

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 7th September, 1976

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

QUESTIONS (3): ON NOTICE

1. WATER SUPPLIES

Federal Grants

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What grants or loans were made by the Australian Government to this State for sewerage in the 1975-76 financial year?
- (2) What funds will be allocated to the State from the same source for the current financial year?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) \$12.4 million (70 per cent loan and 30 per cent grant).
- (2) \$9 million (70 per cent loan and 30 per cent grant).

2. FISHERIES

Abalone Industry

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) How many professional abalone divers operate in Western Australia?
- (2) What limitations are placed on the abalone divers in—
 - (a) areas of operation; and
 - (b) size and quantity of catch?
- (3) Is the Minister aware of growing public concern over the possible disappearance of abalone from our coast as a result of the apparent over-fishing now taking place?
- (4) If the answer to (3) is "Yes" what steps does his department intend to take to rectify the situation?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) There are 27 licensed professional abalone divers operating in Western Australia—

In Area 1 (South Australian border to Shoal Cape)—7 divers;

in Area 2 (Shoal Cape to Bus-selton Jetty)—8 divers;

in Area 3 (Augusta to Wynd-ham)—12 divers.

- (2) (a) Divers must operate only in their authorised area.

There are also conditions placed on specific areas within the authorised area. For instance, in Area 3 the licence holder shall not use, alight on, or stand or remain on any reef tops in waters between Mandurah and Eglinton Rocks for the purpose of taking abalone; and shall not take abalone from the following areas—

- (i) Between Mandurah and Trigg Island; and
 - (ii) Between Little Island and Eglinton Rocks;
 - (iii) Watermans Bay Beach between the northern side of Beach Road and the southern side of Ada Street;
 - (iv) Within 400 metres of the Western Australian Marine Research Laboratories (i.e. 400 metres radius of the continuation of the centreline of Elvire Street;
 - (v) Between the northern side of Beachton Street, and the southern side of Hamersley Street;
 - (vi) Between the northern side of Sholl Avenue and the southern side of Lynn Street;
 - (vii) Southwards from the northern side of Kathleen Street.
- (b) Licensed professional abalone divers are restricted in both size and weight according to their authorised area.

In Areas 1 and 2 such a diver shall not take or attempt to take or sell any green-lipped abalone (*Haliotis laevigata*) of a weight less than 113 grams minimum shucked weight. He is not restricted in total catch weight.

In Area 3, however, a licensed diver not only shall not take or attempt to take or sell any abalone of a size less than 6 centimetres, measured from edge to edge of the shell across the longest measurement, but also shall not, when operating between Mandurah and Eglinton Rocks, take or bring into Western Australian waters or on land more than 180 kilogrammes of abalone (shell weight) per day.

- (3) I am not aware of any growing public concern. Amateur fishermen denude accessible reefs of abalone on the west coast, but this does not endanger the species because there are enough abalone in inaccessible crevices to repopulate the reefs in time.

On the south coast the abalone are generally restricted to waters too deep for most amateurs to work.

- (4) Continual monitoring and inspection shows that professional divers are effectively and responsibly farming their areas. Over-fishing on the west coast by amateurs is cyclic in form and poses no long-term survival problem.

3.

SEWERAGE

Forward Planning

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

Further to my question of the 6th May, 1976—

- (1) Will the Minister table plans showing the options for new sewerage reticulation areas throughout the metropolitan area for the next three years?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that many people suffer great uncertainty in planning alterations and additions to their homes because they have no knowledge of the priority given to the installation of sewerage reticulation in their district?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) and (2) No. With the object of making known its intentions to construct sewerage reticulation areas the Water Board—
 - (a) consults with local authorities to determine priorities;
 - (b) advertises work as a preliminary to construction. This is done by the publication of detailed plans in the Press before the works are approved, and at this point reticulation works of the order of \$14 million have been advertised which, subject to funding, will be constructed in the next two or three years. To go beyond this period would result in the need to re-design works to cater for improvements added to properties between the times of design and construction, or to place undesirable constraints on householders in the development of their properties.

FIREARMS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [4.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. T. O. PERRY (Lower Central) [4.49 p.m.]: Mr President, as I was not in the Chamber during the second reading debate, I should like to pass a few comments on this Bill. The first amendment will enable shooters visiting Western Australia to bring their firearms with them and use them for sporting purposes; however, they will be granted a permit for a period of only seven days, which in my opinion will severely limit them.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: This period is to be extended to 28 days by amendment.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: From time to time we have seen amendments made to the Firearms Act which have been of advantage to the holders of firearm licences in the State.

The PRESIDENT: I am obliged to remind the honourable member that the question before the House is that the Bill be now read a third time. It is my opinion that the honourable member is making a second reading speech, and I regard his attempt as being out of order.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I apologise for adopting this course. I was not in the House when the second reading debate took place, and I do wish to comment on certain aspects of the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [4.51 p.m.]: During the second reading debate Mr Wordsworth raised the question of shooters coming from South Australia and the Northern Territory to Western Australia on shooting expeditions. I replied that that aspect was covered by the Bill. However, the only provision covering shooters coming from the other States deals with those who come here to participate in competitive shooting. In these circumstances a club licence is issued, and the competitors are covered for a period of 28 days in respect of the rifles and guns they bring to Western Australia.

I would like to point out to Mr Wordsworth that the Bill does not contain any provision which would permit an itinerant shooter from another State who might come to Western Australia to shoot wildlife such as kangaroos and emus.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Veterinary Preparations and Animal Feeding Stuffs Bill.
2. Offenders Probation and Parole Act Amendment Bill.

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

FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 25th August.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [4.54 p.m.]: Since the original Bill was introduced in this Parliament in 1918 to establish a Forests Act, the Act has been amended only a few times. I am happy to say that I fully support the amendments contained in the Bill now before the House.

The Bill proposes several amendments to the existing Act, and I make a request to the Minister that he be kind enough to suggest to his colleague, the Minister for Forests, that following the passage of this Bill through Parliament the Act be reprinted. I make that request so that people when referring to the Forests Act will have before them a complete reprint, rather than several amendments superimposed on the last reprint of the Act.

I have mentioned that the Bill seeking to establish the original Forests Act was debated in 1918, and it was assented to early in 1919. It is interesting to refer quickly to the origins of the Act, because they have relevance to the Bill before us.

The then Attorney-General, and Minister for Woods and Forests (the Hon. R. T. Robinson) introduced the measure. The legislation of that time flowed from an examination of the timber industry and forestry matters of a much earlier period. I think a Royal Commission was set up in 1903, and it was not until some 15 years later in 1918—although we must bear in mind that World War I intervened in that period—that legislation was introduced into this Parliament. When one refers to the *Hansard* reports of those days it is interesting to note that in the course of the passage of the legislation through both Houses of this Parliament, considerable debate on the measure was engendered, and considerable concern was raised on many issues. Some of these have been of continuing concern to those who today are interested in forestry matters, and to others in the public arena who take an interest in a more intelligent way in these matters.

The original legislation had a chequered career. It encountered a committee of managers of both Houses of this Parliament which was appointed to resolve certain aspects in the legislation proposed at that time. Therefore I submit that the members of that era took great pains to try to achieve what they believed to be a sound Act on which to base future activities in respect of forestry matters in Western Australia.

I suggest that the legislators of that era were eminently successful and relatively wise. I say that in the knowledge that since 1919 the Act has been amended on four or five occasions only. The amending Bill, prior to the one now before us, was

introduced mainly for the purpose of controlling diseases in forests—diseases such as jarrah dieback—and of ensuring that machinery provisions were available for quarantining certain areas.

It is also interesting to note that when the original Bill to establish the Forests Act was debated, certain members even at that early period were trying to bring to the notice of the public at large the value of softwood production in this State. It was remarked upon that a certain quantity of softwood was being imported from the USA, and that very little softwood if any at all was being produced in Western Australia. Today we find this very interesting aspect: that softwood production is undertaken, in addition to our indigenous hardwood production.

It pleases me a great deal to learn that the amendments contained in the Bill before us have the concurrence of the Opposition. The legislation contains several provisions. One of some importance refers to the rearrangement of finance, and for the accountancy finance to be associated with the Forests Department. This is a very important provision in the Bill, and it will enable the Forests Department to raise loans for certain purposes.

One of the great problems we confront in Western Australia, and which has been of concern to me for a period, is that the Commonwealth Softwood Forestry Agreement Act, which I think came into being in 1967, has an extended life until the 30th June, 1977. Under the provisions of this Commonwealth legislation, Western Australia has benefited on an average to the extent of about \$500 000 a year for the development of softwood plantations.

I very much hope that the financial aid will continue to flow from the Commonwealth sources to the State through these financial agreements. However, I understand the agreement has been extended only until the 30th June next. If the agreement is not renewed, for one reason or another, it will be all the more important for the Forests Department to be able to handle its own finances, as set out in the Bill. It is paramount that we provide that opportunity.

We must continue our softwood planting, one way or another. It has been mentioned that the in word is "multi-purpose". I submit that "multi-purpose" does fairly adequately describe the Forests Department. The Forests Department in this State is involved not only in the commercial production of timber, but in many other aspects of the timber industry. Therefore, "multi-purpose" is a reasonable expression in relation to the Forests Department.

The Bill provides for the employment by the Forests Department of people other than qualified and trained foresters. That is a very good thing. We have reached the stage in this State where the activities

of the department are more widespread than they have ever been previously, and where the department has a far greater responsibility. It is also involved in preserving flora and fauna, hydrography, and agronomy. There is a definite need to employ people who have special talents and skills other than those associated with traditional forestry methods.

In more recent times wood chipping has been projected as being a problem. I do not consider wood chipping to be an industry which will present any difficulties at all. The wood chipping industry has had the complete support of this Parliament—from both sides of each House. However, I am continually disturbed by the number of people in the community who, no doubt for genuine reasons, have expressed concern for the future of our forests and forestry activity. I am also concerned at the number of innocent people who are being misled by those who say they have the forests at heart but who, in fact, do not learn as much about the topic as they should before making public announcements.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: To whom are you referring?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: To the white ants.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I will refer to the advertisement which appeared in *The West Australian* on Saturday, the 26th August, 1976. The advertisement covered two pages and was inserted by "Friends of the Forest". I have not counted the number of names in the advertisement, but I imagine it would amount to something around 800. One could not disagree with some of the motives behind the advertisement, part of which I will quote as follows—

We believe that the community would be best served by a balance between the various forest uses of water catchment, timber and honey production, recreation, tourism, preservation of the national estate, flora and fauna habitat and scientific and educational study. This can only be achieved by the adoption of a true multiple use philosophy. It is essential, therefore, that large national parks are created and that wood harvesting should be carried out in a manner that respects the forest and safeguards the long term security of the hardwood timber industry. We call on the Government of Western Australia to accept its responsibility now.

No-one could really disagree with those sentiments, but the advertisement does not acknowledge that most of the objectives—if not, all of the objectives—set out in the advertisement are, in fact, being implemented. The present Government in Western Australia—and also the previous Government—accepted that responsibility. So, the advertisement really confirms the actual situation.

I do think that in all fairness an advertisement of this nature, when published in the Press, should acknowledge the efforts of the Government rather than insinuate that insufficient is being done to preserve our forests.

I am grateful that this measure has received support from both sides of this House. Those who inserted the advertisement call themselves the "Friends of the Forest". One could be a little cynical and suggest that perhaps they are the friends of Rip Van Winkle because they appear to be asleep or unaware of the work which has been done, from time to time, and which will be done in the future.

As an aside, one could also suggest that some of the people who attached their names to the advertisement could well be referred to as "Friends of the ALP". One name in the advertisement is "A. Tonkin, 3 Bishop Street, Morley".

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Who is he?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I am aware that the address is that of Mr A. R. Tonkin, the member for Morley. So, I suggest that some of the people named in the advertisement could be referred to as "Friends of the ALP".

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What has that to do with forests?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: It has a lot to do with forests because I understand Mr A. R. Tonkin is the Opposition spokesman on forests in the other place. So, it does have a relevance.

As I said previously, I am grateful for the support extended to this legislation, but one wonders how the member to whom I have referred allows his name to be associated with the advertisement which appeared in *The West Australian*.

As a further aside, quite recently a petition was presented to this Parliament from a number of people. The petition is reported to contain 230 metres of protest. A picture appeared in *The West Australian* of the 25th August, 1976, and it showed the MLA for Geraldton (Mr Carr) accepting the petition at Parliament House. As members well know there is nothing wrong with members of Parliament accepting a petition, but it did seem curious to me that a petition requesting, as it does, the preservation of the Shannon River basin from wood chipping should be presented to the member for Geraldton. To my knowledge, no wood chipping takes place at Geraldton. I should have thought the petition would have been more appropriately presented to the Hon. H. D. Evans, the member for Warren, and in whose electorate the wood chipping industry has been established.

The Hon. N. McNeill: I notice that Bob McMullan also observed that fact.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The simple reason is that Mr Evans did not happen to be present. Also, the fact that one

accepts a petition, or presents it to Parliament, in no way implies that one supports it. The member opposite should know that.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I did not say that. It seemed to be rather curious that the member for Geraldton, whose electorate happens to be the furthest ALP electorate from the wood chipping industry, should present the petition.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: He happens to be on the appropriate committee.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There is nothing as dead as yesterday's news!

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I would now like to refer to a supplement to the *South West Times* of Thursday, the 19th August, 1976. The article is headed, "forest breeze" and is essentially a newsletter of the "Save Our South West Campaign". I would like to quote from the advertisement as follows—

South-West union leaders have issued statements in support of the woodchips industry on the eve of a tour of the timber country by members of the Trades and Labor Council.

The TLC has provided much of the backing for the anti-woodchips lobby.

This month's South-West tour seems certain to raise the issue of where the unions stand on woodchips.

South-West spokesmen have rejected the TLC conservation stand as "interference by city dwellers".

Secretary of the Bunbury Waterside Workers' Federation, Mr Jack Goodlad, said: "Some of these people in Perth have gone conservation mad.

"They don't realise that the flora and fauna will change their habitat and come back to the area where the woodchips have been.

"Union members who are supporting the industry are the ones who live in the bush and know the place.

"I think it would be a good idea if some of these Perth people spent a bit of time there.

"The industry is a good thing for the South-West.

"I think that the objection is a city thing.

"The country unionists don't get much say because their headquarters are in Perth.

"Ours are in Sydney and we didn't get any direction on woodchipping."

South-West spokesman for the Australian Workers' Union, Mr Dan Hall said that the industry was creating a lot of employment.

"Personally I think it's a bloody good thing from the point of view of jobs and everything else", he said.

"If they clear up the bush, use the rubbish timber and don't just pick out the good stuff, then that's good for the forest.

"As far as I'm concerned there is nothing wrong with woodchipping.

"It's creating a lot of jobs and this is what we have got to have."

The article goes on to state—

Not surprisingly, the South-West division of the WA Timber Workers' Union is backing woodchips.

It is also worthy of note that the Federated Clerks' Union has come out and stated that it is in complete support of wood chipping. So, it is interesting to note just where some people stand with regard to wood chipping. The advertisements which continue to appear in *The West Australian*, inserted by the anti-woodchipping lobby, seem to be misplaced.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Very similar to the advertisements with regard to Tresillian inserted by the Minister for Health.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I intend to make some observations which I believe—and certainly hope—will be helpful to the timber industry. Looking to the future, I am convinced that the timber industry—the commercial side of timber production—should be placed more and more in the hands of private enterprise. I am quite convinced that private enterprise will dominate the sawmilling industry in the future. Coupled with that development, I envisage there will be a reduction in Government participation to an experimental level only. I envisage the role of the Forests Department will be to continue with experimentation.

We have had difficulties in the past because of mining activities on timber reserves. From time to time mining projects are established in timber reserves or in State forests and there is a resultant loss of timber for commercial use.

I am sure that everyone is conscious of the need to increase our timber production and preserve our State forests in perpetuity. In order to achieve that objective, mining tenements should be granted after negotiation with the Forests Department. No provision is made for compensation to the State when forest areas are allocated for mining. I believe an equivalent area should be made available for exotic plantations so that the forest areas are not lost to the State. In other words, what is lost by way of indigenous timber should be replaced with land which can be used for other species. That should be included in the agreement when areas are allocated to mining companies.

Provision should also be made to cover the cost of management of the mined areas. It is one thing to rehabilitate a previously mined area, but it is another matter to cover the cost of rehabilitation and management.

Very necessary to forestry activities is the question of fire control and the protection of the forests generally. In my view this has been very adequately and efficiently controlled over the years by the Forests Department through its expertise and plant and equipment. The efficiency that has been built up through the department and its employees over the years not only assists the Forests Department and the timber industry but also provides an insurance against fire damage in the community.

May I particularly refer to the benefits of protection to rural properties, to the farming communities and, indeed, to entire townships on occasions. I wish to acknowledge the very fine work that has been and is being carried out by the bushfire brigades. We all know that these are manned in a voluntary capacity, mostly by people associated with farming communities. In the forest country of the south-west, however, because of the very nature of the localities and the very nature of the rural activities and industries in the area, it is not always possible to have the same degree or magnitude of spontaneous response from brigades in those areas as is the case, for example, with those situated in the great southern or eastern wheatbelt.

When I say that I do not in any way mean to be derogatory to the people who man the bushfire brigades of the south-west, I understand their problems very readily; but the people associated with fire brigades there are engaged in activities which from time to time take them from their own properties and they are not readily on call when a bushfire breaks out. That is why they are faced with these very real difficulties.

Accordingly, the role of the Forests Department in fire protection and protection of property is well recognised throughout the community and not only by the farmers.

Looking to the future and the better management of our forests reserves, I would refer to a provision of the Act which requires the conservator to prepare working plans for each State forest and timber reserve. These working plans have been implemented from time to time, and I believe that a more up-to-date working plan will be available for the public in the not-too-distant future.

I thoroughly support the concept of working plans for the working of forestry country and the production thereof. I believe these plans, should be, as the Act lays down, for periods of not longer than 10 years. The plans can be revised and updated at any time, but I am mindful of the complexities in arriving at an overall plan and, accordingly, I believe 10 years to be a reasonable period.

I would not like to see a plan brought in for a period of one or three years in the short term, because forestry is a long-term undertaking which affects many commercial enterprises and facets of the industry. Accordingly there should be some guidelines set down to cover all the contingencies and, therefore, I agree with the provision in the Act which states that working plans should be revised in periods of 10 years; the revision should not be too frequent, but we must bear in mind the need to meet the particular circumstances at any given time.

The Bill before us, which seeks to amend the Forests Act, is another stage in our endeavour to preserve the forest and timber industry in perpetuity. To manage our forest reserves it must be acknowledged that it is necessary to provide a sustained wood yield, to maintain the growth and stability of the forest industries.

Forest industries employ many people at many levels. They employ not only those engaged in the timber industry itself—that is, in the felling and carting of timber to the mills—but also those engaged in the actual milling of the timber and in the transportation of the finished product. As we all know, the activities of people directly engaged in the industry indirectly affect other aspects and result in the provision of better hospitals and schools, thus eventually building up a package deal. The activities in the industry and the benefits that accrue make for better towns and communities. Accordingly it is essential we should manage our forests in perpetuity to help give a better yield and stability.

One could refer back to what happened years ago when sleeper cutting was a major undertaking and a prime facet of forestry activity, and as a result of which there was a tremendous loss and wastage of timber. The sleeper cutting itself was done in a slow and laborious way and from a guess one might say that in the early times some 50 per cent of the sound log would be lost through the shaping of the sleeper itself. This, of course, was most wasteful.

Accordingly we have progressed over the years; we have always been looking for a way to maximise our production and one of the ways to do this has been with the advent of wood chipping which I will refer to at a later stage.

It is well known that our hardwood indigenous forest reserves will reach a point when there will be less production. The forests are not reproducing themselves as rapidly as we would like and we are obliged to take more than we would like at the present time. This is being corrected and there will be a transitional period. I believe there will be a changeover in the industry in that the emphasis will not be

so much on hardwood production but on softwood production. I am sure a greater reliance will be placed on softwood production in the years ahead.

The transitional period will mean there will have to be some reassessment in a number of areas. I refer particularly to variations in permits and licences. There will need to be flexibility of management to meet the demands of traditional milling and the multiple uses that flow from the use of timber generally. It will not be an easy operation.

Some mills obviously will be scaled down in certain areas and some smaller mills will be either relocated or the owners will be compensated in some other way. There will, however, be a transitional period, and during this period—which in my view will be within the next 10 to 15 years—things will be a little awkward, and there will need to be a degree of understanding and tolerance at all levels.

It is well known it is not possible to use a tree twice; it can be used only once. Perhaps that is not altogether correct, because timber can be recycled, but that is another matter.

This brings me to the point that in reconstructing the industry one will need to place greater reliance on hardwood veneer and composite timbers. I have made reference to timber wastage and I believe we should place greater emphasis on recovery and use of composite timbers in the future. This will mean a greater utilisation of smaller logs and also the remanufacturing of timber products that have had a primary use, and having been so used may be continually recycled. I feel close attention should be paid to this facet. We need to maximise our production at every level. This is of prime importance because it will create a greater use of materials.

When speaking of softwood production one is mindful of the Wesply complex which is situated near Dardanup in the south-west. This would be the largest complex of its kind in the southern hemisphere. Such an enterprise will require a large volume of softwood materials and, therefore, it is of prime importance that we increase our softwood production. I will say a little more on that in a moment.

The Bill before us will allow the Forests Department to provide some technical assistance in respect of work undertaken on behalf of other departments of the Public Service, public statutory authorities, and other persons in the growing and managing of forests. I think this is a very important provision.

We realise also that the Forests Department has in the past given a lot of good and sound advice to a great many people in a number of areas. But I think

we now at least spell out in the legislation a provision which allows the Forests Department to more specifically undertake this work. I should like to refer particularly to that part which says it may advise and assist persons in growing and managing forests.

I have regard here, as the amendment, undoubtedly does, to private plantations. I would like to express the view that the amendment is referring specifically to technical advice and not advice of an economic nature, as to whether or not somebody should invest money in private plantations. I think that is a decision which people associated with the growing of pines must make in their own right. It is for them to get all the information they need to assist the proposition as they see it and to make their determination after having obtained the advice from the Forests Department.

This being the case, it will not be possible for anyone to blame the Forests Department for any misadventure that may arise in the future. There are a number of private plantations in Western Australia today and, undoubtedly, more will be developed in the future. These are being grown on what was previously freehold land used mostly for farming purposes. As time goes on, however, I hope we will see the day when the State will, through the Forests Department, lease certain areas of Crown land and State Forests to private individuals or companies for the production of softwoods.

If this is to be permitted it would be my strong view that any private plantation grown under lease on a State Forest or on Crown land would have to submit a work plan for perusal to ensure that the whole operation does not become a liability upon the community; and also to ensure there is some chance of its success as a commercial enterprise. It would be essential for the working plan to contain such an item as the intention of the person growing the trees to provide adequate fire protection.

I have already referred to the fire protection role undertaken by the department and the country bushfire brigades; and it would not be a fair thing if private plantations were to be established without a degree of responsibility being placed upon those concerned to protect their asset and, indeed, to play their part in protecting the community around them. Therefore, private plans should also show the method of vermin control to be adopted within the plantations, the type of fencing to be used, and the projected market outlets upon the maturity of the timber in the long term. So it can be seen there needs to be a degree of co-ordination of the resources of the State. This is of prime importance; it is not

much good a private plantation being established in an area where there is less likelihood of obtaining the full benefit of the enterprise.

We need to have regard for the fact that the resource must be grown near a manufacturing mill or a processing plant, and we need the cheapest possible type of transport system. It is no good hauling timber over a long lead; that does not help the State, the private growers, or anyone else. Therefore, there needs to be co-ordination of resources in this context, and private growers would be well advised to consult the State in regard to such matters.

I refer again briefly to the wood chipping industry. As I said, this industry has been approved by this Parliament and is the key to multiple and optimum use of forest products. That is what the industry has been trying to achieve for years, and it will allow better and more efficient management of resources and will maximise the use of materials, because, in addition to chipping logs, salvage or waste material will be used.

I know some people have been impatient at the thought that we will be able to use waste from traditional mills. However, I would like to point out that at one large mill—Deanmill—already there is special plant to handle the chipping of waste material, which is then carted by road transport and put on rail nearby. I understand other mills will be equipped to handle waste in this way; so it is a spin-off from the traditional milling.

In addition to that, of course, the wood chipping industry will be the means of cleaning up the floor of the forest or, if one likes to put it another way, of sweeping out the rubbish. When one walks or drives through a forest one sees there is a lot of rubbish on the floor; some members may be staggered to find the amount of waste material and rubbish that can be seen lying on the ground. Of course, this provides an additional difficulty in respect of fire control.

Wood chipping will allow selected breeding or growing of trees and will enable the right species to be grown in the right way. It will make for better fire control as a whole.

An overriding feature which many people fail to understand, or do not want to understand, is that a forest cannot stay as it is. Many people say forests should stay as they are; but a forest is never still and never stays as it is. Like people, trees grow, mature, and die. If nothing at all is done to a tree it will eventually decay and die or be burnt by bushfire. Therefore, forests need to be farmed and husbanded just as the best possible husbandry techniques are needed in respect of beef cattle, wheat crops, and sheep to ensure that the best possible return is obtained. So the people who say, "Do not touch the country; leave

it as it is", well intentioned though they may be, really do not know what they are talking about. The only way to ensure good forestry in perpetuity is to farm the forest correctly, to clean it up, nurture it, and grow new trees as others mature. That is what wood chipping is all about: to grow fresh trees for fresh crops, and to continue in that way.

One of the things that annoy people is that forestry is a long-term undertaking. That is the nature of the game; trees cannot be grown quickly. People must understand that is the very nature of forestry, and if they wish to invest in it they would be well advised to make a thorough study of the matter and to seek the advice of professional foresters.

The Forests Department, of course, has a great regard for water and soil conservation, and the preservation of flora and fauna. It has a role to play in respect of national parks, because it gives advice. Many national parks adjoin forest country. So we come to the term, "multi-purpose".

Before I conclude I must refer to one particular facet; that is, the proposal to use the Donnybrook sunkland for multi-purposes. There is currently available for public scrutiny and examination a statement of intent dated September, 1975, relating to the afforestation with pines of parts of the Donnybrook sunkland. The area in question is roughly in the shape of a triangle between the towns of Busselton, Margaret River, and Nannup. Under the proposal it is intended to plant approximately 20 per cent of the whole area with pines. That works out at something like 60 000 hectares or 150 000 acres of pines, and the life span proposed is 30 years.

The pines will be planted in cells, and there will be seven cells in this area. The total area of the Donnybrook sunkland is some 283 000 hectares of State forest; and it is proposed to plant under pines only 600 000 hectares, or approximately one-fifth of the area. The remaining areas in and around the cells of pines will be used for the multiple purposes to which I have referred; that is, recreation, the preservation of flora and fauna, tourism, and all manner of things. I believe this is a very good thing, and it has my full support.

I have no doubt a number of people will be uptight about planting pines in place of indigenous timber. Might I remind them—and they may well have a need to look for themselves, as I have done on many occasions—that much of the country concerned is fatally affected by *jarah* dieback, and the only way it can be rehabilitated is to replace the vegetation with dieback resistant species. This has my full support.

Not only will it create additional timber resources, but additional mills will be established, and I do not think many people realise the nature of these mills. They will be sophisticated, large mills,

which will be equipped with all modern technology, including facilities to x-ray logs to ensure they are sound before they are treated. The industry will create job opportunities for a good number of people who will be based in places like Busselton, Margaret River, and Nannup; and this will further consolidate the communities that already exist in those places.

A question which is often raised is that of the nonpayment of rates by the Forests Department to local authorities, in respect of State forest land. This is a well canvassed subject, and we know the department does make *ex gratia* payments to local authorities in certain areas as compensation for the nonratable land within their boundaries. This has never been completely satisfactory, but at least it is an acknowledgement and the local authorities do receive some help. Of course, rates are paid in respect of private plantations, just as any private landowner pays rates, and local authorities benefit from that industry.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute, as others have done, to the work of the Forests Department and its employees at all levels. It has been my happy experience over many years in the south-west to appreciate the work done by this department, its staff and employees. I think the relationship today between the personnel of the department and local people is better than it has ever been, and may that situation long continue. It has not always been thus, but I understand the department is placing emphasis on this very important feature.

I return to where I started: way back in 1918 the foundations were laid for a sound forestry and timber industry in this State; and I commend the people of that era for having the foresight to set the guidelines for this great industry. I support the Bill.

THE HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [5.41 p.m.]: I do not wish to hold up the House for very long, but I would like to make a few comments in this debate. Mr Ferry dealt with the "Friends of the Forests", but he did not deal with a few aspects of that advertisement, with which I would like to deal. As members will see by the time I have finished, names such as Clohessy and others from the BWIU, and Mr Tonkin, are shown to be names of significance in the socialist scheme of things.

The other point that interests me about the advertisement is that of the 900-odd names, only 10 of the people come from anywhere near the south-west. In fact, they come from everywhere but the south-west; the nearest one to the forest area is Narrikup, near Albany.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I am glad you mentioned that.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It fascinates me that this is one of those petitions which, of course, has no bias whatsoever;

but the names are of people who come from anywhere except where there is forest.

What worries me day by day is where the Australian Labor Party stands in respect of this issue. Labor members in this House and the other place have supported this Bill. They could not really do anything else, but they chop and change and make halfhearted statements so often when in fact in their platform forestry comes under the heading of "Miscellaneous" and is summed up in about two lines. That is the importance the Labor Party attaches to forests. Let us see what members opposite and their friends in the TLC wanted to do.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I do not know if forests are mentioned in your policy.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is obvious the honourable member has not read our policy, and I forgive him for that.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We know it off by heart.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I did not realise Mr Claughton could read, and if he wants a copy I will send one to him.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You could enlighten us by reading it out.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I could, if members wish to sit here for another 1½ hours, because our policy is very full. We could easily deal with that.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The policy that is coming up, or the one that is passing?

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: We could nickname you Samson, depending on for how long you hold up the House.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Well! That is a classic, coming from that gentleman.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: He was smiling when he said it.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is good. The TLC put out a 16-page report, after considerable study. In two sittings the TLC spent 11 hours on this matter, and it presented a report, which it appeared for a while the ALP might adopt. Even now there are 48 people at the ALP conference who feel it should be adopted. I hear they are to have a conference every second year now, so we had better let people in the south-west know that if Labor gets into office its policy could be changed again before its term of office expires. Do members think the Labor Party may be just kidding the community? I shall quote some comments from *The West Australian* later.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Can you tell us who put the wood chipping industry into operation?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Yes, I can. In my opinion, Mr Cooley's leader has told deliberate untruths in the Press. If they are not deliberate untruths, he is dealing very carelessly with the truth.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You should not cast discredit on other members.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If the honourable member wants proof I shall produce it a little later. Let us look at *The West Australian* of the 2nd August, 1976, in which Mr Jamieson, who I believe is still the Leader of the Opposition—

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: When are you people going to have a conference and open it to the Press?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Jamieson has not rejected wood chipping and I shall show members how his deputy (Mr H. D. Evans) has vacillated all through this matter and has come up with the same sort of comment. I can quote from another newspaper if members of the Opposition wish it. Would the *Collie Mail* be better? The newspaper states that the Labor Federal and State Governments started the wood chipping industry in Western Australia. This is obviously the subject to which Mr Cooley was referring. If we look at Bill 58 of 1969 dealing with the wood chipping industry whom do we find are the signatories to it? Funnily enough, they are two very prominent Western Australians. One was the Deputy Premier at the time, Mr Crawford Nalder, and the other person, to whom we could give the whole credit for the wood chipping industry in this State, was named Court. He was the bloke who started wood chipping in Western Australia. He put through the first agreement, and yet Jamieson is claiming credit.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Mr Jamieson.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It says "Jamieson" here and I shall call him Jamieson.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member can show some respect.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Yes, Sir.

The PRESIDENT: Mr Jamieson is the Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The honourable Leader of the Opposition in another place. He has the audacity to say that the Federal and State Labor Governments got the industry off the ground. I am glad that Mr Cooley reminded me of the next matter. It is very interesting to read the limited amendments to the wood chipping agreement which were brought down in July of 1973, because Sir Charles Court had done such a good job with it.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: In 1973, did he?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Limited amendments were brought in by Mr H. D. Evans in 1973 and they were limited only because Sir Charles Court did such a good job in initiating the whole scheme.

It is interesting to read the comments of Labor members on the original scheme. The member for Warren, the present Deputy Leader of the Opposition in another place, said that he was so thrilled with the whole concept. In a few moments I shall read some of the comments he has made one way or the other since then about the wood chipping concept. To get back to Mr Cooley and the ALP's amending Bill of 1973, the interesting thing was the comment by Mr Cook in his report—

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Which seat does he represent?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Cook has something to do with the TLC. I thought Mr Cooley would probably know him because Mr Cook says—

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: There are a lot of Mr Cooks.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The member does not think much of Mr Cook?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I said there are a lot of Mr Cooks.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: This is Mr Peter Cook who is the convener of the committee appointed by the Trades and Labor Council to investigate the wood chipping industry in Western Australia. Does that help the honourable member?

On the second page of Mr Cook's report he says—

... Bunning Timber Holdings a licence to those companies to extract 680 720 tonnes green weight of wood-chips per annum for 15 years (when the Act was first brought down it provided for the extraction of 508 024 tonnes. However, this was amended to the present figure in 1973).

So all the Labor Party did was to increase the weight that came out of the wood chipping area by 20 per cent. I could not agree more with people such as Mr Thompson—they are very nice people—in their attitude on saving forests. But Mr Peter Cook has signed an advertisement about saving forests and in his report said it did not matter that the Labor Party upped the cut from the Manjimup area by 20 per cent. It is very interesting to follow through the machinations of the Labor Party on this subject.

Having disposed of that, let me say that Mr Jamieson cannot remember interjecting about how difficult the original wood chipping Bill was—

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You have made some indiscreet interjections at times, have you not?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Never. Interjections are disorderly.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the honourable member will always remember that.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will, Sir. I was dealing with Mr Evans and his comments about the operations. Under the headline "Premier has become desperate—Evans" the following appears—

Mr Evans said that it was the Tonkin Government which updated and signed the woodchip agreement. I think that is misleading. The Tonkin Government did update it but Mr Evans did not say that Sir Charles Court was the bloke who initiated it and got it off the ground. The article continues—

Having supported the agreement in Parliament, Mr Evans and Mr Jones still hold their expressed view that the woodchip agreement for the next 15 years is most desirable for an integrated timber industry, providing that it is controlled by the Forests Department and follows the qualifications and recommendations set out in the environmental impact statement.

Nobody has said that the Forests Department should not control it. Everybody in the south-west is completely happy with the way the Forests Department is handling it, except maybe the ALP. From its office in Bunbury the ALP distributes pamphlets. One anonymous pamphlet is called "Stop woodchipping". Pamphlets from the South-west Forests Defence Foundation totally oppose wood chipping and invite membership. The report and recommendations of the Trades and Labor Council on the wood chipping project suggests dramatic reductions. Does that sound like a party that was supporting wood chipping?

Another newspaper headline calls for the Government to show its hand. This call was made by the Forest Council of the Parliamentary Labor Party which met in Bunbury. I think it was at the time Mr Jamieson made the same silly statements as he made about the future of the wood chipping industry and the Labor Party having supported it.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: If you did not like the statement it must obviously have been a good one.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I do not think whether I like it has anything to do with the matter. All I want is some straight answers from the Labor Party.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You do not have a preference one way or the other. You stated a fact.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I stated a fact. In the *Warren-Blackwood Times* of the 30th June Mr Evans said—

Surely there has to be adequate reserves set aside for posterity. The present overcutting of the karri forest by one-third needs to be considered and the utilisation of forest waste must be undertaken.

The Minister who signed the present work plan was Mr H. D. Evans. He knew, as did anybody who knew anything about timber, that we had to overcut for the next four or five years so that we could have pine plantations by the 1980s in order to get wood chipping under way. Nobody has ever queried that until during the last 12 months the Australian Labor Party and some of its affiliates have queried what the Forests Department has done. I agree with what has been said in this House and in another place: there is no doubt that the Forests Department in this State is the best Forests Department in Australia and one of the best in the world. Its management of the forests has been superb. It understands what it is doing.

Just because some people in the city, who have not the time to look at the forests, make decisions without any sort of referral to those forests is not the fault of the department; it is doing a superb job.

Another interesting point is that Mr Beggs, the Conservator of Forests, announced on the 14th May that there would be sufficient wood chipping material from 3 600 hectares each year instead of the original estimate of 4 600. This information was available to the Australian Labor Party and to the TLC.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why do you think the ALP and its affiliates are so disloyal to their leaders?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I cannot understand that, Mr Minister. I get very worried when they are disloyal to each other.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This is what I mean.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I did not think they had any leaders.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: It is the result of their system.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is the result of their system and they try to smother what is going on.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: What is this? Shades of Tresillian?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is one of the most inane interjections—

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I thought you were talking about people being disloyal to their leaders.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Is that not very interesting? The Labor Party has been dragooned on this issue. If the Hon. Roy Claughton wishes to deal with that matter I shall quote an article which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 30th August, 1976. I think it is the first occasion the Labor Party has got on the front page of *The West Australian* for years. The headline was: "Big Labor policy reversal". If one reads this article one will find the ulterior motives of the Labor Party. The article states that during the debate on wood chipping within

the State branch of the party Mr Jamieson had to leave the chair. There was nobody else who could sway the argument. Mr H. D. Evans joined in the debate and said—

There is not one forester in the south-west who would opt for the excision of the Shannon for this purpose. The Shannon was the site of a major sawmill for 20 years. It is not the virgin basin it has been made out to be.

Later on, for Mr Claughton's benefit—

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I was there.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The member's memory gets shorter and shorter, because the president of the Western Australian Timberworkers' Union (South-west Land Division), Mr R. McCallum, spoke out against Labor politicians who had criticised the wood chipping industry. He lives down there; he knows something about it. He said—

If it was not for the esteem in which Mr Evans is held in the Warren area, Labor would lose a big number of votes on this.

Would any member of this Chamber think that the big Labor policy reversal had not been made just for political purposes? Will the party change again at its conference in two years' time?

Mr Evans makes comments about all sorts of people, including myself. He has said nasty things about what he considers to be my new-found interest in forests and wood chipping. I think seven or eight years ago was the first I had ever heard of wood chips. For Mr Evans' information, my family and I have had more than something to do with trees for many years. We have brought more species of trees to Australia than Mr Evans.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You are talking about logs!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: But that does not matter. Mr H. D. Evans can make that sort of criticism and then talk about meetings of the group intent upon saving the south-west.

What could explain the absence of Mr Lewis is that he had walked up to Mr H. D. Evans at that particular meeting and said, "Hello". However, Mr H. D. Evans tried to use the Press as a political medium. He cries when someone criticises him in *The Blackwood Times*, but he is prepared to say anything for a little publicity.

Mr Bartlett from Donnybrook had written to both the *South Western Times* and *The Blackwood Times*, but would Mr H. D. Evans answer his questions? No.

Let us consider the Bill a little more deeply. Like Mr Ferry, I believe it will

give great impetus to private pine growers because of the help the Forests Department will be able to give them.

I am tickled pink that the Forests Department will be able to borrow money, because I am sure that in the future it will do so for tourism, recreation, and so on, as well as purely for forestry needs.

It gives me great pleasure to support the Bill because the people of the south-west have for years wanted a Government which was firm enough to indicate what it knew would occur to the forests in the future. They have one now; and I do not think the Labor Party should ever forget that it was Sir Charles Court who brought the wood chipping industry to Western Australia, and it was Sir Charles Court who enabled those men in the south-west to find jobs. Virtually the Labor Party tagged on behind as it always does because it has no initiative in any matter. I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [6.02 p.m.]: First of all I express my appreciation to Mr Claughton who, on behalf of the Labor Party, indicated support for the legislation; to Mr Ferry for his very interesting speech on the legislation and the timber industry; and to Mr Lewis for his contribution.

There is nothing more to say other than what has already been said, so 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.

DOG BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

House adjourned at 6.06 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 7th September, 1976

The SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.
QUESTIONS (18): ON NOTICE

1.

ELECTORAL

Commonwealth-State Roll

Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

What is the latest development in the arrangements between the Federal and State Governments in providing a single electoral enrolment system?