REGISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 57)
REGISTRATION (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENT) BILL
(Serial 58)

Continued from 8 May 1991.

Mr BELL (MacDonnell): Mr Speaker, these amendments seek to consolidate one in place the various fees that are charged by the Registrar-General. The bills also make amendments to the Powers of Attorney, Real Property, Real Property (Unit Titles) and the Workmen's Liens Acts. This is of more than passing interest because, from memory, the Minister for Transport and Works was referring to the fact that a major Alice Springs construction company had been placed in receivership recently - PMT Partners. I understand that other companies have experienced difficulties also, largely as a result of liens that were placed on the construction of the large motel in Leichhardt Terrace that used to be called The Territory Motel. I received representations in respect of the liens on those properties, and I will be interested to find out how they fare. However, I digress.

I note that this legislation introduces significant increases in some of the penalties under the Workmen's Liens Act from amounts such as £12 to $3000, a 125-fold increase. Obviously, that is a timely increase and I indicate that the opposition supports these bills.

Motion agreed to; bills read a second time.

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that the bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; bills read a third time.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL
(Serial 65)
OATHS AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 66)

Continued from 9 May 1991.

Mr BELL (MacDonnell): Mr Speaker, these 2 bills are of some interest in terms of the historical development of the Local Courts and the position of what, as the Attorney-General mentioned in his second-reading speech, was the ancient office of the Justices. Of course, it is of more than historical interest that the essential thrust of these bills is to separate the operation of the Magistrates Courts, which are covered by the Justices Act, from the operation and the appointment etc of Justices of the Peace which are currently also covered by the Justices Act.

It seems to me that there are a couple of extra comments to be made in this regard. One is to point out that, in the Territory, we have no intermediate court structure, such as a District Court or a County Court, as I believe most of the other Australian jurisdictions have. This has meant that, with the increased jurisdiction given to the Magistrates Courts by the parliament in the last year or so, that jurisdiction has been increased from $5000 to $40 000 although, from memory, certain restrictions apply in that regard. I make that observation merely to point out that there has been that kind of development of the court structures and it is appropriate