

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 21 May 1987

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Burkett) took the Chair at 10.45 am, and read prayers.

## SESSIONAL ORDER

### *Adoption: Standing Orders Suspension*

**MR PEARCE** (Armada—Leader of the House) [10.47 am]: Before seeking to suspend Standing Orders, may I remind members who may not have been here last evening that arrangements for today will be rather unusual. We had intended to proceed with the occupational health, safety and welfare legislation, but due to the illness of the member for Kalamunda, the Opposition's lead speaker, I have agreed not to proceed with it today.

There will be a number of second readings, a motion I will deal with myself, and then questions. Then I will seek to adjourn the House for the balance of today's sitting.

I move, without notice—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable me to move a motion dealing with matters of public interest.

Question put.

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

Question thus passed.

### *Motion*

**MR PEARCE** (Armada—Leader of the House) [10.49 am]: I move—

That for the balance of the present Session, Standing Orders 47 and 48 are suspended and the following Sessional Order shall have effect—

- (1) A member may propose to the Speaker that a matter of public interest be submitted to the House for discussion. The member proposing the matter shall present to the Speaker at least one hour before the time fixed for the meeting of the House a written statement of the matter proposed to

be discussed; and if the Speaker determines that it is in order, he shall read it to the House after Notices of Motion, if any, have been given. The proposed discussion must be supported by eight members, including the proposer, rising in their places as indicating approval. The Speaker shall then call upon the member who had proposed the matter to speak.

- (2) The Speaker may permit a motion in accordance with this Sessional Order on no more than one day in any sitting week and, in the event of more than one matter being presented for the same day, priority shall be given to the matter which, in the opinion of the Speaker, is the most urgent and important, and no other proposed matter shall be read to the House on that day.
- (3) It shall be competent for a member to move a substantive motion under this Sessional Order notwithstanding no notice has been given of such a motion.
- (4) No member is permitted to address the House for more than 30 minutes on any question under this Sessional Order and, in any case, the debate on such a question may not extend for more than one hour in total.

That is a precise replica of the sessional order from the last session of Parliament, and that resulted from an agreement between the Government, the Opposition, and the National Party to try to find an effective way of dealing with what used to be dealt with under the old urgency debate provisions. I believe it worked well in the last session in terms of giving members an opportunity to raise matters of importance, but still ensuring sufficient time was set aside for Government business. I hope members believe that system was sufficiently effective to see it brought into effect during this session of Parliament as well.

**MR MacKINNON** (Murdoch—Leader of the Opposition) [10.52 am]: The Opposition supports this motion. On Wednesday of this week it found that this sessional order had not been moved at the beginning of this session as it should have been. Consequently, the Opposition believes this motion provides for better management of the House than an urgency motion, particularly on the basis that such a motion has to be withdrawn. It is not satisfactory from the Opposition's point of view in showing

its real intent when it moves a motion and then has to withdraw it. The Opposition has pleasure in supporting this motion.

Question put.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Again, to be carried, this motion needs the support of an absolute majority. I have counted the House; and, there being no dissentient voice, I declare the motion carried.

Question passed.

## **SHEEP LICE ERADICATION FUND BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**MR GRILL** (Esperance-Dundas—Minister for Agriculture) [10.55 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Sheep lice cost Western Australian woolgrowers an estimated \$20 million a year. This arises from wool production losses of \$12 million; costs of lice control by owners of \$7 million, and Government extension and inspectorial costs of \$0.5 million. Regulatory controls have been in place for over 40 years in this State but only recently have advances in the techniques of lice treatment made it possible, for the first time, to consider eradication on a State-wide basis. The potential savings to industry from total eradication are considerable.

An eradication plan has been developed which is cost-effective, leading to a calculated net saving to industry of \$24 million over the first 20 years.

The lice eradication plan has been based on large-scale field research and a successful pilot trial in the Geraldton area, and has been developed in close consultation with primary industry organisations and the wool trade. It has the support of both the Western Australian Farmers Federation and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. The eradication plan is to be financed on the basis that the Government will maintain its traditional input into sheep lice eradication and the sheep industry will finance all the extra costs of the new programme. These are estimated to be in the order of \$500 000 per annum.

The plan is based on identification of lice infested flocks, mainly by means of a new test carried out on wool samples routinely examined by the Australian Wool Testing Authority. Owners of the infested flocks will be

visited by existing staff and by extra contract staff financed from the new fund. Assistance will be given to achieve eradication. Local farmer liaison groups will be established and the programme will rely heavily on community involvement. This approach worked well in the pilot project in the Geraldton area.

The Bill seeks to establish a new fund into which will be placed money raised from contributions paid by all woolgrowers delivering three or more bales of wool in a financial year. The Bill provides that this money is to be used for expenses related to lice eradication and associated costs. The Bill provides for the grower contributions to be collected by way of the Commissioner of Taxation sending a notice to all woolgrowers liable for payment. The Bill provides for a maximum amount payable by each woolgrower to be \$75 in any one year; however it is expected that the amount which will be set each year will be \$50 or less. A sunset clause ensures that the Act shall cease to operate at the end of the 1992 financial year.

This Bill will provide a sound basis for industry to finance this new initiative and woolgrowers are to be commended for this action in funding a programme which is planned to bring benefit to the industry.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Tubby.

## **GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**MR TROY** (Mundaring—Minister for Transport) [10.58 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Government Railways Act to make it possible for a Government railway, or portion of a Government railway, no longer required for use by the Railways Commission, to be allocated to any person for the purposes of operating a tourist railway.

The machinery by which this will be achieved is the inclusion of powers in the Act for the Governor in Council, by order

published in the *Government Gazette*, to declare that the railway or section covered by an order is—

while the order remains in force not a Government railway for the purposes of the Government Railways Act; and granted to the person nominated in the order for purposes of managing, operating and maintaining a tourist railway service thereon under such conditions as are specified in the order.

The legislation is modelled upon similar provisions of the State of Victoria's Transport Act under which the Bellarine Peninsula Railway and the Healesville Railway Cooperative operate in that state.

In bringing forward this legislation my Government's objective is to ensure that the State's railway heritage and associated tourism development is enhanced. On the one hand the identity of redundant railways will, if the justification exists, no longer disappear and be merged in time with the surrounding countryside. They may be preserved and retain their own unique identity to the benefit of this State's heritage.

On the other hand, private individuals or groups with entrepreneurial skill and enthusiasm will be allowed the opportunity of putting forward proposals of a tourist attraction kind. These proposals will be tested for viability and if approved allowed to operate as private commercial enterprises, thus expanding the tourist attractions in the relevant area. The Railways Commission will ensure regulations for the safe operation of such enterprises are formulated and complied with under the provisions of the Order in Council.

The initiative being taken was prompted by the existence of four former timber branch lines in the south west on which freight services have ceased. These lines are—

#### Date On Which Service Closed

Nannup—Wonnerup—6/6/84

Capel—Busselton—1/8/85

Alumina Junction—Dwellingup—  
15/10/84

Pemberton—Northcliffe—30/12/86

The procedures under which railway lines considered to be no longer viable are required to be tested prior to Government making a decision on their future have been completed for those railways—that is, the Commissioner of Railways has undertaken studies on their operations and recommended closure, as their re-

sults no longer contribute to the financial benefit of Westrail.

The Director General of Transport, acting under the provisions of section 18A of the Transport Co-ordination Act, has also undertaken a study of the social and economic consequences of closing the lines and recommended they be discontinued, as considerable financial savings would be achieved.

Following a further report titled "Report on the Future of Timber Branch Lines as Tourist Railways" commissioned by the Director General of Transport, my Government has made the decision which results in the legislation before the House today.

Mr Blaikie: Would you be prepared to table those reports for the benefit of the House?

Mr TROY: Yes.

An example which crystallises the intent and purpose of the legislation is the operations of the Hotham Valley Tourist Railway, Incorporated. This organisation of volunteers operates its own steam trains between Pinjarra and Dwellingup, using Westrail crews at the moment because, although disused by the railways, the line remains a Government railway.

By any measure the Hotham Valley railway is successful. It is exceptionally well-run by people showing a high degree of professionalism and commercial acumen. It is hoped this enabling legislation will allow the Hotham Valley railway to assume completely independent operation of the Dwellingup line, under appropriate controls and regulations, early in 1988.

The Government recognises that difficulties are present in sustaining a conventional railway passenger train operation on other lines in the lower south west. For such operations track maintenance costs to bring the tracks to standard and to keep a safe operation may be prohibitive. The Pemberton-Northcliffe section, due to its steep gradings and high bridges, is a particular example. However, the area is exceptionally beautiful and we do not doubt a much lighter form of rail transport, of an amusement device nature as distinct from a train, offers opportunities.

The Bill is a simple and clear piece of legislation, which reflects a simple and clear purpose: To provide opportunities for increasing the quality of life in Western Australia at little, if any, cost.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Blaikie.

**LOCAL COURTS AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

**MR PETER DOWDING** (Maylands—Minister for Works and Services) [11.04 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The amendments proposed by the Bill are intended to facilitate the operations of the Local Court and to extend its jurisdiction to reflect changes of money value.

It is proposed, firstly, to provide for a trial or proceeding to be transferred to a place where it can be more fairly or conveniently tried or heard. Under the existing provisions of the Local Court Act it is not possible for a magistrate to conduct a trial or any other proceeding in any place other than the court in which the action was commenced. This restriction is impractical. For example, it may prevent the magistrate examining a judgment debtor during his regular circuit visits to a town even though the defendant lives and works in that town.

The amendment will provide a magistrate or a clerk of the Local Court with a discretion to determine the venue to be used to hear any matter under the magistrate's control. It will also improve the service in country areas by allowing Local Court matters to be dealt with at 57 additional centres which magistrates currently visit for petty sessions matters only.

It is also proposed to increase the jurisdiction of the Local Court in respect of monetary limits in the following ways—

the general jurisdiction of the Local Court from \$6 000 to \$10 000;

the small debts jurisdiction from \$2 000 to \$3 000; and,

the provision for recovery of possession of land in section 99 from \$10 000 to \$15 000.

The increased monetary limits will take into account the effect of inflation and enable a wider range of matters to be commenced in the less formal environment of the Local Court with resultant cost savings to litigants.

The Bill also proposes the introduction of a pre-trial conference system into the Local Court. Subject to magisterial discretion, parties to a defended Local Court action may file with the court a certificate of readiness for trial and attend a pre-trial conference. The proposed procedures are designed to encourage settle-

ment and reduce the number of trials which have to be adjourned because the parties are not properly prepared.

At present, parties requesting a trial date are not required to certify that they have taken all necessary steps preliminary to trial. Nor are they required to discuss with each other, or the court, matters such as the likely duration of the trial or the prospect of settlement. The amendment will enable discussion to take place between the parties and allow the court to list hearings with greater certainty than has previously applied. Pre-trial procedures are already in place in the District Court and they have proved to be effective.

Finally, it is proposed to provide that a defence may be struck out where a defendant fails to comply with an order of the court that he supply particulars of his defence. At present, the only sanction against the defendant who fails to provide his defence when ordered by the court on application by the plaintiff, is an award of costs against him for that particular application.

The amendment provides redress similar to that which currently applies for failure to comply with other interlocutory orders in the Local Court and is consistent with the practice in the Supreme and District Courts.

The above amendments will enable the Local Court to carry out its functions in a more effective and efficient manner and by increasing its jurisdiction allow more litigants access to its more informal procedures.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Mensaros.

## **SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

**MR BRIAN BURKE** (Balga—Treasurer) [11.08 am]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I announced in a media statement at the end of last February that the Government would seek to amend the Salaries and Allowances Act in the autumn session to give the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal the jurisdiction to inquire into and determine the entitlements and benefits of retired Premiers. The announcement followed receipt of recommendations from the tribunal in respect of retired Premiers which have been accepted by the Government.

Consistent with that principle of obtaining advice from an independent arbitral tribunal, I also asked the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal to report on and recommend additional benefits for retired members of State Parliament. That report has been received and the Secretary of the Parliamentary Former Members' Association has been informed that the recommendations of the tribunal have been accepted to be operative from 1 July 1987.

The amendment contained in the Bill will give the tribunal jurisdiction to inquire into and determine the entitlements and benefits to be paid or provided to former Premiers of the State, and former members of the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council of the State.

The changes have the advantage of achieving a degree of neutrality in the fixation of retired members' entitlements and benefits. This principle is consistent with the 1986 amendment to the Act which gave the tribunal the jurisdiction to inquire into and determine certain matters relating to parliamentary superannuation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

[Questions taken.]

## **ELECTORAL ACT (COMMENCEMENT OF AMENDMENTS) BILL**

*Assent*

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

## **BILLS (2): MESSAGES**

*Appropriations*

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

1. Supply Bill.
2. Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill.

## **MEMBER FOR MITCHELL: ELECTORATE VISITS**

*Minister for The South West: Personal Explanation*

**MR D. L. SMITH (Mitchell)** [11.57 am]: I seek leave to make a personal explanation under Standing Order No. 117 in relation to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition with respect to a memo directed to the office of the Minister for Agriculture and The South West.

Leave granted.

**Mr D. L. SMITH:** Under Standing Order No. 117 we are entitled to make statements and personal explanations about matters raised which reflect personally on members. The inference contained in the question from the Leader of the Opposition was that I, as the member for Mitchell, had complained about the Minister for The South West not coming to my electorate often enough and that he should do so more often.

The memo referred to by the Leader of the Opposition arose out of a meeting I organised and was present at with a representative of the Minister's office. The members for Collic, Warren, and Lower West were not present at that meeting, and anything reported was a report of the comments I made.

I have a reputation among both Ministers and ministerial staff for being extravagant in my language and demands on Ministers. Someone new to the game and hearing me for the first time may have misconstrued something I said.

I said the Minister should be congratulated for the fact that in terms of Ministers who give attention to their portfolios, he gave more attention than any person in south west history, to the extent that he visits Bunbury every Wednesday. He is almost more available to some of my constituents than I. On at least five occasions in the past three weeks my constituents have had to see the Minister in my absence at meetings arranged by me because I was committed in Perth.

I went on to say that in being so attentive and present at his Bunbury office so often, he should not become preoccupied in terms of being in the office in Bunbury responding to some of the negative things people wish to see Ministers about and that he should, more often, come out into the electorate with me, and the other members mentioned to talk about the positive things happening in our electorates directly in response to the work the Minister has been doing.

The members for Vasse and Murray-Wellington will know this Minister is responsible for some of the best reforms in the dairy industry. The dairy industry is operating better than it ever has.

In relation to the matter of SCM Australia Ltd, this Minister has been so active as almost to take the leading position in preference to myself and others. To the extent that anything I might have said may have been construed by a member of the Minister's staff or the Oppo-

sition as implying that this Minister neglects his electorate. I have given a wrong impression, as the reverse is true.

I should add that it would be impossible for me to do so without being quite untruthful and extremely extravagant, because under this Government and at the coercion of this Minister, Cabinet meetings have been held for the first time in Collie, in Manjimup—

*Point of Order*

Mr HASSELL: It is my understanding that a personal explanation must relate to something that the member has said or to something that has been said about him. The member is now making a political speech about the alleged achievements of the Minister during the term of the Government. His explanation is not personal and is against Standing Orders.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Mitchell to direct his remarks to that for which he was given the right to speak.

*Personal Explanation Resumed*

Mr D. L. SMITH: The reflection which was made upon me was that I was complaining about the Minister, and I wanted to take the opportunity to place my comments in context because the report may affect my future relationship with the Minister.

Several members interjected.

Mr D. L. SMITH: It was surely a matter of my saying that the Minister was nearly perfect and with just a subtle change he could be perfect.

*House adjourned at 12.02 pm*

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Dangerous Goods Regulations*

1001. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Labour, Productivity and Employment:

- (1) Will the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Amendment Bill 1987 have any connection with, or effect on, the present dangerous goods (road transport) regulations 1983, with particular reference to—
  - (a) part (V), stowage and segregation;
  - (b) part (VI), transport procedures;
  - (c) part (VII), emergency procedures?
- (2) If yes, will he detail such connection or effect?

Mr PETER DOWDING replied:

- (1) and (2) The prescriptive provisions of the regulations mentioned could be used as evidence to justify a breach of the general duty of care provisions contained in the Bill.

### FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: INTEREST RATES

#### *Relief: Public Servants*

1003. Mr LAURANCE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is the State Government doing to ease the burden of housing interest rates of public servants who, due to work transfers—for example, to the north west—are forced to rent out their homes in the city, and are now being charged investment interest rates on their home loans?
- (2) Is he aware that the investment rate of interest being charged in these circumstances can be as high as 19.6 per cent?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) and (2) It is the case that loans for housing which is not occupied by the owner can attract interest at an investment rate. This situation is not confined to public servants, and equally affects people in private enterprise.

The problem has been exacerbated by the Federal Government's decisions regarding negative gearing and de-

preciation allowances relating to income from housing not occupied by the owner.

The State Government has on many occasions indicated to the Federal Government its concern in respect of this matter, and will continue to seek a favourable review. To a degree, the burden is offset by the fact that many public servants obtain Government Employees' Housing Authority houses in the country and north west at attractive rental rates.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### BUSINESSES

#### *National Companies and Securities Scheme: Federal Control*

96. Mr MENSAROS, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the announcement by the Federal Attorney General that the Commonwealth Government wishes to legislate to have sole and full control over the national companies and securities scheme, both the legislation and the commission?
- (2) Does he agree that this move would result in a central power prevailing over one of the showpieces of arrangements which, mainly on the instigation of the Western Australian Attorney General, has been worked out between and agreed to by all States and the Commonwealth, proving how real federation should and can work?
- (3) Will he and his Government make vigorous representation with the State and Commonwealth Governments in order to prevent this centralisation exercise succeeding?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

- (1) to (3) I am aware of the matter raised by the member in his question. He should be under no illusion as to the opposition that has been and will continue to be mounted by the State Government to the announced intention of the Commonwealth Government. The situation is complicated by the apparent willingness of New South Wales and Victoria to capitulate to the Commonwealth's demands. I fear that, in the case of Victoria, the capitulation is based upon the assurance

that the headquarters of the NCSC will remain in Melbourne. That seems a fairly weak reed upon which to base an argument for a particular Commonwealth proposal.

The Attorney General discussed the matter with me last night, and I indicated to him that he should today distribute a Press release that sets out explicitly our opposition to the proposal; and that includes the indication that if the Commonwealth persisted with its intention we would take whatever options were open to us to prevent the Commonwealth succeeding. The wording was deliberately framed in that manner so as not to exclude any option that the State might be able to pursue but at the same time would not bind us to a particular path. Our opposition to the Commonwealth's proposal is absolute, unalterable, and very strenuous.

If the Commonwealth persists and succeeds, and there is no doubt that that will be the case, we as a State could be left with not much more than the registration of business names and a few other very peripheral responsibilities in this area.

We have been at pains to express to the Commonwealth repeatedly that the regional economies of this country are different, that they are growing differently and at different rates, and that it is very difficult in a number of important areas to frame legislation in Canberra that is consistently good for the States or consistent in its application across the States, and that because of that the Commonwealth needs to be very careful.

Apart from saying that, and not wanting to be seen to be threatening or trying to wield the big stick, the member should be under no misapprehension as to the vigour with which we are opposing this proposition.

#### MIDLAND SALEYARD LAND

##### *Buffer Zone*

97. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that Mr Ellett, the proprietor of Prestige Bricks, has publicly stated that the land comprising the

saleyard facility at the Midland abattoirs site will not be required for the construction of the proposed brickworks other than to act as a buffer zone?

- (2) If yes, will he advise the Parliament why it was necessary to sell the saleyard, together with that land comprising the Midland abattoirs, against professional advice, when now the Government is required to lease it back at a reported figure of \$110 000 a year?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) I am aware that Mr Ellett has indicated that the saleyard site may not be necessary for the brickworks, but that is nothing new. I have been telling the member that in Parliament for month after month. Finally he is starting to wake up, and that is good to see.
- (2) I am very happy to say that the tenure is the sort that the industry has wanted for 15 years. The member should be congratulating the Government rather than trying to attack it and Mr Ellett in this snide sort of way. The lease-back is a very favourable one to the Government and to the taxpayers. It is on the basis that the taxpayers and the Government, even on today's prices and fees, will make a very considerable profit.

#### MIDLAND SALEYARD

##### *Lease-back*

98. Mr LEWIS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that the reported \$110 000 a year rent to be paid to Mr Peter Ellett to lease back the Midland saleyard is a return of 24.4 per cent on Mr Ellett's \$450 000 investment?
- (2) Can he explain why this return is double the normal return expected on industrial property?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) In asking that question the member for East Melville neglects certain facts. The first is that the first six years of the lease-back will be at a peppercorn rental—in other words, at no cost to the Government. That arrangement has been valued by the



Valuer General in net present terms at \$410 000. It is very interesting to note that when I was continually saying in the House that a lease-back at a peppercorn rental was worth a considerable sum of money, Opposition members continually said that it was not worth anything, that it had no value.

The member asking the question, in his minority report at the conclusion of the Legislative Assembly inquiry into this matter, very specifically failed to place any value in favour of the Government in a lease-back at a peppercorn rental per annum. He is responsible, therefore, for basic elementary errors in valuing or basic elementary errors in adding up—in other words, in simple arithmetic.

## RURAL SECTOR HARDSHIP

### *Plans*

99. Mr SCHELL, to the Minister for Agriculture:

After completing a comprehensive tour of the Shires of Westonia, Mukinbudin, Mt Marshall, and Koorda with me on 7 May, the Minister will be aware that a number of farmers in those areas are in a serious plight, and particularly those faced with the prospect of having to leave their farms. Has he any plans to alleviate the problem?

Mr GRILL replied:

I carried out an inspection of that area at the member's insistence and I thank him for making the arrangements for that inspection. It is true that the area we looked at represents a pocket of fairly severe downturn in the rural industry, especially in the cropping industry. As a result of that trip and my concern about certain elements of the industry in that area, I requested that the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation and the Department of Agriculture jointly carry out a study of the area to ascertain exactly what the problems are, and to report back to me as soon as possible.

Presently, there are some very good signs also in the agricultural industry. Apart from the interest rates situation that I mentioned the other day, there

are good signs also in that input costs in respect of the agricultural industry are on the way down.

It is also interesting to see that professional opinion in WA now indicates there is a bottom in the land market. There are encouraging signs that rural agricultural land is now starting to increase in value. Indications are that viable farmers and entrepreneurs are now moving back into areas of rural pursuit.

All in all there are some encouraging and favourable signs, some on the horizon and some a lot closer, with regard to the agricultural industry. I hope, as I know the member for Mt Marshall hopes, that all of those signs will continue to fruition. That turnaround which we hoped for in the rural industry and which is now under way in some areas will not allow us to forget people in areas such as that mentioned by the member, which has had some very bad periods of drought over the last decade. We will not be prevented from looking closely at those areas and their special problems.

## MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

### *Electorate Visits: Minister for The South West*

100. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for The South West:

- (1) Is it correct that at a meeting of south west Government members on 7 April 1987, the members for Collie, Mitchell, and Lower West Province expressed concern that the Minister had not visited their electorates?
- (2) If so, what steps has the Minister taken to overcome this problem?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) and (2) That is not true, because I have been in those electorates on a number of occasions in the last 12 months.

Mr MacKinnon: Are you saying they did not express that concern?

Mr GRILL: I am not saying that, although I doubt whether they did. Certainly, the question is not correct because, as I said, I have been in those electorates quite often in the last 12 months.

## EDUCATION

*"Better Schools" Programme: Union Discussions*

101. Mr D. L. SMITH, to the Minister for Education:

Has the Minister succeeded in re-establishing discussions with the Teachers Union on the Government's "Better Schools" programme?

Mr PEARCE replied:

Following the failure of the Teachers Union's political campaign during the by-elections when it expended an amount of over \$100 000 of teachers' funds to help produce a swing back to the Labor Party's candidates of between five and seven per cent, I wrote to the union and urged it, now that the campaign has failed, to re-enter the negotiations through the processes which we had made available to it all along—that is, the consultative committee between the Teachers Union and the department.

I have had several meetings with the union since sending that letter, and discussions are continuing at present. I hope that in the next week or so the union will take advantage of the offer which the Government again made to it to re-enter the discussions on this issue.

I find it a little strange that the official opposition on educational matters now appears to be the union, because the Opposition is failing totally in its job of trying to get together alternative educational policies for this State. The Opposition oscillates between the Government's policy delayed a year, and the Government's policy delayed by three or four years. I know that imitation of another person is the sincerest form of flattery and that some people are slower than others to move through the implementation processes.

I wish that the education debate in this State would, at a critical time for the education system, occasionally be joined by the official Opposition, the Liberal Party, and that it would make the odd constructive contribution to that debate.

## EDUCATION

*Unit Curriculum: Pilot Programmes*

102. Mr WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Education:

I draw the Minister's attention to the pilot programmes being undertaken in several high schools prior to the introduction of unitisation in secondary schools next year.

- (1) What action is being taken to evaluate the pilot programmes?
- (2) Who is in charge of the evaluation programme?
- (3) Are regular reports being compiled relating to the evaluation of the pilot schools?
- (4) If so, are these publicly available?

Mr PEARCE replied:

- (1) to (4) That is a constructive question on the education debate. Seven schools are undertaking the pilot programmes for the unitisation of curricula. It will be based in the Government schools and most non-Government schools at the beginning of the 1988 school year. A series of evaluation groups are looking now at whether the trial is working in those schools.

Dr Max Angus, the executive director of the schools division in the proposed new Ministry of Education, is responsible for the evaluation of the unitised trials. A committee has been established on which are a number of departmental people and people from the Teachers Union. It will evaluate the results of the programme and apply what it learns to other schools.

I have not seen the results of the evaluation, although I understand a report on the initial stages of that pilot programme is close to completion or may even have been completed. I have not thought whether it will be a public document because basically it is a document for use in the schools. It certainly will not be a secret document in that the lessons that are learned from the programme in the pilot schools will be quickly disseminated to all other schools so that they can learn from the pilot project. I will certainly have a look at the report and,

unless there is something in it, I see no difficulty in the report being made available to the Opposition.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### *Albany Town Council: Valuations*

103. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Local Government:

Last year in answer to a question the Minister informed the House that no officer of the Department of Local Government gave officers at the Town of Albany approval to use valuations inconsistent with the law. The Mayor of Albany has recently publicly stated that approval was received. Who is right, and can he reassure members that he has not misled the House?

Mr CARR replied:

The member for Stirling and I have had a discussion recently concerning matters involving that answer in the Parliament. My departmental officers have checked the answer given at that time, and on the best possible advice from the department, no officer of the Department of Local Government conveyed the information to the Town of Albany. Therefore, I have full confidence that the answer I provided to the House at that time was correct.

## PASTORAL LEASES

### *Australian Land and Cattle Co Ltd: Resumptions*

104. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Lands:

Following the Minister's announcement that the Government intends to legislate to resume the four ALCCO properties of Bohemia Downs, Louisa Downs, Napier Downs, and Kimberley Downs on the basis of ensuring compliance with the Government's tuberculosis eradication programme—

- (1) When does he intend to introduce the legislation to the Parliament?
- (2) Had the company made any attempt in the previous two years to negotiate with the Government in order to carry out its obligations under the tuberculosis eradication programme?
- (3) If so, with what result?

Mr WILSON replied:

- (1) Probably next week.
- (2) and (3) Yes. My information is that considerable opportunity was given for such negotiation, but it was not possible to reach agreement because of the procrastination on the part of the private parties involved in trying to reach that agreement.

## PASTORAL LEASES

### *Australian Land and Cattle Co Ltd: Resumptions*

105. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Lands:

Will the legislation to which he has just referred be introduced into this Parliament before or after the United States trade and investment mission which is visiting Australia next week leaves the State?

Mr WILSON replied:

The member should wait until the legislation is before the Parliament.

## TRANSPORT: AIR

### *Albany and Esperance: Alternative Operators*

106. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister pursuing arrangements to allow second or third operators to provide passenger air services to Albany and Esperance?
- (2) If not, what are the reasons?

Mr TROY replied:

- (1) and (2) I am unaware of any approach by second or third operators for the Albany service. If the member puts the question on notice, I will have it fully investigated and respond.

## HOUSING

### *Residential Tenancy Legislation: Draft*

107. Mr MENSAROS, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

Yesterday I asked him, in questions without notice 797 and 800, whether certain provisions were included in the proposed residential tenancy Bill. He did not reply to that, but answered that the Bill had not been drafted—which I did not ask him.

Is it a fact that a document stamped "Working Draft—Residential Tenancy Bill", containing 72 pages of provisions, has been given to interested people, and that this working draft contains the provisions about which I asked yesterday, namely—

tenants are allowed to be 14 days in arrears before action can be taken to retrieve the rent;

a rent rise will only be allowed every six months, with 90 days' notice;

tenants will have the right to have rental premises cleaned at the landlord's expense;

actions before the tribunal will be free if initiated by the tenant, but subject to fees if initiated by the landlord;

landlords will have to give three months' notice to tenants for terminating the tenancy without specially given reasons;

the notice by landlords will have to be two months, should the landlord intend to move in himself or should he intend to demolish the property;

the notice by landlords will have to be one month if the property is being sold by the landlord?

These are the provisions contained in the document which was widely distributed; but the Minister said yesterday that the draft was not complete and therefore he could not say to a member of Parliament whether they were right.

Mr TAYLOR replied:

It is correct that a working draft has been distributed to interested parties. I must emphasise that it is a working draft.

I held a meeting last week with those interested parties—tenants, landlords, owners of properties, and representatives of those interest groups. The meeting lasted for several hours, and at the end we were able to achieve consensus in relation to the points raised by the member for Floreat.

The reason for the answer I previously gave the member and for the answer I am now giving is that, in fact, we have

not finalised that Bill. When it is finalised the member for Floreat, along with other members in this House, will be made aware of the contents of the Bill.

## SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

### *Announcements: Political Content*

108. Mr MacKINNON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) In the same memo of 7 April to which I referred earlier from the members of the Government in the south west, is he aware that south west members claim that frequently announcements are made through and by the South West Development Authority and in many cases they have a high political content?
- (2) Has the Minister had his attention drawn to that concern, and what action has he taken to overcome that problem in relation to the South West Development Authority?

Mr GRILL replied:

- (1) I cannot remember the memo to which the Leader of the Opposition refers.
- (2) There has been some concern from members in that area that they would like to make some of the statements made from time to time by the South West Development Authority. That is a natural situation. There will always be conflict when a fairly autonomous statutory authority is set up with its own powers in any part of the State, and the members in that area will feel from time to time, just as local authorities do, that the authority strays into areas of their jurisdiction. It will always happen and those concerns will be expressed from time to time.

## HEALTH

### *Psychiatric Services: Inquiry*

109. Mr BRADSHAW, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Minister replied to the State Psychiatrists Association's call for an independent inquiry into the State psychiatric services?

- (2) Has he agreed to the request for an independent inquiry?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) At least four or five reports in relation to psychiatric services have been completed in this State over the last four or five years. I see no need whatsoever for a further report.

The letter referred to in the first question requested a new award for psychiatrists in this State and dealt principally with their concerns for a new award, working conditions, and salary rates for themselves. It did not specifically address the question of an investigation or whatever into psychiatric services in this State. I do not believe there is any need for an investigation.

In fact, the member for Murray-Wellington came to Graylands with me yesterday when new psychiatric services facilities were opened. This Government has paid very special attention to psychiatric services over the last four years; there has been a dramatic improvement and as far as I am concerned, as Minister for Health, there will continue to be improvement.

#### PASTORAL LEASES

##### *Australian Land and Cattle Co Ltd: Tabling of Documents*

110. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Lands:

Further to the reply the Minister gave to my question wherein he indicated that ALCCO had adequate opportunity to negotiate with the Government over the tuberculosis programme—

- (1) Will the Minister now arrange for all papers on this matter to be tabled in the Parliament for the benefit of members prior to, or at least in conjunction with, the introduction of the ALCCO re-sumption legislation.
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr WILSON replied:

I thank the member for his question and will be pleased to give serious consideration to it.

#### SUPERANNUATION BOARD

##### *Question: Response*

111. Mr HASSELL, to the Treasurer:

Having regard to the Premier's remarks on Tuesday about the answering of questions and the special, efficient system that he has set up, when does he expect to be able to answer the three-line question I asked on Thursday, 9 April—question 459—which reads—

In which hotels and hotel developments does the State Superannuation Board currently have funds invested?

Mr BRIAN BURKE replied:

Members can do without the snide remarks of the member when he says the special, efficient system, because I made no reference to any special system. I did say the Government had set up an efficient system, and I maintain it is extremely efficient. The question to which the member refers has been sent to the relevant authority, which I would assume in this case is the State Superannuation Board, and I have not received any advice from the board.

Mr MacKinnon: That is pretty efficient!

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The first person to complain if an investment of a very minor nature in a very broad portfolio of investments was overlooked in the answer to a question would be the member for Cottesloe—or these days the member might attempt to preempt his complaint, instead of following him—but I guess the State Superannuation Board is involved in making sure that no possible investment is overlooked. That may not be the case; it may be the case that there is some other reason. I will draw this question to the attention to the Board, having been asked to do so by the member for Cottesloe.

I still maintain the Government's system in this Parliament is very efficient when it provides more answers

to more questions than are provided in any other Parliament in the Commonwealth.

Mr Hassell: The Government is still refusing to refer questions on when they are sent to the wrong persons.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: The Government receives rafts of questions asked by members opposite of the wrong people. When the Leader of the Opposition complained yesterday that this Government did not pass the questions to the Minister to whom they should have been directed, four or five questions had been wrongly directed. I know the Opposition is getting itself into shape, but an elementary step it must take is to find out to whom the question should be addressed. That should not be difficult. I will arrange to send to every Opposition member a copy of the names of the Ministers, their areas of responsibility, and the Statutes for which they are responsible. It should then not be beyond those members—with one or two notable exceptions—to address their questions to the right people. If that is done, then the questions will be answered immediately. However, if the Opposition is going to send rafts of wrongly addressed questions, the Government will pass them on to the appropriate Ministers and the questions will be answered in writing.

Mr Watt: How long will that take? Why cannot the questions be answered in the House? I asked a question on 2 April, which was referred on.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That would be the member's first question for the year.

Mr Watt: That is rubbish.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I am trying to answer the member's question, and if he cannot find out the person to whom the question should be addressed, he should not whinge and complain; he should ask the right person.

Mr Watt: The Premier did not answer the question.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: I do not bother to look at the question, let alone decide whether it should be answered in Parliament, if it is addressed to the wrong

Minister. I will undertake to pass it on to the right Minister and an answer can be given in writing.

Mr MacKinnon: Who does look at the questions then?

Mr Lightfoot: Does Vince Shervington have a look at them?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: He is a darned sight brighter than the member is. That is typical of members opposite; they attempt to criticise one of the ministerial services officers, in this case, or drivers. The member is implying that someone as meanial or as lowly as Vince Shervington—

Several members interjected.

Mr BRIAN BURKE: That is what the member is saying. That is typical. That is one of the reasons why the Vince Shervingtons of this world do not vote for members opposite.

Mr Watt: How would you know?

Mr BRIAN BURKE: Because I know that is the attitude shown towards members opposite.

The member for Cottesloe asked yesterday about the Speaker and his wife going on a trip, but neglected to say that when he put the knife into the former leader, having done the deed, he then lined up and asked for an extra trip round the world for himself—and I gave it to him. That is the sort of disarray and disrepair into which members opposite have fallen. Members opposite should thank me for passing wrongly addressed questions on to the right Ministers, because otherwise in eight or ten year's time the members would be sitting there, fewer in number, duller in the eye, still asking dopey questions of the wrong Ministers.

## DEFENCE

### *Frigates: Contract*

112. Mr COURT, to the Minister for Defence Liaison:

(1) How many States are currently trying to win the Navy's new frigate contract?

- (2) Is the Minister aware that senior Ministers from other States have recently travelled overseas to visit countries which may be participating in the Navy's new frigate project?
- (3) Has the Minister personally been dealing with the Australian and overseas companies which will eventually be part of this project?
- (4) Following the Government's inadequate performance with the submarine contract and the Trades and Labor Council's criticism of the Minister's performance, will the Government now get its act together to ensure this major frigate contract, which the Western Australian shipbuilding industry is particularly well suited to handle, is properly and professionally secured for this State?

Mr BRYCE replied:

- (1) The member for Nedlands has developed a very unhealthy and niggardly attitude towards practically every developmental aspect of politics in Western Australia. The Government is still waiting for the member to tell it that it was a good decision to have the submarines based here.

The Government is disappointed, as are members on the other side of the House, that the decision to establish the assembly facility for the submarine project did not come this State's way. Hundreds of millions of dollars will be pumped into the naval infrastructure in this State as a result of a recent decision that will guarantee millions of dollars of recurrent expenditure for many years to come. This Government was delighted that the Feds—as they are so frequently fondly called—have committed themselves in this way because the real benefits from the long-term spin-off for this State are associated with recurrent expenditure through life support facilities. That is why the Government was concerned when it felt it was necessary yesterday to make the point about Sinclair.

- (2) and (3) The second part of the member's question seemed to convey an invitation to me to go overseas again.

Members know that if it is absolutely necessary I am prepared to commit my body to the pack.

Mr COURT: You are always two years too late.

Mr BRYCE: Is the member for Nedlands not wonderful? He has learnt from the former honorary colonel of the SAS how to rattle a sabre. He rattles a sabre every time he is seized with a sense of importance about defence.

- (4) The next contract in this field that really concerns our Western Australian economy is the replacement for the surface combatants. A week ago I said that we are in an excellent position. We are far removed from where the State was when we first came into office, when not a single company was in a position with quality assurance standards to qualify for the naval engineering contracts.

Having worked with those companies to help them achieve their quality standards, they are now in a position where they can jump with both feet to get in the middle of the surface combatant replacement programme. Most of the work is to be done by the companies in this State which have a direct vested interest. The defence industry task force within the Government, which did not exist when we came into office, is composed of excellent people who understand the defence system and who will work shoulder to shoulder with those Western Australian private companies which will chase the contracts. We are confident they will get a damned good share of the cake when it is allocated.

## HOSPITAL

### *Margaret River: Construction*

113. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Health:

What progress has the Minister made in having a new hospital built at Margaret River?

Mr TAYLOR replied:

As the member for Vasse knows, we are looking at building a hospital at Margaret River from the point of view of the current Budget. One of the

reasons it is stimulating further discussion in this area is the hard work of Hon. Doug Wenn, who talks to me about this matter on a weekly basis. He is a very effective member.

In relation to the future of the Margaret River Hospital, I am quite certain that within the course of the

next year a decision will be made that not only the member for Vasse will be happy with but certainly all people in the Margaret River area.

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