-wheel drive vehicles travel up and down beaches in remote areas and turn inland, they come back through the dunes and cause damage. As a former geography teacher, I know they cause blowouts to develop, and people have shown me aerial photographs demonstrating that that damage is occurring.

Mr Speaker, this next point does not relate to the Bill but I hope I may be allowed to make it. I think it will not be long before we will need to look very carefully at the use of beaches by vehicles which are motorised. It will not be long before a bather, sunbaking in an isolated spot, is run over. I have been in some of those spots and think the way those vehicles run up and down the beaches is ridiculous. Government attention will have to be given to this matter before long.

For the reasons I have just given, I believe it is logical to provide the advisory committee with a member who has environmental expertise. Such a person should help the committee make better decisions which give greater emphasis to environmental aspects, although I am told that since it has operated the committee has had many observers sitting in with the advisory people, including environmental professionals. No doubt the committee was taking advice from those people before and perhaps the Minister has only included this measure in a symbolic way to bring that person from the edge of the room up to the table. The Opposition therefore supports the addition of these two members.

I have only one disagreement with the Bill, and it is a very small point. The Minister, in his second reading speech, commented that there is a need to balance the representatives of the planning and enforcement agencies with the user groups. I guess that is built into the argument that "that is the reason we had to put on two—one from one side and one from the other". The Minister said in his speech—

This is seen as desirable and a principle which should be retained.

I cannot accept that that is a principle. I believe there is no principle that one must balance those two groups, and that it is philosophically unnecessary to have such a balance. In fact, if it

were true that the committee consisted of two parts comprising the planning and enforcement agencies, and juxtaposed to them the user groups, every decision the committee made would reflect that, the decisions would come out balanced, and the chairman would make all the decisions. In that case, we could get rid of the committee. When the Minister comes to making a decision again about adding another person to the advisory committee, he should not shackle himself with such principles. If he is convinced somebody should be on the committee, he should appoint him and not seek to increase the number of members from five, to seven, to nine, and so on. I do not believe there is any magic in that, nor a principle. It is a needless balance.

The Opposition supports the Bill.

MR HOUSE (Katanning-Roe) [8.07 p.m.]: The National Party supports the expansion of the committee, but there are a couple of points I wish to raise. Often in these cases environmental people tend to overstate the damage done, not only by vehicles, but by other people using some of the parks, recreation areas, beaches, and sand dune areas. I speak especially of the areas along the southern coast.

I take some issue with the point made by the previous speaker when he said he thought maybe the day was coming when we would have to ban vehicles from beaches. That is a fairly typical comment from somebody who is based in the city and who has not had a good look at what happens in the southern areas of Western Australia. I can assure the member for Karrinyup that there are many beautiful beaches in the areas bounded by Albany, Bremer Bay, Hopetoun, and Esperance that one cannot reach without using four-wheel drive or beach buggy vehicles.

Mr Clarko: All I was calling for was care when you do it, and I said that consideration should be given to it.

Mr HOUSE: I suggest the member for Karrinyup read what he said.

Mr Clarko: You do not think there is any danger in those vehicles driving along beaches? Of course, there may not be in your southern area.

Mr HOUSE: That is the point I am talking about. If the member does not think he said it, he should read his proof.

Mr Clarko: The real point is that there is a possible danger with the conflict of the two.

Mr HOUSE: There may be some conflict in some places, and I am sure that there would be on the more populated beaches. That leads me to the next point: There needs to be a lot of practical commonsense in administering some of these laws, and the local authorities in each area should be involved, as they have available the opinions of local people who have some knowledge of their area.

Although it would be a fairly large job for a shire to look after a coastline the size of that around the Shires of Ravensthorpe and Jerramungup, this local involvement is important. There are large expanses of country in the area and large expanses of beaches and sand dunes that have had just as much damage done to them by kangaroos and wild grazing animals as has ever been done to them by a few people driving beach buggies and by fishermen getting to the beach in four-wheel drives.

I would hate to see a situation where we had an authority based in the city closing off access to some of those beaches and other areas to amateur fishermen and people wanting to go camping. Perhaps the Minister could comment later. My point is that we need practical people making practical decisions.

The National Party supports the Bill.

MR CARR (Geraldton—Minister for Local Government) [8.11 p.m.]: I thank both speakers for their support of the legislation. The member for Karrinyup spoke at some length, not so much on the amendment contained in the Bill but on a fairly comprehensive summary of the background of the parent Act and on aspects of the prevailing situation. He outlined some of the cases in the past, and I think the case of the threat of a wire across a track is an indication of the extent of the frustration that some people feel about the type of problem being caused by off-road vehicles. Obviously the threat of such action cannot be tolerated, but nevertheless it expresses the extent of the frustration.

The member for Karrinyup was a little surprised to hear that I still receive expressions of complaint about the conduct of riders and drivers of off-road vehicles. I was not trying to say to him that I believe the problem is as bad as it ever was; that is not my view. I firmly believe the problem has reduced, and I suspect that the number of expressions of complaint that come across my desk now would be less than the expressions of complaint received by the previous Minister prior to the enactment of the original legislation. But people do com-

plain, and in some metropolitan areas and indeed other areas of the State, we can find valid grounds for complaint. There is no doubt that some people cause noise problems and dust problems and that some people cause environmental-damage problems.

In that context there is scope for more local councils to do more. The member for Karrinyup made the point that only a small number of permitted areas have been gazetted. The onus is on local governments to take the initiative and to request the advisory committee to consider their request for permitted areas so that it may in due course recommend to me that those permitted areas be gazetted. There are places where action could be taken by local authorities, but I stress that it is my view that it is the initiative of local authorities to take the first step.

I accept that the driving of off-road vehicles on beaches on occasions could put at risk the well-being of other persons on the beach. By the same token, the magnitude of implementing a system of controls over where people can ride on a beach would be immense. As the member for Katanning-Roe has pointed out, areas in the south-west have very long and secluded beaches, and it would be very difficult to implement a system that imposed too rigid a control over the driving of four-wheel drive vehicles on beaches. Certainly we have no intention to embark on that sort of system of control at this time.

The member for Karrinyup raised a point concerning the balance on the committee, and I would not want him to think I was making a big issue of wanting the committee to be balanced. The background to this change is that the committee of five has worked quite successfully with exchanges of views from all parties concerned and with input from a number of observers who do sit in on committee meetings. It does not operate as a committee of two versus two, with the chairman needing to make all the decisions.

The main representations for change have come from the four-wheel drive clubs; they have been quite vociferous over an extended period in seeking some representation on the committee and a view had certainly come to be formed in my mind that that was appropriate representation. Other large groups were represented on the committee, and they had thought there were sufficient user groups involved to represent all user groups. We had some difficulty deciding whether to extend the representation to include four-wheel drive

clubs. It is in that context that I thought it appropriate to appoint another person to represent the Minister for Conservation and Land Management on the committee. In a sense that could be said to balance the committee with three from the enforcement agencies and three from the user groups. If it comes to a dispute on a particular item, that might well be an appropriate balance to have, but I did not want to overstate the view that I thought it a very important principle to balance the representation.

I thank the House for its support.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Carr (Minister for Local Government), and transmitted to the Council.

AMERICA'S CUP YACHT RACE (SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), read a first time.

Second Reading

MR PEARCE (Armada—Leader of the House) [8.20 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Shortly after *Australia II* won the America's Cup, the Government of Western Australia initiated a strategy plan to ensure the State's ability to successfully host the America's Cup defence. The first of special legislation, necessary in conducting such an event, was passed earlier this year. At that time, members appreciated that existing legislation in Western Australia was never intended to superimpose an event such as the America's Cup yacht race and its associated activities.

This Bill reflects the recommendations of two legislative working parties established to ascertain whether there was a need to introduce changes to existing legislation.

The transport legislative working party, comprising representatives from the Police Department, State Planning Commission, Fremantle

City Council, Department of Local Government, Main Roads Department and America's Cup Office, has identified several areas where existing legislation is inadequate to meet the needs of the event. For example, the process of providing additional parking facilities or alterations to existing facilities could take several weeks. Where a local authority has by-laws covering parking, the local authority must endorse the proposal and recommend its implementation to the Minister for Local Government. Once approved by the Minister, the local authority may then implement the proposal.

Where the local authority does not have its own by-laws covering parking, a proposal must be forwarded by the Commissioner for Main Roads for the local authority's endorsement. Once endorsed, the Commissioner for Main Roads may then implement the proposal. Similarly, the provision of traffic signs and signals requires the approval of the Commissioner for Main Roads, with implementation taking several days.

Another problem is that not all local authorities have the power to tow away vehicles that may be obstructing traffic or vehicles that in fact may be abandoned.

In response to these matters, this Bill proposes uniform legislation to enable a rapid response to any unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the period of the America's Cup. It is not the Government's intention to close roads during the America's Cup. However, the Bill includes the power to close roads if considered necessary.

Visitor-number predictions are available. However, the actual number of visitors visiting the State and areas around the State during the period may vary considerably, given a number of varying circumstances such as whether it is a race day or what major events are scheduled for particular days, which yachts are competing on any given day, or even the weather.

Because of these variable circumstances, the impact of visitors on the road system will be known at short notice and consequently legislation should be sufficiently flexible to respond quickly to these circumstances.

The legislation will be vested in one Minister who will have the power to issue orders. In issuing orders, the Minister may consult with the Transport Advisory Committee that is proposed to be established in this Bill. That committee comprises representatives of authorities which are involved in the management of traffic on our roads.

The second legislative working party comprising representatives from the State Planning Commission, the Health Department of WA, the Department of Local Government, the Western Australian Tourism Commission and the Caravan Parks and Trades Association of WA, has identified potential problems in accommodating the expected influx of caravanners and campers.

Three areas have been identified that will ease the potential for problems. These are: Temporary overloading of caravan parks; accommodation of caravans on private property; and contingency parks for caravans and camps. This Bill will enable a caravan park proprietor to exceed the registered number of caravans that may be parked in a caravan park, provided the site can accommodate additional vans, and subject to the approval of the local authority.

With regard to the parking of caravans on private property, the Bill will enable visitors to park a caravan on a residential lot, thereby reducing the impact upon existing caravan parks. At present, the by-laws enable only members of the family of the occupants of the residence to do this.

The Bill will enable temporary, emergency caravan parks to be set up on private and/or public land. Although it is expected that existing caravan parks will have adequate capacity to cater for the expected demands, it is prudent that the State Government designate contingency caravan park sites in case there are not sufficient facilities available due to unforeseen visitor numbers.

In conclusion, the State Government has endeavoured to legislate for all anticipated circumstances and situations that may arise during the cup defence. However, with such a significant event, such legislation must account for the unforeseen as well as the expected.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Thompson.

LEGAL AID COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), read a first time.

Second Reading

MR PEARCE (Armadale—Leader of the House) [8.25 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill proposes to amend the Legal Aid Commission Act in a number of respects, some of which are proposed as a result of the Legal Aid Commission's experience in the administration of the Act over a number of years.

Clause 5 amends section 7 of the Act to alter the composition of the commission. The number of commission members is proposed to be increased from eight to nine, as a result of the number of members appointed by the Commonwealth Attorney General being increased from one to two. The members to be appointed on the nomination of the Law Society are reduced from three to two. That third member will now be appointed on the nomination of the State Attorney General. This will allow more flexibility of appointment from people with relevant community experience.

Clause 6 amends section 12 of the Act by removing reference to appeals to the Privy Council.

Clause 7 amends section 14 to require the approval of the commission in respect of disbursements or out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of assignments of legal aid to private practitioners. At present, reimbursement to an assigned practitioner for payment of disbursements or out-of-pocket expenses is mandatory, whether or not such payments have been approved. The practitioner need show only that they were "properly" made by him in providing legal services under the assignment. That was not the Act's original intention and it is now intended to expressly require prior approval.

Clause 8 inserts a new section 16B to empower the commission to delegate its functions or powers to a member of the commission, a legal aid committee, the Director of Legal Aid or any member of staff. Such a delegated function or power cannot be further delegated.

Clause 11 amends section 36 of the Act by replacing the word "prescribed" with the word "approved". At present, section 36 requires that an application for legal aid be made in writing in a prescribed form. This is unnecessarily restrictive and it is proposed that the application form simply be approved by the Commission.

Clause 12 is intended to avoid difficulties experienced elsewhere by making it clear that an applicant's "lifestyle" or apparent financial resources are relevant in determining applications for legal aid under the Act. Experience elsewhere has shown that it is sometimes difficult to properly assess the applicant's real financial situation. In some cases very little in the way of income or assets is disclosed, although there is justifiable concern about the applicant's financial circumstances because of his or her apparently wealthy "lifestyle".

Clause 12(c) addresses an increasingly important area of legal services, namely, services to children. At present, section 37(3) precludes a grant of legal aid to a child who is under the guardianship of the Director General of Community Services, or a child placed under the control of that department, or to a child who would ordinarily be the responsibility of a department, instrumentality, or agency of either the Commonwealth or State Governments. This is because the financial resources of the department, instrumentality, or agency would have to be taken into account in determining the child's financial eligibility. Clause 12(c) is intended to overcome this problem by stipulating that in such cases the commission disregard the financial resources of the department, instrumentality, or agency when considering the financial eligibility of the child for legal aid. This amendment will ensure that legal aid services to children are provided uniformly by the commission rather than a range of departments, instrumentalities, or agencies, which may not necessarily be in the best position to make decisions concerning the provision of legal aid to the child.

Clause 12(e) is intended to meet Australia's obligations, in so far as Western Australia is concerned, under the Convention on International Access to Justice, usually referred to as "the Hague Convention". The clause inserts a new section 37(4c), to stipulate that, where an application for legal aid is made in relation to proceedings for a purpose to which the Hague Convention applies, and the applicant has been granted or has received legal aid for those proceedings from another nation state which is a party to the convention, a legal aid authority of the commission shall grant aid, notwithstanding any other provision of the Act.

Clause 14 amends section 39 of the Act to empower a legal aid authority to impose conditions on a grant of legal aid.

At present, section 39 expressly refers to two conditions; namely—to pay to the commission the whole or any part of the cost of providing the legal aid; or to make a payment or payments to the commission in respect of any out-of-pocket expenses incurred or to be incurred in providing the legal aid.

It is proposed that appropriate conditions be able to be imposed, including the grant and execution of a mortgage, bill of sale, debenture charge, or other security over land or other property, in order to secure the payment of the whole or any part of the cost of providing legal aid.

Clause 15 amends section 40 of the Act. At present, section 40 empowers the commission to exclude or remove the name of a private practitioner from the panels of names of practitioners able to undertake legal aid assignments.

The removal of a practitioner's name under section 40(6) operates only to prevent a practitioner accepting new legal aid cases after the date of removal. It does not prevent him continuing to act on cases assigned before that date.

Clause 15 rectifies that position by inserting a new section 40(6a) to the Act, which will allow the commission to have regard to any order or finding of fact relating to the particular practitioner made in disciplinary proceedings by the Barristers' Board or the Full Court of the Supreme Court.

Clause 15 also inserts a new section 40(8a) which empowers the commission to direct a private practitioner whose name has been removed from the panels to cease acting in respect of a particular case or legal aid cases generally.

Clause 19 amends section 64 to permit, with approval of the chairman of the commission, or the commission itself, disclosure for the purposes of the Legal Practitioners Act. It provides also that the prohibition upon disclosure not apply to disclosure of information or production of documents to an inquiry before the Barristers' Board nor to disciplinary proceedings before the Full Court of the Supreme Court.

These amendments are necessary for the proper, effective, and more efficient operation of the administration of legal aid in this State. In the main, they implement requests by the Legal Aid Commission, based on its practical experience in recent years.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mrs Beggs (Minister for Racing and Gaming), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MRS BEGGS (Whitford—Minister for Racing and Gaming) [8.32 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On 8 June 1984 the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into and report upon the liquor laws in Western Australia presented its report to His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor and Administrator of Western Australia.

As a result of an extensive examination of the report, a study of the liquor legislation in other States, and consultation with industry, I propose to amend the Liquor Act in two stages.

The first stage provides for a clear separation between the judicial and administrative functions of the Liquor Act.

The second stage will involve a complete review of the Liquor Act, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Royal Commission and the views of industry.

This Bill is designed to provide such a separation and at the same time provide for a less expensive, more efficient, and more streamlined method of administering the Liquor Act.

It is proposed that the judicial and administrative functions of the liquor laws be separated by—

- (1) abolishing the presently constituted Licensing Court and by creating in its stead a liquor licensing court headed by a single judge; and
- (2) by establishing an administrative body headed by a director of liquor licensing.

The proposed liquor licensing court will be responsible for the granting, renewal, transfer, forfeiture, suspension, surrender, or removal of those liquor licences where there is provision within the Act for industry and public objection. These licences are shown as category "A" licences in the Bill.

An important provision of the Bill which will be of great benefit to the industry, measured by way of less cost and less delay, is the power

conferred on the director of liquor licensing to deal with an application in respect of category "A" licences where the objection provisions pursuant to the Act are not utilised. In other words, if there is no objection from any source to an application in respect of a category "A" licence, the director will deal with it administratively, rather than have the matter dealt with by way of formal court hearing. This will save time and cost.

There is a safeguard in respect of the director's powers in that any decision by the director on a category "A" licence and certain other matters is appealable to the liquor licensing court.

All other matters relating to licences and permits which are carried out currently by the Licensing Court and which do not require judicial determination will, under these new proposals be carried out by the administrative body and not the court.

In granting powers to the director to determine certain matters, the Bill provides that the powers of determination are to proceed with as little formality as possible. Where it is considered necessary, the director may conduct a hearing and all parties are permitted to be present. Such hearings will be of an informal nature.

This procedure will be of major benefit to the liquor industry and the public, as many matters are capable of being administratively determined, especially where there may be some dispute and conciliation is required. The cost saving such an approach would achieve is self-evident.

The passing of this Bill is seen as a first step in the process of updating and simplifying the Liquor Act. The Act is unnecessarily complicated and obtuse and experiences in other States have shown that a simple, easy to understand but effective Liquor Act is possible. The establishment of the liquor licensing administrative body provides the resources and structure to undertake this task.

Briefly, the court will deal with the following matters—

- The grant of all category "A" licences;
- the revocation or suspension of licences or any other disciplinary proceedings against the licensee;
- applications for the limitation of trading conditions on the grounds of complaints from local residents, where the director has

failed to reach a settlement between the parties;
 proposed alterations to category "A" licensed premises that would result in a significant material difference to the nature of the licence;
 the grant of entertainment permits;
 any disagreement with a determination of the director;
 removals or transfers of licences that have attracted formal objections; and
 matters referred to it by the director because of some difficult point of law involved, or for some other reason.

The director of the authority will be responsible for—

The grant of all other licences not being category "A" licences;
 alterations to all licensed premises except those that significantly affect the nature of a category "A" licence;
 fee assessments and reassessments;
 unobjected removals or transfers of licences;
 surrender of licences;
 variation of trading hours; and
 all other permits, certificates, declarations, and informal applications.

Generally, the emphasis of this Bill is on reducing the complexity of applying for certain types of liquor licences, and a more streamlined structure which will be able to respond to the needs of the people and industry.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr House.

COAL MINERS' WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR PEARCE (Armada—Leader of the House) [8.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Coal Miners' Welfare Act that was passed originally in 1947. Its purpose was to provide amenities, other than those required to be provided by owners under the Coal Mines Regulation Act, for coal miners, and the improvement of the physical,

cultural, and social well-being of coal miners, and their education, recreation, and living conditions.

This was done by the creation of the coal miners' welfare fund, and a board to administer the fund. The fund itself was financed by the owner of every coal mine paying the fund one penny ha'penny per ton of coal produced from every mine which, when metricated, became 1.2303c per tonne. The rate of 1.2303c per tonne was set in 1947 and has not been changed since.

The fund has been used to finance a fairly wide range of amenities programmes in Collie, with the benefits of these programmes being enjoyed by the Collie community generally.

However, the fund's ability to continue financing these projects at the same rate has been gradually diminished by inflation. Figures show that in 1948, the levy on 738 948 tonnes of coal gave an income to the fund of \$9 160 while in 1985 the income was \$45 184 from the levy on 3 672 619 tonnes of coal.

This Bill seeks to increase the rate of levy, by way of regulation rather than by incorporation in the Act, from 1.2303c per tonne to 2c per tonne. The other amendments proposed are of a cosmetic nature to bring the Act up-to-date and in line with current drafting practice.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Thompson.

ACTS AMENDMENT (PORT AUTHORITIES) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Troy (Minister for Transport), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR TROY (Mundaring—Minister for Transport) [8.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Port Authority Acts for the ports of Albany, Bunbury, Esperance, Fremantle, Geraldton, and Port Hedland to permit the appointment of board members for periods of up to three years.

The current Acts state that board members are to be appointed for periods of exactly three years. This, on occasions, does not serve the best interests of Port Authorities as it does not

permit flexibility in the appointment of board members.

The amended arrangements will give that flexibility. Of greatest importance, it will allow the appointments of board members to be staggered to avoid the situation where the terms of office of many members terminate at the same time, with the difficulties that implies for continuity.

The amended arrangements will also make it possible to have shorter appointments for other reasons; for example, to appoint members who have specific expertise which is required for only a short period where the reduced appointment is acceptable both to the port authority and to the member himself.

The thrust of the proposed amendment to the port authority Acts is to ensure that at all stages, the interests of the port authorities are of paramount importance and that the necessary expertise can be obtained at a very senior level. On a point of practicality it is also necessary to ensure that the appointment of a chairman does not conflict with the individual's term of appointment as a board member. Therefore it is necessary to amend the legislation to ensure that the term of appointment as a chairman cannot exceed the term of appointment as a board member.

Amendment is not required to the Dampier Port Authority Act as this Act already enables board members to be appointed for periods of less than three years. A further benefit of this amendment, therefore, is to bring about uniformity of all the port authority Acts with regard to the appointment of board members.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Laurance.

BETTING CONTROL (BUNBURY GOLDEN CLASSIC) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mrs Beggs (Minister for Racing and Gaming), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MRS BEGGS (Whitford—Minister for Racing and Gaming) [8.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow licensed bookmakers to field on the proposed Bunbury Golden Classic.

The Bunbury Chamber of Commerce is embarking upon a programme to attract tourists to Bunbury, especially during the city's 150th anniversary celebrations.

One of the concepts that has attracted unanimous support from business groups and other organisations in Bunbury is the staging, on an annual basis, of a professional foot racing series which will be known as the Bunbury Golden Classic. The Golden Classic is based on the highly successful Stawell Gift at Bendigo in Victoria.

The Stawell Gift, which is run at Easter each year, has been running for approximately 100 years. It attracts in the vicinity of 800 competitors amounting to some 2 000 individual entries and leading up to the main event which offers a total prize purse of \$50 000. One of the main reasons for the success of the Stawell Gift is the provision of on-course bookmaking facilities.

It is proposed to hold the Golden Classic on the Anzac Day weekend which will enable athletes to compete in both the Stawell Gift and the Bunbury Golden Classic.

The Bill before the House proposes to permit bookmakers to field on the Golden Classic as a "one off" special event. I would like to emphasise that the Bill permits bookmakers to field on the classic for 1987 only. The legislation has a sunset clause and will cease on 30 June 1987.

A feature of this Bill is that even though it has a sunset clause, section 8(2) provides for validity of action and the payment of moneys after the legislation has ceased. All other conditions and requirements under the Betting Control Act 1954 will apply and include the keeping of records, the production of financial returns and the payment of tax on bets taken.

A further feature of the Bill is that betting will be restricted to on-course facilities only. The Totalisator Agency Board is not entitled to accept bets on the Bunbury Golden Classic.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Bradshaw.

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion without notice by Mr Gordon Hill (Minister for Police and Emergency Services), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR GORDON HILL (Helena—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [8.46 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The provisions of this Bill will honour an election undertaking to provide both age and age service pensioners with a 50 per cent concession on motor vehicle registration fees.

It has been of concern to the Government that this category of pensioner has been disadvantaged in the provisions of concessions. The concession will extend to those age pensioners and age service pensioners not currently entitled to a concession.

To be entitled to the concession a person must be the holder of a Pensioner Health Benefit Card and receive an age pension under the Social Security Act or an age service pension under the Veterans Entitlement Act.

The concession will be made available only after an application is made by the owner of the vehicle and will apply to only one vehicle, either a motor car or motor vehicle with a tare weight not exceeding 3 000 kilograms, a motor propelled caravan, motor cycle, or a moped owned by the person.

To obtain this concession a person will be required to make a declaration setting out his or her pension details. The application for the concession will be able to be made at any licensing and services centre in the metropolitan or country areas.

The new concession will apply to motor vehicle licences issued or renewed from 1 January 1987. Other pensioners such as totally and permanently incapacitated persons currently receiving a concession will not be disadvantaged by this Bill and will continue to receive their present entitlements even if their pension is converted by the Commonwealth Government.

This new concession is another undertaking of this Government's commitment to the senior citizens in our community to ensure they do not become disadvantaged.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Laurance.

MISCELLANEOUS REPEALS BILL*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 24 July.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [8.49 p.m.]: This Bill sets out to repeal a number of items of legislation which are no longer necessary and include the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act and the Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Act. There are a number of other Acts and accompanying regulations which are unnecessary, and the Opposition supports their repeal.

I wish to refer to the Government's promise to do something about the excessive level of regulations we have in our society and the necessity to do something about reviewing the existing regulations and introducing new safeguards to stop the continual and increased flow of these new regulations.

This Bill does very little towards implementing Government promises of a year or so ago. I can remember the Deputy Premier, as Minister for Small Business, at a function to launch Small Business Week last year, had a display set up for the media. The Minister had some scissors and he cut a lot of red tape in front of the television cameras, saying that the Government was committed to doing something about getting rid of the many regulations under which we operate.

Since that hullabaloo, which got him headlines in the paper and was a big story for a few days, we have seen very little. In fact, as I shall show later, this Office of Regulatory Review was set up initially by the Deputy Premier through the small business portfolio. A lot of noise was made about getting rid of regulations, but this office became lost. When a journalist tried to find out how to make inquiries of the people concerned, or the hotline which the Government promised, he found this department was lost.

In other words, this was just a publicity stunt. It was a reaction from the Government to something done by the Opposition.

Prior to that small business function, the Liberal Party had released a very detailed policy on deregulation and what it would do if elected to Government. This policy was condensed into a pamphlet which outlined very clearly and specifically what the Liberal Party would do if in Government towards trying to cut down the level of regulations. The Labor Party, with its PR machine, looked at what we proposed. The Minister made this big announcement, and after that function was over, that was all we heard of it.

This Bill before us tonight is not doing what the Government promised to do.

Mr Watt: It is four years now.

Mr COURT: That report was commissioned by the previous Liberal Government and it came out in the first weeks of the Labor Government.

Mr Watt: No, it came out just before the election; a week before the election.

Mr COURT: Anyway, the Government, four years ago, said it would act on many of those recommendations. For four years the Government has been saying it will do something about cutting red tape. In actual fact it has done the exact opposite. Many Bills have passed through this House which have increased quite considerably the regulatory level under which businesses in our community must operate. Every time these Bills are brought on, such as the equal opportunity Bill, and the Environmental Protection Bill, many regulations are included which have a detrimental effect on certain parts of business. The Government has not been committed to making those changes; it has been playing lip service only to what it says it will do.

This legislation is nothing more than a feather duster flicking away some of the old cobwebs. What the people of this State are asking for is a real commitment to regulatory review as outlined in our policy for the last election. The Deputy Premier said he would have a special deregulation Bill, and he would introduce a timetable for existing regulations to be reviewed by way of cost benefit analyses. That commitment was a very hollow one.

In December last year legislation was supposed to be introduced to provide that regulations would lapse after 10 years if they did not satisfy certain assessments. We have not seen such things. We have been debating Bills in this House but there has been no talk of regulations lapsing after 10 years. If Bills such as this one that we are debating tonight are all that is to come out of this Office of Regulatory Review, the business community, which is reeling under the weight and cost of Government red tape, cannot take much comfort from the Government's commitment to doing anything positive about this burden under which it has to work.

The Deputy Premier, who was then responsible for small business, made all those commitments. He called this the "reg buster". That was a television stunt. What is the Office of Regulatory Review? Where is it? Where is the

red tape hotline? Some time this year a journalist tried to find out and came to the conclusion that the department had been lost.

Mr Pearce: It has been reviewed.

Mr COURT: It never got off the ground. Anyway, I have been asking some questions myself.

Mr Pearce: Surely you did not want it to build up a bureaucracy!

Mr COURT: It might have been a couple of those 400 people the Premier spoke about. We have had these commitments from the Deputy Premier, and this is something which went down very well with the small business community because its members liked the idea of the existing regulations being reviewed; they liked the idea of legislation like the environmental legislation coming in.

Perhaps someone could prepare an analysis of what it will cost and what will be the effect on business. That is the sort of important commitment which was given, but nothing has happened. We have seen nothing of those cost benefit analyses which were to have been carried out.

This was to relate not only to State regulations but also to local government and Federal regulations; the fringe benefits tax, for example; all the different things which have to be complied with on that piece of legislation. But that is a Federal matter.

In May this year, when we started to find out what had happened to this Office of Regulatory Review, we found it had been lost. An article appeared in the newspapers in September 1985, which was after the Deputy Premier had made his big thrust on the establishment of this office and the Government's "reg buster". This is what he said—

"This legislation, which will be introduced in the Spring session of Parliament this year, will provide that all new Government regulations have a maximum life of 10 years", Mr Bryce said.

"In addition, all existing Government regulations will be reviewed according to a strict timetable between now and 1990."

"That timetable is likely to see all regulations enacted before:

- (a) 1960 reviewed and revoked by 1 July, 1987;
- (b) 1961-1970 regulations reviewed and revoked by 1 July, 1988;

- (c) 1971-1980 regulations reviewed and revoked by 1 July, 1989; and
- (d) 1981-1985 regulations reviewed and revoked by 1 July, 1990".

These are the commitments the Deputy Premier made in September last year. He went on to say—

In addition the legislation will require that any proposal for new regulations or re-enacting existing regulations be accompanied by a Regulatory Impact Statement.

The thrust of what the Deputy Premier was saying was very much in line with the policy we had put out.

Mr Pearce: In rhetoric, but we did not see a lot of it in Government.

Mr COURT: If the Leader of the House had read our deregulation policy combined with our business approvals and licensing approvals he would have seen that we had three detailed policies in that area. We summarised them in pamphlet form, and the Deputy Premier picked them up in a couple of weeks. All that was done, and it got media coverage and was seen as a genuine attempt by the Government to stop the flow of new regulations and look at existing regulations to see what could be done.

I asked questions in October this year in connection with this matter. In question 1228 I asked—

When will the Government be introducing its special deregulation Bill to ensure the compulsory review and revocation of Government regulations?

The answer was a bit waffly and to the effect that the Government had changed its approach a bit and was not going ahead along the lines it had first thought of. It said in part—

Also significant efforts to remove red tape within the business sector have been undertaken with amendment to the Bills of Sale Act passed in the autumn session of 1986. A further review of Corporate Affairs Department practices to reduce regulatory burden is also being undertaken. In addition, regulatory review officers peruse submissions seeking approval to draft legislation and recommend methods of easing regulatory burdens where appropriate.

That is a lot of nonsense. When the Environmental Protection Bill was being debated I asked the Minister whether the Bill had gone through the Office of Regulatory Review and

through the procedures which the Deputy Premier said new legislation would go through. We caught the Minister by surprise because he had not heard of the department. He might laugh about it now, but when he asked his adviser it took him some time to work out what the department was.

Mr Hodge: They keep a low profile.

Mr COURT: When this journalist tried to ask questions of the department, she had trouble tracking it down.

The Bill is not more than a feather duster flicking away the old cobwebs. It does nothing to meet the Government's promises to do something about cutting the level of red tape. The Office of Regulatory Review has turned out to be a public relations stunt. There may be a couple of people somewhere in the Department of Premier and Cabinet who do a bit of work in this area on a part-time basis, but there is no real commitment. The office which was set up to cut red tape and regulations has lost itself within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It has become one of the Government's best kept secrets. When the Government promised its attack on red tape last year it spoke of all new regulations having a maximum life of 10 years and new regulations or re-enactments being accompanied by regulatory impact statements or cost benefit analyses. A commitment was given to systematically review regulations in line with the timetable I read out.

This is not occurring, and the business community is growing impatient with the Government's lack of action. The Government is not only not doing what it promised, but also it is continuing to churn out new forms of legislation which are imposing more controls on business activity. All this Bill does is to prove conclusively to us that this Government does not have a commitment to controlling the problems associated with excessive red tape in our community.

The Opposition supports this legislation, but we think the Government has a bit to answer for, whether through the Deputy Premier or the new Minister for Small Business. I think it is about time they gave up these cynical exercises of saying they are going to do something. It sounds good, and it goes over well in the media, but it is then quietly forgotten and no-one is meant to say anything. This Bill has given me the opportunity to say I am disappointed the Government has not performed in this area, and it has a lot to answer for.

MR THOMPSON (Kalamunda) [9.07 p.m.]: I support the view expressed by the member for Nedlands. The Government in trying to strip away regulations is trading on the fact that most people in the community vote not on the facts of the matter but on their perception of it. The Government very cleverly has created a situation in which people in the electorate perceive it to be a Government hell-bent on getting rid of irksome regulations which stand in the way of people getting on with their lives and business.

Every day people in the community come across Government red tape which causes them concern. All those people will have been impressed by the announcements made by the Government, particularly the Deputy Premier, that they would be freed from the horrors of having to dig their way through piles of red tape.

When this legislation came to the Parliament I took the opportunity of looking at some of the legislation and regulations which are going to be stripped away by this momentous Bill. I have before me an Act to regulate the exportation of horses, assented to on 17 July 1874.

Mr Stephens: You are not going to accuse the Government of being rash in getting rid of that Act?

Mr THOMPSON: It appears the Government is being quite revolutionary. It is going to deprive this State of a significant income. The Government ought to be collecting the sum of one shilling for every horse exported from this State.

Mr Pearce: I hate to raise this, but the Court Government, of which you were a member, acted illegally in regard to that Act.

Mr THOMPSON: This Government has done that, too.

Mr Pearce: But we are repealing it.

Mr THOMPSON: This Bill is on the Statute books, and people in this State have been breaking the law, year after year. It is this hefty legislation and troublesome regulation which the Government is boldly stripping away. It is a con job of the first order. The Government knows it, and we know it, but the unfortunate fact is that the community has a perception that this Government is doing something good. Unfortunately the community is wrong.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [9.10 p.m.]: The National Party supports this Bill. Like the previous speakers, we feel that perhaps the Bill does not go far enough and that there is plenty

of scope for the Government to use the knife much more vigorously.

I refer to the Group Settlement Act of 1925, which is one of the Acts to be repealed. The area I represent, particularly around Denmark, had quite a few group settlers. I have checked the Statutes and have found that although the Bill was introduced in 1925, it has been amended on two occasions only, in 1928 and in 1930. I think it was in 1944 that the administration of the Act was handed over to the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the group settlers. It is amazing that, although going into heavy timber country, they carried no more than an axe. Some of them did not own a horse or cart and walked up to 30 miles to buy their provisions. It is hard to imagine in this day and age that in 1925 people endured that sort of hardship. However, they endured it and many of them survived.

In Denmark today there are many group settlers who went there in 1926. I pay tribute to their courage and tenacity and to the fact that they overcame all obstacles. They were survivors. They brought into production land which is highly productive and which is still making a contribution to the economy.

I support the Bill.

MR PEARCE (Armadale—Leader of the House) [9.12 p.m.]: I thank the members of the Opposition for the support of this measure. It would not be unfair to say that their support was not precisely wholehearted.

Nevertheless, it is true that the member for Nedlands, in seeking to brand the Government as one of no action in this area and one which is attempting to roll out a policy to catch a few television bulletins without taking any action, did not accurately reflect the situation. On the other hand, it is true that the Government has not moved as far in this matter as it would have liked. However, the Government routinely writes into legislation and regulations sunset clauses where it is appropriate, and the review of regulations has occurred in many departments, including the Education Department and other departments which reflect on business. Some regulations have been taken out of the regulatory process as a result of those reviews. If the member wants to see the Bill as a public relations exercise, then perhaps we have not been showing the public relations flair that we might in announcing these sorts of things.

It is easy to pick on something like this and say that it is an example of a Bill which is obviously ludicrous. However, it is ludicrous to leave on the Statute book legislation which no-one enforces or pays any attention to. Although this Bill may not be one of the most important which has come before the Parliament, the principle that underlies it is significant; that is, for almost a century Governments have done nothing to tidy up the Statute book of this State.

This Bill may be a small beginning, but it is a beginning. The other steps we will take in regard to legislative review will also be small steps, but a beginning. Everyone else has talked about it, but at least this Government has taken initial steps. If another year goes by and these steps are not continued, perhaps the member for Nedlands will have some reason to criticise. We have taken steps regarding that policy in Government.

Mr COURT: You have waited four years. How long do you want—14 years?

Several members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: When in Government the Opposition never paid any attention to the Legislative Review and Advisory Committee. Reports came from that committee advocating that certain regulations were either ultra vires or draconian, and it continued to ignore the recommendations of its own committee.

I appreciate the support of members for this legislation and I for one will not shed any tears over the demise of the Acts, which we will soon see.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Pearce (Leader of the House), and transmitted to the Council.

CO-OPERATIVE AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 7 October.

MR LEWIS (East Melville) [9.18 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill, and it intends, during the Committee stage, to move an

amendment to raise the maximum shareholding from \$20 000 to \$50 000.

One of the provisions of the parent Act was that a society or provident group must have at least seven members to operate, otherwise it is automatically deregistered. This is very important because if the amount of shareholding is to be increased, we must understand that, notwithstanding the number of shareholders, everyone has a right to vote. If the maximum shareholding is to be raised from \$20 000 to \$50 000 as foreshadowed, it is important to realise that this will not in any way have an impact on the ability of the members of the society to control the society, notwithstanding the capital that has been injected.

This Bill will amend section 3, as well as other sections of the Act, and will increase the maximum shareholding of \$10 000—the amount provided in the amendment to the 1973 Bill—to \$20 000. It is interesting to note that in the original legislation, no reason was given in the Minister's second reading speech for the maximum shareholding to be £200.

Indeed, why was the limit put there in the first place, other than to encourage a wider spread of private shareholders of cooperative or provident societies?

I understand the federation of cooperative societies in this State considers the \$20 000 limitation too restrictive and would prefer no limitation at all. If there is to be a limitation it should be structured around that provided for in the New South Wales Act; that is, restricted to 20 per cent of the capital of the society.

I note that the Bill provides also for such amount as is prescribed. That is accepted so that at any time a regulation can be gazetted which will give the Government of the day the ability to vary the amount. If there is no just reason for a ceiling or an upper limit to the amount of capital that can be put in, perhaps it should be looked at on the basis of the New South Wales Act whereby the limit is 20 per cent of the issued shares.

The Co-operative Federation of Western Australia has also made the point that since 1973 the restriction of the \$10 000 capital has probably not encouraged the incorporation of this form of small business. I understand that in recent years on average only one cooperative society has been incorporated annually. It is indeed a very effective way of encouraging small groups of people to get together in business. In that regard, raising the limit to \$20 000, if not \$50 000, will go some way down

the path of allowing groups of individuals to get together and embrace this form of business.

I understand that in recent times some co-operative societies have been stymied because they have wanted to do certain things and have not been able to raise the capital. Rather than borrow at exorbitant rates, they have not been prepared to pursue the business enterprise they wanted to go into, principally because of the restrictions of the Act.

With that in mind, the Liberal Opposition certainly supports the Bill and will support the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Avon.

MR TRENORDEN (Avon) [9.25 p.m.]: The main crux of the matter, as already mentioned by the member for East Melville, is whether or not the limit of \$20 000 suggested in the amending Bill is adequate.

I would like to read to the House comments made by Hon. W. H. James, reported in *Hansard* on 24 September 1901. He said—

The measure thus provides for a numerous body of small shareholders, not one of whom has an interest to a larger extent than £200.

That comment was made at the time of Federation and the Bill was defeated. He said also at that time—

I think the measure is needed, because these co-operative societies can be encouraged, and should be encouraged as far as lies in our power.

At the turn of the century it was recognised that groups of people with common interests collectively putting money together for the purpose of enterprise was a good thing. That has not changed in all those years, from 1901 right through to 1986.

The question seems to be whether we should ask these cooperatives to operate on a limited capital. The problem of restricting their funds to \$20 000 is that if they wish to expand, as a couple of people affected by this legislation do, the only alternative they have, other than raising shareholders' funds, is to borrow. I think we all recognise that to borrow money in today's market is a fairly dangerous exercise.

Why should it not be prudent or good management for these people to raise their capital from their own members? That is all they seek to do. The National Party will move an amendment to raise the limit to \$50 000—the societies have the right to that. I have spoken to all parties involved with this Bill; some do not

wish to go anywhere near \$50 000 and will limit themselves well short of that mark. Some will limit themselves to as little as \$1 000 or perhaps \$5 000; some will stop at \$10 000; but some wish to go to higher amounts to raise capital to progress. The National Party believes that is a reasonable business action on their part.

The argument against that will be that a few of the societies are small and if their shareholding is too large and a large shareholder withdrew from the society, it might be in financial difficulty. However, the Minister knows very well the tremendous power that the registrar has over the societies. We have only approximately 100 cooperatives listed in Western Australia, whereas Victoria has 10 times that number.

Mr Wilson: Not operating under an Act like this.

Mr TRENORDEN: I agree that they are not. I am trying to say that in our declining marketplace, where corporations are getting larger and larger slices of any market, the cooperative is a good way for people to collectively band together and compete. That was recognised in 1901, and the principle I put to the House has not changed.

We should be asking ourselves, as members in this place and on an apolitical basis, why there are so few cooperatives in Western Australia. Perhaps we are putting too many brakes on. I am told that it takes months for a cooperative to be registered in Western Australia and only weeks to register a company. We should be looking at that problem.

There is no argument about the control of these cooperatives, because the Minister will know that a member has one vote only, and that has nothing to do with the size of the holdings.

I have also been in touch with these people and spoken to them about whether they believe it is necessary to have a limitation on percentage holdings for any particular body. In this case I do not personally believe that is necessary, but perhaps we could wear it. By limiting these people to \$20 000, we are limiting their ability to raise capital and operate on a sound, reasonable, economic base. Even if one takes the 1973 figure of \$10 000 and applies an inflation rate, one reaches \$26 000. I know the figure is nothing like \$50 000, but the National Party wishes to amend that figure to something greater than \$20 000.

I am sure the Minister will agree from talking to the people involved that they are reasonable; these people have control of their direction and their businesses and they know what they want and how they wish to achieve it. They come from a broad section of commerce; they are fishermen, poultry farmers, service station operators, newsagents and so on. We should give them a chance to expand and to compete in the market. I would be interested to hear the Minister's point of view on why the figure should not be greater than \$20 000. Where is the great economic risk to the public of Western Australia as a result of raising the limit above \$20 000? The National Party will seek to amend the Bill by changing the limit from \$20 000 to \$50 000.

MR COURT (Nedlands) [9.32 p.m.]: I would like to make a few comments in support of the member for East Melville and the member for Avon. The amendments they propose in respect of increasing the maximum shareholding from \$20 000 to \$50 000 are sensible. If one looks at what inflation has done over the years one can see the point. When was the limit of \$10 000 introduced?

Mr Wilson: In 1973.

Mr COURT: If one looks at the effect of inflation from 1973, it makes sense not only to increase the limit, as the Government is doing, but also to increase it further. The current limit curtails the activities of some of these cooperatives which want to go ahead with certain extension plans. As previous members have mentioned, we should look at the Acts under which cooperatives operate and make major changes to give them more scope to be used as vehicles for businesses to establish themselves.

The trend is towards the formation of community enterprises. This is an ideal opportunity for Governments to create a legislative framework to encourage these types of businesses to form.

Cooperatives have been under-sold in the community. If one looks at the achievements of the cooperatives covered by this legislation we find some have been tremendous success stories, whether in the export field, or in the field of service stations, newsagents and the like. These cooperatives have played a very important role in the economic and social development of this State. It is time we reassessed their position and opened the way for them again to become a major force in the development of the State.

Travelling through the different country areas today, one sees various cooperatives at work. One uses service stations, newsagencies and other small businesses in one's day-to-day activities. Most members of the public are not aware that these people are part of a co-operative. If anything, they have undersold themselves.

I support the comments made by the previous two speakers. I hope the Government sees the reason to change that minimum to \$50 000, and at the same time takes the opportunity to reassess the whole legislative framework of the cooperative movement to see whether it cannot be streamlined and used to encourage more people to set up businesses in this form.

MR WILSON (Nollamara—Minister for Housing) [9.36 p.m.]: I thank members of the Opposition and of the National Party for their support of the general direction of this Bill. The impetus for the amendment in the first place came from the Fremantle Fishermans Co-operative. It made an approach to the registrar, and in response to that approach the registrar held discussions with that and other cooperatives.

It should be understood, of course, that only five cooperative societies are incorporated under this Act; all other cooperatives are incorporated under the Companies (Co-operative) Act of 1943. That Act is administered through the Corporate Affairs Office which comes under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General.

That is an important distinction, because, as I understand it, in the first place we did not receive any particular representations from the Co-operative Federation of Western Australia. It is only very late in the piece that those representations have been received.

As I said previously, I understand most of the cooperative societies affiliated with the Federation would be societies incorporated under the other Act, and therefore in many cases the situation is quite different from that pertaining to these small co-operative societies.

It was considered at the time of that approach that in terms of the position of the societies concerned, the amendments in the Bill would be sufficient to meet the needs that they had expressed, and in particular one of those societies had expressed a wish to have greater capacity to finance its expansion through increases in equity rather than by external borrowings. The main line of thought was that what we have here, in essence, are small trading

and consumer societies servicing only a small number of members who specialise in industries such as market gardening, service station operations, fishing, poultry farming, newsagencies and a few other small business operations.

In that sense, the ability to become a member was limited to some degree. As such, of course, the societies existed to benefit the small businessman and at that stage there was an understanding that they wanted things to remain pretty much that way. In fact, even in the latest discussions I have had with some of those societies, the view has been expressed that if the limit of shareholdings were to be increased dramatically, it might result in a person or body of persons gaining indirect control of a society, notwithstanding the requirement of equal voting power for members. That concern has been expressed to me directly.

Mr Court: How do they gain indirect control?

Mr WILSON: Simply by buying large numbers of shares. I am not debating the issue, I am simply saying that that concern was expressed by representatives of some of the cooperatives with whom I discussed this matter. That is the way they saw it, although I do not particularly see that as a problem.

As has been indicated, some societies do not even permit within their rules the statutory limit of shareholdings as are allowed currently. For instance, the rule limit for the Poultry Farmers of WA Co-op Society Ltd is \$10 000; for the Capricorn Society Ltd it is only \$5 000, although it may have moved to \$10 000 since 1973; for the Associated Newsagents (WA) Co-operative Society Ltd it is \$10 000; for the Osborne Park Co-op Society Ltd it has been set at \$1 000, despite the fact that it could have moved to \$10 000 since 1973; and, for the Fremantle Fisherman's Co-op Society Ltd it is at the current limit of \$10 000.

I might say that, having discussed the issue further with representatives of the cooperatives, and having listened to their points of view and in particular to the point of view put by the Co-operative Federation of WA, the Government has no objection to accepting the amendments of which the member for Avon has given notice, and will not be opposing those amendments.

However, in giving further consideration to this matter, and in particular to the issue of whether there should be any limit at all, I even considered whether it might not be appropriate

to abolish this Act altogether and to require cooperative societies to be incorporated under the Companies (Co-operative) Act which, of course, is a more modern Act, having been enacted in 1943. The concern that anybody would have these days, in the current financial markets, about an Act enacted in 1903 is that it was framed in a time when current trends were not required to be taken account of. Despite what has been said by a number of members, I do not believe it would be appropriate to take off all limits for societies incorporated under this Act until a proper and comprehensive review of this Act was undertaken. I agree with the member for Nedlands that it would be timely for a comprehensive review of the Act to take place.

Members may be aware that the Government has decided that with the retirement of the previous Registrar of Building Societies and Credit Unions, and with the advertising of that position, the registry should move to the Treasury, away from the Housing portfolio. In association with that move, a comprehensive review of building society and credit union legislation is now under way. From discussions my officers had with the Corporate Affairs Office I believe consideration is being given to a review of the Companies (Co-operative) Act which is administered by that office under another Minister. It would seem that once the move of the registry to the Treasury has taken place and the review of the other major legislation which comes under the control of the Registrar of Building Societies and Credit Unions has been completed and its recommendations implemented, in conjunction with any review of the Companies (Co-operative) Act there should also be a review of this Act.

Mr Court: Have you appointed a new Registrar of Building Societies and Credit Unions?

Mr WILSON: That question has been asked and answered in the Parliament. The position has been advertised.

I make those points to underline what I consider to be the need to approach any relaxation of all restrictions applying to the incorporation of cooperative societies under this Act with some caution, but only in the context of a more comprehensive review of the Act. However, the proposed amendments of the member for Avon to the effect that the limit be extended to \$50 000—although in a sense a figure of \$50 000 is an arbitrary one not only to take account of inflationary movements but also to

go out a little ahead of those movements to ensure it covers a period from the present time and to some time in the future—certainly would cover the period which is likely to occur between now and when any proper review of the Act takes place.

In commending the Bill to the House in general terms, I indicate that the Government will not oppose the amendments, and that it supports the comments of the members of the Opposition and the National Party.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Thomas) in the Chair; Mr Wilson (Minister for Housing) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 3 amended—

Mr TRENORDEN: It gives me great pleasure to speak to this clause. As a new member it is good to see that the interest of the people is taken to heart. I congratulate the Minister and the Labor Party for having a close look at this point. I agree in principle with what the Minister said; that is, review of these co-operative societies would be a good thing—if we could encourage a few others, or make amendments to bring in a broader spectrum and allow them to get out into the marketplace. I commend the Minister for meeting these people yesterday and arriving at his decision. I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 12—To delete “\$20 000” and substitute—

\$50 000

Mr WILSON: As already indicated, the Government does not intend to oppose this amendment. The Government is in general agreement with the argument that lies behind it.

Mr COURT: I take this opportunity to thank the Government for agreeing to raise the figure from \$20 000 to \$50 000. It is heartening to hear that the Government has accepted this point in discussions with the people concerned. I hope the increased limit will give them the flexibility immediately and in the years to come in some cases—because I know their operations reasonably well—to carry out some of their expansion plans without necessarily having to borrow funds. The Opposition is appreciative of the Government's acceptance of this change.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 5: Section 19 amended—

Mr TRENORDEN: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 16—To delete “\$20 000” and substitute—

\$50 000

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 6: Section 43 amended—

Mr TRENORDEN: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 21—To delete “\$20 000” and substitute—

\$50 000

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 7: First Schedule amended—

Mr TRENORDEN: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 25—To delete “\$20 000” and substitute—

\$50 000

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Wilson (Minister for Housing), and transmitted to the Council.

SALE OF GOODS (VIENNA CONVENTION) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 7 October.

MR MENSAROS (Floreait) [9.57 p.m.]: There are two main general comments one should make in connection with this Bill. The first is: Why has the Government in its wisdom scheduled the Bill under the control of the Minister for Consumer Affairs? It is a highly legal subject, and is actually an enactment of an international convention. It has been decided by a meeting of the Attorneys General to enact this legislation in all States and Territories, and therefore I would have thought it was much more appropriately handled by the Attorney

General, the more so because he has the more appropriate staff to deal with it.

Be that as it may, the Bill gives one an opportunity to talk about another much more important overriding subject—the question of international treaties and agreements. We all know that depending on what view one has—whether one has a view of federation which Australia is meant to be, or a centralised view—the powers of the Commonwealth Government as far as external treaties go, which we briefly call the external powers, have been changed tremendously by interpretations of the High Court of Australia, particularly in the Tasmanian dam judgment which was brought down by a majority of one. It brought an interpretation to the Constitution that whatever the Commonwealth Government agrees with another sovereign Government outside Australia becomes the law of the land irrespective of the intention of the Constitution and the fact that we have sovereign States with Parliaments and a Governor representing the Queen, and with their legislative power.

Even the Constitution could be amended without a referendum by simply approaching an external power and negotiating a treaty with that power. The treaty could be that the Commonwealth Constitution should be amended in such-and-such a way and that would be it. I suppose there could be plenty of troubled middle African countries which, for a few hundred thousand dollars, would be prepared to write a treaty with the Government in Canberra and that treaty could contain anything. It could contain the statement that the member for Balcatta should be arrested, even though he has not committed an offence against the Criminal Code of Western Australia.

I think it was commendable that the Commonwealth Government and the Attorneys General decided on this treaty to be implemented through State laws, because it affects State laws. The Attorneys of all States and the Territory were asked to legislate to include the provisions of this treaty in the laws of the State. From that point of view the principle should be supported.

I suppose that the Federal Government, irrespective of the decision of the High Court and its interpretation, should adopt this attitude with all foreign treaties because that is the intention of the Constitution. First of all it should, at every negotiation of foreign treaties, include representatives of the States, or at least those States which would be involved in the

treaty because there would be certain treaties in which some States would not be involved. Treaties could contain provisions relating to mining matters where only one or two States are involved in that activity.

The other requirement ought to be that every treaty should have a Federal clause acknowledging that Australia is a Federal entity and therefore its components, the sovereign States, might have different laws and that the treaty would be valid in Australia only to the extent that it is accepted by the States. Even though the European Economic Community is not a sovereign State, it has underwritten a number of treaties, particularly those concerned with tariffs, and it has negotiated on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. It firmly expresses the view that its acceptance is dependent on the laws of the various member countries.

I am proud to say that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Peter Durack of Western Australia, introduced a Bill into Federal Parliament which spells out precisely how external treaties should be concluded.

I come back to the contents of the Bill which are really the convention. The most important part of the Bill is the preamble. It states that—

Whereas—

(1) the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods was adopted at Vienna, Austria...

(2) it has been agreed between the Commonwealth, the States, and the Northern Territory that the provisions of the Convention should... have the force of law in the States and the Territories by virtue of the legislation enacted by the parliaments of the respective States and the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory and by virtue of an Ordinance of the Australian Capital Territory;

That is the most important part because an international treaty will become law in Western Australia by virtue of the fact that the Western Australian Parliament will enact the legislation.

The provisions of the Bill do not, in my humble opinion, have anything to do with consumers and consumer protection. They regulate contracts made by business people, and I suppose sometimes by individuals, with another business overseas. That should not have any direct effect on consumers.

As I said, the convention agreement is virtually a lawyer's law. The only criticism I have of the Minister is that he has not explained the legislation. He mentioned only two articles out of 101, and they were the exceptions to the general rule. He left the remainder included in the Bill to be read by members. It makes for very involved and complicated reading.

An interesting fact that I want to mention is that the interpretation of the convention seems to be extremely liberal. It almost presumes that the International Court of Justice, to which all litigation would ultimately go if there were litigation, would look at the provisions of the articles in a very permissive way because it says the interpretation should be based on the goodwill of all the parties, or words to that effect. I do not think any lawyer would allow any internal law to be written that way.

When one goes through all the provisions as I have done—I do not want to do the Minister's job and explain them article by article to the House because I am suspicious that members would not be very interested—they will be assured that there is nothing untoward in the legislation. In fact, there are a number of provisions which could well serve as examples of the way treaties should be concluded.

The Opposition supports the Bill.

MR WILSON (Nollamara—Minister for Consumer Affairs) [10.10 p.m.]: I find myself in almost complete sympathy with the comments of the member for Floreat. In a sense, I agree that the Bill would be more appropriately dealt with by the Attorney General. It is almost entirely a matter of legal interpretation and I am afraid that I cannot answer the question posed by the member for Floreat as to why it was handed to me as Minister for Consumer Affairs to deal with, as it has come to us as a recommendation of the meetings of Attorneys General. Agreement was reached among them, so that it is a matter that should have been referred to each of the Parliaments within the Federation.

I am pleased to accept the view put by the Opposition spokesman in support of the Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Wilson (Minister for Consumer Affairs), and transmitted to the Council.

MAIN ROADS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 7 October.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [10.14 p.m.]: This Bill has three purposes, two of which the Opposition has no quarrel with. The first of the three purposes of the Bill is to enable the Commissioner of Main Roads to delegate his duties more effectively. We see that as being of little or no consequence. We can see no evidence that the commissioner has not been able to delegate his duties effectively in the past. Therefore, we question the Government's motive in wanting to move in this direction. However, we have no quarrel with that particular provision.

The third purpose of the Bill is to continue the system of annual road grants. As this is purely a continuation measure and no changes are envisaged, we have no quarrel with that either. We believe that as the system of statutory grants to local authorities is not to change in the way that the grants are to be administered and made available to local authorities, that clause also should not be opposed.

The second purpose of the Bill is to set up a Main Roads Board. We are totally opposed to this. It is a load of ideological codswallop to set up a Main Roads Board in this way. It is completely unnecessary. We believe that it will be cumbersome and that it will retard the work of the Main Roads Department. It will make the department more ineffective as a body. When added to the other mistakes made by the Minister in the six or eight months that he has been the Minister, the bringing forward of a measure of this nature only goes to prove that the Minister has presided over a disaster.

The Government was hypocritical in coming before the Parliament in the previous session to raise an additional \$45 million or \$46 million by way of horrendous increases in the State fuel levy, when it intended to spend in real terms less money on roads than previously. That is totally unacceptable.

Mr Troy: How much less?

Mr LAURANCE: The Minister will not answer the questions.

Mr Troy: We will when we get around to the Budget.

Mr LAURANCE: What about providing answers to questions? That would be of great assistance to the Opposition. I do not know whether the Minister has anything to hide, but it would have been of assistance to us to have the answers to questions before we had to deal with this legislation.

I repeat that from the way the Minister has mishandled his portfolio, it is quite obvious that he is out of his depth. This is just another example of the backroom policy boys of the Labor Party foisting this Bill upon him and insisting he bring it here to try to get it through the Parliament. He will not do it with our support. He will have to bludgeon his way through if he wants to saddle the Main Roads Department with this advisory board.

The provision with respect to the advisory board represents a vote of no confidence in the Main Roads Department by the Government. It is nothing more and nothing less than that, a vote of no confidence in the Commissioner of Main Roads and his department by the Government. What a smack in the eye for an outstanding Commissioner of Main Roads who has served this State with distinction for something like 20 years! For 20 years he has managed that department without the benefit of an advisory board. Why then does he suddenly need to have this group put in his way? It is not as though the commissioner and his department do not consult with all the bodies that are involved in or affected by any road-making decisions. They have not acted in isolation in the past. They have always been prepared to consult with the various bodies that will be represented on the advisory board.

The Minister, in his reply to the second reading debate, should come clean and indicate where the Main Roads Department has fallen down so badly that it is not able to operate effectively without an advisory board. I will bet that he cannot give us one reason for the necessity of such a board. The real reason for this provision is to be found in the backroom policy-making bodies of the Labor Party. That is where the proposal comes from.

The Main Roads Department has acted effectively and consulted with several bodies. I do not know whether it has been found wanting, but this Government is very critical that it

is not doing its job properly. It wants to make the Commissioner of Main Roads subject to an advisory body. The Minister should outline how the Main Roads Department has failed him. Perhaps a couple of vacancies need filling, or help is needed for a couple of broken-down party hacks.

No matter who is to be on this body, it will not end up being satisfactory. It will always be felt that someone has been left off. Even though it is to have 11 members, the Minister has already received representations to extend that number. I presume he will indicate his reaction to that representation.

That is another reason that we oppose this measure. If one has a group of people involved in assisting the Main Roads Department to do a job it has done effectively in the past without such a body, obviously people will say, "We are not involved but we want to be." An example may be the chamber of commerce. It may say it represents business people right across the State, and many decisions of this advisory body will impact on many businesses in country areas. The chamber has a point; I sympathise with it. If the Royal Automobile Club of WA, the Conservation Council of Western Australia, and so on, are to be represented, then there should be a representative of the chamber of commerce.

If we set up a body, more and more representations will be received from people who want to be on it. How much more unwieldy does the Minister want to make it? It is to have 11 members now, and one group says that it is not effectively represented and it should be. There is some strength to this claim if one looks at the people involved. Let us have a few more. Extend it from 11 to 12 or a few more and make it more unwieldy! Attack the Main Roads Department more if it has been ineffective in the past! One cannot draw any other conclusion than that from the Government's action.

We believe this measure is quite unnecessary. However, if the Government is foolish enough to hamstring the Main Roads Department in this way, then it should put other people who have requested representation on the committee.

This Government is remarkable in its hypocrisy in moving now to implement a board such as this which will change the operation of the Main Roads Department, and change its funding by doing away with the exclusive method through the main roads trust fund. The

Government is siphoning from roads huge sums of money into other forms of transport.

This money is raised from the motorists as the result of an exorbitant fuel levy, the highest in any State in Australia. Motorists presume that at least these funds will go to roads, but they will not.

I want to remind the Minister that at the time of the last election the then Minister for Transport and the Government generally traipsed around the countryside saying that if the Government was not returned, then a whole lot of people in the Main Roads Department would lose their jobs because of the way we would run the finances of the Main Roads Department, particularly with our commitment to do away with the State fuel levy. Now we have seen that levy doubled instead of being removed. We could have been like Queensland, which has no State fuel levy. In fact we have gone the other way and now have the highest fuel levy of any State in Australia.

This Minister is going around sacking people in the Main Roads Department in country areas. I wonder what the former Minister told those people when he spoke in the various Main Roads Department camps around the State. He said, "If you vote Liberal you will lose your job." It has turned out that they voted Labor and lost their jobs.

In answer to a question in another place recently we were told that there would be some stand-downs in the Main Roads Department before Christmas. By way of reply to a question from Hon. Norman Moore on 14 October 1986 we were told that a number of owner-drivers around the State were stood down. The answer was that stand-downs were anticipated before the end of 1986 and the number expected to be involved were seven in Bunbury and four in Carnarvon.

This Minister went to the Carnarvon depot and said the only way people could save their jobs was to vote Labor. Now four people have been put off.

Several members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: These people are being stood down all around the State by a Government which said, "Vote for us and your jobs are safe." How hypocritical can the Government be?

Mr Pearce: You were going to put the whole thing up for contract.

Mr LAURANCE: There it goes; the Government is putting people off all around the State.

Mr Troy: Keep going on this line; we want it recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr LAURANCE: It is very hypocritical. This Government has gone about removing people from the Main Roads Department when it committed itself to keeping them on the staff. That is what the promise was. The Minister's predecessor went around this State telling people they were in danger of losing their jobs if they voted for the Liberal Party, but if they voted for the Labor Party their jobs were assured.

Mr Pearce: Your policy was to sack the lot and put the work out to contract.

Mr LAURANCE: Members opposite represent the Government.

Several members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: What are members opposite going to tell those people? Are they going to go around telling them—

Mr Troy: I have been in your depot.

Mr LAURANCE: I know, without any advice to the local member. I suppose it was such bad news the Minister had to sneak in so that nobody would find out.

Several members interjected.

An Opposition member: You are embarrassed. You missed the plane. We know where you were.

Mr LAURANCE: They have changed the plaque, by the way. I had nothing to do with it. The Leader of the House now has two airports to worry about. He will never catch a plane now.

This Minister sneaks into country areas without any acknowledgment—

Mr Troy: I would not have found you anyway.

Mr LAURANCE: Oh yes, the Minister would have. There would have been no invitations. The Minister opened the Onslow Road bypass, which was constructed by gangs from the Gascoyne area, and there was no invitation to that. This Minister sneaks in and sneaks out.

Mr Troy: You want an invitation to Onslow too? You are out of your area.

Mr LAURANCE: No, but at the same time the Minister came to Carnarvon without any acknowledgment. I am not going to write to the Premier about that. However, did the Minister tell them that four blokes were to be put off? Did he tell them?

Several members interjected.

Mr Troy: I am not surprised that you do not know, because you do not have a clue what I told them. You really should go back to your electorate and start doing your homework.

Mr LAURANCE: Does the Minister want me to replay the tape?

Mr Pearce: Credibility bypass.

Mr LAURANCE: The Minister for Planning has a mouth there—he should remember that!

Did the Minister go to Carnarvon and tell these people that the former Minister, the Minister's predecessor, lied to them when he said, "If you vote Liberal, you lose your job; if you vote Labor you save your job, but we are going to sack you anyway"? This is a bit like the police—they were promised a 38-hour week before the election, but afterwards the Government came along and said it would not give that 38-hour week. This is all Labor deceit.

What about the Kimberley? The Minister has sacked people there and has closed offices down.

Mr Troy: In Derby? You are not suggesting that when the work is finished in the area, some people should not go out?

Mr LAURANCE: Well, is the work finished in that area?

Mr Troy: On soil testing, yes. That is why they are going back to Derby.

Mr LAURANCE: So the Minister is only going to allow work to be done in the West Kimberley area. The Australian Labor Party has written off the East Kimberley! That is all I can take from what the Minister is saying. The Minister has given Kununurra away.

Mr Troy: Their current programme has finished for the moment.

Mr LAURANCE: It just shows that the Minister has absolutely no control and he is now going to rely on this advisory council to get out of this trouble. Some of the promises the Minister has made stick in the craw of people in the north. The Minister knows that he was not universally accepted when he went to the Main Roads depot in Carnarvon because of what had been said by his predecessor.

Mr Troy: That is completely untrue. I could not have received a warmer welcome. I am surprised that they support a member like you.

Mr LAURANCE: The Minister got a torch to his belly. Even his fellow ALP members do not like it. Graeme Campbell, the Federal member for Kalgoorlie, is reported as follows in an

article headed, "Campbell hits at MRD sackings"—

FIVE Kalgoorlie owner-drivers are to lose their jobs with the Main Roads Department, according to the Federal member for Kalgoorlie, Mr Graeme Campbell.

Mr Campbell said the MRD move was "reflecting the knee-jerk reaction to the fashion for privatisation".

"It is agreed even by the MRD that these truck drivers have given good service to the department," he said.

Mr Campbell did not go on and say that the jobs had been guaranteed by the former Minister for Transport just prior to the last election. That is how these people have been let down by this Labor Government. It is one thing to say, in the lead-up to an election, what one is going to do, but it is a very different matter when one gets into Government. The Government has let these people down and engaged in wholesale sackings from one end of the State to the other. From Narrogin through to Geraldton, Carnarvon, Kimberley, Bunbury, and all over the State, people are being sacked by this Labor Government. This is a contradiction of what this Minister told them only a few days before the election some months ago.

When one looks at all these areas, one finds that the Government is letting down the people of this State, particularly with regard to the Transport portfolio. Now this Government has the hide to come here and say that it wants to attack the MRD in this way. This is a vote of no-confidence in the MRD and its commissioner. No satisfactory reason has been given as to why an advisory committee is needed. Already we have had an additional request for further representation, should the Government want to move in this way.

As I have indicated, this move does not have the Opposition's support and we thoroughly oppose that section of the Bill which seeks to establish the advisory board.

MR RUSHTON (Dale) [10.35 p.m.]: The matter before the House is small in its presentation but large in its impact.

The legislation is in three pieces: The first phase is minor in the sense that the MRD could have gotten by without the change relating to the authority at times when the deputy commissioner acts for the commissioner. That in itself is not of any great magnitude. The third part of the Bill relates to a continuation of an allocation of funds. That in itself needs to be

done; but this package seems to revolve around this socialist philosophy of committees.

The MRD administration has the reputation of being the finest administration in Australia. It is recognised internationally and it has a tremendous morale. That is where we start. When the Minister gave his second reading speech, I interjected to ask whether this advisory council had the support of the commissioner. The Minister did not answer so I can assume only that the commissioner has not supported this change.

Mr Pearce: Why do you assume that? The advice that senior public servants give to Ministers has always been confidential. You never revealed any of it when you were the Minister.

Mr RUSHTON: Yes, I did. The Liberal Government stated when the commissioner supported or rejected some matter. I would not have introduced such a measure without the support of the commissioner.

Mr Troy: You are suggesting that I did. This just shows that you are a long time removed from the transport scene.

Mr RUSHTON: The Minister can tell me whether he did or did not. He has a mouth and he can say, "Yes, the commissioner does support the change."

Mr Pearce: Did the Commissioner for Railways support the closure of the Fremantle line?

Mr RUSHTON: Yes, he did. The then Director of Transport did support it. All the directors of transport of that time recommended closure. In fact, they put the proposition to me.

Mr Pearce: The commissioner for Westrail put it to you. I am asking you whether the Commissioner for Railways supported the closure of the Fremantle line.

Mr RUSHTON: He recommended it to me. I believe he still does not think it should be an electric system. I can produce the supporting information, if the Minister wants me to. This just proves how out of touch this Government is in relation to the facts.

The MRD is a body of which any State would be proud. It has the bottom line record of being the most efficient in the country, of being effective, and of being consultative. Yet here we have these changes being brought down—not only this change; the previous Minister also brought down a controlling measure on the commissioner by introducing extended powers for the Government. This was not necessary for the effective running of the MRD. There was the creation of the Transport

Trust Fund, which has drawn off moneys which should basically have been for roads and will now be used in all sorts of other ways. This is basically the creation of a slush fund, which will in fact draw off the legitimate MRD funds into other areas. This is most inefficient so far as economic control and administration are concerned.

The MRD, in itself, is one of the major contributors to the cost support of our export-orientated State. By its effectiveness in creating good roads, we can have economical transport of our goods. We all know that this State depends very much on our exports. The MRD is a vital contributor to that effectiveness. It was interesting to note on 29 October that the Commissioner of Main Roads spoke to the Australian Automobile Association and gave a warning of what was ahead in regard to the shortage of funds. He spoke of the ending of the bicentennial road funds programme and warned about what could take place after that. He also mentioned the drawing-off of funds raised from the fuel franchise levy for other purposes, and said the vehicle licence fee revenue could meet the same fate.

As a result of Government action the Main Roads Department has lost its continuity of programme, and we will feel this before too long. We should heed the commissioner's warning. There has been a lack of explanation of this last measure of control through the advisory committee. It will be detrimental to the effective working of the department. The Minister needs to clearly explain the origin of this advisory committee. Who recommended it, and why did he support the recommendation? What does he hope to achieve in the better development and maintenance of our roads?

The Main Roads Department already has a full commitment to consultation on environmental and all sorts of aspects of the road programme. All members would agree the road programme develops in a most effective way. Anybody who has had anything to do with the creation of the road programme realises it is something which needs to be done without political interference. It must be done on a sound basis of need, and I have been proud to observe the way it has been implemented in this State.

Who knows what people the Minister will appoint to this advisory committee and what sort of recommendations will come forward? It appears it will be the Minister's backdoor way of controlling Main Roads. If he does not have the ability, the administrative skills, or the character to negotiate and consult with his

commissioner and achieve the Government's objectives, he will be found wanting. A group of people will develop the department's policy. I cannot think of anything worse as far as achieving the result we desire in this huge State is concerned.

I warn all members that this State is in grave risk of losing its percentage of total road funds allocated to the States by the Commonwealth Government. We receive something like 12.4 per cent of the funds; that is a reduction from approximately 19 per cent in the Whitlam years. We have held on to that 12.4 per cent with a great deal of effort by Ministers and the commissioner himself. To a large degree his reputation and skill have ensured that we retain this share of the road fund. Recommendations that have come forward from time to time from committees created by the Commonwealth have urged that we should receive only 8.7 per cent of road funds. It would be disastrous for this State, which comprises one-third of Australia, has more than 20 per cent of all the roads in Australia, and has great needs relating to export earnings.

If nothing else, the Minister should give a clear, frank, and honest explanation as to why this advisory committee is being imposed upon the Main Roads Department. It was not explained in the second reading speech, and the Minister owes an explanation to the House, to the department, and to the people of this State. Roads have been without political interference in years gone by, but a change has taken place. The previous Minister for Transport inflicted extra controls on Main Roads through amendments to legislation. We have now had inflicted on the department and motorists a drawing-off of fuel franchise funds, particularly this year, into Transperth. They could be drawn off into anything at the Minister's whim. That has chopped the continuity of road funds and prevented a balanced programme from going forward.

The Government is now about to inflict on the Main Roads Department something quite destructive to the department's morale—an advisory committee which is being set up for no obvious good reason. The only reason one can think of is that it is a way for the Minister to control Main Roads, influencing road programmes which might suit his political party and which are not in the best interests of the State. Our road making administration has developed a reputation both in Australia and internationally which is second to none. I was very proud indeed to work alongside the de-

partment, and I recognise the calibre of the people there. To inflict on them an advisory committee without supporting reasons is moving in the wrong direction. This legislation is detrimental to the advancement of good road making and maintenance in this State.

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [10.47 p.m.]: The National Party opposes two parts of this Bill which, as the Minister has pointed out, deals with three areas. The first is the power to allow the commissioner to appoint a deputy in his absence. The situation has existed for many years without any serious disadvantage, and we cannot see any reason to change it. We can see that it may be, with the other provisions, a backdoor way of getting things done which the commissioner perhaps does not want to do.

We are also opposed to the creation of the board. It is going back 60-odd years. In 1925 there was a move to set up a board, and when it was discussed in the Legislative Council a Select Committee was set up, and as a result a board was appointed. Most of the argument appeared to be along the lines that we were working in conformity with what had been done in the Eastern States. It was a three-man board, two of whom were experienced highway engineers, the other being an experienced administrator. This three-man board did not survive very long, and it was changed in 1930. In introducing the Bill on 16 September 1930, the then Minister for Works said—

This Bill has two principal objects. One is the abolition of the Main Roads Board, and the appointment of a commissioner in the board's place. The other is the waiving of contributions by local governing bodies for the years 1927-8 and 1928-9.

This is important, and perhaps the Government should listen to this. The Minister went on to say—

The abolition of the board is proposed on the score of economy.

Surely in the circumstances of the State now we should be looking at ways and means of economising, and not of increasing expenditure. One of the reasons advanced for the abolition of the board in 1930 was economy. In the serious economic circumstances facing us today, this Government proposes to introduce an 11-man board.

We can see no necessity for it and it will be a waste of taxpayers' money.

One of the other reasons for the disbandment of the board was that it was subject to political interference. Speaking in that second reading debate on 18 September 1930, Mr McCallum said that his experience was that the only member of Parliament not able to influence the board was the Minister. Every other member of Parliament went to the board, told it what he wanted, influenced it, and used his position as a member of Parliament. In the eyes of one member of Parliament that was certainly a very valid reason for getting rid of the board.

I do not think anybody in this House will advance the suggestion that the Main Roads Commissioner has been unduly influenced by political considerations. I believe the present situation has worked quite well and I think the roads in this State generally are a credit to the State, the Main Roads Board, and the commissioner.

Without going into all the expenditure, I repeat that the Government, in proposing this measure, is creating something that was done away with 60 years ago, and by doing so will inflict upon the public of Western Australia an unnecessary extra expense. It may not be a large amount but it could well contribute towards the cost of the maintenance of roads. For that reason the National Party opposes the first two parts of the Bill.

The third purpose of the Bill as outlined by the Minister in his second reading speech involves the continuance of the system of annual road grants made by the State Government to local governments. It is essential that that scheme, which expired on 30 June 1985, be continued. Under this Bill it is proposed to cover the period from 1 July 1985 to 30 June 1990. We certainly support that provision of the Bill.

MR HOUSE (Katanning-Roe) [10.53 p.m.]: I support the comments made by the member for Stirling and want to add one or two more. The first part of the Bill deals with the delegation of the powers of the Commissioner of Main Roads. It seems to be a strange provision. I hold the Commissioner of Main Roads in very high regard and I think most members who have had the opportunity of seeing him and his department at work would do likewise. I think, however, that he should have the power to delegate his responsibilities to those below him while he is away.

My argument, however, is with the provisions relating to the creation of the advisory board. I wonder whether this is not just another

bureaucracy in the making. As the member for Stirling has pointed out, it was tried and it failed before. We have had a system that has worked very well and I have heard no arguments about why that system should be changed. It will be a costly exercise because the Bill makes provision for the payment of people who will serve on the board. It is interesting that the provisions relating to who will serve on the board state that it will include one representative each of the salaried and waged employees of the department. I wonder why those people would want to be involved in matters relating to the upgrading or improvement of roads. I cannot see any reason for their having an input into that matter. Who will be the boss? Will it be the board, will it be the Main Roads Department, or will it be the Minister or the commissioner? Will three bosses be pulling in different directions? I think all of what I have said makes it obvious that the board is unnecessary.

The Bill states that the Minister shall, as soon as practicable after the expiration of five years, hold an inquiry into the effectiveness of the operations of the board, the need for the continuance of the board, and other such relevant matters as the Minister might find relevant. Perhaps he has already had second thoughts about it because he has made provision to review the board after five years of operation of the legislation.

I support the third part of the Bill dealing with annual road grants to local government. There is no question that local government is dependent on road grants and needs those grants to maintain a good road system in this State.

MR TROY (Mundaring—Minister for Transport) [10.56 p.m.]: I have listened intently to the comments by Opposition speakers. The first of the three parts of the Bill deals with the delegation of the responsibilities of the Commissioner of Main Roads. The majority of speakers have misunderstood the intention of that part of the Bill. Obviously they have not bothered to ask and do not appreciate that it is necessary for the commissioner to delegate. I am surprised that an ex-Minister for Transport is not aware of the difficulties that occur when the Commissioner of Main Roads leaves the State. The requirement for someone to perform his duties while he is absent currently necessitates Executive Council approval for the power to delegate those responsibilities. That has been a long and frustrating process, not only for the

present commissioner, but for all those who preceded him. I am surprised at the lack of understanding on that point.

The role of delegation rests with the commissioner. It is certainly not a role of the Government. The decision as to whom he hands the power is his alone. That should be clearly understood.

In relation to road grants, the Bill tidies up a process that fell into disuse in June 1985. I draw the attention of the House to my second reading speech in which I referred to statutory Commonwealth road grants being proportionately increased or decreased by the amounts supplied by the Commonwealth. Members should be aware that that does not involve application to individual councils. Individual councils receive amounts dependent on the distribution formula or, in the case of an urban pool, on the priority of projects submitted by councils. However, the overall grant is in accordance with the Commonwealth changes to the funds provided.

From what I heard, there is not a great deal of objection to the first two parts of the Bill. The second part relating to road grants links in with that relating to the establishment of an advisory board. The intention is to obtain a broader view from local government authorities about a changing formula on road grants and obviously there are many diverse views about that. When we examine the proposed board structure we will see that there is adequate representation from local government and that representation will bring local government closer to the decision-making process on road funding generally across the State rather than the narrower perspective of local government in isolation.

The Government believes that the board will be effective in terms of addressing the wider question of funding across the State.

Let me move to the third area of contention. To describe the move towards a more effective decision-making body as "ideological codswallop" astounds me, especially in the year 1986. Opposition members are taking us back to the dark ages if they do not realise that part of the decision-making process today involves people having more responsibility. I fail to understand their ideology.

Mr Rushton: What about Mosman?

Mr TROY: That sort of comment explains why the member for Dale went off the track during his speech.

I want to place on record that in the few months I have been the Minister for Transport I have found that the present Commissioner of Main Roads rates as one of the most competent and professional officers employed by the Government. There is no doubt about that.

Mr Laurance: Your words have a very hollow ring to them.

Mr TROY: No, they do not. His performance has been superb. He will go down in history as one of the top performers this State has ever had and I do not think members would disagree with me. Quite clearly, this legislation is not a vote of no confidence in the Commissioner of Main Roads.

If members look at the composition of the proposed board they will see that a person will be appointed by the Governor to be a member and the chairman of the board; one shall be the commissioner, ex officio; and one shall be the Director General of Transport, ex officio. I do not think members can question the three positions I have mentioned.

Other members of the board will consist of an officer from the Main Roads Department appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the commissioner. There will be a strong Main Roads Department input on the board. One member shall be a salaried officer of the MRD and one shall be an employee of the MRD who is paid wages. I do not think that in the 1980s we can question that sort of input. After all, those people give their lives to the industry in which they are involved. If the Opposition is not prepared to look at that sort of progress I feel very sad for it; obviously, with its attitude to modern day decision making it will remain on the Opposition side of the House for a long time.

The discussions I have had with the Commissioner of Main Roads have resulted in his welcoming this legislation. In the 1980s and 1990s he is faced with difficult circumstances. The point the Opposition fails to recognise is that if I wanted to remain politically dominant in the operations of the board I would ensure that I maintained the control I presently have.

Valid input has been received from various groups. Let us look at the user group which has been addressed by the Opposition. It is the intention of the Government to have represented on that board the road freight hauliers, private motorists, metropolitan local government and rural local government. As a result of the impact of roads on the environment a representa-

tive from the environmental group will also be on the board.

I have received two letters from groups which have expressed an interest in being represented on the board. The member for Gascoyne referred to one of those letters and quite simply the letter indicates that the public generally believes that it is well represented on the board. The Western Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce Incorporated wrote to me seeking a position on the board. It clearly indicates that a number of groups have a strong desire to be represented on the board.

With a board such as this a line has to be drawn as to its membership. In this case the board will have a membership of 11 people. Honestly, the size of the board did give me some concern and I wondered how effective it could be. However, I recognise that it is an advisory board and it will advise the Minister and the Commissioner of Main Roads on specified activities, projects and decisions. I spoke to the commissioner about the efficiency of a board of that size and he assured me that it would be effective. As I indicated, a line must be drawn as to the membership of boards.

I received also a letter from the Tree Society of WA which indicated that it would like to be represented on the board, but I believe that its interests are adequately covered by the environmental representative.

The Opposition obviously does not understand that we are living in the 1980s. As the Minister for Transport, I am proud to bring this Bill to the House. The proposed board will liaise with the various road user groups and its determinations will stand this State in good stead for a long time to come.

I draw the attention of members to an amendment to clause 9 which I have placed on the Notice Paper.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Thomas) in the Chair; Mr Troy (Minister for Transport) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Heading and sections 12A to 12E inserted—

Mr LAURANCE: I reiterate that the Opposition is unhappy with this proposal. The Opposition does not want a Main Roads Board to be established and there was nothing in the

Minister's response to the second reading debate that indicated he had any reason to proceed with this clause.

The Opposition believes that this clause is nothing but a massive vote of no confidence by this Government in the Commissioner of Main Roads and his department. Nothing the Minister will say can change the Opposition's opinion. It is obvious the Government is unhappy with the performance of the Main Roads Department and that is the reason for the establishment of the board.

We can put no other construction on it. Reference has already been made to the cost of the new body. The Standing Committee on Government Agencies has had a look at the Bill, and I have been provided with a briefing note by the members of that committee. It shows that the board will be a new Government agency within the jurisdiction of that committee and that the board will not be subject to the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985, unless a regulation is made to that effect pursuant to that Act. Those are the two points raised in that briefing note. The note just points out that another Government agency is to be established with the costs that have been referred to. We reiterate our opposition to this clause which seeks to establish a Mains Roads Board.

Mr STEPHENS: I indicate the National Party's complete opposition to this clause. It is not my intention to repeat the reasons for that. The member for Gascoyne has just outlined the reasons and I also expressed them during the second reading debate. We are completely opposed to the establishment of a Main Roads Board.

Mr RUSHTON: I support the previous speakers and record my objection to this clause. The Minister refused to indicate whether he has the support of his first-class administrator, the Commissioner of Main Roads, for this move. The Minister should be condemned for bringing forward a proposal which is not cost efficient. The creation of a board would create more costs. In any event, there could not be a worse time to increase costs in general administration. It may appear that a quite small sum is involved, but it all adds up to a greater burden on the taxpayers who do not even receive the benefit of an effective result. I oppose the clause.

Mr TROY: I am not sure how many people on the other side of the Chamber have sat down and examined the question of cost. We

are talking about an estimated cost of \$70 000 to \$80 000 for the operation of the board out of a total Budget of nearly \$300 million. We are talking about 0.02 per cent of the Budget.

If this board can unlock the road funding formula—which is not agreed to by local government despite the fact that there is agreement that a greater concentration of funds should be spent on road maintenance—it will save \$80 000 in its first two months of operation. I will be amazed if it does not contribute more than its cost many times over each year.

Mr RUSHTON: It now appears that the reason for seeking the establishment of a Main Roads Board is to control local government. The next thing we will see is that a group of advisers will impose their will on local government. Why is it considered that local government and the Main Roads Department, working together, are not competent to control their own destiny? The lid of the secret box has been opened and we now see that the real intent of the Government is to get more control of local government.

Clause put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 22	
Mrs Beggs	Dr Lawrence
Mr Bertram	Mr Pearce
Mr Bridge	Mr Read
Mr Carr	Mr D. L. Smith
Mr Evans	Mr P. J. Smith
Dr Gallop	Mr Taylor
Mr Grill	Mr Troy
Mrs Henderson	Mrs Watkins
Mr Gordon Hill	Dr Watson
Mr Hodge	Mr Wilson
Mr Tom Jones	Mrs Buchanan

(Teller)

Noes 18	
Mr Bradshaw	Mr Mensaros
Mr Cash	Mr Nalder
Mr Clarko	Mr Rushton
Mr Court	Mr Schell
Mr Cowan	Mr Stephens
Mr House	Mr Thompson
Mr Laurance	Mr Tubby
Mr Lewis	Mr Watt
Mr Lightfoot	Mr Williams

(Teller)

Pairs	
Ayes	Noes
Mr Burkett	Mr MacKinnon
Mr Peter Dowding	Mr Spriggs
Mr Bryce	Mr Trenorden
Mr Parker	Mr Grayden
Mr Marlborough	Mr Hassell
Mr Terry Burke	Mr Crane
Mr Brian Burke	Mr Blaikie

Clause thus passed.

Clause 9: Section 32 amended—

Mr TROY: I move an amendment—

Page 6, lines 10 to 14—To delete paragraph (a) of the clause and substitute the following paragraph—

(a) in subsection (1) (b), by deleting "or" after subparagraph (i) and deleting subparagraph (ii);

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 10 and 11 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr Troy (Minister for Transport), and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 11.23 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH

Physiotherapists: Wanneroo Hospital

1613. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many out patients on average per day were treated by physiotherapists at the Wanneroo Hospital in the last two years?
- (2) Are out patients at Wanneroo Hospital now able to be treated by physiotherapists at Wanneroo?
- (3) If no, why?
- (4) Where can outpatients at Wanneroo Hospital requiring physiotherapy now be treated?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) 1984—11
1985—13
1986—18
- (2) to (4) An additional physiotherapist has been allocated to Wanneroo Hospital. Outpatient services have recommenced.

MEMBER FOR EAST MELVILLE

Car Tampering

1622. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Will he name the independent BMW expert who is assisting the police with inquiries concerning the member for East Melville's car as referred to by the Deputy Premier in his answer to question 310 on Thursday, 23 October?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

Police obtained an independent opinion on the probability of mechanical failure. The opinion supports the view that the condition of the vehicle was a result of mechanical failure. However, that opinion did not conclude police inquiries. It is not considered appropriate to disclose the identity of the expert.

MEMBER FOR EAST MELVILLE

Car Tampering

1623. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) When was he informed that police inquiries had concluded that the damage to the member for East Melville's car was caused by mechanical fault as outlined by the Deputy Premier to the House on 23 October?
- (2) As the Government has attempted to claim that the "mechanical failure" conclusion should have been known to me when I spoke in the House on Wednesday, 22 October, why did the criminal investigation bureau officers involved in the case visit the premises of Auto Classic to interview the service manager and obtain service records on the afternoon of Thursday, 23 October?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) and (2) On 23 October 1986 I was advised to the effect that there was no evidence that the member for East Melville's vehicle had been unlawfully interfered with and the probability for the vehicle's condition was a consequence of mechanical failure. Neither the police, the Deputy Premier, nor I have said that inquiries had at that stage been completed.

The police attended at Auto Classics in the normal course of inquiries on Thursday, 23 October 1986. Service records were not inspected by police. A further experiment was carried out on a BMW sedan arising out of a discussion with the service manager on that day.

The member may be aware that the investigation process involves following up all possible leads to enable a judgment to be made on established facts as opposed to opinion. In this case there is an absence of factual indicators to absolutely support the view that the vehicle had been unlawfully interfered with, while on the other hand there is evidence consistent with the cause of the vehicle's condition being mechanical failure.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Homes: Police Surveillance

1624. Mr LAURANCE, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) He will be aware that during his answer to question 310 of Thursday, 23 October he said, "at the time of making his speech no member of either House was under police surveillance as he alleged"; and I now refer him to the *Hansard* extract of my speech on Wednesday, 22 October which says, "Two members of this Parliament...were having their houses kept under surveillance by the police last week". Will he now acknowledge the correctness of my statement?

- (2) When can I expect his apology?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) and (2) I can understand the severe embarrassment the member for Gascoyne is now experiencing as a result of his outburst in the House on Wednesday, 22 October 1986, and my disclosure the following day that no member of Parliament was under police surveillance as he alleged. However, the member cannot seriously expect even his Liberal colleagues—who I understand are upset by his parliamentary comments on this matter—to take seriously his attempts to get off the hook.

The clear impression created by the member in his speech was that surveillance was continuing. This is the impression held not only by members on both sides of the House but also the media. *The West Australian* reported the member as saying, "It is a serious matter that two members of this House are under police surveillance for protection."

At no stage did the member suggest that the situation to which he referred had altered—in other words, that the police surveillance had been removed.

As I said in response to a question without notice on Thursday, 23 October 1986, police surveillance of the member for East Melville ceased two days after the police received the complaint. No other member from

either House had been under surveillance.

It is clear to me, and apparently the media, the member sought to convey the impression police surveillance on two members was continuing. I am sure if he seriously wanted me to believe he had been misunderstood, he would have insisted that *The West Australian* "correct" its report.

LAND RESERVE

Monadnocks: Status

1637. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) What is the current status of the Monadnocks Reserve?
- (2) Is it a fact that an area of the reserve has been logged since legislation excising the land from State forest was passed by Parliament?
- (3) If yes to (2)—
- when was the area logged;
 - what is the total area logged;
 - what was the volume of wood recovered;
 - what was the value of wood recovered;
 - to whom was the wood sold and in what quantities?
- (4) Are there any other plans to log any of the reserves excised from State forest at the same time as the Monadnocks? If so, what are the details of the plans?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) State forest.
- (2) The reserve has not yet been excised from State forest but a dieback area in the proposed reserve has been logged.
- (3) (a) March-April 1986—dead and dying dieback areas only;
- 122 ha;
 - 220.38 m³;
 - \$3 548.11;
 - all sold to Bunnings at Jarrahdale.
- (4) Logs will be salvaged from dead and dying jarrah trees.

LAND RESERVE

Lane-Poole: Signs

1638. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Further to question 709 of 1986, were the signs erected in Lane-Poole Reserve as agreed?
- (2) If yes—
 - (a) what did the notice on the signs state;
 - (b) when were the signs
 - (i) erected;
 - (ii) removed;
 - (c) where were the signs located?
- (3) If no, why were the signs not erected as agreed?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) "Lane Poole Reserve". The draft management plan for this reserve has been prepared and is available for public comment. The closing date for submission is 22 August 1986. Copies may be obtained from the CALM Office, Dwellingup, or may be inspected in Pinjarra at the Murray Shire Office or library. Submissions should be directed to—
Executive Director
Department of Conservation and Land Management
State Operation Headquarters
COMO WA 6152.
- (b) (i) Friday, 25 July 1986;
(ii) Friday, 21 September 1986.
- (c) Near Baden-Powell waterspout, Nanga mill site.
- (3) Not relevant.

LAND RESERVES

State Forest: Conservation

1639. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Further to his media statement of 22 October 1986, will the entire 100 000 hectares of State forest in the four reserves be set aside for conservation as indicated?
- (2) If no, what is the area of the reserves to be set aside for conservation?

- (3) If the entire area is not to be set aside for conservation, for what other purposes will the reserves be set aside?
- (4) Will these other purposes in (3) allow—
 - (a) water supply dams;
 - (b) logging;
 - (c) mining?
- (5) In which of the four reserves mentioned will activities other than conservation be allowed?
- (6) What is the specific area in each of the four reserves that will be available for purposes other than conservation?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No, but I would like to correct a mistake in the 22 October Press release. The total area of the four reserves is about 80 000 ha.
- (2) In the Lane-Poole Reserve it is proposed to set aside approximately 41 000 ha for conservation. No figure can be quoted for the other areas until land management plans are prepared.
- (3) Recreation.
- (4) Cabinet has decided that no dams will be constructed in the Lane-Poole Reserve. However, a final decision on the land use activities permitted in jarrah forest reserves will not be made until land management plans have been completed.
- (5) and (6) See (4).

LAND RESERVE

Lane-Poole: Dam Proposals

1640. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Will he detail on which Murray River tributaries within the Lane-Poole Reserve will provision be made for possible future dam proposals?
- (2) Will he detail the public processes that must take place before any dams are built on tributaries within the Lane-Poole Reserve?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) There is no provision for dams within the Lane-Poole Reserve.
- (2) Not applicable.

FORESTS

Jarrah: Resources

1641. Mr RUSHTON, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

(1) Further to question 1296 of 1986—

- (a) what is the jarrah timber resource for the next two decades;
- (b) how much of the total jarrah timber resources for the next two decades is contained in the northern jarrah forest;
- (c) what percentage of the millable jarrah timber resource is contained in virgin jarrah forest;
- (d) what was the definition of "virgin jarrah forest" used in coming up with the figure of 0.3 million hectares of virgin jarrah forest in State forest;
- (e) what was the minimum forest area used to come up with the aggregate of 0.3 million hectares of virgin jarrah forest in State forest;

(2) What is the purpose of inviting public comment on the contents of the draft working plan for State forests and timber reserves?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) It is not possible to quote a figure as it depends on the level of cut and constantly changing market demands;
- (c) refer to question 1296 (3);
- (d) all jarrah forest for which there is no record of felling;
- (e) two hectares.
- (2) To allow public participation in policy making as required under the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Cleaners

1642. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Education:

How many cleaners were employed by the Education Department on 30 June—

- (a) 1981;
- (b) 1982;
- (c) 1983;

(d) 1984;

(e) 1985;

(f) 1986?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (a) 1981 not available;
- (b) 1982 not available;
- (c) 1983 not available;
- (d) 1984 3 011;
- (e) 1985 3 081;
- (f) 1986 3 244.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Mirrabooka: Cleaners

1643. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Education:

How many cleaners were employed at the Mirrabooka High School on 30 June—

- (a) 1980;
- (b) 1981;
- (c) 1982;
- (d) 1983;
- (e) 1984;
- (f) 1985;
- (g) 1986?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (a) 1980 15;
- (b) 1981 15;
- (c) 1982 15;
- (d) 1983 16;
- (e) 1984 17;
- (f) 1985 17;
- (g) 1986 17;

DR M. EXLEY

Letter: Reply

1646. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

Adverting to question 1196 of 1986 concerning his reply to Dr M. Exley's letter, when does he expect to complete consideration?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

A formal response was forwarded to Dr Exley on 17 October 1986.

GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES

Payroll Tax: Liability

1650. Mr COWAN, to the Treasurer:

- (1) How many Government agencies or statutory authorities have been identified as being in competition with private industry and as such are required to pay payroll tax?

- (2) Will he name them?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The requirement to pay payroll tax applies to statutory authorities whether or not they are in competition with private enterprise. Consequently, the test of being in competition with the private sector is only required to be applied to those agencies which are not statutory authorities.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT

Regulations: Gazetted

1651. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) Have any regulations been gazetted under section 23 of the Wildlife Conservation Act for the purpose of suspending or restricting the operation of the section?

- (2) If so,

- (a) in what manner;
- (b) for what period or periods;
- (c) in what part or parts of the State, did, or do, such regulations apply?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.

HEALTH

Medical Practitioners: Advertisements

1653. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does he intend to introduce legislation to allow doctors of medicine to advertise?
- (2) If so, when?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Medical Amendment Act 1985 provides for the making of rules in relation to advertising by medical practitioners. This Act is awaiting

proclamation pending the drafting of these rules and others.

WATER POLICE

Headquarters: Approval

1654. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Has the Swan River Management Authority withdrawn or varied its approval for the water police headquarters at North Fremantle?
- (2) If yes, will he provide details?
- (3) Is the Government complying with all the conditions laid down by the Swan River Management Authority in respect of the water police headquarters?
- (4) If not, will he provide details?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

This question has wrongly been addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. It has been referred to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management and Environment, and he will answer the question in writing.

WATER POLICE

Headquarters: Approval

1655. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Has the State Planning Commission withdrawn or varied any conditions of its planning approval for the water police headquarters at North Fremantle?
- (2) If yes, will he provide details?
- (3) How wide will the access footway be to the river from Harvest Road?
- (4) Is this any narrower than the condition imposed by the State Planning Commission?
- (5) If yes to (4), will he provide details?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

This question has wrongly been addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. It has been referred to the Minister for Planning, and he will answer the question in writing.

LAND

Conditional Purchase: Price

1656. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is he aware that the price at which some new land farmers are paying off their conditional purchase blocks—about \$40 a hectare—is higher than the price which comparable developed farm land is realising on the open market?
- (2) If yes, what action will he take to review the current conditional purchase land prices in order to provide a measure of relief to new land farmers?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Reviews have shown that at the time these conditional purchase contracts were entered into, the prices were conservative compared to fair market values, particularly having regard for the generous terms of payment on CP leases. Alternative means of assisting new land farmers are being examined.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Work Practices: Investigation

1659. Mr HOUSE, to the Minister for Industrial Relations:

As part of his investigation into work practices in Western Australia, does the Minister intend to look fully at the question of basing award movements on production gains rather than the principle of comparative wage justice, thereby taking into account an industry's ability to pay?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

It is presumed that the member is referring to the forthcoming conference concerning productivity and employment. Rather than constituting an "investigation into work practices", this conference will involve an exchange of information and views on a broad range of issues relevant to productivity and employment, both generally and within particular industry sectors. Work practices are but one factor which participants may wish to raise in this context.

The Government believes that negotiations relating to workplace productivity are to be encouraged, but

these must take place at the workplace. The conference is expected to foster an environment conducive to such negotiations.

With regard to the basis for award wage movements, the member is reminded that the current wage principles afford any industry or employer the opportunity to seek relief from national wage or other adjustments on the grounds of economic incapacity. In addition, wage increases based on comparative wage justice have been strictly limited under the wage fixation principles developed as a consequence of the accord.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Landscaping

1660. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why has the landscaping contract for the Leeming High School not yet been completed?
- (2) When was the landscaping contract first let?
- (3) What was the completion contract date in that initial contract?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Planting and paving have been completed.
- (2) and (3) The work was undertaken as part of an annual planting contract and commenced in August 1986.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Hall-gymnasium

1661. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When will the joint community-school facilities incorporating the gymnasium and other facilities be commenced at the Leeming High School?
- (2) When is it anticipated that those facilities will be ready for use?
- (3) What is causing the delay to the commencement of this project?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (3) Tenders have been called for the project, and an announcement concerning the building will be made in the near future.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Enrolments

1662. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the current enrolment at Leeming High School?
- (2) What is the anticipated enrolment in 1987 and 1988?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) 263.
- (2) 420—1987;
635—1988.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Extra Facilities

1663. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What facilities will be contained in the new stage of the Leeming High School?
- (2) When is it anticipated that those facilities will be constructed?
- (3) When is it anticipated that those facilities will be ready for use?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Specialist facilities, including additional science, art and crafts, business education, a social services suite, and general teaching areas.
- (2) During 1988.
- (3) The latter half of 1988.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: School Nurse

1664. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is a school nurse currently employed at the Leeming High School?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) When will a school nurse be employed at the school?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Although a school nurse as such is not appointed to Leeming High School, the school is serviced by a nurse from the community nursing services.
- (2) It is normal practice to only appoint a school nurse to a Government secondary school once it attains senior high school status and has a student services suite built.

- (3) The student services suite will be built as part of the next stage of additions to the school buildings, and a school nurse will then be appointed.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Leeming: Youth Education Officer

1665. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is a youth education officer currently employed at the Leeming High School?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) When will a youth education officer be employed at the Leeming High School?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Secondary schools do not have a youth education officer appointed to their staffs until they have year 11 and 12 students.
- (3) At the earliest, 1988.

HEALTH

Dental Therapy Clinics: Leeming Area

1667. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When will work commence on the dental therapy clinic referred to by him in answer to question 1491 of 1986?
- (2) At which Leeming school will the centre be located?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Early in 1987.
- (2) Leeming Primary School.

HEALTH

Specific Learning Difficulties Association: Funding

1668. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

Why has the Government decided to cease providing any funding for the Specific Learning Difficulties Association of Western Australia?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Premier. It has been referred to the Minister for Education,

and he will answer the question in writing.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Lynwood: Capital Works

1669. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

When will the work referred to in question 1495 of 1986 concerning capital works at Lynwood High School be commenced?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The work is expected to commence in April 1987.

AUDITOR GENERAL

Report: Decision Makers Account

1671. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

What expenses were charged to the decision makers account during the year ended 30 June 1986 and as referred to on page 61 of the first report of the Auditor General for the year ended 30 June 1986?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

Expenses charged to the decision makers account during the year ended 30 June 1986 included venue hire and catering costs, mail charges, printing, and stationery costs.

KALEEYA INVESTMENTS PTY LTD

Loan Guarantee

1672. Mr MacKINNON, to the Deputy Premier:

(1) When was the loan guarantee extended to Kaleeya Investments Pty Ltd, as referred to on page 10 of the public accounts for the financial year ended 30 June 1986?

(2) What was the purpose of the loan?

Mr BRYCE replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Deputy Premier. It has been referred to the Premier, and he will answer the question in writing.

MOSMAN PARK TEAROOMS

Approvals

1676. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Planning:

In relation to the Mosman Park tearooms development, on what date did the State Planning Commission approve the development?

Mr PEARCE replied:

Approval for the development was issued by the State Planning Commission on 21 March 1986, subject to three conditions. The commission advised of its acceptance of modified plans as satisfying those conditions in October.

MOSMAN PARK TEAROOMS

Approvals

1677. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Environment:

In relation to the Mosman Park tearooms development, on what date did the Swan River Management Authority approve the development which is now proceeding?

Mr HODGE replied:

On 23 July 1984 the Swan River Management Authority provided advice to the Department of Marine and Harbours recommending approval for the redevelopment of the Mosman Bay tearooms. The same advice was subsequently given at a meeting convened by the State Planning Commission on 13 March 1986. On 16 October 1986 the Swan River Management Authority expressed a preference for the amended redevelopment proposal to be limited to a size that would seat 20 customers.

ENVIRONMENT

Reefs: Blasting

1684. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Environment:

(1) Is he aware of any plans to blast reefs in Western Australian coastal areas?

(2) If yes—

(a) in which coastal areas will this blasting occur;

(b) what area of reef will be affected;

- (c) what is the purpose of this blasting?
- (3) Will he tell the House of any blasting that may be contemplated if required in coastal areas prior to the blasting taking place?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) No. However, there is a proposal to remove by means other than blasting pinnacles at the entrance to the Hillarys Boat Harbour for safety reasons.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Hillarys Boat Harbour proposal has been referred to the Environmental Protection Authority for advice. I will make public the advice of the authority and the Government's decision on the proposal.

EDUCATION

Schools: Vandalism

1686. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is vandalism to both school property and equipment increasing in Western Australia?
- (2) Can he provide details of the increase for the years—
- (a) 1983;
- (b) 1984;
- (c) 1985;
- (d) 1986 to date?
- (3) How much is the estimated cost to the Government expressed in terms of Education Department regions for the following years—
- (a) 1983;
- (b) 1984;
- (c) 1985;
- (d) 1986 to date?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes, although where schools are fitted with a silent electronic alarm system, damage has decreased by up to 75 per cent.
- (2) (a) 1983 *1 551 reported offences
- (b) 1984 2 656
- (c) 1985 2 797
- (d) 1986 2 201 (figure available to September 1986 at this stage).

* figures inaccurate as the present Voc-phone reporting system was only introduced in October 1983.

(3)

	1983 \$	1984 \$	1985 \$	1986 \$
1. Metro South East	113 646	292 582	247 147	245 070
2. Metro South West	191 865	197 640	62 046	110 008
3. Metro North East	417 791	226 889	65 008	207 433
4. Metro North West	37 392	60 644	103 677	83 552
5. Upper Great Southern	5 528	696	2 465	2 923
6. Great Southern	1 117	7 190	5 450	5 563
7. Country South West	69 196	6 032	24 475	13 858
8. Midlands	3 570	845	5 013	4 402
9. Geraldton	6 043	4 318	7 772	59 191
10. Goldfields	11 144	6 532	12 686	3 795
11. Pilbara	13 096	13 895	4 365	16 429
12. Kimberley	189	509 458	2 397	3 805
13. Yilgarn	645	1 005	702	300

PASTORAL LEASE No. 3114-871

Availability

1690. Mr TUBBY, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is pastoral lease No. 3114-871 east of Pindar available for lease?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Pastoral lease 3114-871 no longer exists. The area, which was formerly Marlingu Station, is vacant Crown land.
- (2) Investigations in the past have shown that the land is not suitable for either agricultural or pastoral pursuits.

LAND RELEASE

Ajana

1691. Mr TUBBY, to the Premier:

- (1) Did he receive a submission in April 1986 from a group of farmers from Ajana in the Northampton Shire, requesting that consideration be given to the release of additional Crown land in that area for farm build-up purposes only, for existing farms adjacent to land mentioned in the submission?
- (2) What action did he take as a result of this submission, which was forwarded to him because it overlapped the portfolios of several Ministers?
- (3) Does he realise the urgency of the situation, as the future viability of these farmers will depend on expanding their farming operations, especially with the production of white lupins for which the land mentioned in the submission is ideal?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (3) I am not aware of personally having received the submission referred to. However, a proposal has been under consideration by a number of Ministers. The Minister for Lands is presently considering the matter, and I have asked for a decision to be expedited.

MOSMAN PARK TEAROOMS

Approvals

1692. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Did he and the State Planning Commission approve the development of the Mosman Park tearooms, which is now under construction, on the basis that it was no different from the development approved in March, subject to three conditions?
- (2) Were the plans for the development now under construction referred for approval by—
 - (a) the Swan River Management Authority;
 - (b) the Department of Marine and Harbours;
 - (c) the Mosman Park Town Council;
 - (d) the Environmental Protection Authority or the Department of Conservation and Environment?
- (3) With reference to his answer to question without notice 337, does he say that the Mosman Park Town Council has asked him to retract approvals given to the plans of March this year, or to retract approvals given to the development now under construction?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) The State Planning Commission accepted that the plans of the development now under construction satisfy the three conditions of its March approval while remaining consistent with the development concept of that approval. The approval of the Minister for Planning was not necessary.
- (2) All the relevant authorities were consulted before the commission's approval in March. The modified plans were submitted to both the commission and the Department of Mar-

ine and Harbours for their respective endorsements.

- (3) By letter dated 27 October, the Town of Mosman Park has asked that "any approvals which may have been given for this project be cancelled . . .".

MEMBER FOR GASCOYNE

Allegations: Select Committee of Privilege

1700. Mr LAURANCE, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Further to his answer to question 1595 of 29 October 1986, is it not a fact that a careful reading of my speech on 22 October shows no "totally baseless allegations against a range of people both inside and outside the Parliament"?
- (2) If yes, will he now apologise?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.

WILDLIFE

Indigenous: Endangered

1707. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) How many indigenous species of—
 - (a) birds;
 - (b) animals;
 - (c) reptiles,
 which are known to occur, or to have recently occurred, in Western Australia, are regarded as endangered?
- (2) What are the birds, animals, and reptiles regarded as being in this category?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) The list of fauna which is declared rare, or otherwise in need of special protection, pursuant to the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950, is published in *Government Gazette* No. 116 of 22 November 1985. An extract from this *Government Gazette* is tabled.
 - (2) See (1).
- (See paper No. 496.)

WILDLIFE

Kangaroos: Commercial Harvest

1708. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

Are commercial harvest and quota details available for red kangaroos, western grey kangaroos, and euros, for the years 1970 to 1985 inclusive, and if so, what are those details?

Mr HODGE replied:

The commercial harvest and quota details requested are published by the Department of Conservation and Land Management in Wildlife Management Program No. 3 entitled "Kangaroo Management in Western Australia". An extract from this program is tabled.

(See paper No. 497.)

WILDLIFE: KANGAROOS

Shooting: Land Management

1709. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

What species of kangaroos and their relatives—superfamily macropodoidea—which occur in Western Australia, may be currently taken for the purpose of containing their effects on land management practices?

Mr HODGE replied:

Red kangaroo—*Macropus rufus*

Western grey kangaroo—*Macropus fuliginosus*

Euro—*Macropus robustus*

Agile wallaby—*Macropus agilis*

The above species may be taken under licence in varying numbers according to quotas set following consideration of factors such as populations, impact on pastoral and farming areas, etc.

WILDLIFE

Agile Wallabies: Open Season

1710. Mr GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Conservation and Land Management:

- (1) When was the last open season declared in respect of the agile wallaby—*Macropus agilis*?
- (2) To what parts of the State did the open season apply?
- (3) What restrictions, if any, were applicable to the open season?

Mr HODGE replied:

- (1) 21 November 1980.
- (2) The Shires of Wyndham-East Kimberley, West Kimberley, Halls Creek, and Broome.
- (3) I table an extract from *Government Gazette* No. 79 of 21 November 1980. (See paper No. 498.)

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Offices: Costs

1711. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

- (1) How many members' electorate offices were there during the financial year 1985-86?
- (2) What was the aggregate all-in cost including rental, cleaning of offices, light, and telephone, repair and maintenance of equipment, etc., of members' electorate offices during the financial year 1985-86?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) As at 30 June 1986, there were 83 parliamentary offices outside Parliament House.
- (2) The total cost of these parliamentary offices, excluding salaries and other staffing costs, was \$962 712 for 1985-86.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Offices: Costs

1712. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

- (1) What was the aggregate capital expenditure for furniture, office equipment, or any other installation not included in the rental, like airconditioning if applicable, for newly established members' electorate offices, since and including the financial year 1980-81?
- (2) How many offices have been newly established since and including the financial year 1980-81?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) This information is not readily available. However, if the member has any specific concerns, I will consider having them investigated.
- (2) The number of parliamentary offices has increased from 66 to 84.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Termination

1713. Mr MENSAROS, to the Leader of the House:

As the times of sittings of Parliament were entirely novel so far in 1986, would he please indicate to the House approximately when the present sitting is planned to terminate and when sittings for 1987 are anticipated by the Government, so that private members shall be able to make travelling and other plans with reasonable security and time for thorough preparation?

Mr PEARCE replied:

The Government hopes to conclude the session before the end of November, if possible, in order to cause as little inconvenience as possible to members' attendances at Christmas functions. I will circulate to all members a schedule of sittings for 1987 and 1988 before the end of the current session.

CRIME

Statistics: Floreat Electorate

1715. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

(1) How many complaints were received by the police in the suburbs of—

- (a) Floreat;
- (b) City Beach;
- (c) Wembley Downs;
- (d) Churchlands;
- (e) Woodlands;
- (f) Mt Claremont,

or nearest equivalent suburban districts for which statistics are available to obtain the information sought regarding—

- (i) theft;
 - (ii) breaking and entering;
 - (iii) damaging property?
- (2) How many of these complaints were investigated?
- (3) How many of the investigations led to apprehension of the offender/s and to laying of charges?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) The statistical information requested is not readily available and would take considerable time and resources to compile.
- (2) When complaints are received, inquiries are made by the officer receiving the complaint as to possible information or evidence for follow-up investigation.
- (3) As for (1).

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

"Generous" Employment Practices

1716. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

With reference to question 1073 of 1986, will he state what other "generous" employment practices apart from long service leave are given to Government employees?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

The member will recall that the economic statement was directed towards addressing important budgetary issues not at specifying the full range of employment conditions in the public sector. Therefore these have not been compiled in detailed form.

There are, however, a number of conditions which can be described as generous. Some are specific to particular areas of employment, such as payout of accrued sick leave, while others have more general application, such as the 37½-hour week and Public Service holidays. Physical working conditions are also generally as good or better than in the private sector.

MR A. R. J. SHORD

Letter: Reply

1719. Mr RUSHTON, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he replied to Mr A. R. J. Shord's letter of 3 September 1986?
- (2) Does he intend to reply to Mr Shord's letter?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) The member will be advised in writing.

EDUCATION

Pre-school Survey: Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons

1723. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons currently carrying out a widespread review of pre-school services with the aim of developing alternative methods of service delivery?
- (2) Who is carrying out that review?
- (3) When is it anticipated that that review will be completed?
- (4) Will the report resulting from that review be made public?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) When is it anticipated that decisions resulting from this review will come into effect?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) The Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons is currently conducting a review of its services to pre-school children. The review is intended to identify the perceived benefits of the existing services as well as identifying areas of concern to parents and staff.
- (2) The review is being conducted by the research and evaluation section in conjunction with chief professional officers and the staff of the authority's pre-school services.
- (3) It is anticipated that a report of the review's findings will be available by the end of 1986.
- (4) A report of the findings will be made available to each regional office of the authority in order that it be available to parents, other agencies, and interested persons.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) Recommendations resulting from the findings of the reviews will be implemented progressively depending upon the nature of the recommendations and the resources required to effect change. Minor improvements to the service have in some cases already been effected at regional team level. Substantive changes will require consideration by senior management.

PORTS AND HARBOURS

Mandurah Bar: Opening

1724. Mr MacKINNON, to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government allocated any funding in this year's Budget to provide a permanent ocean entrance to the Mandurah channel?
- (2) On what basis have these funds been allocated?
- (3) When is it anticipated that work will commence on this project?
- (4) What is the estimated annual cost of maintaining the permanent ocean entrance?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

This question has been incorrectly addressed to the Premier. It has been referred to the Minister for Environment, and he will answer the question in writing.

EDUCATION

Teacher Aides: Murdoch Electorate

1725. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will any of the 30.5 full-time equivalent teacher aides referred to by him in question 1494 of 23 October be employed within the Murdoch electorate?
- (2) If so, where will they be employed?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) No, because all the aides in centres in the Murdoch electorate are already employed full-time.
- (2) The additional aides will be employed at centres where there are currently full-time teachers but 0.5 aides.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Lynwood: English as a Second Language

1726. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the English as a second language programme to be discontinued at Lynwood High School in 1987?
- (2) If yes, why is this so?
- (3) How many children are currently benefiting from this programme at Lynwood High School?

- (4) How many children would have benefited from the course in 1987?
- (5) If the programme is not to continue at the school in 1987, what will happen to the computing and library resources established at the school to support this programme?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Severe cuts in Commonwealth funds to the ESL programme for 1987 have resulted in a need to restructure it so that as much assistance as possible is provided for the greatest number of students.

Continuation of ESL support can only be given to those schools with large numbers of students in stages 1 and 2. Regrettably, direct ESL support programmes will have to be withdrawn from those schools which are presently without stage 1 intensive classes, Lynwood Senior High School being one of these.

- (3) A total of 43, comprised of 15 students in stage 2 and 28 students in stage 3.
- (4) Approximately the same number.
- (5) As the computers and library materials were acquired by the school as a result of its submission to PEP for resources to support general school development, they must remain in the school to be used for whatever purpose the school chooses.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Flexitime: Study

1727. Mr HASSELL, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he advise if, in the Government's study of flexitime, savings from the removal of flexitime within the public sector have been quantified or determined?
- (2) With reference to question 1074 of 1986, will he say what the new arrangements are which have been implemented in respect of the nine-day fortnight and 19-day month for employees under the Public Service Act and for "Government officers"?
- (3) What has been the outcome to date of the Government's review of the 38-hour week within the public sector?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Arrangements have been made for the member to receive a copy of the new arrangements from the Public Service Board.
- (3) The 38-hour week reviews conducted by employing authorities have been undertaken to check on estimated cost savings gained from the trade-offs for the introduction of the 38-hour week and to ensure that the operational efficiency of the organisations concerned have not been unduly affected.

ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL

Services: Cut-backs

1730. Mr CASH, to the Minister representing the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs:

- (1) Is he aware of the concern of the Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia at the rationale which determined the broad range of cut-backs in multicultural programmes and services?
- (2) What was the rationale which determined the broad range of cut-backs?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) The Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia has written to me advising me of its concern at the effect of the Federal Government's decisions which have already been made, and those which the council believes may be made, on multicultural programmes and services.
- (2) As all matters raised by the Ethnic Communities Council fall primarily within the responsibility of the Federal Government, I would advise the member to raise his query with the Federal Ministers concerned—that is, the Federal Ministers for the Arts, Education, Communications, Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and the Attorney General.

MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Review

1731. Mr CASH, to the Minister representing the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs:

- (1) Is there to be a review of the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission?
- (2) Is it to be coordinated by a private consultancy, and if so, will he provide details of the estimated cost?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) The review of the role of the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, which I announced in a Press release on 10 October 1986, is being chaired and therefore coordinated by Graham Burkett MLA, member for Scarborough.
- (2) Not applicable.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CRIME

Defence: Personal Safety Centres

338. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) In view of the fact that in WA in the past year, breaking and entering offences have increased by 10 per cent, robbery offences by 24.7 per cent, serious assault offences by 12.6 per cent, and motor vehicle thefts by 24 per cent, will the Minister consider establishing shop-front personal safety centres where members of the public can go to receive professional advice on how to protect themselves and their property from personal assault, vandalism, theft, or other offences?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that such centres operate successfully in South Australia and are clearly an extension of crime prevention?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) and (2) I am not aware of the establishment of such centres in South Australia. We have a very effective crime prevention bureau in Western Australia, and this Government has given considerable assistance, both financial and moral, to that bureau.

Whether that is the best way of getting a message across to the public will need to be addressed.

The Government's commitment to assisting the police in bringing to the attention of the public various methods that can be employed to prevent crime is undiminished.

HEALTH

Hospitals: Food Costs

339. Mr THOMAS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of assertions made in the Press by the member for Murray-Wellington concerning comparisons of food costs in major metropolitan hospitals?
- (2) Are those assertions correct?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) I am aware of the assertions made by the member for Murray-Wellington.
- (2) No, his assertions are not correct. He can correct me if I am wrong, but I did the same arithmetic as he did after he asked me a question in June about the daily occupancy and annual total food costs in various hospitals in the metropolitan area. He then divided the food costs by the occupied bed days and came up with the rates that he produced for the Press to make comparisons from hospital to hospital and more particularly for the Princess Margaret Hospital for Children with the Adelaide Children's Hospital.

The cost of patients meals is one factor when one looks at food costs in hospitals. Other factors need to be taken into account. The Princess Margaret Hospital provides meals to relatives of patients or to parents of young children who are in hospital. Hospitals also supply meals to staff; meals are supplied in some hospitals to the Meals on Wheels organisation; and some hospitals supply meals to other hospitals. Apart from the number of patient-occupied bed days in hospitals, those extra factors need to be taken into account.

The information for 1985-86 that I have obtained from the department shows that in Western Australia, the average cost of a meal in hospitals was

\$5.61 compared with \$5.83 in South Australia. I suppose the best we can say to the member for Murray-Wellington is that his arithmetic is correct but he has failed to understand the linkage between gross food costs and inpatient days.

I am sure that, tomorrow, when we debate the future of the Fremantle Hospital, the member for Murray-Wellington will tell the House that the Government should be spending more money there. Yet he is prepared to make those sorts of statements in the Press about the cost of hospital meals. He should make up his mind. Does he want reductions in staff numbers at hospitals to reduce costs, or does he want us to reduce the quality of food so the kids at Princess Margaret can eat bread and dripping and drink hot water? I will look forward to what he says about whether he wants to reduce staff numbers or reduce the quality of meals.

HEALTH: DRUGS

Operation Noah: Involvement

340. Mr CASH, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the concern expressed by senior police officers in the Eastern States that Western Australia will not be participating in the national drug offensive, Operation Noah?
- (2) In light of this concern and the fact that drug offences in Western Australia have increased by 29 per cent in 1985-86, will he request the Commissioner of Police to review his decision not to allow the police to take part in this important exercise?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

- (1) and (2) I do not know how many times I have to tell the Opposition that it is not the Government's responsibility to direct the police in operational matters. The Commissioner of Police made a decision not to participate in Operation Noah this year. That is his decision; and it is not our responsibility or the responsibility of any politician to interfere in the right of the Commissioner of Police to make a decision on operational matters.

SEWAGE DUMPING

Gosnells City Council

341. Mr SPRIGGS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) When did the department authorise the Gosnells City Council to dump sewage in its Kelvin Road tip?
- (2) What plans are required to be submitted to any Government department before sewage dumping is permitted?
- (3) Was his department satisfied that the dump had been designed to effectively do its job without danger to the community as a whole and to those who live in close proximity?
- (4) What qualifications do the staff in charge of the dumps require to supervise the operation?
- (5) Is he aware the residents are subjected to appalling smells which result in a number of people vomiting continuously and having to have medical treatment?
- (6) As I have no doubt this dump is totally and completely unqualified in design and position to continue its operations, will he immediately close the tip?
- (7) Has the Minister visited the site?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Late 1985.
- (2) A satisfactory management plan relating to the size of the site.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) An ability to comply with the management plan and to undertake testing required by the Health Department of Western Australia.
- (5) I am aware that complaints have been made by residents living in proximity to the site.
- (6) No. However, representatives from the City of Gosnells, the Department of Conservation and Environment, and the Health Department of Western Australia met today and agreed on the introduction of more stringent controls in the operation of the site.
- (7) No, I have not visited the site, but it is my intention to visit it to see whether the controls agreed on today work.

The member for Gosnells has made a number of representations to me about this matter. As a result of her representations, the Health Department was involved in the organisation of the meeting on the site today to discuss what could be done and also to try to come to some satisfactory resolution of the problem.

Sewage has to go somewhere; of that there is no doubt. The problem in the metropolitan area is finding the best solution to the problem. It is not an easy matter to come to grips with because no-one wants these disposal sites anywhere near them, and I understand that. As a Government and as a community, we have to overcome these problems.

We will do our best to overcome the problem. I am sure that as a result of representations of other members and particularly of the member for Gosnells, this problem will be solved. I will go and inspect the site after the new controls have had a chance to work or not to work, whatever the case may be.

STATE FINANCE

Expenditure: Curbing

342. Dr WATSON, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is the Treasurer aware of repeated calls by the Opposition for a curbing of Government expenditure?
- (2) How does the Opposition's present position compare with its record in Government?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I do not think that anyone is unaware of the Opposition's repeated calls for curbs on Government expenditure. They are calls frequently associated with demands that we spend more money, and they tally somewhat hypocritically with the Opposition's position on the steps we took in respect of Government employee housing. What did the Opposition say about that? It was aghast! It criticised us for attempting to increase in a very fair and reasonable way rents on Government employee housing.

What about technical and further education? Where did the Opposition stand on that when we took steps to curb Government expenditure? The Leader of the Opposition had nothing to say and some of his back-benchers simply sought to maximise their political positions by trying to garner support from technical and further education teachers. Thus the Opposition's rhetoric rarely matches its performance in Government or in Opposition.

Today the member for Mt Lawley suddenly went in to bat for better working conditions for anyone—for members of the Police Force on this occasion. He wants us to curb expenditure in line with the Opposition's policy, at the same time as he wants us to increase spending on the Police Force. Members opposite cannot have it every which way, but the facts are most revealing. The facts show that the Opposition has no credibility whatsoever.

For the record, I put into perspective the performance of our Government compared with that of the Liberal Party when it was in Government. In the nine years of the Court and O'Connor Governments, total Consolidated Revenue Fund expenditure grew at an annual average rate of 16.9 per cent. They spent like there was no settling. The average annual rate of increase in expenditure during the nine years of the Court and O'Connor Governments was 16.9 per cent! By contrast, in the three Budgets prior to the most recent one introduced by the present Government, the annual growth in CRF expenditure was only 9.8 per cent.

To look at it from another perspective, in the three years to 1985-86 real CRF expenditure grew by 2.5 per cent under our Government's prudent, frugal policies. That was almost half the annual real growth during the period of the Court and O'Connor Governments. Where can we find the integrity in the position occupied by members opposite? They call on us to curb expenditure, yet when they were in Government for nine years they outspent us in real terms by 2:1. They now want to mouth off about cutbacks

in expenditure. They set the pace; they built into this State's Budget the sorts of expectations that we have had to wind back, yet now they have the gall to call on us to reduce expenditure. We have been able to increase employment opportunities dramatically at the same time as we have been prudent and responsible and have held down taxes and charges.

I conclude by pointing out once again to the Parliament that the increase, for example, in the metropolitan domestic electricity tariffs under the previous Government was absolutely horrendous. I know that the previous Government signed the contract for the North-West Shelf gas and had then to set about making good the difficult situation it created, but it almost reached the stage at which people could not afford to turn on their lights, although one of the Liberal slogans was "Turn On the Lights". In 1980, there was a 17.8 per cent increase; in 1981 a 16.1 per cent increase; and in 1982 a 12.9 per cent increase. During our period in Government there have been increases of 15 per cent, 3.8 per cent, and 12 per cent. By any measure, we have outperformed the Opposition when it comes to curbing expenditure and increases in taxes and charges and when it comes to creating economic prosperity and employment.

GRAIN FREIGHT

Agreement: Lapse

343. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) With reference to the two-page advertisement relating to the grain freight agreement in today's *The West Australian*, does the claim by Westrail that the 1986-87 contract has lapsed mean that the 1984 grain freight agreement is no longer valid?
- (2) If the validity of the contract is in question, what authority does the grain freight steering committee have to act on behalf of Western Australian grain growers?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) I am pleased to say that just a few moments ago I completed a further meeting with the grain freight steering

committee. The status of that agreement is not absolutely clear. There is a very clear indication from the parties that they still see it remaining, and past experience suggests that when the contract has expired at certain times, people have nevertheless adhered to it. The parties bring a great deal of goodwill towards resolving the issue and the discussions that are proceeding are going along in the appropriate manner. I hope that next week some firm conclusion can be gained.

- (2) I missed the second part of the member for Merredin's question.

Mr Cowan: What authority does the grain freight steering committee have to act if the contract is no longer valid? However, the Minister has said that it is valid.

Mr TROY: The parties are holding to it. I am seeking legal opinion from the Crown Law Department, but I think the important thing is that the parties are prepared to honour the agreement at this stage.

POLICE OFFICERS

Number: Decrease

344. Mr READ, to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Is the Minister aware of the allegation made by the member for Mt Lawley in the "Political Notes" column published in *The West Australian* newspaper on 6 November 1986 that, "In fact, in the past three years there has been a six per cent decrease in uniformed officers on our streets"?

Mr GORDON HILL replied:

It is worth emphasising the point raised by the member for Mandurah. The statement by the member for Mt Lawley as reported in *The West Australian* "Political Notes" column is typically factually incorrect. The Commissioner of Police commissioned a report which indicated that as a percentage of the total Police Force, there has been a six per cent reduction in police officers on the street over a 10-year period. Of course, some of that reduction occurred when the Liberal Party was in Government.

However, in absolute terms there are more officers on our streets than ever before. I support the Commissioner of Police's policy of effective policing involving the transfer, where possible, of trained police officers to operational duties. The member for Mt Lawley has never said where he stands on that question of effective policing and transferring officers from non-policing duties to operational areas.

TAXI LICENCES

Temporary

345. Mr MARLBOROUGH, to the Minister for Transport:

Can the Minister inform the House of the results of his request to the Taxi Control Board to consider the situation regarding some disquiet among taxi drivers about the temporary restricted taxi licences that have been issued for the Christmas and America's Cup period?

Mr TROY replied:

Members will recall that in answer to a question on the subject on 30 October last, I informed the House of the arrangements that had been made for temporary licences to be issued by the Taxi Control Board for the period of Christmas, and January and February next year, the peak period of the America's Cup.

Currently some 55 temporary licences are on issue, and holders of the licences are operating on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Members will recall that I reported to the House that there was some feeling among taxi owner-drivers and lease operators concerning the operation of these licences on Thursday and Sunday nights. I have since received a photocopy of a petition regarding this, which was signed by some 406 drivers. Those petitioners are representative of a wide spectrum of taxi drivers and others in the industry.

I have referred this matter to the Taxi Control Board for its consideration. As members are no doubt aware, the

Taxi Control Board is a representative body that comprises a majority of industry representatives; and it is my view that it was for the industry to consider the most appropriate action.

I inform the House that at its meeting this afternoon the board decided that it would continue the operation of all 55 temporary licences on Friday and Saturday evenings, and would roster half of those licences onto the road on Thursday nights and half on Sundays. This arrangement is to continue until demand warrants an increase in the number of these licences on the road. To monitor demand, all drivers of the temporary cars must fill in running sheets outlining the nature of work undertaken. I am therefore quite sure that the board will be able to closely monitor the situation.

Finally, I inform the House that I have commended to the board a suggestion that it consults on an open basis with all the industry at some future date to discuss the arrangements for this coming Christmas and America's Cup period. I do not for one moment criticise the board or the determinations that it has made—it has shown imagination and courage and has been responsive to the needs of both the taxi-using public and those in the industry. I will be pursuing this point further with it.

WA EXIM CORPORATION

Annual Report

346. Mr COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) When will the annual report of the Western Australian Exim Corporation be released?
- (2) When will the annual general meeting of shareholders be held?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) and (2) I do not know the answer to the question. If the member puts it on the Notice Paper, I will convey it to Exim Corporation and have the member advised.

TRANSPORT

Taplin Report: Implementation

347. Mr SCHELL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the Government given consideration to implementing the recommendations of the Taplin report?
- (2) What benefits, if any, would the recommendations of this report have in reducing Westrail's grain freight rates for medium to long-haul areas to competitive levels?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) and (2) I presume the member is referring to the latest report on long-haul grain rates. I can assure the member that Dr Taplin puts his name to many reports; I make the assumption that is the report the member is referring to.

The long-haul grain freight rate question cannot be treated in isolation from the general question of grain freight haulage. I have encouraged members of the working party I established to take into account considerations relating to long-haul grain. As I indicated earlier, as a result of my meeting this afternoon and other reports, consideration has been given to the long-haul problem being taken into account by those considering the general problem at this stage. As I indicated earlier, I am hopeful that an announcement can be made next week when something fairly firm will be before me.

MIDLAND ABATTOIR SALE

Contract: Completion

348. Mr TUBBY, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Further to the comment made as an interjection by the Premier earlier this afternoon relating to the sale of the Midland abattoir site.

- (1) Has the site now been formally disposed of with purchase moneys being paid in full, and the certificate of title formally transferred to Pilsley Investments Pty Ltd?
- (2) If yes, what was the date of settlement?

- (3) If settlement has been effected, will the Minister make available or explain to the Parliament the terms and conditions of the lease to protect the ongoing use of the saleyard facility?

Mr Taylor: Wrong Minister!

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) to (3) The interjection by the Minister for Lands was probably quite correct. The person to whom that question should have been directed is, in fact, the Minister for Lands. He deals with those sorts of subjects. He has been responsible for the transfer of the property.

From my own knowledge, let me tell the member firstly that settlement of the sale has gone ahead. Transfer documents have been drawn up and will be executed in accordance with legal procedures. Some things of a fairly formal nature have to be completed, but that will be done over the next few days. Settlement was effected yesterday, and the new company is in possession of the site.

Mr Hassell: Has it paid?

Mr GRILL: It has.

Mr Hassell: In full?

Mr GRILL: Yes. In respect of the terms and conditions of the lease, either the Minister for Lands or I will make them available fairly shortly.

PASTORAL LEASES

Kimberley: Aboriginal Groups

349. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

- (1) Can the Minister advise the extent of the leases of the former cattle stations being granted to Aboriginal people in the Kimberley?
- (2) What are the sizes and numbers of cattle expected to be carried on the respective leases currently under review?
- (3) Are the leases formerly part of the Emanuel properties, and how much of the Emanuel properties is expected to be involved in the leases to Aboriginal persons?

Mr BRIDGE replied:

- (1) to (3) I am not able to answer that question because, as the member would understand, this whole thing is still very much in the area of restructuring and planning. No clear areas have been defined as to percentage, if there is a percentage, and the size and nature of the leases. It would be impossible to give any clear indication in respect of the questions raised.

If the member were to put the question on notice, there may be some way I could extract more information for the member. The proposal has been put to Exim, which is dealing with these matters regarding Aboriginal interests as well as the interests of other people in the Kimberley. All that is at the moment under consideration. I could not be precise today.

Mr Blaikie: Is it intended that the leases will hold about 5 000 cattle when they are finally subdivided?

Mr BRIDGE: That may be the position. The difficulty at this stage is in saying that that will occur because of the large difference in terms of numbers being advanced for viable units. Some people have said 3 000, some have said 10 000, others have suggested 5 000, 7 000, and so on. I do not know what the ultimate figure will be, except that some sort of consensus is emerging that one is looking at not less than 5 000, and perhaps a higher figure for a viable unit from the restructuring of the properties. It would be reasonable to say that it is likely to be 5 000 or perhaps more. At this stage I cannot be definite.
