

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 19th October, 1978

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENTS

Approval by Governor

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. Clive Griffiths): I have received the following letter, dated the 19th October, 1978, from Government House, Perth—

Dear Sir,

I am enclosing the amendments made to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council on Thursday, 14th September, 1978, and Tuesday, 10th October, 1978, which have been approved by His Excellency the Governor in accordance with Section 34 of the Constitution Act, 1889.

Yours faithfully,

Vincent E. Hart

OFFICIAL SECRETARY

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

MARINE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [2.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [2.42 p.m.]: In the second reading debate I asked the Minister whether any provision had been made in the Budget of the estimates of revenue to be gained from this source. The Minister did not provide me with an answer at that time. Perhaps he has been able to obtain some information and is able to provide it now. We have no indication when the charges will be implemented. Perhaps he can answer that question as well.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Lands) [2.43 p.m.]: I am afraid I did not pick up that question from the member's speech. I realise he protested about the advent of another charge. As I understand the situation, the authorities are now able to do this, but I am unable to inform the member whether provision has been made in the Budget.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BILLS (3): REPORT

1. Shipping and Pilotage Act Amendment Bill.
 2. Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill.
 3. Consumer Affairs Act Amendment Bill.
- Reports of Committees adopted.

STATE FORESTS

Revocation of Dedication: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 17th October, on the following motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Forests)—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 20, 27, 37 and 47 laid on the Table of the Legislative Council by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 12th October 1978, be carried out.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [2.46 p.m.]: I have examined the proposals contained in the papers supplied by the Minister and as far as can be ascertained from the information in them, the changes to be made seem to be sensible and of benefit to State forests and the private owners involved. We support the motion.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [2.47 p.m.]: I support the motion, and I would like to direct my remarks to the work of the Forests Department. The motion before us is clearly the result of section 21 of the Forests Act, to which the Minister referred in his introductory speech. We should remind ourselves—and certainly some members of the public need to be reminded—that no change may be effected to a State forest without the approval of Parliament. Therefore, section 21 of the Act clearly sets out the manner in which any change to any State forest may occur.

In modern times so much emphasis is placed on conservation and other allied matters that one tends to believe all one hears, and occasionally we hear it is easy for the land in State forests to be excised. That is not so, because the Act specifically lays down guidelines in this regard. We know that as a result of negotiations with mining interests, changes occur to State forests from time to time; but the forests are indeed well protected by the Act.

It is interesting to note that the total area of State forests as at the 30th June, 1978, was 1 853 876 hectares, and the measure before us allows for certain parcels of land to be changed

for good and sensible reasons. That is the way it should be. However, the total area of State forests is to be diminished very little. I think the net result is a loss of some seven hectares of the present total.

When one speaks of the State forests area, it is prudent to refer to the production of that land at present. Hardwood production is gradually decreasing. This is by design as well as, perhaps, by accident. Certainly it is the aim of the department, under its working plans, to reduce the overall cutting of hardwoods for a number of reasons. It is not easy to reduce the production of hardwoods, because of advance concessions and rights granted to milling companies. The reduction needs to be effected in a progressive way.

At the same time as this reduction is being carried out, in order to replace our wood resources we are tending to increase our softwood production. Firstly there have to be softwood plantings, and from those plantings eventually comes production. Softwood production is gradually increasing. This increase will take up the slack somewhat from the decreased production from traditional hardwood sources.

I note from the annual report of the Forests Department for 1978 that sawn wood production includes saw logs and logs for plywood veneer and reconstituted wood. "Reconstituted wood" refers, of course, to particle board and in part to the Westply factory established at Dardanup to take advantage of the softwood plantations in that particular region. Therefore this Parliament saw fit to ratify an agreement in recent years to allow that to be established. I am happy to say that this venture is proving to be very successful and well run.

The revocation of State forests is a serious matter. It is only right that the Parliament should deliberate on any changes that occur from time to time. I have no criticism of the suggested changes before the House today.

I would like to add that I appreciate the attitude of the Forests Department, particularly in recent years, in being what I would describe as more flexible and reasonable in exchanging some parcels of land. It has been my experience over the earlier years of my parliamentary representations to try to obtain changed usage of land for private owners, shires, and for other purposes, such land to be taken from State forests. Conversely, I have been associated with offers of private land to be made available to the department for inclusion in State forests. It has been my experience in recent years that there has been a clearer and better understanding of the

total situation in this exchange of land usage. I commend the Forests Department for its attitude.

I know that the department is supported by all Governments of the day, because the forests industry is in a special category. It is a unique industry. I have already referred to the special Act—the Forests Act—which protects and maintains the industry in perpetuity.

I support the measure.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South—Minister for Forests) [2.54 p.m.]: I thank members for their support and the complimentary remarks which have been made about the Forests Department. I shall pass on to the Conservator of Forests a copy of the comments made.

Question put and passed.

Resolution transmitted to the Assembly and its concurrence desired therein, on motion by the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (Minister for Forests).

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 12th October.

THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [2.55 p.m.]: The Opposition is not opposed to the three principles contained in this Bill.

One part of the Bill merely seeks to give to cabarets the same rights given to other establishments such as hotels, clubs, taverns, and restaurants, in 1972. That right is that when New Year's Eve falls on a Sunday, a cabaret is entitled to serve alcohol on that Sunday. This is a reasonable proposition. New Year's Eve is a festive occasion. A lot of people would go to a cabaret and regard that as a rather pleasant way to spend New Year's Eve.

There is one point on which I would like the Minister's explanation. Why is Saturday included in the term "weekday"? I have always been under the impression that Monday to Friday were weekdays, and that Saturday and Sunday constituted the weekend. However, I see in subclause (1) (a) of clause 3 the Bill refers to "weekday", and subclause (1) (b) refers to "Sunday". Obviously it is intended that Saturday is included in that term "weekday".

Another amendment is to section 35 of the Act, which seeks to correct an omission from an amendment introduced in 1976. That amendment gave to the holders of a club licence the

right to seek a voluntary association's permit to hold functions on the club premises and to serve alcohol at those functions. However, the amendment did not permit the members' wives to attend those functions. The Bill is seeking to overcome this problem so that members will not have to dance with each other, but they may take their wives along and give them a drink, if they are so inclined. That is another reasonable proposition.

The third part of the Bill provides for section 6 of the Act to be amended to enable the serving of liquor in circumstances where it is a part of the training of persons for employment in the catering industry. There has been some resistance to this in the past, because it would be associated with educational institutions attended by young people. However, we have to accept that the consumption of alcohol is very much part of our culture, and one of the most pleasant and sensible ways to consume it is with a meal. Any training for a job in that industry would not be complete if it did not include training in the skills of serving liquor.

The restaurant industry is now big business in Western Australia. It is employing a lot of people. An increasingly large number of restaurants are becoming licensed. Those restaurants need to employ people with skills in serving food and in serving alcoholic beverages.

Mr President, there is a matter that has been concerning me for quite some time. It is indirectly connected with the employment of persons in this industry. The point I wish to raise is the excessive overcharging by the proprietors of licensed restaurants for wine served in those restaurants. I do not know whether members realise this, but if they patronise licensed restaurants they will learn that there is a 200 per cent markup on a bottle of wine—at least a 200 per cent markup.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Not always.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I would like the Minister to point out a restaurant that will serve wine for less than \$4.50 a bottle. There are not too many restaurants that will do that.

I have before me the wholesale prices of wines for this State. They are shown in the publication "The Licensed Retailer". In it a bottle of Lindemans Ben Ean moselle costs the licensed restaurant proprietor \$1.49 a bottle; the recommended retail price is \$2.10 a bottle, or about a 40 per cent markup, which is what about what the hotels charge and is reasonable. Anyone who

buys a bottle of this wine at a licensed restaurant will have to pay \$4.50 to \$5.00 a bottle, which is a 200 per cent markup.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Does the publication say where the wine is recommended for sale?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I have quoted the prices which appear in this publication, which goes out to the liquor stores, the hotels, etc. I think that from his own experience the Minister knows that if a person buys such a bottle of wine from a hotel it costs about \$2.00 which is much less than the price charged at a licensed restaurant.

If a person bought a bottle of Penfolds Dalwood hermitage claret or burgundy at the wholesale price the cost would be \$1.47 a bottle. The recommended retail price is \$2.09 a bottle; but once again the price charged at a licensed restaurant is between \$4.50 and \$5.00.

It is about time that the Consumer Affairs Bureau or the Licensing Court had a look at the liquor prices charged in the licensed restaurants; I think the public are being grossly overcharged.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: That would come under the Consumer Affairs Bureau.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I said that; or it will come under the Licensing Court.

Perhaps conditions could be imposed when licences are granted to ensure that the public are not overcharged for these wines in the licensed restaurants. I have said that this was indirectly associated with the employment of people in the industry. If these licensed restaurants continue to charge such high prices they will lose many of their customers. In fact, many of my friends seek out restaurants that are not licensed, because they do not like to be ripped off.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You will be pleased to know that at Halls Creek a person is able to obtain wine at the hotel price if he gets it and serves himself at the table.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The high prices cannot be blamed on the wages that are paid to the employees, because these employees are some of the lowest paid. A waitress working 40 hours a week receives \$130.30, and this brings it down to \$3.25 an hour.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: What industry is that?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The restaurant industry. The cost cannot be blamed on overtime payments to employees, because on weekends the patrons are usually called upon to pay a surcharge.

This industry is one of the worst employers of workers. Last year 38 per cent of all the cases dealt with by the Industrial Court were taken by the Liquor and Allied Industries Union against the employers in the industry. Over the past four years a total of \$127 000 in unpaid wages has been recouped from the employers. The blame cannot be laid at the feet of the working people for the excessive charges that are loaded on patrons who purchase liquor at licensed restaurants.

Those are the only comments I wish to make on the Bill. Firstly, I think the Consumer Affairs Bureau should look into the overcharging of wines sold at licensed restaurants; secondly, I think the Department of Labour and Industry should be more active in prosecuting employers in the industry who are breaking the law by underpaying the workers.

Often the Government is keen to take the unions to task, but in the case of the liquor and allied industries the union was successful in recovering \$127 000 over the last four years in unpaid wages. All this was achieved by the union, and not by the Department of Labour and Industry.

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [3.06 p.m.]: I am surprised that more members have not jumped to their feet to speak to the Bill which seeks to amend the Liquor Act. It looked as though we would have one speaker from the Opposition; and that speech referred to something that is not really in the Bill.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought you were a friend of mine.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I am surprised to see that not too many members desire to speak to the Bill. The Minister was on his feet when I managed to catch the President's eye, and he gave me the call. I did not see Mr Tozer rising in his seat!

It is amazing how readily we now accept amendments to the Liquor Act. I can remember the occasion in 1966 when I had to lobby practically every member in the House to bring in a private member's Bill to enable junior golfers, who had won trophies, to be able to go into the club house and collect the trophies.

That innovation was not easy to accomplish, because it was considered by some to be *infra dig*. Progressing into the 1970s, there were right, royal arguments in this House on amendments to the Act, and as a result the Act was broadened. I recall that some of the present members, and in particular, Mr Masters, had something to do with that. I recall that the Minister who is now turning

in his seat was interested in the proceedings at the time. Likewise, Mr Neil McNeill was interested.

In general we seem to be a little reluctant to bring in amendments to the Liquor Act. Personally, I think one major amendment could be brought in; that is, to scrap the whole Act. In my opinion we are gradually getting somewhere with that.

Now we are considering three amendments to the Liquor Act. We are asked to allow the trainee catering students in preparation for the role they will play when they receive their diplomas to actually use the real stuff. This was like teaching young cadets to shoot a rifle, but only supplying them with blank ammunition. At least we are becoming more sensible about these matters. In the Victorian era it would not have been thought proper to allow students to consume anything as volatile as *crème de menthe* or *Tia Maria*.

In my opinion this is an elementary type of amendment. It is so elementary that I wonder why it has to be brought before us. I know the real reason; and that is the original Act provides for that to be done. The Act appears to be an ass in many of its requirements.

It seems that we have had to wait 150 years before we discovered something, because in his second reading speech the Minister said that in celebrating New Year's Eve on the 150th anniversary of this State, that day will fall on a Sunday. I know that many Western Australians will wear their top hats, stand on chairs, and scream with delight in bringing in the New Year in 1979, but what a blow it is for the organising committee of the anniversary celebrations that that occasion should fall on a Sunday. I can imagine the Minister who is handling the Bill, and who has toured the world in connection with tourism, saying what a great occasion that would be. Nevertheless, it became a matter of concern to me and many other people—certainly of concern to the Temperance League and a few churches—that it needed an event as important as the 150th anniversary of this State to amend the Act in that respect, in order that such activities on the Sunday night should take place.

For years and years the Act has made Sunday sacrosanct and the situation has been ridiculous all along. We have altered the laws a little and we are now allowed to have a couple of hours' drinking on a Sunday! We may as well have open sesame as is the case in European and Asiatic countries.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You can still only get two bottles, though.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I agree. However the honourable member will win one day. It might take another 150 years, but he will win; mark my words.

This is how ridiculous things are. We have gradually improved the situation a little so that people are realising how farcical the drinking laws are in Western Australia. Under the amendments before us we will allow the consumption of alcohol by guests of members of voluntary associations attending approved functions, and, according to the Minister, this means that the members will be able to entertain their wives. That is terrific! We have waited until now to allow our wives to go with us to have a drink—and our guests what is more!

I was rather surprised that the Hon. Lyla Elliott, who handled the Bill extremely well on behalf of the ALP, appeared to be the only speaker.

I think the Bill is terrific, but it has taken us 150 years to realise that one of these amendments makes sense. It has taken us 150 years to decide that we should be permitted to have a drink at a cabaret and dance on a Sunday night. Whoever thought it would happen? We will be able to drink liquor until the cows come home.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It will be a great year!

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Yes, but it has taken us all these years to reach this far. I have not had one letter about the legislation. Has the Hon. Grace Vaughan? She has not even complained. The Minister is to be congratulated, and may the next 150 years pass more quickly. Let us get rid of the whole farcical Act and get down to living. We know how to control ourselves.

THE HON. T. KNIGHT (South) [3.12 p.m.]: I intend to say a few words on the legislation. Members will recall that a couple of years ago I expressed strong views on the Act. We are gradually waking up. I have said before that we should throw the Liquor Act away and, as Mr Gayfer suggested, rewrite it. That could be done in two pages instead of the book we now have.

I would also like to emphasise that in the near future we should consider the stupid law regarding the purchase of two bottles on a Sunday. It is ludicrous. A person can go into a hotel and from as many bars as he likes obtain two bottles. If he is pulled up by the police, they cannot say for sure where he obtained the liquor. It could have been in his car from the night before. The situation is ludicrous in this day and age. Despite all the achievements we have made in the last 150 years we are still held back by the fact that

we can buy only two bottles of beer on a Sunday. I hope the Government will study the position, repeal the Act, and re-enact it so that at least a person can buy more than two bottles on a Sunday, just as he can do on any other day of the week.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [3.14 p.m.]: I thank members for their support—plain, common sense, and facetious.

I wish to draw the attention of the Hon. Lyla Elliott to section 7 of the Act. On page 11 a definition of "weekday" is provided.

The question which was predominant was the one raised by Miss Elliott dealing with prices, and I will obtain a copy of her speech to take with me. As members would be aware, for the last several years a series of conferences instigated by Alan Ridge, the previous Minister for Tourism, and chaired by Mr Cotton, now Sir Robert Cotton, has been held. Also, one member was Mike Barnard, at that time the Minister for Tourism in Tasmania. Mr Ridge and later I were members of the committee dealing with penalty rates in the hotel and liquor trades.

We finally managed to arrange a meeting with the union representatives. However, when they attended they informed us that they had been sent by their union with absolute instructions that they were not to talk to us. We sat at a table the size of the Table of the House and they told us they were not able to talk to us. That information was staggering.

The end result of the sort of rates which are applicable to hotel and liquor trades—indeed to most of the tourist activity in this country—is the sort of prices the honourable member mentioned today. They are quite horrifying.

Members must bear in mind that, because of the award conditions, most of the people serving the wine would have been on casual rates probably for a period of eight hours and they would earn anything up to treble time for Miss Elliott's dinner.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Where did you get that from?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Out of the award conditions.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I have never heard of treble time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The honourable member should go into the hotel trade. On a Monday holiday it costs three times as much

to get a bed made as it does on the following day. The bed still has to be made and the room must be dusted.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I am talking about waitresses and stewards.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: They are the same. The honourable member should bear in mind that they must be employed on an eight-hour shift under award conditions. The wine itself, if it is a red wine, will have been kept in a cellar for a reasonable period of time. Then it must be handled and that is not cheap. If a person happens to go in for dinner after an early show—about 9.00 p.m.—which is not uncommon, or if the dinner commences at 8.00 p.m. there will probably be a two-hour period in which enough wine must be sold to pay the wine steward who would have been employed probably for a minimum of eight hours at casual rates and, because of the time span, at penalty rates on top of that.

The Hon. T. Knight: It is called double time and a half.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: That is exactly why trading on a Sunday should be voluntary. It costs too much.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Or on a contract basis. Many people working in the industry have not worked a full week.

Incidentally, referring again to the meeting I was discussing earlier, finally common sense prevailed and the union people realising the absolute absurdity of travelling to see us and then saying they were not allowed to talk to us, did talk.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I think you must be exaggerating.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am not.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I am trying to imagine which places I have been to which would fit the category you describe. In most cases the ordinary waitresses bring the wine.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I can assure the honourable member that in many places they do not.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: We cannot afford to go to those!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I know precisely the financial situation of the Hon. Grace Vaughan, because I know what a retired civil servant gets and I know the salary of a member of Parliament.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: I wish I knew my exact financial position!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: With regard to the meeting, I finally said to these gentlemen that penalty rates were introduced and were perfectly reasonable and proper. I said they ought to be defended in a situation where a person worked for five or six days a week and completed the 37½ hours allowed for, after which the boss indicated that he wanted the person to work an additional two or three hours on top of that.

A member: That is time and a half.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What is treble time?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Public holidays.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Double time and a half.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: How do you relate this to the BYOG restaurants?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am answering the point raised by the Hon. Lyla Elliott. Some people are employed in the hotel and liquor trade under contract conditions. Some housewives work Sunday evenings as stewardesses, waitresses, or perhaps assistant cooks. A woman's husband is at home minding the children and she may work three hours a week. The award lays down that on Sundays she shall receive double time, and it is treble time for working on public holidays.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: Yes, and the restaurant adds a surcharge for that. The customer pays the extra.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is what the honourable member is talking about. That is why the wine costs so much.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: A door charge is added to cover the extra cost.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I have been around to quite a few of these places, and a door charge is not always applicable.

The Hon. Neil McNeill: The industry is very much opposed to that door charge.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I do not think many restaurants apply a door charge.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am grateful to the Hon. Lyla Elliott. I agree with her remarks. The tourist industry is forever complaining about the high price of wine, firstly because we want people to buy Western Australian wines and, secondly, because a fair thing is a fair thing. A high-class restaurant usually employs a wine steward who is knowledgeable about wine.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: That is a different thing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Next time I go to a conference I will point out that members of the Labor Party support my point of view. I can assure members that Mr Mike Barnard, a good Labor man, stood up to tremendous pressure from the hotel and liquor trade union on this point. This is a problem we will have for the whole of our 150th anniversary year.

I was talking recently to a man who operates a service similar to that operated by the Golden West Bottling Company in Portland, Oregon. He said that he had to pay \$6 an hour to his workers, but then workers' compensation payments and other charges brought this figure up to \$10 an hour. These employees are not badly paid, and this man said to me, "Do you know, Mr MacKinnon, by law we now must pay them for one week's holiday a year, and after three years' work for the same firm we must give them two weeks' holiday pay a year?" He went on to say that many of these people had worked for his company for a long time. I said to him, "That is rough; do they always take the holiday?" He said, "Mostly they have a month off. I pay them for two weeks, and they take two weeks off without pay." I think the standard holiday period in Australia is four weeks.

This problem is most apparent in industries associated with the hotel and liquor trade, and that is why it is such a tremendous cost, not just in this State, but also in this country when we are trying to keep prices down.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What absolute rubbish; they are very poorly paid in that industry.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am very grateful that the honourable member brought this to the notice of the House, because it is a matter to which we should be giving some consideration. I would like members to think about it, because it is a real problem we have to face if we are to develop the tourist industry. We tend to brush our difficulties off by talking about our isolation, but now our isolation tends to be an attraction rather than a disadvantage, because people are looking for unusual places to visit. However, the main problem in our tourist industry is the high cost involved.

In many countries during holiday periods the hotel and liquor industry is able to obtain labour at a reasonable rate. Frequently the housewives can work at night and on holidays while their husbands mind the children. These people work at a standard rate of \$3 an hour or so. However, in this country, even in the case of a special job, the workers must be paid penalty rates.

I thank the honourable member for raising this matter. I also thank the other members for their contribution to the debate. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (the Hon. V. J. Ferry) in the Chair; the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title and citation—

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I cannot let all that rubbish go unanswered. I might have known that is what I could expect from the Leader of the House. Would he like to work for \$3.25 an hour? That is the award rate for people in this industry—waitresses or stewardesses. An employee who works part time receives a 25 per cent loading, and it would not take much to work out that that is still not a great amount per hour.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is on a week-day.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I have obtained these figures from the secretary of the union, and I venture to suggest that he would be fairly familiar with the award. People who work at the weekend are paid time-and-a-half.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is double pay for Sunday.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I was told that it is time-and-a-half for weekends. Many restaurants add a surcharge to cover that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Not many of them.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I will return to the BYOG restaurants to which Mrs Vaughan referred. The proprietors of these restaurants are primarily in the business of supplying food. None of us minds paying a reasonable price for food, because we know that high costs are involved in purchasing and preparing it. Some restaurants have been in existence for many years, and if they then obtain a liquor licence they often do not employ additional staff. The same waitresses, who have served the food in the past, bring the bottles of wine to the table and open them.

For that service the customers are expected to pay a 200 per cent markup. I realise that restaurant proprietors have to meet other costs, including a 7 per cent fee imposed under the Liquor Act on the value of the total purchases. That still leaves a markup of 193 per cent.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The glasses have to be provided, and they must be washed.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: If one goes to an unlicensed restaurant, the glasses are provided and they are also washed.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The moral of your story is to go to an unlicensed restaurant.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: We do mainly, but occasionally we go to licensed restaurants. I object that people are being ripped off when buying bottles of wine at licensed restaurant. Of course the restaurants have certain expenses to meet, but it does not justify what they charge. They have been getting away with it for so long that although people may grumble they pay up. It is time there was some sort of Government intervention to ensure a fair deal for the public.

Mr MacKinnon claims that wages are responsible for the high cost of liquor in restaurants. A waitress receives \$3.25 an hour, and a restaurant makes \$3 on one bottle alone; how many bottles would a waitress serve in an hour? Mr MacKinnon's argument does not hold water.

I would say that restaurants' expenses would be more likely to be outgoings like interest rates, rents, and water rates; these are the costs they are finding onerous. In fact, there have been cases where multi-national corporations have charged such high rents for the restaurants they are letting that union fees have been withheld to pay the rent.

It is absurd to suggest employees' wages are responsible for the high cost of liquor in restaurants. These employees are in a very low-paid industry, but even so, they are being underpaid continually. The restaurant industry has one of the worst industrial records when it comes to underpaying its staff; the union recovered some \$127 000 in underpaid wages over a period of four years.

Mr Chairman, I have quoted the permanent and part-time rates payable in this industry; you can work out for yourself whether or not the argument put forward by the Leader of the House is valid.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: My electorate is vitally concerned with the production and sale of wine. For whatever reason—it may be high wages in some cases, or it may be a whole host of other reasons—I believe the cost of wine in restaurants is prohibitive and is crippling the industry. It mystifies me that a person can buy imported German white wine almost as cheaply as Australian white wine; there is something wrong there. It is possible to pay between \$4 and \$6 for a bottle of Western Australian wine, and the people are beginning to get very fed up with that situation.

However, I do not think the Government should intervene in any way; I believe the public will react against these restaurants. Mrs Vaughan recommended that we all go to BYOG restaurants; it is a fact that many people are saying, "We have had enough; we will take our own wine."

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What happens when all these restaurants realise what a good thing it is and become licensed?

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That will not happen, because there are many genuine people in the restaurant business who simply want to serve good food; they would prefer that people came to enjoy their food and brought their own wine.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is surprising the number of restaurateurs who say that it does not pay to obtain a liquor licence because it is too expensive.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Whatever the situation, the markup is too high.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I agree; it is ridiculous.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: Mr Hetherington referred to the time years ago when all restaurants in Perth requested customers to bring their own liquor. I must admit I was appalled at such a system. However, the pendulum has swung the other way and now that I find I am required to buy wine at high prices at licensed restaurants I am happy to do what Mrs Vaughan suggested; namely, to take my own liquor when dining out.

I am concerned at the effect of this practice on the wine industry, because people are being driven away from wine. The industry is under a deal of pressure, and it must sell its wine. For example, we should permit the vineyards in the Swan Valley to sell their wines on Saturdays and Sundays; this would assist them to get rid of their wine. I hope the Minister gives consideration to this suggestion during our 150th anniversary.

He should also consider repealing the two-bottle limit on Sundays, which has had the effect of making the Government a laughing stock throughout the State; it is a thing of the past and should be dropped. The vineyards in the Swan Valley are right on the edge of the metropolitan area. If we allowed them to sell their wines on the weekends we would encourage people to drive into the near-country areas for the day.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Little family businesses.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is the point; it is an important issue for the wine industry of the State.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Perhaps you could encourage Western Australian wines at Parliament House.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I believe it is being done; I think Mr Lewis and Mr Dans are dealing with this matter. I would hope that during our 150th anniversary we can purchase a quantity of Western Australian wine for members and their visitors to enjoy.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I cannot let Mr Masters get away with the remark that Mr Dans and Mr Lewis were investigating this matter and "at last" we may get some Western Australian wines for our visitors to enjoy.

At one time I spent a week with Mr Dans and Mr Lewis visiting all the vineyards; in fact, on one occasion a lady member accompanied us, although I will not mention her name. We did our utmost to find a wine to suit everybody's palate. We were very pleased with the result of that tour, so pleased in fact that we had a repeat performance the following week! Mr O'Neil, Mr Dans and I did another tour. It was hard work, as I am sure the driver will tell members.

I did not enjoy what Mr Masters said, because we came down with a very fair decision: We tossed for it and we brought back to the House what we considered to be an excellent wine. We had the labels printed, "Parliament House Wine", and stocked up the shelves of the parliamentary bar.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You still have some of it left.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I think nearly all of it is still in the cellar! To all those people who are wine buffs—or "buffoons"—I say that I believe with wine it is to each his own. It is largely a matter of individual taste and the wine which suits a person's palate is not necessarily the one with the exotic label or the high price.

I sincerely hope the next wine which is selected receives a little more enthusiasm than the stuff we purchased about five years ago. I am sure it will be a collector's item one day.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I agree with Mr Masters that the equilibrating forces in the market may help to decide which restaurants prosper and which do not. Obviously the restaurants which rip off people will not prosper in the long run.

One thing we must consider, particularly in our 150th year, is the number of visitors who will be going to Western Australian restaurants on a "once-off" basis and who will go away with

the impression that they have been ripped off in Western Australia—a State which is endeavouring to advertise its wine industry. In fact, it is recognised by many people who appreciate good wine that Western Australia has become a leading State in the production of many wine varieties.

I am thinking not only of the visitors to the State; I am thinking of the people who perhaps go to a licensed restaurant once a year or once in two years to have a meal, on an occasion such as a birthday celebration. This is the choice of people who cannot afford to go to restaurants too often.

We in this House are in a position to go to restaurants, and we can afford to go to good restaurants. That has not always been my lot, but I can do that now.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Does BYOG mean bring your own grandmother?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I had a grandmother who had a very intoxicating personality. The idea of market forces applying in this respect does not apply to the occasional patron who goes to a restaurant, or to visitors who will go to restaurants on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the State. I think it is good that this matter should be aired. I think it would be a good idea for the Leader of the House to take this matter in the right spirit to ears which will listen to our advice.

It is a great pity when a person goes to a restaurant to find he is ripped off. That has happened to me, and I have placed the name of that restaurant in my black book and I will not patronise it again. I am loath to spend money unless I get value for it. However, I am prepared to give money away, but I do not like to spend it without getting value for it. I am often turned off my fillet mignon when I see the prices on the wine list. I do not mind the restaurant charging me for the fillet mignon, but I object to the high cost of the wine which comes from the same source or even a cheaper source than I am able to obtain the wine.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: From the bull!

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: A person can be charged three times the ordinary price for a bottle of wine in a licensed restaurant, simply because a waiter serves it. If it is argued that a wine waiter has to be employed, then I say that the volume of work would be the same if the restaurant was run in an efficient way. The question of whether there is a division of labour between the wine waiter and the food waiter is

irrelevant. The fact is the wine waiter is there to serve the wine and the other waiter is there to serve the food. But that does not mean the volume of the work is not the same.

The Hon. T. Knight: The restaurants have to engage wine waiters, so that they can put more booze in the patrons before they eat their meals.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: That should be less reason to charge more for the wine, because the more wine that is sold the less it should cost. That ought to be the determining principle in free competition.

It seems that if it is not a monopoly operating, then it is a rip-off on the casual patron or visitor. We are fortunate to have the Minister for Tourism in this House. That being the case my comments will probably fall on receptive ears.

The Hon. I. G. PRATT: One of the wonderful features of life is that one learns about things continually. On listening to this debate I have learned something which is very important to me when I dine out. Recently I had a very enjoyable meal of veal which was cooked in marsala. The other ingredients were bacon and cheese. This was grilled. I paid about \$8 for that dish, but I did not realise I was being ripped off.

I have done a quick calculation. The piece of veal would cost about \$1; the bacon would cost about 20c; the cheese would cost about 5c; and the potatoes and peas would cost about 15c, making a total of \$1.40. At that price I was charged for the dish, there would be a rip-off of about \$6.60.

Admittedly we have to take into account the cost of the persons preparing the meal and serving it. If we assume that that cost is half of the cost of the dish, then I would have paid over \$3 for the marsala in which the meal was cooked. I thank members for bringing to my notice the tremendous rip-off in the sale of liquor in restaurants. The next time I choose to have my meat cooked in wine I will pause to think that the marsala in which the meat is cooked costs about \$3.20. That is a tremendous rip-off.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I know the debate on the clause has taken a lighthearted turn. Nevertheless, there is an undercurrent of seriousness, and that is why I am replying to the comments which have been made.

Very real concern is felt by the Department of Tourism in regard to the prices of ancillaries to meals; I refer to wine and liqueur. The other day I had to complain about a bottle of Scotch costing \$63.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Where were you when you bought it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It was quite simple to work out the cost; it was the cost based on the nips in the bottle. The bill happened to be for a foreign national in Canberra, and I got the backwash.

I am quite serious in what I say about the penalty rates that are paid in this country. I think they are exorbitant. Anyone who has worked 40 hours in the week and is expected to continue working beyond the 40 hours is perfectly entitled to receive penalty rates. However, when a person works three hours on a Sunday and is paid penalty rates, it is unreasonable. Similarly, if a person makes up half a dozen beds on a Sunday—she may be living up the road and is engaged on a contract basis—it is unreasonable for her to be paid penalty rates. I am prepared to argue that with anybody, including Bob Hawke.

I take issue with a point raised by Mrs Vaughan. She has no right to leave the decision to me or any other individual. When she is charged an exorbitant price for wine she ought to take the matter up in the restaurant.

She should tell the waiter, "Bring me the person in charge. I know that a bottle of this wine costs \$2.80 in the supermarket. I realise that you have bought it, packed it, cleaned it, and built a room to store it. I do not mind if it costs \$4.80, but when you charge \$6.80 I object. I want to let you know that I will not be coming back to this restaurant."

In these days, people have to book two or three weeks ahead for tables at good restaurants, because the community are affluent. The people who patronise the restaurants can help themselves in this respect. It is no use for the visitor to this State to say he will not patronise the restaurant again, but the owner of the restaurant will listen to a resident of the State who says that. Each of us has an obligation to say, "I think that is a rip-off" when he considers that the price is exorbitant. I would appreciate it if members will do this when the occasion arises, not in a way which brings attention to them, but in a quiet manner.

The food prices charged at the restaurants seem to be accepted but I think the prices of the ancillary items are objected to.

Clause put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 3.50 to 4.08 p.m.

Clause 2: Section 6 amended—

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I am in somewhat of a quandary in respect of this clause. The point I wish to make is perhaps covered only by the word "vineyard", and I rise to speak because of comments made in the Chamber this afternoon. I was very mindful of what Mr Masters had to say. He has for some time pleaded for some relaxation of the liquor laws in regard to vineyards being able to sell bottles on a Sunday.

Next year is our 150th anniversary and during that year we will be trying to do two things: Promote 1979 as a tourist year for the State, and show the world that Western Australia is a State of excitement. As such, one would expect these sorts of attitudes to be reflected in this legislation.

Perhaps the Minister would be prepared to adjourn the debate, as he is the Minister for Tourism, and then bring to the House an amendment to cover the sale of liquor at vineyards on Sundays and so help promote tourism in that quarter. This would show the people of the world what we have to offer in the way of wines. Other legislation has included provisions to make allowance for the State's 150th anniversary next year, and I think we should do the same to promote the liquor industry, especially the selling of wine at vineyards on Sundays. It would be a real spinner for tourism.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: We would be optimistic if we expected the Minister to adjourn the debate. However, I ask the Minister to consider the request for an amendment as suggested by the Hon. Mick Gayfer.

Overseas visitors are, and will be, amazed to find they can purchase only two bottles or four cans of beer from a hotel on a Sunday, but are unable to buy bottles of wine—this in a country which produces vast quantities of wine of which we are rightly proud and which can hold its own on world markets.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: Which we cannot sell.

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS: All the more reason to encourage its consumption and make it more available for people to drink. The present situation is archaic and I believe it is only a matter of time before it is rectified, but let us make that time our 150th anniversary year.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will bring the matter to the notice of the Chief Secretary, under whose jurisdiction this Act lies.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 30 amended—

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I would like to know what the Minister regards as the definition of an artist. The definition is not in the parent Act and many interpretations could be put on what is an artist. It may be covered by some other Act. To many people an artist may mean a person who is in the performing arts, someone who does quick sketches, or who does a striptease in an artistic manner. Unless a full definition is included, the matter is open to interpretation by a cabaret owner.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: In the sense of this Act, "artist" means one who performs.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: That is not a very satisfactory answer. After all, we can have a performing bear. The definition does not stipulate it must be a human. We can have performing dogs or fleas. The matter should be considered, as a cabaret licensee could engage an act which is not acceptable.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I assure the member I will look into it.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), and passed.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 17th October.

THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [4.16 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill which affects four sections of the Act. It is merely a machinery Bill to clarify or simplify the provisions regarding the tenure of office of the 10 members of the board.

I must say when I was looking at the Act, and the section referring to the members of the board, I was surprised to see that although there are 10 members on the board not one represents the 684 uniformed men. There are representatives of various local authority areas; there are two persons appointed by the Governor; it is set out that three members shall be elected by the insurance companies, and that one member shall be elected by the registered voluntary fire brigades—and I have no objection to that. But, surely

to goodness it is a sound principle that the people directly employed in the industry—the uniformed men of whom there are 684—should have a say on the board. The principle has been established with the SEC and it should be looked at with regard to this Act. After all, people like those uniformed men know what is going on in the organisation, or in their employment, and they are aware of any weaknesses in the system that should be remedied.

For example, I am told that although we have appliances and equipment which could be considered to be the most up-to-date in the world our fire brigade force is quite understaffed. Although the Government recognised in 1976 that it needed another 60 men, we are to get another 36 only, and then not until 1979. I am told that equipment such as seven multi-purpose pumps, two turntables, and the hydraulic platform are all understaffed. I think the men who work in this area and who understand the problems should be given a say on the board. I am informed that the fire brigade is understaffed by about 50 men, and that the Government should be giving urgent attention to the employment of another 50 men in order to provide a fully effective force.

I was also disappointed to note that nothing had been introduced yet with respect to the financing of the board's activities. This matter was raised in 1976 when we were told, in an article which appeared in the *Sunday Times* during October, 1976, that the Chief Secretary said, on the question of the finances of the brigade, that there was a Government inquiry into the funding of the board and that he hoped to have the report at the end of the year. That was October, 1976.

On the 25th October, 1977, there was another Press report—this time in *The West Australian*—in which the Premier referred to the fact that the question of the funding of the WA Fire Brigades Board had been referred by the Cabinet to a working party of Government officers. Earlier this year, on the 5th October, I asked a question as follows—

- (1) Has the working party of government officers set up to enquire into the funding of the W.A. Fire Brigade Board yet concluded its deliberations?
- (2) If so, will the Minister table the recommendations submitted by the party?

The answer to that question was—

- (1) No; however, it is anticipated that it will do so in the near future.
- (2) Answered by (1).

We have been told the same thing for a period of two years and I really think it is about time the Government looked into this very inequitable situation. I say "inequitable" because there are some people carrying a very heavy burden in respect of the cost of the brigade, and others are not paying a penny.

A very comprehensive report submitted by the Perth City Council in 1976 drew attention to the fact that Commonwealth Government and State Government buildings, people who were insured through the State Government Insurance Office, people and businesses with loans through the Rural and Industries Bank, and the owners of vacant land did not pay the levy. But, it is paid by people who insure through private insurance companies, and their contributions amount to 75 per cent of the total running cost of the board. I think that is very unfair on private householders.

Point of Order

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Mr President, I rise on a point of order. May I point out that the title of the Bill reads that it is a Bill for an Act to amend sections 11 and 16 of, to repeal and re-enact sections 9 and 10 of, and to add section 9A to, the Fire Brigades Act, 1942-1975.

The financial provisions of the parent Act are contained in part IX, headed "Financial Provisions". That part of the Act covers sections 36 to 47, which are not the sections specifically mentioned in the amending Bill.

Could you advise me, Mr President, whether the remarks of the honourable member are pertinent to any of these provisions?

The PRESIDENT: It had occurred to me that the honourable member was straying from the contents of the Bill, but I was allowing some leniency because she seemed to come back to the Bill occasionally. However, I would recommend to the honourable member that she pay more attention to what the Bill is about and endeavour to confine her remarks to that content.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr President. I felt it was in order to refer to these things under the provisions of this Bill when people spoke about all sorts of irrelevant things on the previous Bill, such as giving licences to the wine industry.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Anyhow I shall proceed. I conclude my remarks by saying I felt the financing of the board was relevant.

We are dealing with the election of members to the board, and that has some connection with the running of the board and the question of how it is financed.

I just want to draw attention to the fact that I think some people in the community are being prejudiced and overcharged. When people like pensioners have to bear the brunt of these sorts of charges, I think the position is long overdue for review. I support the provisions in the Bill but I do wish they had gone further.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [4.25 p.m.]: I do not intend to speak against this Bill. I just wish to point out that during the second reading speech by the Minister he mentioned that the necessity for this Bill arose from the unfortunate death of the late Colin Campbell, who was chairman of the board.

I would like to say that in 1976 I spoke to Colin Campbell concerning the problem of his board and, particularly, the financing of it to which Miss Lyla Elliott has referred—and I do take notice of what the Leader of the House said and your ruling, Mr President.

I would like the Leader of the House to pass on to the Chief Secretary my proposal that he request all the members of the board to recognise the fact that the board is incorrectly funded. It is funded in law, because we passed an Act of Parliament. However, if the new board members are not aware of this Act then they may not be able to exert sufficient pressure, through good advice to their Minister, when the board is considering its refunding. What Miss Elliott said previously was perfectly true, and I will not go over that ground.

It is very important and necessary that board members are made aware of these facts. In 1976 I published a booklet and gave a copy to all members of Parliament advising them of the inadequacy of the funding of the board, and also advising the Government of the unfairness in that people in my constituency pay up to seven times the amount paid by city people.

I will take this opportunity to advise members that I have already approached the Insurance Council of Australia, and I have advised it that as a legislator I am placed in a most unfortunate situation whereby I am advising my constituents to pay only 10 per cent of the fire brigade levy because, to quote from my letter—

I consider the present funding to be an act of piracy on my constituents.

I do not object to the Bill, and I support it.

THE HON. G. C. MACKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.28 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of the legislation. The side reference to funding has been noted and I will pass the comments on to the Chief Secretary.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Consideration of Tabled Paper

Debate resumed from the 12th October.

THE HON. F. E. MCKENZIE (East Metropolitan) [4.30 p.m.]: In speaking to the tabled papers I wish to raise a number of matters, some of a very minor nature. Nevertheless, in one's electorate one deals with all types of problems, and to the individual they are sometimes important. Behind the problems there are principles and I believe some of them need to be aired in the Parliament.

The first matter I wish to deal with is the Government's decision to allow vehicle licence concessions to persons who are invalids. The licence is free of charge to invalids upon application, provided the person can substantiate his entitlement to the concession. Certain people in the community do not qualify for the concession but I believe in some cases the Minister should exercise his discretion and grant it. I am not sure that he has the power to do so, but I hope he does have the power. In respect of a matter I put forward, he certainly did not indicate that he did not have the authority to grant a concession in a special case, although in his reply to me he said he did not consider the people in this particular case were entitled to it.

The case related to two elderly people on the age pension. The wife had been a cripple since 1928 and required the use of a wheel chair. It was necessary for those people to have a motor vehicle in order that the wife could be transported to various places from time to time. The husband, who is an age pensioner, thought it was quite reasonable for the Government to grant his wife the concession applying to invalid pensioners.

The position is that on reaching 60 or 65 years of age an invalid pensioner automatically transfers to the age pension, and in those circumstances the former invalid pensioner qualifies for the motor vehicle licence concession.

The circumstances of these particular people were that although the wife had been an invalid since 1928 the husband had been a breadwinner and was able to bring home sufficient income to sustain his wife. When he went onto the age pension he decided that, his wife being an invalid, it was necessary to have a motor vehicle almost exclusively for her use. They would have done without a car but for the fact that she was an invalid.

I took up the matter with the Minister for Police and Traffic and asked him whether he could grant the concession to the wife in view of the fact that the husband had looked after her and she had not been a burden on the State. Had she been on the invalid pension she would have automatically transferred to the age pension and qualified for the concession. Eventually the Minister wrote to me saying—

There are no doubt many persons incapacitated in their earlier years through illness or accident, but in most cases, the breadwinner is able to support that person during their working life. At the qualifying age, those persons may then receive social services pensions.

For the State Government to extend concessions to persons on the ground of incapacity without any consideration of their financial standing would lead to a flood of applications at the expense of urgently required road funds.

Under these circumstances, you will appreciate the reason for refusing this application.

I understand the Minister's point of view but I think special circumstances can be looked at without necessarily opening up the floodgates.

As a matter of fact, I had cause to make application to another Minister for a concession to be granted to some people on special grounds. That Minister looked at the matter in an entirely different light and granted the concession. If the Minister for Police and Traffic has the authority to grant it, I think the circumstances of the elderly couple to whom I have referred warrant passing the concession on to them.

I have mentioned this matter in the Parliament because other members probably face the same problem from time to time. Certain circumstances warrant special consideration, and I hope the Minister for Police and Traffic will reconsider this case.

The next matter I wish to deal with relates to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I have referred many matters to the bureau and I must say its officers—particularly Mr Fletcher and Mr Brian Moore—are very helpful. They bend over backwards to assist members of Parliament, because they realise the pressures we are under at times, but it is very evident to me that the bureau is understaffed. I have also noticed that people who come to work at the bureau do not stay very long. I realise consumer protection is a very difficult area which requires a special type of person. I do not think just anybody can deal with consumer problems. It is an area where officers can very easily become run down as a result of trying to track down the problems which come to them. Consumer problems are very time-consuming because a great deal of investigation is usually required. I am concerned about the staff changes in the bureau but I can fully understand the reason for them.

I am suggesting to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, who is in another place, that consideration be given to appointing a parliamentary liaison officer. That system seems to work very well in the State Energy Commission and the State Housing Commission. We can take our problems to them, and they deal with them very expertly and expeditiously. It is of great benefit to members of Parliament.

All members will be aware that some constituents expect members of Parliament to be able to do things that nobody else can do. They think we have very wide powers but they are not by any means as wide as constituents believe they are. Particularly in relation to consumer problems, it would be of great assistance to have a parliamentary liaison officer at the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I emphasise that I am not complaining about the service given by the bureau; in fact, quite the reverse. On every occasion I have referred a problem to it, it has been attended to very promptly and very courteously.

The next matter I want to touch on is the situation in my electorate in respect of Garratt Road and the area between Guildford Road and the river. From time to time constituents have complained to me about the problems they experience in trying to cross Garratt Road between Guildford Road and the river. Even at the lights

at Guildford Road it is hazardous to cross because of the big trucks turning into Guildford Road and Garratt Road. Sometimes they come perilously close to the median strips at the lights. People have suggested to me it would be quite easy for a truck to mount the median strip and they are not very happy at the prospect of having to cross the road.

No lights are provided for pedestrians, and I suppose pedestrian lights at that point would slow down the traffic flow. But I cannot see any reason that a set of "Walk" lights cannot be provided in Garratt Road between Guildford Road and the bridge to enable people to cross safely. Currently a couple of very narrow median strips are being constructed in the area but I do not think they will do the job satisfactorily. It is difficult enough to get half-way across Garratt Road, let alone the full distance across, and the road is becoming busier day by day.

Recently a number of residents in the area drew up a petition and presented it to the Bayswater Shire. I do not know how far it went. The council subsequently wrote to me and asked whether I could support it in its endeavours to provide a safe crossing. I wrote back to the council asking what kind of installation it had in mind, but I have not received a reply to that letter.

I have investigated the position and I believe that lights of some sort should be installed there. Another factor is that many of the people living on the northern side of Garratt Road have children attending the school situated on the southern side, and they face the problem of crossing Garratt Road to get their children to school. Of course it is impossible to expect children to try to cross the road on their own; so the parents accompany them or, alternatively, the parents are forced to use their motor vehicles to take their children to school safely.

I would hope the responsible Minister will consider this position and see if something can be done to alleviate the problems that exist in order to enable the people who live in the area to have a safe method of crossing Garratt Road between Guildford Road and the river.

Whilst I am on this subject I might as well raise another matter. I refer to the aged people who live in the Mertome Village. I have raised this matter previously by way of questions, but still no median strip has been provided on Beechboro Road. I do not know whether this is the fault of the local authority or the Main Roads Department. However, certainly the Minister for Transport clearly indicated that a median strip would be

provided to help these aged people and also the children who attend the special school to cross Beechboro Road. A median strip is not the most desirable facility, but at least it would provide some sort of refuge so that the aged people and children can cross half the road and take refuge on the median strip until it is safe to proceed. I wonder whether the Minister in another place would investigate this matter for me.

Whilst referring to the Bayswater district, I would like to comment on the recent dismissal of the Bayswater Shire Council. I should inform the House that the Bayswater Shire Council never involved me—or any other member of Parliament, as far as I am aware—in any of its affairs. I do not think that was very wise on the part of the council. I do not know the reason that the members of Parliament in the area have not been involved in any of the activities of the council. I think local authorities should involve their members of Parliament in their activities, because the members can assist the councils at various times.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I have attended naturalisation ceremonies there at which the Hon. Lyla Elliott and Mr Harman have been present.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The shire has never extended that courtesy to me.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You should not say it does not involve local members, because I have been there.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Maybe the shire is discriminatory; perhaps it likes some members and not others.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I could not imagine them not liking the honourable member.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Thank you. The only experience I had with the council was when I was invited by a member of the staff, along with my colleague, the member for Ascot, to look at some plans which related to the Swan River authority wanting to assume jurisdiction over land controlled by the shire. I went along expecting that I might be able to assist the council. I listened intently to what I was told, and I resolved to assist the shire if I could.

Much to my amazement, some little time after that my visit to the council became the subject of debate at a council meeting. A number of questions were asked regarding the reason for my presence in the council chambers on that day, along with a member of the staff. As a result, the council subsequently passed a resolution to the effect that in future no member of

Parliament was to participate in any such exercise without first obtaining the permission of the shire manager, the shire clerk, or the shire president.

I visited the council simply because I was invited by a member of the staff. It did not dawn upon me that I should have permission to be there; I assumed that if permission were necessary the gentleman would have obtained it. There was nothing sinister about my visit, I was there merely to assist the council. I might add that three councillors had their names recorded as opposing that resolution. Nevertheless, it was passed and I was subsequently made aware that action was taken as a result of my visit. I assure members my visit was made purely with the intention of assisting the council and at the invitation of a staff member.

I do not expect one should have a great deal of sympathy for the dismissed councillors because, as I have pointed out, unlike other local authorities they did not involve their members of Parliament in their activities. I have many local government authorities in my electorate and all of them involve their members of Parliament in some form or another, to a greater or lesser degree.

For instance, the Town of Canning—and that shire is represented by a number of parliamentarians of various political colours—goes to the extent of sending members of Parliament a full copy of the minutes of its meetings so that we are fully aware of what is transpiring.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: I noticed with interest that a servant of the Bayswater Shire Council said that he took the minute book home with him and brought it back the next morning, in breach of section 188 of the Act. Do you recall reading that?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: No, I do not. I am merely informing the House of what has happened. Some councils ensure that their local members know what is going on.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I have quite a few in my electorate which do that.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Within my province the Shire of Kalamunda is most courteous to me.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: It is one of the best in the State.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I do not say that it is not. However, of all the shire councils that I deal with—I suppose it is dangerous to single out one for being very open in its affairs—only the Town of Canning provides me with a copy of the minutes of its meetings.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You have no problem handling all the inquiries that come from the shires?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It is difficult to resolve some of the problems.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: But you have no time factor problem?

The ACTING PRESIDENT (the Hon. T. Knight): Order! I would appreciate it if the member would direct his remarks to the Chair and refrain from holding round-table discussions.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You have not a time factor problem?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Mr Acting President, certainly there is no time problem; we are able to deal with the problems that come forward.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: That is good; so your electorate is not too big?

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: He is very efficient; that is all.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: To continue: One or two aspects of the dismissal of the Bayswater Shire Council disturb me. I noticed that the Minister for Local Government in her statement said that in October of last year a senior officer of the Local Government Department was directed to undertake a major examination of the shire's administration, and the investigation continued until March of this year. Therefore, a long time transpired between the conclusion of the investigation and the dismissal of the shire council. I wonder what was going on during all that time. It seems to me to be a very long time and, if things were so bad that in October of last year an investigation was warranted, I wonder why the Minister waited so long to dismiss the council, because it seems nothing of real substance has come forward since then. Why did the Minister wait so long?

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Are you saying they should have been dismissed more quickly?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I am not saying the councillors should have been dismissed.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: He is questioning why the Minister took so long to make a decision.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Certainly on the basis of the evidence before me, there are certain grounds for the dismissal of the shire; but I say those grounds are insufficient. The only person mentioned in the report that has been made available is the ex-president (Mr Hinds); yet the Government has dismissed the whole of the council.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you suggesting that any Minister or any Government would take a step like that lightly?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: No, but I believe the Government should have tabled the full report. At the moment the situation is not fair to the councillors who have been dismissed, because the evidence before me is not sufficient to dismiss the whole of the council.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think if you look at it another way you will find that whatever else was done would not have been fair to the other people, either.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Does that mean to say there should be a cloud of suspicion hanging over the head of every councillor simply because the Government refuses to name those involved?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you think it is reasonable to say that some members of the council would have known what was happening and others would not?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Why have we not been told about it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Use your imagination.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The important thing is that in the final analysis the ratepayers will have to make the decision whether to return the councillors who have been dismissed, or to elect others in their place. I am not convinced that the council should have been dismissed under these circumstances. In fact, I would be loath to dismiss it on the evidence that has been tabled.

If one has a look at the report, one finds that some of the matters were investigated; I will read a section of it. This appears under the heading on the first page of the report, "Town Planning Scheme No. 17—Administration Expenses", and the report reads as follows—

At the time of my earlier investigation the Shire Manager/Treasurer was unable to explain how he had arrived at the amount of \$200,000 but suggested that portion would represent a recoup of expenditure incurred by the Municipal Fund on the administration of the Scheme. However, he was unable to indicate the amount of that portion.

The council has been dismissed. What about the administrators within the council? What is to happen to these people? They still have their jobs. If one reads that report, it is fairly damning, in my view, so far as the shire manager is concerned.

One must take this into consideration. Anybody who has had anything to do with members of councils would understand that, to a great degree, the councillors rely on the advice given to them by the bureaucratic administrators of the council. The Local Government Act is a large and complex Act. There are parts in it which are difficult for councillors to understand. I know that they should understand it; but they rely to a great degree on the advice given to them by the people who are in the profession. They are the people who have passed the necessary examinations in order to become shire clerks, and the like.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Nevertheless the decision is finally that of the councillors, and they have to take the responsibility for it.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I will go along with that. When some of the staff are named in the report, however, as in that passage relating to the shire manager, why should he be allowed to continue in his position when he could not explain that matter to the investigating officer?

The Hon. R. G. Pike: For the very reason that your belief in unions provides a right of appeal for the ordinary worker.

Point of Order

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I rise on a point of order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (the Hon. T. Knight): Order!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I wonder if you, Sir, could advise me, as there is a report on this which will need some action, whether the matter that the honourable member is discussing should be regarded as *sub judice*? I would not know what the situation was.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: It is not a case before the court. A decision has already been made and has been published and circularised. I believe the member is only discussing what has been published in the Press and spoken about. There is no point of order.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I will not spend any more time on it except to ask what will happen to the person who was dismissed? In *The West Australian* of the 13th October there was a passage which read—

A former employee of the Bayswater Shire Council, Mr Ronald Taylor, said last night that he had notified the Local Government Department, about September last year, of council irregularities.

He had been gathering information on these from February 1977 when he began working for the council's town planning section.

"I endeavoured to tell a number of people they were acting incorrectly, but I was told to mind my own business," he said.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Is he the guy who took the minute book home at night?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I do not know anything about the minute book. I do not even know Mr Taylor. I have just taken this from the newspaper. The report continues—

Mr Taylor was dismissed from the council in June for what he was told was "subversive activity."

There is a council employee who was saying that certain matters were going on which were wrong. He was subsequently sacked for subversive activities. What about his job? Will he have his job restored to him? Will the shire manager lose his? It is quite unfair for that situation to continue.

I will not continue with this matter except to say that I do not think enough information has been presented to members of Parliament and to ratepayers to justify the dismissal of the Bayswater Shire Council. I know that the matter is not completed. Every member of Parliament received a letter today which was signed by some councillors. They are claiming that the whole situation is wrong.

I am not taking the side of the councillors. I do not wish to indicate that I am taking their side, because if one reads this report one sees that there were a lot of things wrong with the Bayswater Shire Council. There is no doubt about that. Unfortunately, it has not been explained to me clearly enough to enable me to make a judgment on the matter. How in the name of goodness can the ratepayers do that?

The Hon. R. G. Pike: They can make their judgment in February.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: They need a few more facts. We are not convinced that justice is seen to be done.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The next matter I wish to speak about briefly, because it has been given a pretty fair run on many occasions, is the continually worsening unemployment situation. This is creating a lot of problems in the province I represent. I have dealings with unemployed people from time to time. It is a problem when young people are not able to find employment.

I can find nothing in the Budget, so I blame the State Government. It must carry some responsibility for unemployment.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: There is still a spare \$30 million in the suspense account.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I feel the major problem lies with the Federal Government and its policies. Nevertheless the State Government must accept some responsibility because, for a long time, the Premier defended the Prime Minister and the policies that he was espousing.

I realise we have to bring inflation down. I note that it is coming down, but it is not coming down to the extent that warrants the continued heavy unemployment and the suffering that goes with unemployment. There is a real problem in that many young people eventually lose the will to work. They go to 30 or 40 places looking for employment, and there are 50 people looking for the same job. They find that demoralising.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I hope you will support the Wagerup alumina project.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: There are some aspects of it—

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: In other words, you do not want employment.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It is not that at all. Certainly we support the Wagerup alumina project provided we are satisfied that the water supplies, the environment, the forests, and the like are adequately protected.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It is accepted that they will be.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: If that is done, the Government will find that the Labor Party will support the project. Providing these aspects are assured, that is our policy.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We made this point when the Bill was debated here.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Very reluctantly.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The situation might have been improved—

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We have to be responsible about these things.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: —if Government funds had been put into the public sector, particularly into labour intensive projects, so that employment could be created.

I am concerned about unemployment. As unemployment increases, we find that the crime rate increases and vandalism increases. These are side effects that the community has to suffer. The sooner we return to the days when Governments pledged themselves to a fully employed

society the better. Seldom these days do we ever hear that mentioned. That is disturbing.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: The Liberals talked about over-full employment in the past.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: My next point is in relation to State Housing Commission rentals. Recently this matter was discussed between myself and my colleague from the same province. We have quite a number of pensioners in our province. We discussed the substantial increase that pensioners faced in relation to rents. They increased by 30 per cent. That is a fairly heavy increase for those on pensions. In fact, the increases will take away from these people all of the increase in the pension that they are to receive in November. They will end up with nothing of that increase. They will hand it to the State Housing Commission in rent.

It is not only the pensioners who have suffered. The people on low incomes who fall just outside the rental rebate scheme have suffered. They are the people whose gross wages are of the order of \$170.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What are you basing these figures on? I think they are incorrect.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: They are not incorrect. I asked a question in this House recently. The extent of the increase was 31.7 per cent for single people, and around 29 per cent for married people. The Minister, in his reply, agreed with that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Based on what?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Based on what they were paying before.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: They have changed the formula, and the rents have gone up.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why do you not leave it to Mr McKenzie? He is quite capable of making his own speech. He is a member in his own right, and in good standing.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. Hetherington: Do not lecture me—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member will proceed.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: On the 2nd October the rent increased by \$3.20 for a married couple. That represented an increase of the order of 30 per cent.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: From the time the previous rent had been established, what was the increase in the CPI?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I can assure the Leader of the House it was nothing like 30 per cent.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What was it?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The increase in the CPI over the last 12 months was of the order of 5 per cent.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was longer than 12 months before they were adjusted.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: No. The rents were adjusted 12 months ago. They will be adjusted in October of each year.

Not only the pensioners have been affected, Mr President. As I said, these other people on low incomes are also affected. Recently they were advised that their rent was to increase by \$5 from \$26.50 to \$31.50. It will increase again, surely, until it reaches the market value. This is the new policy.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why do you say that? How do you really know that? You have said until it reaches the market price.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The so-called market price, yes.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: From whom did you get that statement?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: From Mr Newman, the Commonwealth-State housing relations—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Mr Newman is not the Minister in charge of Federal housing.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It has been changed, but he did make that statement when he was.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If honourable members wish to have a conversation amongst themselves, I suggest that they leave the Chamber and allow the honourable member on his feet to proceed.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr President. Otherwise, I will let them go on, and we will be here after six o'clock.

The PRESIDENT: It is not the intention of the Chair to let them go on.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I hope it is not the Chair's intention to be here after six, either.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Taking over the President's job?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Rents are shortly to rise again. Some of these houses, particularly in my electorate, are very old homes. In many instances the increases are justified. However, \$31.50 rental is about as much as some of those old homes are worth in my area, as far as the

market value is concerned. I do not think the rents should go beyond that limit. They will go beyond that limit, and there is not much anybody can do about it except to complain in the House about the effect this is having on these people.

We should then examine the position in relation to moneys allocated to the State. It is not altogether the fault of the State Government that there has been a downturn in allocations to housing, because we rely heavily on specific purpose grants for housing from the Commonwealth. When one looks at the situation since the Fraser Government has come to power in Canberra, one notes that in 1975-76 Western Australia received \$33.4 million in specific purpose payments for housing. In 1976-77 we received \$35.4 million, on the face of it an increase, but in real terms that would not be so. In 1977-78 we received \$36.7 million. But what happened in the last allocation? It was an absolute disaster as far as housing was concerned. Is it any wonder we have substantial unemployment in the building industry when the Federal Government curtails deliberately the activities of home building? This year the allocation was decreased to a figure of \$29.8 million compared with a figure of \$36.7 million for the previous year.

Not only have we suffered inflationary loss, but also we have suffered a substantial cut in the allocation. The Government should have protested more strongly to the Federal Government about the drop in the housing allocation. It is creating hardship in the housing industry and for people on low incomes.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are being unfair again. We could not have protested any more.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: He is stating the truth.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I believe the Government could have protested further. It is time the Federal Government was attacked because of the action it has taken. In real terms we have suffered a loss of \$17 million compared with the allocation received in 1975-76. Had we received that \$17 million we would have been able to build 809 new SHC homes.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Of what value would each house be?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I do not know the value.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Well, that is all important, if a house is to attract some investment return.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: We have lost a total amount of \$17 million and that could have been used to construct 809 homes.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How do you know, if you do not know the value of a home?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You have worked it out, so you must have done that on some basis. You prepared those figures.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I did not prepare the figures. They were prepared for me.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you reading someone else's speech?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I am not reading someone else's speech.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Who prepared those figures?

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: It is Government information.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Honourable members know interjections are out of order and they know also that carrying on audible conversation while a member is speaking is out of order. I suggest to honourable members, if they do not like the rules in the Standing Orders associated with the conduct of this House, that does not give them the right to flout or disregard them. It gives members the right to change them; but until they take that action I suggest members comply with the rules.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Thank you, Sir, for your assistance. I was finding it difficult to cope with so many interjections at the one time.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member should disregard the interjections.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have done a good job.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You get on with reading that speech.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Get on with reading that other bloke's speech.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Because of the downturn in the amount of money allocated to this State for housing purposes, people have to wait for a longer period before obtaining a house. For example, in the metropolitan area alone 4 982 applicants are awaiting SHC homes.

In Albany a total of 343 applicants are awaiting SHC houses and in Bunbury—part of Mr MacKinnon's electorate—595 applicants are awaiting a home. Those figures were obtained from the SHC, as were the figures I quoted previously.

The cut in the allocation of funds for housing is an important matter. I hope the Government protests more strongly to the Federal Government about it. I know we have suffered cut-backs in a number of other areas. The Federal Government is a dreadful Government.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is a vast improvement on the previous Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: That is a matter of opinion. The Minister is fooling himself again.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I do not agree with the comment made by the Leader of the House. I should like now to speak about public transport. It is the final matter to which I wish to refer, but I will spend some time on it.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I am sure you will mention railways.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I shall certainly have something to say about railways.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I do not really believe you would want anyone to write your speech on railways.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: On the last occasion I spoke on the Address-in-Reply debate on Tuesday, the 11th April, I drew the attention of the House to certain matters. I asked the Minister for Transport to provide information in relation to figures which I quoted. My remarks appear at page 529 of *Hansard*. I went into great detail asking him to explain these figures.

The Leader of the House said, "I am sure there is a very valid explanation for that." I received a reply from every other Minister to whom I directed a question, except for the Minister for Transport who was present in the House when I made my speech. It was not a difficult question.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He replied to you on the spot.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The Minister did not reply to me at the time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He might not have satisfied you; but he replied to you. You would not want him to write you a letter as well as reply to you here?

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He just wanted a proper reply. It is quite simple.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: In order to refresh the memories of members, I should like to quote the passage to which I am referring. It reads as follows—

I have had a look at the latest report which has been brought down and I would like the Minister for Transport to explain to me, when he is replying to the debate, the reason for the additional expenditure now being incurred in the rail section of the Metropolitan Transport Trust. The report was tabled in this House on the 16th March of this year, and I obtained a copy of it because I wanted to try to find out where the expenditure was going. However, it is very difficult to understand the expenditure from a reading of the document; so I hope the Minister will clearly outline to me the reasons for the additional expenditure.

I went to the trouble of outlining the difficulties I was having in interpreting the matter. My difficulties can be understood, when one looks at the latest report of the MTT. One can follow the expenditures incurred under buses and ferries, because they are outlined under various headings; for example, traffic operations, engineering operations, administration and management, and depreciation and interest. There are a number of headings under which one finds items of expenditure.

However, when one comes to the suburban rail system one finds the following headings: "Traffic and motor power; mechanical and ways and works; general and administration; depreciation; and interest". Those headings appear under "expenditure". It is very difficult to follow, particularly when there has been a substantial reduction in expenditure so far as wages were concerned, but there has been a tremendous increase in mechanical and ways and works. I wanted to know the reason for the additional expenditure. I wanted to know whether this expenditure would continue in the future or whether a large sum of money was being spent this year because all the railway stations had been allowed to run down and it had been decided to improve them. These figures reflect in the loss per passenger. If a great deal is spent one year, and it is not an ongoing expenditure, that expense will not be incurred in the following year. That is a matter on which I wished the Minister to provide a reply. Every other Minister, including those in the other place, replied to my questions except the Minister for Transport.

Of course, some replies were not satisfactory. The explanation may have been clear, but it did not please me. I was disturbed that the Minister did not see fit to answer my question, because I believe we have a right to know where the money is being spent, in order that one may satisfy one's self that the loss per passenger is in fact a correct figure and will not fluctuate wildly.

I should like now to comment briefly on the SWATS report. I have examined it in detail. I do not want to criticise it. I believe it contains some good recommendations which, if implemented, would be beneficial. However, I am disturbed about some of the recommendations. For example, if economics dictate that road transport should replace rail transport in some areas, we should not be blind to that fact. But if a road transport system is justified, I believe Westrail should operate it. We should not have the situation where the rail system is fragmented and various contractors are responsible for it.

I have seen what has taken place in respect of the Mullewa to Meekatharra section of the railway line which has now closed down. The problems are probably not so great for people wanting to send articles from Perth to Meekatharra; but there are a number of disadvantages. This is what happens when we have a fragmented rather than a centralised transport system.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: Are you going to tell us about the case of apples?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I should like to tell members about that.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: Because I have heard it many times before and there is a simple explanation for it.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I should like to tell the story. When Westrail operated the transport service, one could send a case of apples from anywhere in the State to Meekatharra for 80c. It costs now 80c to have the case of apples transported to Kewdale and \$2.80 from Perth to Meekatharra, a total cost of \$3.60. If the honourable member has a simple explanation, I should like to hear it.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: You can consign the case direct to the Bellway depot and Westrail will deliver it.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It still costs one 80c to send it to the depot and a further \$2.80 to send it to Meekatharra.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: If you consign the case from Donnybrook to the Bellway depot via Kewdale, it is delivered to the depot and you pay the freight from the Bellway depot to Meekatharra.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: The honourable member is correct; but it still costs a total of \$3.60 whereas previously it cost 80c.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I have heard that people pay charges of up to \$5 for this service. Have you not heard that?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I am not familiar with the suggestion made by the honourable member; but I know what it costs for a case of apples to be consigned from the Bellway depot to Meekatharra. It costs \$2.80 whereas it cost 80c previously. This is probably one of the worst examples I have.

These problems arise with a fragmented service. A number of operators are involved which results in higher freight charges. The same situation applies to interstate services where a number of operators are involved also. I am sure Mr Dans can tell us about his experience with transporting wine. The freight charges are exorbitant.

The same thing will happen here if it is handed over to various people. The SWATS report says much of that can be overcome by a transport subsidy. What is the gain in that? Will we subsidise a private operator to do the service? It will still be a fragmented service. The transport system is somewhat like the PMG's Department; it needs to be dealt with on a centralised basis by one body. I believe it is up to Westrail to continue the service.

So long as the position is watched very closely—which I intend to do—some of the recommendations in the SWATS report are worthy of introduction but I think they should be confined to Westrail rather than fragmented, because otherwise we will finish up with a system that is quite unsatisfactory.

We cannot blame the Commissioner of Railways, because with the easing of regulations the private road transport operators have gone in and grabbed all the freight that carries a subsidy, whereas previously the good stuff was paying for the bad. It is probably fair to say a case of apples was being carted at a loss in many instances but was being subsidised by a keg of beer or something like that.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: You can also send 40 kilograms of apples for \$2.80, which assists the businessmen in Meekatharra.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: That would have been much cheaper under the old scheme, so I do not see how it would assist the businessmen of Meekatharra. Previously it was cheaper than that.

The Hon. N. F. Moore: I do not think that is correct. I will check up on it.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: That will save me a lot of trouble. I hope the honourable member will tell me whether I am right or wrong. I think freight can be sent at a cost of \$2.80 only on one day a week on the ordinary service. It is not encouraged. On the other services it is dearer still. I am sure I have quoted the cheapest possible rate on the ordinary goods service. Freight sent on other days is paid for at the refrigerated or perishable freight rate, or whatever it is.

It is unfair to Westrail to have the situation developing where it ends up with all the rainwater tanks. No truck wants to carry rainwater tanks, so they are taken down to Kewdale and dumped onto Westrail. I have been told Westrail is getting all the rubbish now.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Do you call our wheat and wool rubbish?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: No. I am not referring to bulk commodities. I admit wheat and wool are very good traffic.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I am glad they appreciate it, because our freights have gone up by 105 per cent in the last six years.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I will have a look at that.

I now come to public transport. I am again very disturbed at the treatment this State is getting from the Fraser Government. It is absolutely disgraceful. The Federal Government just does not seem to listen. I know the Ministers have complained but I wonder at times how strong their complaints are. They are certainly not being heard; they are voices in the wilderness.

In the last three years we have had less than 3 per cent of the total allocation for urban public transport grants. That is a disgraceful situation which should be exhaustively inquired into. There is something wrong somewhere. Either the Government is not preparing its submissions properly or this State is being treated in a cavalier fashion by the Federal Government. I tried to find out what our submissions were, but I was told documents passing between Governments were confidential and I was not entitled to see them. It is a disgraceful situation when we have had only 3 per cent of the total allocations to the States in the last three years.

Recently we tried to get \$10 million and we finished up with \$2 million. The State with the allocation nearest to ours was South Australia, which got \$4 million—double the amount. Mr

Shea complained bitterly about it in a Press release and said it was hard to understand why we should get only \$2 million when South Australia gets \$4 million, and we carry as many passengers as South Australia does on its system.

Either our submissions are not up to scratch or the Federal Government is choosing to ignore us. The matter should be fully inquired into because it is not fair to this State. The transport system continues to run down and the stock is getting older. Westrail has nothing that is less than 10 years old, and a great deal of the stock is in excess of 15 years old.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Yet we send MTT buses across to South Australia so that they can study our most up-to-date MTT bus transport. It is crazy.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: There is nothing wrong with the equipment we have here but if we continue to get this kind of treatment it will run down. Other States are rapidly catching up with us, and some of them are being aided by grants from State Governments. The Western Australian Government is not giving anything to public transport. All it talks about is cutbacks. The deficit continues to mount, and it is not hard to understand why. With the expansion of the urban sprawl the cost of running services to outlying areas becomes greater. I am sure members of Parliament who represent those outlying areas have people leaning on them to do something about instituting bus services.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What about the buses that are not filled now? When you travel in the rush hour in the morning there are empty seats in the buses and you see cars containing only one person—the driver.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: There is no evidence of that.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Yes there is. Just hop on the Freeway and have a look between 8.00 and 8.30 a.m.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Mr Shea watches the MTT services very closely. He is an efficient operator.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I am not saying anything about that. What about the cars carrying single persons?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It is hard to understand but we must look at the overall position. We will not get people out of their motor-cars until we provide a service on which they can fairly conveniently get from point A to point B.

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: There is an excellent service from Midland.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It is not very far from Midland to Kewdale in a motorcar but when travelling by public transport one has to catch a bus or train into Perth and then another bus to Kewdale. Where is the encouragement to people to get out of their motorcars under those circumstances?

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: That is incorrect.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Is there a bus service between Midland and Kewdale?

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: No, but you can get from Midland to Kewdale with one transfer.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: How?

The Hon. O. N. B. Oliver: By bus.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Where does one get it?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You go via Fremantle!

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I would say one has to get a bus to Belmont, and another bus at Belgrave Street to go to Kewdale.

It disturbed me to see in *The West Australian* on the 20th September, under the heading "State Budget", that the MTT is to study cost cuts, and it has been mooted that the service will be cut. The more we depreciate the service offered to people, the more people will use motorcars, and fewer people will use public transport. The Government must look at this matter very seriously. It must modernise its fleet and provide some State funds if the Federal Government will not give us funds. In an article in the *Daily News* of the 11th October Kim Jordan said—

Ask any well-travelled person how to get around the world's major cities and the answer will probably be: "Take the train."

That does not apply to Perth. The rail service in Perth is the same as it was 50 or 60 years ago. It goes to the same areas, there has been no extension, and it is not convenient for people to move around by rail. We have a battle to keep it rolling along as it is.

Before I conclude I want to refer to part 17 of the Estimates for the year ending the 30th June, 1979. In division 63, relating to railways, we see that in all areas except traffic transportation and civil engineering the votes for salaries, wages, and allowances have been increased. I regard traffic transportation and civil engineering as the two key sections of Westrail because they are responsible for the construction and maintenance of the railway track and services.

In traffic transportation the expenditure on salaries, wages, and allowances to officers and employees, generally, was \$41 047 342, whereas the estimate for the coming year is \$41 034 260. So there has been a slight reduction in that area.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Perhaps that is because Mr Pascoe is leaving.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: If we look at Mr Pascoe's section—

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is all right. I was just being facetious.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: It is up with the fat cats that the vote has increased.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Perhaps they need two men to do his job.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Well that might be so; he was a very capable man.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: A very good man.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I could perhaps be critical of him in some areas, but overall he was a very good commissioner. If we look at the civil engineering section, we find there will be a reduction in the wages paid from \$13 189 642 to \$12 932 800. Then let us look at the figures which apply to other sections. In the Railways Commission and Secretariat, in other words the secretary's branch, we find the vote for the employees generally is up from \$1 738 553—that was the actual expenditure—to an expected \$1 979 510 this year. So in an area that I regard as a non-productive area, there was a substantial increase.

If we look at the accounts and audit section, the same thing applies; there is a slight increase. If we look at this other famous section the railways has, we find there are now three doctors holding varying degrees dealing with computers and systems analyses. The amount actually expended last year was \$513 530, and this year it will be up to \$642 130. So what is happening in the railways? One only has to speak to the demoralised wages employees, the people who are actually producing something, to find out. I do not want to be too critical of the management section, but there has been quite a substantial increase in this vote also, from \$513 000 to \$642 000, whereas there has been a slight reduction in other areas.

I feel it is wrong that we are getting more fat cats or non-productive people. If one likes to use the terminology commonly used in the railways, one could say we are now reaching the stage where there are more chiefs than Indians.

That is a very serious matter. It is affecting our railway system; the service is being taken away from the people. There is a cut-back in the actual services offered to the people, but there is no cut-back in management.

If anyone likes to go through the books, he will see that all the superintendents and managers in the various departments are being retained. There are no cut-backs there, but there have been cut-backs in the people actually producing the goods. For instance, members will have read recently that the people who have manned the barriers for many years are to lose these jobs, and they will be replaced by machines. The department is having difficulty finding positions for the people concerned, because of the difficulty of finding extra jobs. Naturally there is a bit of friction between management and the union as a result of it. There is opposition to change when jobs are lost.

If we are to bring machinery in to replace people, some thought must be given to replacing those people who are doing all the investigating and justifying their own positions to retrench people who have at least been contributing a service to the public. But no, more and more services are being withdrawn. The Perth parcels depot has been closed down and people wishing to send parcels by train now have to go to Kewdale to do so. Perhaps some of these measures are good, but we must provide a balance. If the department wipes out some of the lower paid positions, surely it must wipe out some of the higher paid positions at the top. That is not the current situation. The idea is to wipe out the jobs of a half a dozen workers on low incomes only to create another bureaucratic position at the top. As a result of all that the public suffer, because a service is not available to them. Perhaps it looks very well on paper because of the savings that will be made. However, if the department saves \$30 000 when it retrenches people on low incomes, and then replaces them with an employee on \$20 000 a year, that is a saving of only \$10 000. We will soon have more chiefs than Indians.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It will be a case of just upping the wheat freight charges again.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: That is an area where the honourable member has more information than I have.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: That would counter the argument you are putting up.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I am sure the honourable member will share my concern.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I intend to speak on this matter.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: There are no staff reductions at the top. We still have the commissioner, the assistant commissioner, the traffic manager, and two assistant traffic managers. All the engineers are still working in the civil engineering branch for \$X a year. However, many of the people who attend to the tracks have lost their jobs.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Are you saying there is the same number of engineers?

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: There has been no reduction in the number of engineers, but there has been a tremendous reduction in the number of people on low wages.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You are proposing that some of these people should be deposed or dismissed.

The Hon. R. Hetherington: He is not saying that at all.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I am not saying that.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are saying there has been a reduction in the Indians but not in the chiefs.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: Yes.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: You are saying that we are getting rid of some privates and not the officers, but that we should be getting rid of some privates and some of the officers.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I have not said that at all.

The Hon. R. G. Pike: Some of the chiefs then.

The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE: I have not said that. What I am saying is that it is so easy to peel off people from the bottom, but it is more difficult to peel them off from the top. In fact, I do not believe the people at the bottom should have been peeled off.

The services should still be available to the public. The Railways Department is losing these people and the public are losing the services.

Time is getting on and I want to thank you, Mr President, for the assistance you gave me when I was being attacked on all sides. It was a great help to me. I managed to weather the storm with your assistance.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. N. F. Moore.

House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ENERGY

Tidal Power

369. The Hon. F. E. MCKENZIE, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

Referring to the answer given to question No. 344 on the 10th October, 1978, concerning the estimated cost of tidal power—

- (1) Could the Minister explain why—
 - (a) no allowance was made for inflation; and
 - (b) a loan repayment period of 10 years was used when a 30 years operating life of the plant was adopted?
- (2) Could the Minister define the term "discounted weighted average costs", and how it operates?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) (a) I would remind the honourable member that the costs quoted in my reply to question 344 were for capital charges only.

It is normal to assess projects of this nature initially in terms of constant dollars. The inclusion of inflation would only increase the quoted costs.

- (b) I would refer the honourable member to the figure on page 9.11 of the Maunsell/State Energy Commission Report No. RD36, of which a copy is now presented for tabling, showing the effect of various possible financing arrangements. (see paper No. 367).
- (2) "Discounted weighted average costs" are the costs arrived at after consideration of the time value of annual energy production and of money. It uses the principles of discounted cash flow.

If the honourable member would like to inquire further into the details of the tidal power study, I will arrange for him to discuss the matter with appropriate officers of the State Energy Commission.

EDUCATION: TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Perth

370. The Hon. R. HETHERINGTON, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Education:

As in the proposed new Perth Technical College now being built, provision is made for 44 parking spaces, considerably less than is available to the College at present, will the Minister examine the possibility of allocating adequate parking space in one of the contiguous multi-storey parking stations for the use of the new College when it is occupied?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The whole question of parking for public institutions within the Perth cultural precinct is being considered by an inter-departmental committee, which is examining this and other alternatives, and will receive recommendations in due course.

STATE FINANCE: GENERAL LOAN FUND ESTIMATES

Marine Facilities at Point Samson

371. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Leader of the House:

Alluding to the General Loan Fund Estimates of Expenditure for 1978/79 under the heading "Public Works—Engineering and Associated Works" on page 7—

- (1) What results were achieved from the actual expenditure of \$7 000 on the investigations of marine facilities at Point Samson in 1977/78?
- (2) What work is planned in the expenditure of \$16 000 in the current financial year?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) Soundings and probes were carried out in 1977-78 in the approaches to and in John's Creek to determine rock levels. The results of this work will enable various concepts to be developed for the dredging of John's Creek to take varying draught vessels at varying stages of tide.
- (2) Subject to the acceptance or otherwise of the proposed development at John's Creek, it may be necessary to carry out further survey and ground investigations either in John's Creek or else in other areas

previously nominated in the Point Samson area. An amount of \$16 000 was provided in 1978-79 for carrying out this work.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Alexander Road-Belgravia Street Intersection

372. The Hon. F. E. McKENZIE, to the Minister for Lands representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the Main Roads Department recently given consideration to providing traffic lights at the intersection of Belgravia Street and Alexander Road, Belmont?
- (2) Has the Belmont Shire Council been contacted regarding the matter?
- (3) If so, what has been its attitude towards the provision of traffic lights at this intersection?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Council requested deferment of the installation since the site will be affected by council roadworks proposed for the area.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, FISHERIES, AND MINING

Sam's Creek

373. The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) In general planning terms, is the area between the Cape Lambert lease of Cliffs Robe River Iron Associates and Point Samson townsite, embracing Sam's Creek, still reserved for possible future industrial development?
- (2) In view of the purchase by Dampier Mining Co. Ltd. of a half interest in railway and port facilities operated by Cliffs—
 - (a) has the Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd. relinquished its option over this future industrial site;
 - (b) if not, when will the option expire; or
 - (c) will the Government seek to terminate such option?
- (3) Has the early planning concept, dating from the Maunsell Report of 1971, for the use of the site for industry, and the

option held by BHP, been the principal reason why Sam's Creek has, apparently, not been considered as a permanent base to serve the Nickol Bay prawn fishery and other local fishing activity?

- (4) Will the Government urgently reappraise the planning premise which, apparently, has resulted in Sam's Creek not being considered?
- (5) As all local professional fishing opinion points to Sam's Creek as being the logical place to develop—irrespective of possible future decisions on adjacent industry—and condemns such alternatives as John's Creek, will the Government direct the appointed interdepartmental committee to focus its investigations on this location?
- (6) In considering the needs of the fishing industry, will the investigating committee give due regard to the joint-use of the small boat facility by the iron ore industry which has an urgent need for permanent moorings in a tug basin giving reasonable immunity from the effects of cyclones?

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) No.
(b) 31st December, 1978.
(c) No decision has been made.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The Government is still of the view that the area between the Cliffs lease area and the Point Samson townsite should be reserved for industry.
- (5) I will call for further advice on the matter of siting of a fishing industry lease.
- (6) As far as practicable, yes.

374. *This question was postponed.*

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

"HANSARD"

Delay in Production

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House:

Has the Leader of the House made any direct inquiries of the Government Printer in respect of the delays, and has he any information further to that which

he supplied yesterday? I notice that the *Minutes of the Proceedings* for yesterday are not available in the House yet.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

I did not make further inquiries. I am aware that the Government Printer is assiduous in his desire to satisfy the needs of Parliament House, and to my

knowledge every time a delay has occurred there have been sound reasons for it. Quite frankly, I did not bother because I am aware the printer is very much concerned with the needs of Parliament House. Nevertheless, I will inquire as soon as possible from the Clerk of the Parliaments the reason for the delay, and inform the House.

