

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 18th August, 1977

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

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

SECURITIES INDUSTRY (RELEASE OF SURETIES) BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [2.49 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Securities Industry Act 1970, was repealed on the 1st March last year and replaced by the Securities Industry Act, 1975.

Under section 18 of the repealed Act, the Registrar of Companies, as he was then called, was prohibited from granting or renewing a dealer's licence unless the applicant furnished a bond in favour of Her Majesty the Queen for an amount of \$10 000.

The registrar is now, of course, the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs. Such bonds were required to be entered into by "approved sureties," such as an insurance company.

Before the old Act was repealed, the practice arose of some bondsmen or "sureties" refusing to act as such, or to execute the required bond, unless assets were deposited by the dealer concerned with the surety, sufficient to cover any liability that the surety might be called upon to meet under the bond.

Generally speaking, any stipulation made by a surety for the lodgement of assets in this fashion was met by the dealer concerned depositing with the surety the sum of \$10 000 in cash.

In some instances, in other States, the assets lodged were shares or debentures having a value in excess of \$10 000. However, it is not known whether assets other than cash were so deposited in this State.

In this State, the existence of this practice did not come to the Government's attention until after the repeal of the old Act. Because of this, and because neither the repealed Act nor the transitional provisions of the present Act contained any provision for the return of money or other assets so deposited, the legislation contains no provision under which a dealer who is no longer required to hold such a bond — or a

person who was formerly licensed as a dealer but is no longer so licensed — can obtain from the surety concerned the return of such moneys or other assets.

The purpose of the Bill now before the House is to rectify this situation by —

Providing for such sureties to advertise all claims, at the request of the dealer or former dealer concerned;

by providing for the discharge of the bond and the release of the surety if no claims are received within a period specified in such advertisement; and

by requiring the surety to return to the licensee or former licensee concerned any assets lodged by him with the surety, once the surety is released from further liability in respect of a bond.

The Bill now before the House defines certain terms used elsewhere in the Bill.

A "dealer" is defined as a person or body corporate licensed under the repealed Act.

A "surety" is defined as an insurance company or other person or body corporate approved as a surety for the purposes of section 18 of the repealed Act — which is the section under which such bonds were furnished.

Provision is also made for a surety, at his own option, or requires him, if the dealer concerned requests him to do so, to take certain steps to advertise for claims and apply for discharge of the bond.

It empowers or requires the surety to advertise for claims in the manner prescribed under the Bill and for the surety to apply to the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs for the discharge of the bond in question, on the expiry of a period of notice to be specified in any such advertisement.

In addition there is authority or requirement for the surety to return to the dealer concerned the whole of the moneys or other assets which have been deposited with or which are held by the surety to cover any potential liability he may have under the bond in question, or such proportion of such moneys or assets as the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs may direct if the bond is being only partially discharged.

The form of the advertisement is set out in a schedule to the Bill, or in such other form as the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs may have authorised and also requires the advertisement to be published in the public notices column of a newspaper circulating generally in the State.

There will be a requirement that the advertisement gives not less than three months

nor more than six months' notice calling for claims to be made under the Bill.

Upon the expiry of the period of notice required, the surety or the dealer concerned may apply for the discharge of the bond and the release of the surety.

The Bill only covers the situation where no claims are made in response to any such advertisement, and empowers the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs on being satisfied that no such claims have been received and that there are no outstanding liabilities of the dealer in respect of the business to which the bond relates to discharge the bond and release the surety.

Provision is made for cases in which claims are made and contains provisions for the partial discharge of the bond and partial release of the surety.

If the claims received give rise to a liability less than the amount of cash or other assets deposited by the dealer with the surety, then the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs may give directions as to the manner in which the bond is to be dealt with.

The directions concerned may include directions as to a variation of the bond; the return of the whole or any part of the moneys or other assets held by the surety in respect of the bond; the reference of matters in dispute to any court or to arbitration; or may include directions for the complete or partial release of the surety.

It is proposed that where a bond is discharged wholly or in part by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs under the provisions of the Bill, the surety is protected from any further obligations under the bond insofar as the bond has been discharged and requiring the surety to deliver up, refund or otherwise return to the dealer in question either the whole of the moneys or assets deposited by the dealer with the surety, in the case of a total discharge or, in the case of a partial discharge, such proportion of such moneys or assets as the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs directs.

The Bill includes protection of the rights of any claimant against the dealer personally and prevents the discharge of the bond or the release of the surety from prejudicing any such claimant's rights against the dealer.

This provision is necessary to protect the rights of any such claimant, against the dealer personally, where the claimant is not aware of the publication of the required advertisement.

In view of the lapse of time since the old Act was repealed and the fact that no complaints have

been received by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs in respect of dealers formerly licensed under the repealed Act, to the effect that a client is unable to obtain payment from a dealer of moneys due to him, it is unlikely that any member of the public will be prejudiced by the effect of the Bill.

The Bill in any event preserves the rights of any such person to claim such moneys from the dealer himself and further protects any such claimant by the required period of advertisement.

However, in the absence of any such release or discharge, some sureties have been reluctant to return to the dealer concerned moneys or other assets deposited with them at the time when the bond was first issued.

The regulations under the present Act do make provision for the return of a bond, after the expiration of three months from the date upon which the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs receives notice from the licensee concerned that he has ceased to carry on the relevant business, if the commissioner is satisfied that there are no outstanding liabilities owed by the licensee.

In so far as any bonds granted under the present Act are concerned the matter is therefore amply covered by the present Act and the regulations thereunder.

I commend the Bill to members.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SIXTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 17th August, on the following motion by the Hon. R. G. Pike—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [2.57 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion before the House. In doing so, Mr President, I wish sincerely to congratulate you on your elevation to your high office. It is good to see you up there. I do not know how you are going to

withstand the pressures of sitting on your own for so long, and not being able to interject on members. Possibly, this will be my first speech in the past 12 years during which you will not interject on me.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do not count on it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: As a matter of fact, on one occasion a devout member of my party, who happens to be a safety officer and an avid reader of *Hansard*, drew to my attention a speech I had made. He even went to the trouble of counting the number of lines my speech occupied in *Hansard* and compared it with the number of lines of interjections by you, Sir. You may be interested to learn that your interjections occupied exactly 10 per cent of my speech.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You always did need some help.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: You will be in trouble now.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, I will not be in trouble; very seldom do I get called to order. We all know the rules of the House. I believe that, in the proper hands, the rules and decorum of the House will be kept as they have been in the past. I appeal to all members to observe the rules of the House and comply with them at all times.

It is sad that over the last few years a change of character has occurred in the Chamber. One member, when he first came here, used to roar so loudly that I am sure the bulls at Boyup Brook could hear him! That is not good. We do not have to yell, roar, or scream, or be arrogant in order to get our point across. It is sufficient that we make our speeches calmly and reasonably because in this way we are better accepted and better understood, and we get our points across much better.

I congratulate the Hon. Graham MacKinnon on his becoming the Leader of the House. In my opinion he should have held this position three years ago and I conveyed that contention to him then. I feel he is now in his right and proper place as Leader of the House, because he has been a member and a Minister of great capacity, and in most cases—not all cases—he has been a fair Minister.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Thank you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: We do not always agree. We have crossed swords on many occasions; but this is a point I wish to emphasise to new members: Never on any occasion after an argument—and sometimes they have been vicious—have we walked out of the Chamber as bad friends.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Will you allow me to put on record the very great help you were to me in altering the fishing laws to the benefit of the fishing industry?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is what Parliament is all about—helping one another. We are here to do a job. If any new member comes into the Chamber, whatever be his political ideology, and thinks he will alter the character or structure of the Chamber, effect changes to the law, or become a master in a very short time, he is fooling only one person—that is, himself. Incidentally, later on today I will point out some anomalies in respect of the law.

Congratulations to the Hon. David Wordsworth. I feel that the experience he will have as Minister will be of great benefit to him and we will not have to listen so much to what goes on in Esperance. I am sure he will carry out his duties most effectively.

It is good to see that the Liberal Party has elected a migrant as the shop steward in this Chamber!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We have been waiting for that one.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is good to realise that this has been acknowledged. I will have to write to Mr Sinclair pointing out that the Liberal Party has seen fit to do this, because that is exactly what the Whip of the Chamber is—he is the shop steward. I congratulate the Hon. Gordon Masters and trust he will enjoy his job and that he will receive the co-operation which has been forthcoming from this side of the House in previous years.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: He does not call us out on strike. He urges us to keep working.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I congratulate the new members on their election. They will find as they proceed that it is not always their own party members who give them the advice they seek. In this respect when I entered the Chamber, I found the situation extremely difficult. I sat next to a Liberal member on one side and a Country Party member on the other, and the advice offered to me by the Labor members in the House was nil. The only attention I received from them was a scolding if I did something wrong; but they did not ever tell me how to do something right. It was the Liberal Party and Country Party members who assisted me greatly, and I acknowledge that. I have tried to reciprocate and will continue to assist any new members who need advice, and the advice will not be given with any idea of trapping them, or anything like that. One does not always get the advice one desires from the person asked,

and so it is a good idea for members to feel free to consult members of any party and I am sure the advice that will be given will be of benefit to them.

I pay my deepest respects to Mrs Heitman on the sad passing of her husband. I had a fair amount to do with the late Jack Heitman and I echo the sentiments of other members because everything they said about him was true. He was a generous man and took anyone at his word. He went out of his way to assist if it was at all possible. To his wife and family I pass on my condolence.

I wish the retired members well. I know Mr Tom Perry is having some difficulty and I sympathise with him because I have had the same complaint and I know it is very painful. Actually I have recovered from mine for the time being.

The Governor's Speech does not always contain the legislation which comes before the Chamber. As a matter of fact on this occasion the Governor's Speech was lacking a great deal in respect of the legislation we should expect following an election. However, it was refreshing to note that Mr Whitlam's name was not mentioned on 13 occasions. It was only two years ago that in 11 different paragraphs in the Governor's Speech reference was made to Mr Whitlam on 13 occasions, and in the preparation of that Speech the Liberal Party conveyed no goodwill towards the then Commonwealth Government which set great patterns in Australia, patterns which are still being followed by the present Government even, in some respects in the current Budget delivered only two days ago.

One observation I would like to make about the Budget is that it will be costly for Western Australia. The manner in which the flat-rate tax scale has been introduced leaves the way open for legislation which will be introduced in this Chamber shortly; namely, legislation to empower the States to impose taxation. I believe that a ploy is being submitted to the people of Australia when they are told there is a reduction in the actual rate of tax. That reduction does not come into operation until the 1st February. Although I am not supposed to refer to such matters in this Chamber, it would be safe for me to say that from the 1st July of next year State income tax provisions will be applied in Western Australia.

Another matter with which I will deal more fully in a moment concerns a very serious and retrograde step which has been taken in the Budget. I am referring to unemployment benefits and the fact that the unfortunate recipients will now be paid two weeks in arrears. Members may

not realise that this will throw a burden on the Community Welfare Department.

The Community Welfare Act, which was introduced during the time of the Tonkin Labor Government, deals mainly with people who are called "disadvantaged people"; there is no mention of colour or creed. Of course, if a person is out of work and has no money, he is disadvantaged. Therefore, it is his right to go to the Department for Community Welfare and claim relief. This is what is going to happen. It will happen all the time. This money will not be reimbursed by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is saying that it will beat what it commonly termed "dole bludgers". I do not agree with that definition because I think these people are the unfortunate ones in our community. The burden will be thrown back on the State, so I do not believe we should be overpleased with the latest Budget.

The Department for Community Welfare was set up in 1972 and within two years it was acknowledged throughout the Commonwealth that this State had the best legislation and we had the most efficient organisation in Australia. It was generally accepted by representatives at ministerial conferences, social workers' conferences, and in the universities that this was the best and most adaptable legislation in Australia. It needed hard work to achieve this. I pay due credit to the Director of Community Welfare (Mr Keith Maine) for his untiring efforts and work in building up this organisation in the two years I was associated with him as Minister for Community Welfare. When I left that portfolio the department strength was 1 182.

The Department for Community Welfare deals with all aspects of community welfare including child welfare, the Adoption of Children Act, child care, and Aborigines; it covers all aspects contained in the legislation.

I have been churning over in my mind for several weeks on how to attack the problem that I intend to speak about. The Department for Community Welfare currently has 40 unfilled vacancies in the social welfare field, as a result of the policies of this present Government. This is absolutely disastrous. The case load is three to four times the international standard laid down for social workers. The standard recognised is 15 to 20 cases per social worker. The Court Government has seen fit to refuse to replace social workers who resign.

Various social welfare officers in my electorate have informed me of the amount of work that is expected of them. I know the problems that these

social workers face. I know the problems that the department faces because no social worker can handle the case load of between 60 and 80 people at one time. What is the result of this? This is absolutely criminal. They see wards of the State very rarely, if ever, visited; people who are placed by the courts in the care of the Department for Community Welfare are not being visited and, in many cases, these people reappear before the courts on other charges. They have had no contact with social workers from the department under whose care and control they have been placed; children who are in foster homes are not visited because the department does not have enough staff to visit them. All these things are not just in the regulations; they are covered by the Statute. It is laid down that these things must be carried out at particular intervals. However, approximately 50 of the last group of graduates from the Institute of Technology and the University of Western Australia could not obtain employment. Many of these graduates left the State and some travelled overseas.

The Government is not humane. It is all very well to state in the newspaper, "We are an efficient Cabinet and Government because we came up with a surplus of \$3 million at the end of the last financial year." However, the Department for Community Welfare is being run down to the lowest level and there will be more resignations resulting from the heavy case load that the social workers are expected to carry. I can see the time—I hope it does not arrive but inevitably these things happen—when there will be a death or an accident and the axe will fall on the Department for Community Welfare. The Press will be screaming about it. The Press will be asking, "Why is not the department doing its job? When were these young people last supervised?" The public, as well as the Press, will want to know this. Now is the time to remedy the situation before there are any accidents or fatalities, or a further breakdown in community standards.

The Government's policy on community welfare is a disgrace. It is as bad as withdrawing nurses from hospitals, or prison officers from gaols. That is what the Government's policy amounts to, for the simple reason that people of tender age are involved—people who, if they do not receive guidance, understanding, and counselling in their formative years will inevitably finish up before the law courts.

The courts, and the Children's Court in particular, are currently turned into a mockery by the present Government, because they are placing hundreds of young people under the care and control of the Director of Community Welfare

each year. The department has no hope or chance of carrying out its duties despite its great desire to do so. It does not have the manpower to perform the necessary duties.

I say, without fear of contradiction, that if 120 people were employed by the Department for Community Welfare tomorrow, it would take until after next Christmas or beyond to catch up with the backlog of essential work that has to be performed by this department. It is a reflection upon the Government that this state of affairs exists.

I could have brought this matter to the attention of members by means of an amendment to the Address-in-Reply, virtually censuring the Government for its lack of action. However, I chose to take the present course so that Government members will have time to approach the Minister and the Premier to find out whether or not I am telling the truth.

I realise that I would have got nowhere with an amendment to the Address-in-Reply, because Government members would have voted against it. I would have been told that I was exaggerating and that my complaints were a lot of poppycock. Of course, the vote would go against my amendment, the Government would remain smug in the belief that it had beaten the Labor Party, and that was all it had to do. Of course, the deterioration within the department would continue.

I am asking members to attend their party meetings and to investigate this matter. If some action is not taken very shortly, I will move a motion in this House. I would like the Press to investigate the department to find out whether my statements are correct, and to ascertain the true situation. I would like inquiries to be made at district offices and for the books of these offices to be examined. Then, because of public concern expressed through the Press, pressure could be brought to bear on the Government. That is virtually the extent of the work of a Labor Party member of this Chamber because unfortunately, if an Opposition member knows something stinks and something is wrong, any motion he moves to correct the situation will be defeated.

The situation as I have described it shows a callous disregard not only for the law of the land, but also for the young people in our community who are not supervised in the way they should be.

We must make an attempt to find out why the laws of the land are being broken every day in this State. All the Government is worrying about is that there are not enough policemen to cover the areas. In this situation I believe the use of

policemen should be a last resort. The most urgent need is for a back-up facility where the staff of the departments work in conjunction with the schools and other organisations. Hopefully a back-up facility would help to keep the young people out of the courts, because a court appearance leaves some sort of a stigma. Certainly remedial treatment is far better than a conviction.

The Government must come to grips with the problem. Last Friday the Hon. Don Taylor and I led a deputation to the Minister for Police. We presented an excellent submission which had been drawn up by the Cockburn Town Council. Back in February of this year the council called a public meeting to which it invited representatives of many local authorities, as well as members of Parliament representing metropolitan electorates. As a result of this meeting a submission was prepared.

Three members of Parliament attended that meeting—the Hon. Grace Vaughan, the Hon. Don Taylor, and me. As a result of that meeting 138 local government authorities were canvassed in relation to a resolution and the minutes of the meeting. I do not have the resolution with me, but it asked for the setting up of an expert committee to inquire into law and order in Western Australia because of the prevalence of vandalism and crime generally.

Of the 138 councils that were contacted, 69 replied giving full support to the setting up of such an expert committee. Another 15 replied giving some sort of qualified support. I believe two local authorities said they were not interested or would not take part in such an inquiry, and the remainder did not reply. However, well over half the local authorities of Western Australia obviously decided that something would have to be done.

Further to the report handed to the Minister for Police, many other suggestions were made. Some of these suggestions were the result of my study tour overseas last year, with particular reference to my observations in Norway and England. I do not feel I should go into any further details as the Minister for Police and the Department for Community Welfare have all the reports. I do not have them in front of me, but I hope the Minister will see fit to appoint some sort of an expert committee to operate in conjunction with local authorities. Perhaps such a committee could issue some guidelines for local authorities, the police, and the community, in respect of law and order in Western Australia. Just by appointing another 100 policemen, we will not create law and order. As a matter of fact, such a

step could act against us rather than to our advantage. When the Minister responds to the Address-in-Reply I hope that he will give me some answers in relation to the matters I have raised.

I now move to another subject; that is, the Local Government Act of Western Australia. We all know that there are good laws and there are bad laws. However, since 1967 the Government's attention has been drawn to certain bad laws incorporated in this Act, but nothing has been done about them. I am referring to those sections of the Local Government Act which cover the election of councillors to municipalities.

On the 28th May of this year, local government elections were held throughout Western Australia. The only dissension that occurred as a result of this election was in one ward in Fremantle where a sitting councillor won his seat by 27 votes. On this occasion the result was queried, not by the candidate who won the election, and not by the person opposing him at the election, but by six interested people. Such action is covered by the provision in section 137 of the Local Government Act.

Without quoting the exact wording of the section, it provides that if a candidate or six interested people object to the manner in which an election is held, the matter can be referred to a magistrate for the district who can call a hearing of the complaint at a date to be fixed. Then the magistrate may declare either the winner of the election, or he may declare the whole election null and void. Of course his decision is final.

I wish the Hon. I. G. Medcalf were in the Chamber at the present time, because he and I have always agreed on one point in regard to legal matters; that is, no magistrate's decision should be final. A magistrate's decision should always be open to appeal. Therefore, I hope the Leader of the House will convey my views on this matter to the Hon. I. G. Medcalf to investigate the possibility of the inclusion of an appeal provision in section 137 of the Act.

I turn now to section 45 of the Act which lays down those people who are entitled to have their names placed on the electoral roll. This section is sadly lacking inasmuch as it contains some words that are no longer operative, to my way of thinking. The side note is "Eligibility for registration as an elector", and it states—

- (1) A person is eligible to be registered in the electoral roll of a municipality as an elector of the municipality, if—
 - (a) he has attained the age of twenty-one years;

- (b) he is a natural-born or naturalised British subject;

These words should be changed completely or even struck out. What is a British subject now? We have an Australian Citizens Act and people who take out Australian citizenship are no longer British subjects.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you sure that was not taken care of?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have a fully amended copy of the Act.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, but is it not in the definitions under the provisions of the Interpretation Act? I thought it had been changed so that if one is a British subject one is also an Australian citizen.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I cannot recall that, but I shall reach this point in a moment. The Town Clerk of Fremantle was summonsed to appear before this court of disputed returns. Councillor Minervini on whose side I was in this argument, sought the opinion of Mr Kennedy, QC. I think Mr Kennedy would have drawn this to the councillor's attention so I do not think it has been changed.

I think it is abhorrent that owners of land in Western Australia are denied a vote because they are not citizens. Over the years that I have been a member of this Chamber I have made applications to the Department of Immigration for citizenship on behalf of people, and I have seen many of these people still not being naturalised and not having citizenship granted to them. The department does not give a reason. If the department does not like the look of a person for some reason or other—perhaps something that happened in the person's old country prior to coming to this country—it can refuse to make that person a British subject, as it was in those days. Naturalisation was not forthcoming just because a person filled in an application form. Therefore, that is one section of the Act which should be amended or struck out.

Section 109 of the Act deals with the duties of a presiding officer on an election day. The section states—

109. (1) A person who attends a polling place to vote in person, shall present himself to the presiding officer or, if he is temporarily absent, to the substitute for the presiding officer.

Issue of
ballot papers
for voting
in person.

(2) The presiding officer or his substitute may, but if required to do so by a candidate or his scrutineer shall, ask the person all or any of the following questions:—

- (a) What is your name and address?
- (b) Are you the person whose name appears as (here state the name) in the electoral roll for the (here state the name of the district or ward as the case requires)?
- (c) Have you attained the age of twenty-one years?
- (d) Are you a natural-born or naturalised British subject?
- (e) Have you already voted at the present election?

If the person does not answer the questions he does not get a vote.

Let us consider how the electoral roll for a municipality is drawn up. It is drawn up containing the names of those people who apply because they are occupiers of premises, are owners or joint owners, or are company nominees. The names of such persons automatically appear on all rolls as being the occupier, the owner, the lessee, or whatever the case may be. All it needs is the signature of the shire president, the town clerk, or the mayor; and it becomes an electoral roll. But there is no provision anywhere in the Act for determining whether a person is naturalised or not naturalised. How can any local authority determine who is naturalised or not naturalised? How can any presiding officer who is appointed to act on that one day once every year know whether a person is naturalised or not naturalised when he comes to vote? If he is not requested by a candidate to ask these questions he need not ask them. The Act says that he may do so if he desires, but shall do so only if requested. This leaves the shires, particularly the presiding officers who are the people charged with controlling elections on these days, in a very bad position.

I have mentioned the south ward of the Fremantle City Council. These six people were gathered up by an enthusiast in Fremantle and they signed their names to a petition for the complaint to go before the magistrate. The enthusiast did not sign his own name to it but he got one woman over the age of 70 to sign. Of course, the summonses were issued, the people engaged a firm of solicitors, and the complaint took the form that two of the 144 people were believed to have voted twice, and the remainder

were believed not to be British subjects. The 144 names appeared on the extract of the roll that this person supplied to his solicitors and it is very interesting to read a portion of the letter which the solicitor sent to each of these 144 people. The third paragraph reads—

Although your name appears on the municipal electoral roll, it is not on the Federal roll for the district. Only British subjects can appear on the Federal roll, and therefore it appears that you may not have been entitled to vote in the municipal elections.

Of course if one were to check this matter out completely one would find that one's name does not have to appear on the Federal or State rolls for the district; it can be on any roll in Australia. In addition, one does not necessarily have to live in Australia because the information we have received shows that if Idi Amin owned land in Western Australia he would be entitled to vote at a local government election. Also, if our visitors from Sabah who were here yesterday owned land in Western Australia—and they do own land in the Northern Territory—they would be entitled to vote and would be classified as British subjects.

Therefore, I think the present situation places a great burden on local authorities and the presiding officers. We are confusing the ratepayers, and the Government should do one of two things. In my view any person whose name appears on the Legislative Assembly roll for an area should be given a vote at municipal elections.

If the Government is not prepared to go that far it should at least remove the complete qualification and allow any person living in an area, whether he is the occupier of a house or a landowner, irrespective of whether or not he is naturalised, to exercise his right to vote. There should be no taxation without representation. That is supposed to be a basic fundamental of English law, but we do not see that applied in this State.

Of the 144 letters this firm of solicitors sent out 48 people contacted either myself or councillor Minervini and most of them had been naturalised for close on 25 years. Yet because their names did not appear on the roll the firm of solicitors had the temerity to threaten them with summonses to appear before the court.

Fortunately we were able to point out to some of the people involved that if the case proceeded the costs would run into many thousands of dollars and the six people who had signed the complaints would probably have to bear those costs. That sent them all running for cover. Four

of the complainants left that firm of solicitors and engaged another firm; and that set the wheels in motion to have the case withdrawn. This course was agreed to by the magistrate.

As the costs to councillor Minervini had been properly arranged with the firm of solicitors which undertook the withdrawal of the case, he suffered no financial loss but only worry and trouble. For at least 20 minutes the proceedings before the magistrate became merely a discussion between the solicitors and the magistrate. However, the city manager, who happened to be the presiding officer that day and had been summoned to appear in court, was ruled by the magistrate to be ineligible to receive costs.

This is another aspect where this law is wrong and the Act should be looked at closely and rewritten. I know the Leader of the House is not paying great attention to what I am saying.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am listening to every word. There are two *Hansard* reporters present to record that fact and I assure the honourable member the matter will be referred to the department.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I trust it will be referred not to the department but to the Minister (the Hon. Ian Medcalf) who is in charge of these matters and for whom I have the greatest regard. I think it is necessary to clear this up, and to remove the ambiguity and errant features, which at present allow a person who has been residing in this country for many years to be asked to cast a vote and then to be humiliated when he is told he is not entitled to a vote when he arrives at the voting booth. The people who canvass the electorate and knock on doors do not know who are naturalised, or who are entitled to two or four votes as the case may be.

The present situation is wrong. We should clear the matter up and amend the Act so that those involved in local authorities are given a higher standing in the community. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.01 p.m.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [4.01 p.m.]: I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, and in so doing I will exercise the privilege which is traditional in this Parliament to talk on a number of issues during the debate.

My main thrust will be on what I term to be the dilemma of land use, particularly in the south-west of this State. However, there are one or two other matters I would like to touch on before I develop that theme.

Prior to the last general State election a number of individuals were concerned with the representation of the South-West Province, and considered that one of the members should be replaced. I received a resounding vote of confidence at the poll, I am pleased to say, and I believe it effectively answered those critics who were dissatisfied. I thank the people of the South-West Province for their tremendous support, and I look forward to continuing as a representative on their behalf. It is indeed a privilege to represent the people of the South-West Province. I also received colossal support from very many people throughout the State, and their support was most encouraging.

A recent development introduced by the State Government, and which I highly commend, is the establishment of regional administrators in various parts of the State. I particularly refer to the South-West Regional Administrator, Mr Peter Beeson. He has occupied the position for only a matter of a few months, but I want to have it recorded that in my view he is doing an excellent job in co-ordinating many activities in the south-west region. He is a man of wide experience in the Public Service. He is very capable and has been very energetic since he occupied his present position. He has thrown himself into as many issues and matters of public interest throughout the south-west as time allowed him. Indeed, I believe he is working himself too hard and perhaps he will need to rationalise some of his activities.

It is to the credit of Mr Beeson that he is taking this very confident stand. I am sure the region will profit from his activities. Not only is he co-ordinating the Government departments and agencies throughout the south-west region, but despite the fact that he is based in Bunbury he travels extensively to centres throughout the area generally. He takes a lively interest in all kinds of development—as one would hope—and a number of people in private business, and other individuals, have expressed their appreciation of his kind assistance and the time and trouble he takes to help them in their undertakings in the region.

I will touch briefly on the matter of Government hospitals, and I particularly refer to the very good progress being made in the construction of the new hospital at Busselton. This is a multi-million dollar complex and I believe it will be completed at the end of this year or early next year. I commend the builder and the workers who have undertaken the project. They have made excellent progress and it is to their

credit that the building is proceeding almost according to schedule.

The Harvey Hospital has been the subject of some fairly recent extensions and improvements, and for that I am very grateful. Together with my parliamentary colleagues representing the area, I made representations to the Government over a period of time for the Harvey Hospital to be upgraded. The improvements have included the replacement of the old ward accommodation and other substandard facilities. Included in the work is an up-to-date casualty station, a new out-patient treatment centre, a new minor operating theatre, and other facilities. The cost of the improvements is something in excess of \$700 000. The work already carried out has been completed under what was known as stage 1. Stage 2, for the improvement of the Harvey Hospital, as outlined and agreed to by the Medical Department and the Harvey Hospital Board, comprises accommodation for an additional 14 beds and other facilities at some future time.

I have made representations recently to the Minister for Health on behalf of the Harvey Hospital Board to have stage 2 implemented as soon as possible. I have taken that step because it is recognised there is a very real need to cater for long-term patients in the Harvey Hospital.

It has to be borne in mind that generally the patients who are admitted to the Harvey Hospital are residents of the district. They have generally lived there for a great number of years; and their families and friends, and the whole world about them, are in that district. The Harvey community is very close-knit, and it takes pride in its community and particularly in its hospital.

Because of the lack of facilities to cater for long-term patients it has been necessary for those patients to be transferred to Bunbury or the metropolitan area. Not only is that a little upsetting to the patients and their families and friends in the district, but I suggest it also places extra strain and responsibility on the facilities available at Bunbury and in the metropolitan area. For that reason it is apparent that stage 2 of the improvements to the Harvey Hospital should be implemented as soon as possible.

I fully realise there is a tremendous demand for funds to provide hospitals all over the State. Nevertheless, I believe there is a case for the completion of the Harvey Hospital, particularly in view of the pending establishment of the Alcoa refinery not far from Harvey. Undoubtedly, the construction of the refinery will increase the population of the district considerably.

Touching on another matter of public

importance, I will refer to the Waroona police station. In my view the building is not really up to standard, and has not been up to standard for some time. The building is not suitable for its present use, not only from the point of view of the police who provide a public service from the premises, but also from the point of view of the general public. I have made representations to the Minister for Police and Traffic to have the situation kept under constant review. It has to be borne in mind, again, that the establishment of the Alcoa alumina refinery nearby will have an effect on the requirement for police services in the region.

I will now refer particularly to the projected establishment of the Alcoa alumina refinery near Wagerup, between Waroona and Harvey. Let me say immediately that the project is very welcome in the district indeed, and it is very welcome to the south-west region generally.

A most important change which the establishment of the refinery will bring to the area is the use of land. A number of dairy farms and cattle grazing properties in the area have been purchased by the company, and as a result the dairying content of the particular district will be depleted. That is somewhat of a shame, productive farm land having to be purchased in this way rather than, perhaps, land which has not already been developed to the same extent. I do not deny for one moment the right of the Alcoa company, or anyone else, to purchase freehold land on the open market. That is the right of any person.

A number of property owners in the area, who have negotiated to sell their farming properties to the Alcoa company, have done so willingly and that is their right. In some cases, the landowners will retire while others will go to the Busselton area and establish new dairy farms. However, a number of people may have been prepared to stay in the area and continue in the dairying industry had they not received an offer from the company. But, as I said, it is their choice to accept or reject the offer and their future is still in their own hands.

A considerable area of the land purchased by Alcoa is serviced by irrigation facilities. Of course, irrigation is a special facility and it is not available in every farming community. The benefit of an irrigation system depends on soil type, and certainly on the adequacy and quality of the water supply, and climatic factors. However, again it is a little disappointing, perhaps, that this highly productive agricultural land will be used, in the main, for the establishment of an alumina refinery. The whole of the area will not be used

for refinery purposes; as is the case with the refinery at Pinjarra, there is to be a surrounding buffer zone of farming land at Wagerup owned by the company. Not all of the land occupied by the company will be used for industrial purposes; much of it will be used for farming purposes.

I have no argument with the use of the land for farming, except that it is more likely to be used for beef grazing and not for intensive agriculture and horticulture. It has to be remembered, again, that much of the area includes prime land serviced by irrigation facilities. I have made representations to the company, on behalf of interested people, for the leasing of portions of the land from Alcoa for intensive agriculture and horticulture activities. Whether that plan will come to fruition, I do not know, but negotiations are pending.

The projected establishment of the industrial complex will bring a number of benefits to the surrounding community.

I refer particularly to the neighbouring towns of Waroona, Harvey, and the coastal settlements of Mandurah and, indeed, the Bunbury area. It is commonplace these days for people employed in industrial works to travel some distance to their place of employment. The roads are good, and motorcars are generally reliable; and families are content to live in the town situation rather than live right against the works.

Therefore I see a spread of people being housed in a number of places. For my part I know that most of the towns are ready and the local authorities are ready to receive these people, and as far as possible they will provide sufficient building blocks and other facilities.

One of the greatest problems we have in the south-west region—and it is not uncommon because it has happened all over the world; it has happened in the metropolitan area over a period of time—is that of getting sufficient building blocks onto the market to cater for the need. Along with my colleagues in the south-west region I have been particularly active in this respect. I am grateful for the assistance given to us by the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning (Mr Rushton) for his endeavours in visiting south-west shires and towns, inspecting subdivisions, and talking to private developers and any interested person with a view to bringing onto the market sufficient building lots to service the demand. With the refinery being developed, there will be a greater need to house people in the region.

Coupled with the demand for urban building blocks, there is also a great demand today for

small rural holdings, sometimes referred to as hobby farms. I believe hobby farming has a real place in the community, and I commend the people who wish to live in that way. I see no conflict arising from it. In this day and age the people who buy hobby farms seem to come from all walks of life. Often they are people engaged in some occupation or business; and it is not unusual for them to be two-income families which have the capacity to handle any indebtedness they may incur.

Hobby farmers bring other work to the area in which they establish themselves. I refer particularly to work carried out by contractors. Hobby farmers usually do not spend a lot of money on machinery, and so they rely on local contractors and tradesmen to do much of their work. This brings business to the area.

Also, hobby farmers generally are content to pay a little more for the land because it suits their purpose. When they engage in some activity on the land they are more inclined to take risks, because they are not entirely dependent on the returns they receive from their farms.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I hope you will bring in a "however" in a minute in respect of how they are forcing up land values.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I will turn to that a little later; I said at the commencement of my speech that I would refer to the dilemma of land use.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Thank you.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The south-west region generally has an increasing population for a variety of reasons. It has been pointed out that by the year 2 000 there could well be 250 000 people living in the region. That is not beyond the bounds of reason, because the south-west has many attractive features. Firstly, it has a very attractive climate. The country itself is attractive, particularly in the warmer months, and we have a great migration to the south-west area over at least six months of the year. Further to that, the region is blessed with a long coastline, which nowadays is a great attraction as people wish to live near the ocean. The south-west is a developing industrial region based on Bunbury, and here again one could refer to all sorts of industries.

The timber industry is gradually changing from traditional hardwoods to a very imaginative and vigorous softwood programme. This in itself will bring new sophisticated timber mills to the region, and the activity will require a high labour content. When I refer to a high labour content, I point out that the mills will not be in the traditional style,

but will be mechanised and, as I see it, motor transport will be used largely.

Water resources, of course, are important no matter where we are, and the south-west region is no exception. I am particularly pleased the Government has seen fit to establish the Water Resources Council, which is reviewing the water needs of the whole of the State. I pay tribute here to Mr David Partridge of Brunswick Junction who has been appointed to the council as a representative of the people of the irrigation areas of the south-west.

I turn now to speak about the dilemma of land use. I believe in the south-west this is one of the greatest needs we must face up to. The matter is being faced up to, but there is definitely a conflict. I wish to illustrate it in this way: I have just described to the House what an attractive part of Western Australia the south-west region is, and why people wish to live there for a variety of reasons. The south-west has various industries; I have mentioned timber, which will always be there because we have legislation protecting our forests and encouraging their regeneration. We have the usual farming activities; we have not only dairying, beef, cattle, and horticulture, but also we now have viticulture, which is the production of grapes for wine.

The south-west also has extensive national parks and reserves and this Parliament has passed legislation to improve that situation.

Arising from all those attractive features we have an increase in tourism and recreation. More and more people have leisure time on their hands; therefore, we have to provide for the leisure time needs of people.

The south-west also has mining industries such as coal, mineral sands, bauxite, and others, which all compete for land use. We have secondary industries arising from our primary resources and these, too, compete for land use. There is a growing awareness of the need to maintain and increase our wetlands for the conservation of wildlife. This has some priority, and so it should.

We also have in the south-west long-term land owners who have been there since the first settlement of Western Australia, and they have rights to the use of land. We have people who have taken up land for various reasons since the early days and they, too, have rights.

We are finding there is a change of emphasis as we pass from one era to another—as we pass from the early days of opening up the country to the more modern days. I mention the drainage system of the south-west. It may not be generally realised that in the south-west we have an extensive

drainage system the total length of which is, I think, about 1 500 miles or in excess of 2 200 kilometres. These are all man-made drains. In addition, we utilise the creeks and water courses to drain land as well as to improve the runoff.

All this was designed to bring about change and it has helped not only the rural communities but also it has helped urban development because the drainage has made land suitable for other uses. This has been to the detriment of wetlands and wildlife, and here arises some conflict and dilemma.

Coupled with that, we have over a period of years developed water resources to enable irrigation farming, which revolutionised areas such as Harvey, Waroona, the Collie River area, and the land extending towards Donnybrook. We have constructed in the south-west a number of dams. The first was the Harvey Weir which was completed in 1916, and enlarged in 1931. Then came the Drakesbrook Weir, which was completed in 1931. Then we had the Samson Brook Dam which was completed in 1941, and the Stirling Dam which was completed in 1948. The Glen Mervyn Dam was completed in 1969, and the Wellington Dam, which is the largest of the lot, was completed in 1933 and had its capacity increased in 1960.

That sort of development has created a dilemma in respect of land use. The construction of water resources has changed the capacity of the land to produce various commodities, and this is good.

In respect of the changing use of land, I refer to viticulture—the growing of vines for the production of grapes—and the new wine industry in the Busselton-Margaret River area. In this respect Mr Gayfer referred to the problem of land values. However, it is fine to have a wine industry flourishing in this region, even though it is in a very early stage. In spite of that, the quality of the wine produced is extremely high, and because of that so are the land values. The value of land which hitherto was used for agricultural purposes in the Busselton-Margaret River area has increased by hundreds of dollars in a short time, and there is a conflict in that respect.

I believe this land has excellent prospects of becoming one of the world's best wine-producing areas. I do not think the area will produce great quantities of wine; in fact I hope it does not for the reason that it is far better in my view that the production be limited and be secure in the knowledge that the quality is first-class and therefore the product commands a good

reputation. I believe that is the way the industry will develop.

Again I refer to hobby farmers, who have tended to increase the value of properties. By comparison, the older established properties engaged in what one could refer to as the more traditional types of agriculture are relatively disadvantaged as a result of the rating system. This is a worrying situation. Many of the older properties have difficulty in maintaining their viability for various reasons, not the least of which are varying seasonal conditions which no-one can control. This factor has markedly affected the south-west over the last 12 months.

All the factors I have mentioned—apart from marketing factors—affect land values as a result of the demand or lack of demand for various types of land.

When speaking of the dilemma of land use, I am mindful of private owners who in some cases have farmed properties for generations and have used the land in a most responsible way. That is their right, and I hope it will continue to be their right. However, I do experience very real concern that, because of pressures in respect of land usage, people who have made these areas their homes and have used them as the means of their livelihood for many years may be unfairly leaned upon by various authorities and agencies. I am referring to pressure in respect of the usage of land for parks and reserves, the preservation of the coastal strip, the provision of adequate wetlands for wildlife, the provision of recreational areas, and that sort of thing. I think this is a rather sad state of affairs, although I recognise—as I said earlier—we need to cater for the interests of all people. I have the highest regard for the right of people who own their own property to go about their lawful business with a minimum of interference from anyone.

I am concerned there may come a time when, be it by the Government or a collection of people, it is considered there should be an overview of land use in the south-west. I think it is right and proper that studies and surveys should be carried out by appropriate agencies to determine the land capacity in this area. However, in so doing we must be extremely vigilant to ensure that individuals do not get crushed and pushed aside on the way through. This is a great dilemma. Should we in fact have a master plan for the entire south-west region and allocate areas of land to certain categories? I believe it is far more practical to have an overview, which takes cognisance of what is reasonable and practical not only in the short term but also in the long term. I think the only sensible way to tackle the dilemma

of the south-west is to have continuing reviews as an overall view. However, any change must be acceptable, particularly to the people living in those areas, and it must be on what I would describe as a chip by chip basis.

I commend anyone who has anything to do with the south-west to interest himself in the problem of land use, no matter whether his interests are recreation, industry, residential, or whatever. In so doing, when decisions are made, more and more people are better informed and hopefully, better able to make sound judgments as to whichever course is adopted.

In conclusion, I return to the principal point of my remarks, and make a plea that people in these areas are not pushed aside for the sake of creating something in theory which does not really have a practical application. I support the motion.

THE HON. R. T. LEESON (South-East) [4.33 p.m.]: Firstly, Mr President, I take the opportunity of congratulating you on attaining your high office. If we see a glimpse or two of your old self in your new position, I am sure we will be in for an entertaining session.

I also congratulate all re-elected members, and those who have been newly elected, and I extend congratulations to those members who have been elevated to higher positions within this House.

Traditionally, the Address-in-Reply debate is a vehicle by which members raise matters pertaining to their electorates. I represent South-East Province, and I can assure members that I have quite a number of problems. However, I wish to raise only a couple of points at this time.

The first matter relates to water supplies in country areas. Recently we had a problem relating to domestic water supplies in the farming area of Salmon Gums, which is to the south of South-East Province. Those members who represent country electorates, particularly farming areas, will understand the position into which some people get in regard to watering their animals. However, on this occasion we were not faced so much with a shortage of water for stock but rather a shortage of domestic water in an area which unfortunately is very susceptible to rains. The position became fairly drastic. The Salmon Gums town water supply was cut off to the farming community and was to be used only for the small township of Salmon Gums. The farmers had to make do with what little water they had on their properties.

Of course, this water was drying up rapidly and a dozen or more farming families were completely out of domestic water. I contacted the Minister for Water Supplies, who informed me there was

little, if anything, he could do because there were some anomalies in some of the Statutes of Western Australia which I believe applied in this case. If water for stock is in critically short supply during a time of drought, an area may be declared drought affected and the Government acts to make sure that stock water is carted to the area. However, the anomaly is that there is no provision in the relevant Act to cart domestic water. While the legislation acknowledges the poor old sheep must have a drink, it does not make the same concession to the humans in the area. I think it is imperative that water be carted to the area.

While there is an hotel in Salmon Gums, not everybody drinks beer; horrible though it may be, some people occasionally revert to water. These people have been on very short rations of only a few gallons per head per day for some 12 months prior to the shortage becoming critical. It was rumoured in Salmon Gums at the time the domestic water was cut off to the farming community that some farmers actually were coming into the town late at night, when very few people were around, and removing water from the town supply.

I believe we should have a good look at our legislation in the light of the position which has been created at Salmon Gums. I certainly hope this does not occur in other areas of the State, although in this day and age it is possible that it may occur elsewhere. We should introduce legislation under which we are empowered to act more quickly to relieve critical water shortages.

It was fortunate that, after possibly a dozen trunk calls, I was able to get onto a couple of Ministers and departments to inform them of the situation, and that same afternoon, the Premier came out of a Cabinet meeting at about 6.00 p.m. and said he was prepared to have water carted to the area immediately. He said he would have acted sooner had the situation been drawn to his attention. After talking to several Ministers, I know exactly what the situation would have been had the matter not been raised when it was. I believe we all recognise that in this day and age, such a problem should not have reached the stage it did but should have been alleviated much earlier.

The other issue I wish to raise in this House is a matter which is very important in country areas which are serviced by television. Next month is September, and we will have the finals and grand final of the Western Australian National Football League competition being played at Subiaco oval. At this time every year, I receive requests from all over my electorate to have something done about

direct telecasts to country areas of the finals and the grand final. I have raised this matter on a number of occasions, either by way of questions, or motions such as this. Quite rightly, the Government has told me it has no jurisdiction in this area and that unfortunately it is up to the WANFL to decide whether a direct telecast to the country will take place.

We have just completed direct telecasts of four test cricket matches, involving some 20 days of play—less some time lost because of stopped play—from a country some 12 000 miles away. These matches have been brought direct to our living rooms. We have watched direct telecasts of Wimbledon tennis and all sorts of other sporting functions from around the world. Yet people in our country areas are unable to watch the football grand final being played in the metropolitan area of their own State. I understand some of the problems which are involved, and I have heard the pronouncements of the hierarchy of the WANFL relating to this matter. All I can say is that they are being so shortsighted it is a joke, and it is about time something was done about it.

I am not the only one who takes this attitude and who has raised this matter in Parliament, and I am quite sure I will not be the last. I should like to see the Government legislate to give itself the power to ensure that people in outer country areas have the opportunity of viewing all sports in Western Australia, as they happen. It may not seem a very important issue, but if members visited country areas they would understand what I am talking about. I am quite sure the country members here know exactly the strength of feeling which runs on this matter.

I believe we could be fair to both sides by drawing a boundary, say, some 250 kilometres from Perth. The inner area could be classed as the nonviewing area, and all areas outside the radius of 250 kilometres would receive a direct telecast of important sporting events. The figure of 250 kilometres could be subject to debate. For instance, it would mean that places like Bunbury would fall into the category of a nonviewing area. Quite frankly, I believe that Bunbury is close enough to Perth to enable those residents who wish to view the grand final to drive the 100-odd miles to Perth; that is not a very long way to drive if one really wants to see a particular match.

We must consider the size of Western Australia and the great areas which are now serviced by television. For instance, television transmission now extends north to Carnarvon and Port Hedland. It should be remembered that the distance from Perth to Port Hedland is almost the same as it is from Perth to Adelaide, and for that

reason I cannot for the life of me understand why people in these outlying areas should be denied this opportunity.

The WANFL has always said that if people were able to view the matches direct in Port Hedland, Kalgoorlie, or anywhere else in Western Australia, they would not come down to Perth to see the match. However, I know from personal experience that most people in my electorate who at present come down to Perth to see the match would continue to do so; they spend a weekend away from their homes, and have a holiday. I am sure this would be the case with 90 per cent of those people who would be affected by a direct telecast of the football finals.

However, other people are involved. I refer to the old people, who are unable to travel; people who are in hospitals, or who are disadvantaged in some other way; people who in some way are disadvantaged by transport, and many others. They would like to see the matches, but unfortunately are not able to get to Perth.

I believe the Government should give serious consideration to my suggestion. The WANFL has been particularly narrow-minded about this whole issue and it is high time somebody took the initiative. It is up to people like us to attempt to do something about the situation.

I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. M. McAleer.

DEATH DUTY ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.47 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is of great significance in that it will provide total exemption from death duty for bequests passing to a surviving spouse.

It gives earlier effect to the policy undertaken to "abolish death duty on assets passing from spouse to spouse over two years" and is but the first step towards the total abolition of death duty in Western Australia.

The total abolition of death duty is the second policy undertaken by the Government to progressively abolish all remaining death duties

over the next three Budgets with the aim of not having to impose alternative taxes which could be even more burdensome.

Initially, it was planned to grant the spouse to spouse exemption over the next two Budgets.

However, because of the sound and successful management of the State's finances in 1976-77 and the Budget situation for the current year, the Government is now in a position to pass on the benefits of good management to the public by exempting totally from death duty all those assets passing from spouse to spouse, earlier than promised.

This proposal will apply to the estates of those persons dying on or after the 1st July this year.

The main elements of the Bill are—

- to exempt from duty any assets passing to a widow or widower; and

- to preserve the existing benefits of children and grandchildren who currently enjoy an indirect benefit from the manner in which the present "spouse allowance" is applied when assessing duty.

The present legislation provides for a sum of \$50 000, being the amount of the current "spouse allowance", to be deducted from the final balance where all or part of the estate passes to a surviving spouse and the balance of the estate passes to children or grandchildren.

This decrease in the final balance has a two-fold effect. Firstly, the balance of the estate on which duty is calculated is reduced and, secondly, the decrease in the balance reduces the "rate" of duty that would otherwise be charged on that final balance of the estate.

Therefore, in these cases there is an indirect benefit to children and grandchildren beneficiaries, as the reduction in the final balance by the amount of the existing "spouse allowance" reduces the amount of duty payable by those beneficiaries.

Provision is made in the Bill so that from the 1st July, 1977, an amount of \$50 000 will still be deducted from the final balance of the estate, when part of the estate only passes to a surviving spouse, before the duty is calculated on the assets passing to children or grandchildren.

This provision in the Bill will ensure that a child or grandchild, in these circumstances, will not be disadvantaged by the fact that after the 1st July a surviving spouse will no longer have to pay any death duty.

In other words, a child or grandchild who benefits from an estate will not under this Bill be called upon to pay one cent more duty than he or

she would pay under the current method of assessing duty with a "spouse allowance" provision.

The Bill also covers all those situations where the estate or portion thereof passes to a dependent child or is bequeathed to a surviving spouse who has a dependent child.

In these cases the final balance is further reduced by the appropriate amount of \$10 000 for each dependent child, before assessing any duty payable by the other beneficiaries as defined and to whom the concessional rates prescribed in table 1 of the Death Duty Act apply.

From the foregoing it is clear that no beneficiary will be disadvantaged by the proposals now before members.

Other existing concessions included in the law which also reduce the final balance of an estate before any duty is calculated, being furniture and personal effects allowance and the provision concerning a rebate of duty when two deaths occur within a period of 10 years for closely related parties, are provided for in the amending Bill.

Thus the present practice will continue to apply for the remaining table 1 beneficiaries after the spouse to spouse proposal receives assent and becomes operative.

The costs to revenue of the proposals contained in this Bill are estimated at \$2.5 million in 1977-78 and \$3.9 million per annum when fully operative.

As stated initially, the spouse to spouse exemption is only the first step in the Government's programme to responsibly phase out death duty.

This legislation will implement the first part of the programme.

I commend it to the House.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.52 p.m.]: Mr President, I seek your guidance. The Labor Party has examined very extensively this Bill and the next Bill to be dealt with and we find that we are in complete agreement with them. I understand that the Leader of the House would like to have both Bills on the notice paper for Tuesday. However, if he wishes to proceed today, he may do so.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am quite happy to proceed with them today.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: We are in complete agreement with the principle and details of the Bill. We believe it goes a long way to reducing those burdens placed upon spouses and the other

people mentioned in the Bill, by way of death duties.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It was our policy in the last election.

The Hon. D. K. DAns: It was the policy of both parties in the last election and we would be little better than hypocrites if we did not wish this Bill a speedy passage through the House.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thank Mr Dans

THE HON. H. W. GAYFER (Central) [4.54 p.m.]: We welcome the introduction of this Bill and the amending legislation. Likewise, it is pleasing to note the remarks made by the Leader of the House that this is the first stage of the Government's programme to responsibly phase out death duties completely. I could go on at great length and speak of the present disabilities suffered by bereaved families as a result of death duty assessments. However, at this juncture, seeing that the Opposition as well as the Government is in complete agreement with the Bill, I would like to signify that the National Country Party welcomes the Bill and supports it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thank Mr Gayfer.

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.

DEATH DUTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Leader of the House), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West—Leader of the House) [4.58 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I should explain that when we have an assessment Bill such as the one we have just dealt with, there is usually an accompanying taxing Bill, therefore one is the Death Duty Assessment Act Amendment Bill and the other is the Death Duty Act Amendment Bill itself. It may be wondered

by some members why, when dealing with the one subject, there should be two amendments.

This Bill is consequential to the proposed amendments to the Death Duty Assessment Act and simply provides for deletion of the reference to widow and widower from the class of beneficiaries listed in table 1 of the schedule of duty rates.

Table 1 lists those persons normally referred to as the near relatives of the deceased person, being the widow, widower, children, grandchildren, other issue, or dependent parents.

On and after the 1st July, 1977, bequests to a surviving spouse will be specifically exempted from duty under the provisions in the Death Duty Assessment Act Amendment Bill and, therefore, table 1 rates of duty will no longer need to apply to a widow or widower.

I commend the Bill to the House, along with the previous Bill, and ask that members opposite agree to the second reading. In doing so, Sir, I would like to express my appreciation to the Hon. D. K. Dans, and other members in this House, who have taken an interest in this matter and have availed themselves of the opportunity afforded, by the Bills being introduced into the Assembly, to make sufficient examination of them to ensure that both the Bills are to their satisfaction and can be passed with such alacrity. I am deeply appreciative.

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.

House adjourned at 5.01 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

FIRE BRIGADES

Insurance Cover

76. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What type of insurance is available to cover volunteer firemen when attending to their duties?
- (2) What are the complete details of such insurance cover?

- (3) (a) Is the insurance cover for the volunteer firemen accepted by one company only;
 (b) if not, by how many and what insurance companies?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The following insurance cover is available to volunteer firemen when attending to their duties:
- (i) Employers' Indemnity: Workers' compensation claims and the like.
 - (ii) Multi-risks: Personal clothing and effects.
 - (iii) Personal Accidents: Personal accidents to junior members.
 - (iv) Motor Vehicles: Personal vehicles including motor cycles.
- (2) (i) Employers' Indemnity:
 The following are covered—
- (a) Every volunteer (both active and reserve) or auxiliary fireman.
 - (b) Every member of the Executive of the Western Australian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association.
 - (c) Every official of the Western Australian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association.

These volunteers are covered:

- (a) Whilst attending, proceeding to or returning from a fire or fire call whether on his own initiative or in conjunction with other members of a volunteer brigade.
- (b) Whilst competing in any competition held by or under the auspices of the Western Australian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association, whether in the State of Western Australia or out of the said State.
- (c) Whilst preparing or training for any such competition referred to in (b) above.

The liability of the insurer is, in all cases, limited to the actual average weekly earning of any person insured under this Policy who may be injured, and is subject to the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act 1912 in the State of Western Australia and any amendments thereof.

The Western Australian Fire Brigades Board is indemnified against liability to pay damages including costs and expenses incurred with the written consent of the insurer under the Fatal Accidents Act 1959, the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1941, the Law Reform (Contributory Negligence and Tortfeasors Contribution) Act 1947, and any amendments of such Acts and at common law for personal injury sustained by any person referred to under the circumstances stated.

(ii) Multi-Risks:

The indemnity granted by this Policy is limited to loss of, or damage to, clothing and personal effects, the property of volunteer firemen or persons assisting at fires and only whilst such persons are under the control of a brigade officer.

The indemnity in respect of any one fireman or person is limited to \$150.

(iii) Personal Accident:

This insurance is to provide compensation as shown in the Schedule below for any event described therein and happening to any junior reserve member of the volunteer fire brigade whilst engaged in activities of the fire brigade provided the junior reserve member is under the control or supervision of the brigade captain or any experienced officer or member of the brigade delegated by him.

The compensation will also be payable in the event of an accident to any junior reserve member of a volunteer fire brigade whilst travelling by a direct route, without deviation, to or from any organised activity of the brigade.

Compensation for Accidents	In Respect of each Insured Member
	\$
1. Death by Accident	500
2. Total and Irrecoverable Loss of all Sight in Both Eyes	10 000
3. Total Loss by Physical Severance of the Whole of Both Hands or the Whole of Both Feet or of the Whole of One Hand and the Whole of One Foot	10 000

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 4. | Total Loss by Physical Severance of the Whole of One Hand or the Whole of One Foot Together with the Total and Irrecoverable Loss of All Sight in One Eye | 10 000 |
| 5. | Total and Irrecoverable Loss of All Sight in One Eye | 5 000 |
| 6. | Total Loss by Physical Severance of the Whole of One Hand or the Whole of One Foot | 5 000 |
| 7. | Total Disablement by Accident from Engaging in or Attending to Usual Profession, Business or Occupation (limited to 26 weeks and to those engaged in employment, profession or paid occupation). Limit for any one individual per week. | Equal to actual wages if member is working, but not in excess of rates payable to voluntary firemen. |
| 8. | Medical, Surgical, Hospital, Ambulance and Similar Expenses (including the supply of dental, surgical and optical appliances necessitated as a result of accident, but excluding loss or damage to existing appliances) incurred with the consent of an authorised official by or on behalf of any one individual following an accident sustained whilst under the control of any authorised official. | 750 |

(iv) Motor Vehicles:

Vehicles (including motor cycles and motor scooters) which are the property of volunteer firemen and Volunteer Fire Brigades Association Executive are covered only whilst such vehicles are being used on the business of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board, including fire calls, meetings, training sessions and demonstrations and whilst travelling to and from such events.

The insurance cover is limited to:

- Vehicles which are not otherwise insured.
- The amount of any excess on vehicles which are insured.
- The amount of no claim bonus lost in the first year only immediately following the event giving rise to the claim provided always that the bonus is not forfeited by virtue of claims arising outside the scope of the indemnity granted by this policy.

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Answered by (a) above.

EDUCATION

Physical Education Branch

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

- (1) Has the Physical Education Branch completed its investigation into including year three children in swimming classes?
- (2) (a) If so, what recommendation has been made; or
(b) if not, on what date is a report to be submitted?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) and (2) Investigations reveal that many year-3 children in country areas are included in swimming classes. In other areas year-3 children are excluded owing to lack of pool space or from considerations of safety where pools have not been constructed to cater for small children.

SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRES

Cooks

78. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

Will the Minister advise—

- (1) How many hours per week are worked by cooks at Senior Citizens' Centres?
- (2) What is—
(a) the weekly wage paid to them; and
(b) their annual or other leave entitlement?
- (3) What does the industrial award covering cooks provide in respect to—
(a) rates of pay;
(b) hours worked per week; and
(c) annual and other leave entitlements?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) to (3) Senior citizens' centres are operated by voluntary organisations. They are responsible for all industrial matters involving their staff. Particulars are not known by the department.

SOLAR POWER

Research

79. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

With reference to the announcement made by the Premier, Sir Charles Court, in June 1977, that funds would be

allocated to set up a solar research institute—

- (a) has any decision been made as to where it will be situated;
- (b) if not, would the Government make the goldfields the site of the institute; and
- (c) what funds are to be allocated for this purpose?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (a) and (b) The Solar Energy Research Institute is expected to be set up by the end of this year.

It will include a small board of management and an expert advisory council whose prime function will be to award research grants in well selected fields to existing institutions, private companies, and individuals and with research facilities to the extent of funds available.

The institute will not be situated as such in one new or separate location. Research will be carried out where adequate facilities exist or perhaps can be most economically added for the selected projects.

- (c) The initial Government allocation to the institute has been set by Cabinet at \$250 000.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Regional Social Planning

- 80. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Has the Government studied the proposal for "The future of regional social planning and community development in W.A." prepared by the five regional councils in Western Australia?
- (2) Has the Government decided to continue the schemes as suggested in the above proposal?
- (3) If so—
 - (a) how is the scheme presently organised and administered;
 - (b) what finance has been provided; and
 - (c) what is the source of the these funds?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Yes, the Government has received and reviewed the proposal dated November 9, 1976, for the continuation of regional social planning and community development in Western Australia, which was submitted by the 5 regional councils.
- (2) The Government, as previously stated in a Press release of May 7, 1977, has not provided continued funding for the regional councils for social development. Currently, none of the regional social development councils is in existence, although two remnants of locally based organisations stimulated by the Australian Assistance Plan are continuing.
- (3) The Government is not continuing the Australian Assistance Plan or implementing the recommendations of the now extinct regional councils for social development. It does, however, believe in the principle of creating regional community advisory bodies. The Government believes that this is best achieved under its model of regional administration and is currently examining ways of increasing public involvement at the regional level.

HOSPITAL

Norseman

- 81. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Health:

With reference to the Norseman hospital—

- (a) what is the programme of construction and renovation work being carried out;
- (b) when is it expected that the work will be completed; and
- (c) what is the estimated cost of the work?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (a) Repairs, renovations, and internal rearrangement of services.
- (b) March, 1978.
- (c) Contract price \$293 375.

PROBATION AND PAROLE

Administration Cost

- 82. The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What is the estimated annual cost of keeping a prisoner?
- (2) What is the annual cost of a parolee or probationer under supervision?
- (3) How many officers were employed for the supervision of parolees and probationers at—
 - (a) the end of June, 1977;
 - (b) the end of June, 1974?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) \$9 800.
- (2) \$280.
- (3) (a) 48 officers
- (b) 46 officers.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Emergency Payments

83. The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

In view of the Federal Government's decision concerning the new format for the payment of unemployment benefits, would the Minister indicate what further measures in the way of emergency payments will be undertaken by the Community Welfare Department to assist new unemployment beneficiaries to bridge the gap from their last salary pay to their first full unemployment benefit pay which will be a minimum period of five weeks?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

This matter is currently under consideration by the department which will report to the Minister for Community Welfare.

HOUSING

Aborigines

84. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Housing:

Will the Minister advise the actual cash payments made by the State Housing Commission for the construction of Aboriginal houses and/or dwellings in the metropolitan area, and each of the country towns, during the year 1976-77?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

The short answer is "Yes".

Cash Payments to Contractors 1976-77 Aboriginal Housing Houses under Construction at 30th June, 1976.

Town	Number of Houses	Contract Price	Since completed inc. cost adj. Payments made in 1976-77 financial year.
		\$	\$
BEVERLEY.....	1	19 920	17 760
BRUNSWICK JN....	1	17 193	Nil
COLLIE.....	6	128 271	131 739
COOLGARDIE.....	2	44 450	Nil
KALGOORLIE.....	5	112 578	53 104
LEONORA.....	4	121 284	52 683
MENZIES.....	3	84 600	12 689
MT. BARKER.....	1	24 454	21 773
WICKERPIN.....	1	43 810	35 361
YORK.....	2	37 487	3 795
	26		328 904

NORTH WEST

WYNDHAM.....	1	36 829	21 298
	1		
	27		\$350 202

Houses Completed during the Year 1976-77

Town	No. of Houses	Contract Price	Payments made 1976-77 inc. cost adj.
		\$	\$
ALBANY.....	2	46 112	48 186
ALBANY.....	1	24 985	22 365
GERALDTON.....	2	44 789	44 993
GERALDTON.....	1	22 310	23 268
KATANNING.....	2	54 207	55 827
MEEKATHARRA..	4	195 240	201 775
	12		396 414

NORTH WEST

BROOME.....	5	204 986	209 388
BROOME.....	4	166 697	171 775
SOUTH.....	7	238 975	244 540
HEDLAND.....	2	68 710	68 636
NULLAGINE.....	2		694 339
	18		

METRO.

KARAWARA.....	1	19 402	18 641
KARAWARA.....	1	21 285	21 321
GIRRAWHEEN/ KOONDOOLA....	5	123 548	98 212
	7		138 174
			1 228 927.00

Aboriginal Houses under Construction at 30th June, 1977

GERALDTON.....	2	54 998	12 392
MEEKATHARRA..	2	85 600	22 080
MOORA.....	3	86 505	Nil
TAMBELLUP.....	1	28 244	24 151
WILLIAMS.....	2	50 528	51 224
DERBY.....	4	173 925	—
	14		109 847

Cash Payments to Contractors in Aboriginal Housing 1976-77

SUMMARY

	\$
Units under Construction 30.6.76 payments made 1976-77.....	350 202
Units completed during year payments made 1976-77.....	1 228 927
Units under Construction 30.6.77 payments made 1976-77.....	109 847
	1 688 976
Aboriginal Housing Buy-Ins 1976-77 (12 Metro. area).	206 590
	1 895 566

1976-77

Aboriginal Village Expenditure—Actual Cash Expenditure

	\$
One Arm Point —	360 424
Looma —	249 465
Jigalong —	1 788
Cosmo-Newbery —	187 409
Fitzroy Crossing —	910 458
	1 709 544
Urban Spending —	1 895 566
Village Spending —	1 709 544
	3 605 110

State—Funds 1976-77—actual payments made to 30.6.77 both commenced within the 1976-77 financial year.

	\$
Collie (8 pensioner units)—	18 380.00
Saunders Street, Middle Swan (4 houses) —	46 806.00
	65 186.00

LAND RATES AND TAXES

Committee of Inquiry

85. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House representing the Treasurer:

Further to my question of the 10th November, 1976—"What action has the Government taken to implement the 37 recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry into Rates and Taxes attached to Land Valuation and contained in the Committee's report dated the 12th August, 1975?"—and the Minister's reply of the same day—"Advice has been obtained from the authorities affected by the recommendations and the replies from these authorities, together with the recommendations in the report, are being considered by Cabinet."—will the Minister now inform me of the decision reached by Cabinet on the recommendations?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

Some of the matters are still under consideration, including one involving possible legislation this session.

I shall advise the honourable member the result of Cabinet's further consideration, in due course, which should be within two or three weeks.

PENSIONER CONCESSIONS

Motor Vehicle and Drivers' Licence Fees

86. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

(1) In view of—

(a) the opinion of the Committee for Enquiry into Pensioner Concessions and Benefits "that compulsory charges associated with motor vehicle ownership imposes real hardship on the pensioner," and the Committee's recommendations—

(i) the State Government allow a rebate of 25 per cent on motor vehicle registration fees (excluding third party fee) for all pensioners eligible for fringe benefits and concessions (limited to sole owners and one car per couple or family);

(ii) the State Government allow a reduction of 50 per cent on corresponding motor vehicle drivers' licence fee;

(b) the fact that generous concessions are available to pensioners in other States; and

(c) the fact that the report was brought down two years ago;

what action has the Government taken, or does it contemplate, to implement these recommendations?

(2) If the answer is "None" what are the reasons for this decision?

(3) What is the estimated cost of implementing the proposals?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

(1) and (2) Last year, the Government increased the concession for invalid and physically handicapped pensioners and this measure enabled more people to qualify for the 100% or 50% concession in vehicle licence fees, depending upon their income.

It will be noted that under the Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill now before Parliament, there are increased eligible pensioners concessions and that they are greater than recommended by the committee as there will be a \$4.00 concession on a \$7.00 licence.

The recommendations quoted are only two of several concessions recommended

by the committee, some of which have been implemented progressively in the two years since the report was brought down.

- (3) In respect to vehicle licence fees, an estimated additional cost of \$255 000 over and above present concessions would result.

In the case of motor drivers' licences, the present concession of 40% costs \$42 436. The proposed concession when motor drivers' licence fees are increased will be 57.14% and will cost \$84 872.

PENSIONER CONCESSIONS

Federal Attitude

87. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

With reference to the Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Pensioner Concessions and Benefits, and the 17 recommendations on pages 91 and 92 which involved the Federal Government—

- (1) When were these recommendations communicated to the Federal Government?
- (2) When were replies received?
- (3) What was the attitude of the Federal Government to each of the recommendations?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) On 28th August, 1975, to Mr Whitlam and again on 26th January, 1976, to Mr Fraser.
- (2) On 3rd November, 1975, from Mr Whitlam and on 13th March, 1976, from Mr Fraser.
- (3) The Federal Government did not indicate its attitude on each of the recommendations, but indicated that the whole report would be taken into account during the income security review.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Drivers

88. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Are voluntary drivers for "Meals on Wheels" paid any petrol allowance?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is "No", in view of—

- (a) the fact that many of the drivers are pensioners with limited means;
- (b) the imminent increase in petrol prices as a result of the Federal Budget; and

- (c) the problem this could pose to the "Meals on Wheels" service;

will the Government consider introducing such an allowance?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) The City of Stirling offers a subsidy to volunteer drivers, but this is claimed only by a small percentage of drivers
- (2) As Meals on Wheels is an area which is supported by the Commonwealth, it is not intended that the State enter the field.

POLICE

Domestic Assaults

89. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Are statistics kept by the Police Department on domestic assault?
- (2) If so, will the Minister inform the House what percentage of the charges listed in the Police Department Report for 1976, under the following headings, were related to violence against a wife by her husband or de facto husband—

- (a) murder;
- (b) attempted murder;
- (c) manslaughter; and
- (d) serious assault—

- (3) If the answers to (1) and (2) are "No" will he take steps to have this information incorporated in future reports of the department?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) A search of police records shows—
 - (a) 3 offences or 23 per cent;
 - (b) nil;
 - (c) nil;
 - (d) 19 offences or 6 per cent.

- (3) It would be impractical to maintain statistics in reference to all assaults.

ELECTORAL

Rolls

90. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Leader of the House representing the Chief Secretary:

Which States have a common roll for both Federal and State elections?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria.

PENSIONER CONCESSIONS

Bus Transport

91. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the reason for forcing pensioners to complete their return journey within a two hour period to qualify for the ten cents concession fare, or be penalised by the payment of an additional charge?
- (2) As this restriction is presenting unnecessary inconvenience and worry to pensioners who may wish to visit relatives or friends in distant suburbs, will the Minister have it removed and allow them to travel at times to suit themselves?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) and (2) There is nothing forcing pensioners to complete a return journey within a two hour period just as there is nothing forcing a full paying passenger to complete a journey within the same two hour period.

However, if a passenger, whether a pensioner or paying full fare, can complete the purpose of his journey and board a returning bus within two hours he escapes the necessity for paying for that return journey by taking advantage of the transfer provisions.

The original intention of these transfer provisions was to enable passengers to complete a given journey on two buses or other modes of public transport without paying a full fare on each.

The concession granted to pensioners is that they shall pay 10 cents where the full paying passenger pays 40 cents.

WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON AND STEEL WORKS

Retrenchments

92. The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) How many people have been retrenched from the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Works during the financial year 1976-77?
- (2) What alternative employment was provided for them be either the State Government or Agnew Clough Ltd?
- (3) What financial assistance has been given to Agnew Clough Ltd by the State Government since the works were sold to that company in 1974?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

- (1) Twenty six persons were retrenched from the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Works during financial year 1976-77.
- (2) Agnew Clough Ltd. collaborated with State and Commonwealth authorities in examining alternative employment opportunities which were very limited. Agnew Clough in fact offered alternative employment to one employee who declined.
- (3) The industry was sold to Agnew Clough Ltd. on the 1st January, 1975. As provided in clause 15 of the sale agreement Act the rail freight previously granted to the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Works Industry was offered to the company.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

HIGH SCHOOL

Hampton

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Transport representing the Minister for Education:

Further to my question of yesterday concerning the dangerous condition of the windows at Hampton Senior High School and my further request for information as to when a report could be expected, is the Minister now in a position to answer this question?

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH replied:

A report on the windows at Hampton Senior High School has been received and action has been initiated. However, the repair programme for the non-operational windows—presumably there were two different types of windows concerned—has not proved entirely satisfactory and alternative procedures for total replacement are now being assessed.