

think this is a very wrong argument. It is not only unfair to members on this side, but it is unfair to all members. I do not think it was ever intended that there should be any undue delay at any time in issuing a proclamation and arranging for a redistribution of electoral boundaries.

The Government this evening has made very good use of some quotes from the 1954 argument, but I can go back to the time when the Bill was introduced in 1947 and I will quote from page 2197 of *Hansard* of that year contained in volume 120 of the new series. Although the bulk of the argument dealt with the manner of representation, and the matter was subsequently bitterly debated, as many members in this House will recall, there was one reference made to the issuing of a proclamation. The Attorney-General—and he was the Attorney-General of a Liberal Party-Country Party coalition Government—said at the time—

The Bill further provides that when so decided by resolution of the Legislative Assembly, or if five or more electoral districts get out of balance as to the number of electors by 20 per cent, or more, the Commissioners shall proceed to make a new distribution of Assembly seats, and again that redistribution will automatically operate.

I think that the Government at that time led us to believe that a redistribution would automatically operate; and, of course, we are entitled to believe that what it said at that time was correct.

I am not going to labour the matter, because I could only repeat some of those points that have already been made tonight and that would upset the Minister for Industrial Development. However, I am concerned with the fact that the Government is breaking the law. There is not the slightest excuse for it to do so. The Ministers take an oath to uphold the law and that oath has been quoted tonight. Private members also take an oath to uphold the law, and I think we have a responsibility to see that it is upheld. The Government should not, as a matter of convenience, refuse to take action when it has been clearly demonstrated, by order of the Supreme Court and also by its own remarks when the Bill was introduced, that the redistribution should automatically take place.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2 put and passed.

Preamble put and passed.

Title put and passed.

#### Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

#### Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 9.26 p.m.

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 4th August, 1965

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

1. This question was postponed.

#### MINERAL CLAIMS AT JANDAKOT

Applications in Warden's Court:  
Position of Private Landowners

2. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Town Planning:

Does the Government intend to oppose in the Warden's Court applications for mineral claims at Jandakot, in the interest of private landowners who are bound by law to plan in conjunction with the Metropolitan Region Authorities developmental

sequence, as such mineral claims are granted over a 21-year period?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

I am informed that applications for mineral claims at Jandakot have been lodged with the Department of Mines.

All instrumentalities affected have been informed of the applications and may submit any objections considered necessary.

In regard to private property affected, any holder can similarly lodge objection.

The applications and objections will be placed before the Warden's Court and can be supported in court by evidence from the objectors at time of hearing.

The warden's recommendations are submitted to the Minister for Mines for decision.

A number of objections have been lodged.

### SELENIUM DRENCH

#### *Registration under Veterinary Medicines Act*

3. The Hon. J. DOLAN (for The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs) asked the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Will the Minister advise whether the compound "selenium drench" is registered under the Veterinary Medicines Act, 1953?

#### *Investigation of Claims in Advertisements*

(2) If so:—

- (a) do the claims comply with the requirements of the Act; and
- (b) have the claims set forth in the advertisement appearing in *The Farmers Weekly* of the 20th May, 1965, been proved by trial in Western Australia, and, if so, by whom?

- (3) If the replies to the previous questions are "No", what action, if any, is to be taken, or is being taken?

#### *Toxicity*

- (4) (a) Are farmers aware of the toxicity of this compound or drench; and
- (b) have the Department of Agriculture any control over a compound containing a substance as toxic as selenium?
- (5) If no action has been, or is being, taken to control its use, advise of its toxicity, and ensure that it is being used in accordance with the appropriate Act, what steps, if any, will be taken so to do?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Several proprietary selenium drenches are registered under the Veterinary Medicines Act, 1953.
- (2) (a) The claims as registered comply with the requirements of the Act.
- (b) The claims relating to white muscle disease are the only ones which have been proved in Western Australia.
- (3) The manufacturer and distributor of the preparation referred to in the advertisement was advised on the 2nd June, 1965, that he had committed an offence under the Act and was asked for an assurance that the offence would not be repeated otherwise the matter would be referred to the Crown Law Department. The preparation will not be reregistered for the current year until this assurance has been received.
- (4) (a) Whilst warnings regarding possible toxicity have been issued in departmental publications and Press releases, the Veterinary Medicines Advisory Committee considers that selenium in the dosages prescribed for purposes of registration and usage is completely safe for administration to sheep.
- (b) The department has adequate control over the use of selenium.
- (5) Answered by (3) and (4).

### OSBORNE PARK HOSPITAL

#### *Extension*

4. The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON asked the the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Health:

In view of the rapidly expanding population of the Osborne, Nollamara and Scarborough districts in the Shire of Perth, will consideration be given to urgent extensions at the Osborne Park Hospital?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

Plans for additions to the Osborne Park Hospital are well advanced and, dependent on the availability of Loan Funds, it is hoped to call tenders this financial year.

### PARLIAMENT

#### *Formal Openings: Restriction of Number*

5. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Government give consideration to the desirability of having a formal opening of Parliament only when a new Parliament is beginning?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Government is willing to examine the desirability and possible advantages prior to the opening of the next session. In the meantime, could the honourable member provide his reasons for this suggestion?

### HOUSING FOR NATIVES

*Special Grant: Approach to Commonwealth Government*

6. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has the Government, during its term of office, made an approach to the Federal Government for a special grant for native housing?
- (2) If so, what was the result of the request?
- (3) If not, will the Government give consideration to making an approach to the Federal Government for a grant specifically for native housing?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) It is considered no useful purpose would be served by such an approach at present.

### QUARRIES AT GOSNELLS

*Dust Problem*

7. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Are those operating stone and metal quarries in the Gosnells Shire district subject to the Clean Air Act, 1964?
- (2) If not, will the Minister make an approach to these operators with a view to obtaining some considerable abatement of the dust problem created by them?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Engineer, Air Pollution, has already approached the company about whom complaints have been made. The company is co-operating with the Public Health Department in a programme of dust suppression.

### DRUNKEN DRIVING

*Blood Tests: Time Period*

8. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Justice:

In subsection 3a of section 32A of the Traffic Act, what is the significance in fixing a time period of eight hours after an offence for the taking of a blood test?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

A medical legal committee's advice was obtained in 1957 which committee recommended that the period of eight hours was the limit of time in which a back count could be made to calculate what percentage of alcohol was present in the blood at the time of the alleged offence.

### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

#### MINERAL CLAIMS AT JANDAKOT

*Applications in Warden's Court: Position of Private Landowners*

The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Town Planning:

In view of the reply I received to-day in answer to the question I asked about Jandakot, am I to take it that the answer is "No"; and are private landowners going to be jockeyed into position by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and be given no redress even though they have held their land for years without being able to subdivide it or develop it in their own interests?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

All I can say is that further consideration will be given to the question asked if the answer is not satisfactory.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: And people are not jockeyed at any time.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Of course they are.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: This has to go before the Warden's Court, the same as any other application.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The question was not answered.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

### DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

*Election*

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [4.45 p.m.]: I move—

That in accordance with Standing Order No. 31A, The Hon. A. R. Jones, The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, and The Hon. F. D. Willmott be elected to act as Deputy Chairmen of Committees during the current session.

Question put and passed.

## COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

### *Election*

The following sessional committees were elected on motions by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines):—

*Standing Orders.*—The Hon. H. K. Watson, The Hon. J. M. Thomson, and The Hon. E. M. Heenan.

*Library.*—The Hon. J. G. Hislop, and The Hon. R. F. Hutchison.

*House.*—The Hon. H. R. Robinson, The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson, The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, and The Hon. J. Dolan.

*Printing.*—The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs, and The Hon. E. C. House.

## SUPPLY BILL, £28,000,000

### *Standing Orders Suspension*

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [4.47 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable a Supply Bill to be taken on receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly and to have precedence each day before the Address-in-Reply, and to be passed through all stages at any one sitting.

This is the customary motion that is moved by the Leader of the House at this period of the session. The House is asked to suspend Standing Orders in order that a Supply Bill, upon its receipt from the Legislative Assembly, can be dealt with in all its stages, if desired, at the one sitting.

In moving this customary motion may I say it is not my desire that the Bill should be unnecessarily rushed through. It is necessary, of course, that the Government have the authority which this Bill will give it to enable it to expend the sum provided for; and it would be of satisfaction to the Government if members could assist in making the passage of the Bill as speedy as possible, bearing in mind the fact that there may be a number of members who wish to take the opportunity that such a Bill as this affords them of addressing the House on some particular subjects.

**THE HON. F. J. S. WISE** (North—Leader of the Opposition) [4.49 p.m.]: As the Minister has stated, it is customary in the early stages of all sessions for a motion such as this to be moved. It is understandable because the Appropriation Bill gave parliamentary approval to the Government for the amounts required for its Budget services to the 30th June last, and a Supply Bill, pending the Estimates—and perhaps a further Supply Bill, and then the Appropriation Bill—is an urgent need at this stage. However, I do want to take this opportunity to raise, without any acrimony or unfair criticism against

the Government, a very important matter in the conduct of parliamentary proceedings.

We have a set of rules—Standing Orders—which, in urgent cases, we suspend. This set of rules applies not merely to the conduct of business governing ordinary debates, but to the handling of important Bills throughout the session. If such rules or Standing Orders are redundant, antiquated, unnecessary, or unused, they should be expunged or brought up to date to meet this circumstance.

I hold the view very strongly that the time is long overdue for a Standing Order to be written into our book of Standing Orders to decide and to govern when urgent or emergency matters should be dealt with under a special Standing Order to meet the urgency or emergency. It is not for us to have this rigid set of rules, some of them age old, upon which we conduct our parliamentary business, and then to scrap them willy-nilly, especially at the end of the session, for the express purpose of getting legislation through quickly.

I repeat my first sentence: I have no objection at all to this motion for this purpose today, but I wish very strongly to express my views on this other aspect; and to support my case I will give, I think, adequate illustrations. In the last session of Parliament this House dealt with 110 Bills. Standing Orders were suspended on the 27th October of last year. In 14 sitting days—from the 27th October to the 27th November—this Chamber passed 77 Bills. That happened in 14 days. I suggest that is completely an abuse of the ability to suspend Standing Orders.

In the Legislative Assembly, in the last session, Standing Orders were suspended on the 21st October, and from that date until the end of the session 24 new Bills were introduced. I say that is wholly wrong. It makes farcical the examination of very vital Statutes; and, as we know, some very vital and very difficult measures are introduced in those circumstances.

I think the matter is so serious that it is time Parliament took stock of the situation. My researches show that 10 years ago, in the session of 1954 which commenced in June, Standing Orders were suspended on the 18th November, and eight Bills only were introduced in that year after that suspension. That was more likely to be the rule in those days: that towards the end of the session Bills which had been anticipated would be introduced after Standing Orders were suspended to facilitate the business of Parliament and to enable Parliament to rise before Christmas.

There are members in the Chamber who will recall that almost invariably late December was the date on which we rose.

It was Christmas Eve on more than one occasion during the many years when I was a member of the Legislative Assembly.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That was not good.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I am not saying it was; but there is something very wrong when we can go on for weeks discussing matters to which attention has been drawn in the Governor's Speech, or perhaps discussing something appertaining to an electorate and then, in the case of the Assembly, introduce Estimates of every Minister's department, which perhaps may not appear in debate for a month. After that we have the rush at the end of the session which, I am sure, no one can defend, and for which I am not in any unpleasant fashion criticising any Government.

It is a course that has developed, and I think very improperly developed. If we have so far drifted in the suspension of Standing Orders as to enable Bills to be dealt with on the same day as they are received from the Assembly and to pass through all stages in the one sitting we should use that facility and ability only when the emergency or the urgency so warrants.

We do not have the same right or responsibility in regard to a supply Bill or an appropriation Bill as does the Legislative Assembly. Bathed in antiquity is the practice that in the House of Commons, or the Assembly in our case, notice of intention to move for leave to introduce such a Bill is given. What is the procedure? There must first of all be a Committee of Supply. When this stage is passed there must be a Committee of Ways and Means to show how the money will be raised. Up to that point the Bill has not appeared. The Bill then goes through, as members know, all the stages that a Bill normally goes through. Why is that? It is to show that a Government has the facility, that it has the money available, and that it has the ways and means to grant supply.

When the Bill comes here we are absolved from all that practice. We treat it as a normal Bill. But all those reasons have great force as a need at some point in Parliamentary practice. What I am saying is that we can become very careless, particularly if we allow the sort of thing that happened last year. I am sure it was a shock to me to know the actual figure, as it must have been to the clerk who so kindly found the numbers of Bills for me when I asked him the question this morning.

If we have rules, and if we have Standing Orders, I think we should endeavour to play the game or to conduct our business according to those rules. While they exist—if they are not wholly redundant or wholly useless—do not let us adopt the system of the expedient becoming the

rule. I think it is very necessary for that to be said, because we are, in my view, year after year drifting into a worse position in regard to the time available to us to examine important legislation.

I think nobody envies the Ministers at the end of the session, particularly the Ministers in this House with the enormous amount of work they must do. I daresay not many would envy us on this side who may have to handle 77 Bills in 14 days and undertake the research necessary; and, as members know, the most innocent looking Bill, so far as I am concerned, warrants the closest examination. I support the motion.

**THE HON. H. K. WATSON** (Metropolitan) [5 p.m.]: In my opinion our Standing Orders, in the main, are neither obsolete nor redundant. On the contrary, they represent the accumulated wisdom and experience of centuries; and I feel there is much to be said to the point which has been made by Mr. Wise. We have this position: Our prime and essential duty as legislators is to legislate; and it is a *sine qua non* that one cannot legislate unless one has given mature consideration to the legislation before one; and the figures Mr. Wise presented to the House were really extraordinary, inasmuch as 77 Bills did go through under the suspension of Standing Orders in 14 sitting days.

As Mr. Wise mentioned, the motion before the House this afternoon is clear, understandable, and in every way justified; but with regard to the other points he mentioned, we really find that instead of the suspension of Standing Orders becoming the exception—and the rare exception—it has, on the other hand, almost become the rule. Therefore, I would add my voice to the plea that there should be a minimum number of suspensions of Standing Orders and that, in the main, our legislation should go through the normal processes of first, second, and third readings, in accordance with the method laid down by Standing Orders.

However, that is not the immediate question before the House at this moment; it is simply to suspend Standing Orders for the express purpose of passing this particular Bill. No exception could be raised to that; but I would express the hope that between now and the time when we do have the motion for the complete suspension of Standing Orders relating to legislation, generally, some consideration may be given by the Minister, and by members of this House also, with a view to seeing we do not have a recurrence of last year's experience.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.3 p.m.]: I feel compelled to make a few remarks in connection with what has been said by both Mr. Wise and Mr. Watson.

I do not feel hurt by the comments of either, because very substantially I agree with what has been said. I agree with Mr. Watson's remarks in respect of the state of our Standing Orders. I do not think they are redundant. They have been written and revised from time to time as a result of the experience not only of us in this House, but of people who have been here before us.

I think this is a problem to which we all contribute; and I say this quite forcibly. Yesterday we sat for the first time after the opening, but how many members were ready to go on with the Address-in-Reply? To the best of my knowledge there was one, despite the fact that since the last general election six months have elapsed and members have had time to prepare for the great day when they would speak on the Address-in-Reply.

I do not say this to be critical, but members never seem to be ready. It is always a case of tomorrow or next week, with the result that we do waste too much time. Sometimes we go home earlier at night than we need to. If we could only organise our programme a little better so that a few members could get their speeches off on the Address-in-Reply each night, then there would be more time for Bills.

Perhaps we on this side are to blame to some extent for this because my colleague, Mr. Logan, and myself—and we will give Mr. MacKinnon the right sort of needle in this regard—have endeavoured to co-operate with members and have placed Bills down on the notice paper or postponed them for the convenience of members. This has had a cumulative effect by the time we have reached the last stage of proceedings.

Mr. Logan will support me, I am sure, when I say that I am constantly on the wheel—that is a mild colloquial expression—of my Cabinet colleagues to get the departments to submit their legislation at an early date. I do not think it is a desirable state of affairs that we should suspend Standing Orders and deal with as many Bills as we did last year. I was not conscious of this, but I was conscious of the fact that my shoulders were bowed down as a result of the work we had to do at the end of the session. I merely say this because, whilst I appreciate the point of view expressed by the Leader of the Opposition, I think we, by our actions, do help to bring about a state of affairs like this.

May I conclude by thanking Mr. Wise for his support of this motion and by assuring him and other members that, with the co-operation of all members of the House, we over here will endeavour to arrange the legislative programme so there will not be this great rush. I have

seen some Bills that members were anxious to have passed quickly. I need not mention what they were.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Iron ore agreements, and those sorts of things!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was not thinking in that direction.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I thought you were.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think perhaps I could stop thinking in the direction I was. However, we will endeavour to improve things this year, and I would hope a similar situation will not arise. I would add that if any honourable member wants the adjournment of a Bill for any specific reason, as has happened in the past, we will endeavour to the best of our ability to assist in his wishes.

**Question put and passed.**

#### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

#### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.9 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The suspension of Standing Orders for the introduction of this measure has been sought in order that sufficient funds might be provided for the services of the State, pending the introduction of the Revenue Budget and the Loan Estimates for the current financial year. These are being drawn up at present and will, of course, be presented in due course. Then, at a later stage of the session, an Appropriation Bill will be brought to this House.

It has been estimated that a sum not exceeding £28,000,000 will meet the expenditure requirements of the first three months of this financial year. Of this amount £20,000,000 is sought from Consolidated Revenue, and £6,000,000 from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund; and there is provision also in the Bill for an issue of £2,000,000 from the Public Account to enable the Treasurer to make such temporary advances as may become necessary. This latter provision is similar to that sought in the 1964 Supply Bill, but the other amounts exceed the provisions in last year's enactment to the extent of £1,000,000, in respect of Consolidated Revenue, and £500,000 as regards the General Loan Fund. These additional amounts as compared with last year's requirements are necessary to meet expanding Government services and increased Government activity generally.

When introducing this measure in another place, the Treasurer considered it was helpful to refer to the position of the Consolidated Revenue Fund in recent years,

which requires a brief reference to Commonwealth Grants Commission procedures. It was accordingly pointed out that the special grant recommended each year by the commission comes in two instalments. The first instalment represents an estimate of the grant required for the year under consideration. This is generally followed by a second instalment two years later when the commission completes its examination of the audited Budget figures for the earlier year. The second instalment then has to be applied in reduction of the deficit for the year to which it relates.

If we take the example of the year 1962-63, we find the first instalment of the grant for that year amounted to £5,900,000, and the State finished with a published deficit of £753,000. A second instalment in respect of 1962-63 was received in 1964-65, and this amounted to £660,000, thus enabling the State to reduce the final deficit for 1962-63 to £93,000. Incidentally, I think this has been the best financial result achieved by the State since 1953-54. In 1963-64, a first instalment of £5,900,000 was also made, and the published State deficit was £1,396,000.

Shortly an announcement will be made through the Federal Budget of the amount of the second instalment for 1963-64. It is expected this will be brought down soon, and we may anticipate the amount will be more than sufficient to completely wipe out the deficit for 1963-64. We trust this will be so.

Such a result would represent a first balancing of the State Budget since 1950-51 and no doubt would give any Treasurer much satisfaction and would be well received by the people.

The first instalment of the grant for 1964-65 was £7,900,000, with the Government budgeting for a deficit of £796,000. It will be recalled the Treasurer expressed his confidence, when introducing the Budget last year, that a substantial portion of this deficit would be recouped to the State when the second instalment of the grant for 1964-65 was received in 1966-67.

As Mr. Wise knows, we are always the best part of two years behind in these repayments. The Treasury is still confident, even in the light of the considerable rise in the deficit for last year to £2,349,000, that most of this deficit will be recouped to the State in due course. This rise in last year's deficit was brought about in the main by substantial increases in salary and wage payments granted during the course of the year. The added cost of Government services financed from Consolidated Revenue amounted to £1,360,000 on account of these rises.

On several occasions in recent years, the Government has been chided in this Chamber for not publicising more widely financial statements of accounts. It is accordingly thought desirable, at this point of time, to indicate that the published Budget

figures cannot, at the time of their publication, give a true indication of the State's financial position. As already pointed out, it is only when the second instalment of the special grant is received that we can judge the position, for reasons that I have already explained. Opportunity is accordingly taken to state for the information of all those concerned in the progression of the State's financial position that we shall balance the Budget for 1963-64 and should go close to a balance in 1964-65.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: A very nice objective.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. The Treasurer has undertaken to give an indication of the prospects for 1964-65 when presenting the Estimates for this current year in the Legislative Assembly. Reference has been made by Mr. Wise to the fact that we do not receive the Estimates in this House. Members will thus be given an opportunity of obtaining any desired detailed information in respect of anticipated revenue and expenditure by reference to the Estimates of various departments.

As earlier indicated, the purpose of this Bill is to provide the Government with sufficient finance to carry on during the first quarter of the financial year.

**THE HON. F. J. S. WISE** (North—Leader of the Opposition) [5.18 p.m.]: It was very interesting and heartening to hear that Governments are getting back into the fashion of other days when a balanced Budget was so important; particularly in the days when our own taxing rights were with us and Governments stood with credit or with condemnation according to whether they levied sufficient tax or levied too much tax on their own people.

It is quite a few years since, on the introduction of the Budget, the galleries would be filled. Nowadays not a soul is to be seen in the galleries, because we are so dependent upon Commonwealth revenues and grants under section 96 of the Constitution; and the repayments under the uniform tax come to us as if they were from Father Christmas. Far too many people forget that the Commonwealth is only repaying to us some of the money it has collected in the State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: And we become much more interested in the Federal Budget.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Much more interested, unfortunately. I can recall a surplus of £11,111.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In 1953-54.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I can remember *The West Australian* saying—and the Treasurer was named Wise—that this surplus was more significant for its symmetry than its size—five aces.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What was the amount of your Supply Bill in those days, do you remember?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It was about £7,000,000 or £8,000,000, and the total Budget was about one-quarter of the £90,000,000-odd which this Government enjoys from all sources.

We do not get very much information nowadays, unfortunately, month by month, or in between the introduction of the Supply Bills and the Estimates. I think I have mentioned this matter previously here: that it is very unfortunate that the monthly figures of the departments and the trend in the State's finances are not published monthly so that we could discern whether there are drifts, or whether more healthy revenues obtain. I think this is unfortunate; and it would not matter if there were a drift and anticipated deficit or surplus did not show the trend to be correct. This is an important matter for public information.

I point out, for example, that it is not until we get the returns and financial statements as at the 30th June that we know by just how much the Estimates were exceeded in revenue, or by how much the expenditure fell or was exceeded in some departments. There is no way of knowing nowadays. I would commend for the serious contemplation of the Government and the Treasury that the returns which the Treasurer receives from his Under-Treasurer become public documents and be published month by month, as always was the case until very recent years.

It is interesting to note the swelling revenues from one department which is a minor section of another big non-earning department—the Public Works Department. It is interesting that the Harbour and Light Department revenue, estimated to be £750,000 for the year 1964-65, swelled to £909,880—a remarkable increase due, one can only guess, but I would think this to be so, to the increased revenues from most of the 10 ports in the north and, perhaps, from the increased harbour dues and wharfage from the Port of Esperance in the handling of phosphates.

In the main, however, I would think the increase would be attributable to the north-west because of direct shipments from Japan, the unloading of sleepers by direct shipments into Point Sampson and Port Hedland, and, perhaps, because of the Government paying itself for the wharfage and dues on the materials used in the new jetty at Broome, which would have lifted the Broome revenue also. I know that Broome, in the month of February, had, for the whole of Broome's history in handling cargoes, a record shipment unloaded.

Here we have the situation where one department—one which, I am afraid, passes with very scant interest or notice

and is a minor department—is run in very businesslike fashion by splendid officers, but scarcely gets recognition; and it is about third on the list of revenue-earning departments. But it does show that the stimulus given by harbour construction, the preparation for new towns, and the construction of railways is already having a very marked influence on the Government revenues from the north-west, which is a very important matter quite apart from the development itself.

I would like to refer to another department within the Public Works Department's activities—the harbours and rivers section, which is overshadowed by the gigantic undertakings, relatively speaking, of the complete department. The harbours and rivers section of the department is doing wonderful work through its engineers in designing the very many harbours and wharves which have been built by the Public Works Department. I pay a tribute to the engineers of the harbours and rivers section. They are the people who designed the Wyndham jetty, the new Derby jetty, and the one being constructed at Broome, where the hundreds of piles, driven on a slant, would not be one-thousandth of an inch out of alignment. Remarkable work is going on under the control of the harbours and rivers engineers. In addition, they have the responsibility for the hydrographic surveys of the north.

I understand the feature that so interested my colleague (Mr. Strickland)—the survey of Napier Broome Bay—has been completed and is ready for action when there is sufficient warrant for the construction of harbour works in the bay.

I do not wish to delay the House on the Bill. There are several matters that can be referred to from time to time on appropriate Bills during the session, and I do not wish to delay the passing of this measure.

**THE HON. J. G. HISLOP** (Metropolitan) [5.27 p.m.]: One matter I would like to bring to the notice of the Government is the control of traffic around the Royal Perth Hospital. I ask the Government if there is any set plan yet approved for such control. I can say quite truthfully that in the last seven to 10 days I have seen three people narrowly save their lives, for the simple reason that the traffic going east in Murray Street and then turning north around the semicircular drive between the cathedral and the hospital, and then turning left again to go out to the north seems to use that portion of the highway as a speed trap. The drivers seem to want to see whether they can take their vehicles around these two curves at considerable speed.

At about 5.30 in the evening it is almost impossible to cross from the hospital to the cathedral side of the road, where the

cars are parked; and I speak with a certain amount of feeling because a car missed me only by inches, even though I ran to try to get out of its way. This is going on constantly, and I think the Government knows what the position is, but any plan that has been prepared is as yet unknown.

I have been informed that on several occasions roadways have been thought of which will take the traffic away from this area—take it somewhat east and then bring it round into Lord Street after it has passed over Wellington Street. I just wonder how long it is going to be before this arrangement can be carried out, because the position is getting worse every week.

I feel certain that some elderly person will get caught in that traffic before very long. I wonder why someone has not so far been caught in it, because I have taken the opportunity lately—I have to go to the Royal Perth Hospital fairly frequently at present—to see just what does happen when people try to cross from the hospital to the cathedral side of the road, from where they can walk to their destination. If the Minister, whether it be the Minister for Town Planning or the Minister for Health, will give us some idea of the plans that lie ahead and when the opportunity will be taken to implement them, I, among others, will be very grateful to know that those people will be protected, especially if it is to be in the near future.

I am wondering whether I should enlarge somewhat on hospitals during the debate on this Bill, because they will require a great deal of money in the near future, and I would like to draw attention to one or two aspects of hospitals. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Royal Perth Hospital is badly overcrowded, and everybody associated with that institution is aware of it. It is no secret; it is common knowledge. Even with the proposed increased number of beds which are to be provided at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital there will still be a period of two years before that planning comes to fruition and the beds provided; and even if those extra beds at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital numbered 100 they will only then take away the existing excess number of patients from the Royal Perth Hospital.

Something must be done to ease the burden on the medical and nursing branches, and every other branch, of the Royal Perth Hospital. A suggestion has been conveyed to me by those who are interested in the future of the Royal Perth Hospital; namely, that the school which has been taken over on the eastern side of Lord Street, should be used to a greater degree for hospital work. The suggestion is that it would be possible, without much alteration or extension to the existing building, to provide some out-patient facilities, and even to place the pathology

department in that area. To put the latter suggestion into effect may require some extra building, but that could be done in a relatively short time and would be preferable to looking for a major edifice to house that department. In that way it could be possible for two or three floors on the southern side of the hospital to be used as wards, and this could ease the strain to some extent.

In my own mind I am quite convinced that some of the incidents that have occurred at the Royal Perth Hospital in recent times cannot be blamed on those working in the institution, because their work is impeded by the overcrowding in the wards and the extreme pressure that is exerted on the staff of almost every one of the hospital branches.

I am not trying to blame anybody for the existing state of affairs. I am merely stating facts and trying to look at the problem in its proper light to see whether the Minister can be assisted to meet it. Quite frankly, I feel that the suggestion made in regard to the use of the school and the school grounds opposite the hospital would assist to ease the pressure considerably if they were used to house an out-patients' department or a special department such as the pathology branch. This suggestion was raised among a number of us when we were together only yesterday evening, and a further suggestion came forward that a number of overways or underways could be arranged to cross the roadway to the new building and so enable the work of the wards to continue almost unhindered.

I suggest that we cannot wait two years for the provision of another 100 beds; something has to be done before then. No more pressure, surely, can be exerted on the Royal Perth Hospital. I do not know whether the same amount of pressure that is exerted on that hospital will have to be exerted on the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, but the future of the medical services, particularly hospital services, in my opinion requires a special commission.

I take my mind back to the very day I entered this Chamber and to when my maiden speech contained a plea for the establishment of a hospitals commission which would have its mind focussed on nothing else but hospitals, hospital improvement, increased number of beds, extensions to existing hospitals, and everything required by hospitals. All these matters would be the business of such a commission. In the other States such commissions have done a tremendous amount of work, and the credit for the provision of base hospitals in Victoria must be given to the hospitals commission in that State.

When I first made the suggestion in 1941 I was told by the Chief Secretary at that time that he liked my delivery but not

what I said. I suppose that since then nobody else in the department has appreciated the need for a hospitals commission to be established, because such a suggestion has always been frowned upon. However, I am sure we are approaching the stage when we will get into real difficulties unless we constitute a hospitals commission which will have no other interest than the preservation, improvement, and extension of hospital services. I would add that such a commission would prove very useful if one of its tasks was purely to adjust and control equipment in hospitals; to standardise all hospital equipment throughout the State. This question is being dealt with in the Eastern States, and it is being proved that if hospital equipment is standardised throughout the State the work of each hospital is made much easier, cost is reduced, and any necessary replacement of equipment is handled with greater ease.

These are matters which are worrying many of us because the day is fast approaching when it will be almost impossible to find a bed for a sick person. I can assure you, Mr. President, that a physician can ring a hospital such as St. John of God Hospital today and invariably be told, "I am sorry, we have not a bed available." To obtain a separate room in St. John of God Hospital is an almost hopeless task, because that hospital is generally completely full.

The position at the Mount Hospital, is possibly a little easier. The patients accommodated there are booked in by a smaller number of practising medical men than those who send their patients to St. John of God Hospital. However, the Mount Hospital cannot remain on its present site much longer. It is wrongly situated; and I take my mind back to the time when we pleaded with Archbishop Le Fanu and tried to convince him that the existing site was not a good one, and that the hospital should be built further out of the city. The lesson is now learned, and some other area must, in the near future, be found to resite the Mount Hospital.

I believe the Government may be faced with the prospect of meeting almost the entire capital cost of a hospital of this type, but its financial burden may be eased to a considerable extent by the organisations that take an active interest in the hospital and help to maintain it. We have practically reached the stage when medical practitioners may have to rely on the public hospitals, and it is almost impossible to obtain a private room within a public hospital unless the illness of the patient is one that demands the complete function of that hospital. In order to obtain a bed in St. John of God Hospital or the Mount Hospital, one must be prepared to face a waiting period, but if the

waiting period becomes any longer than it is now, the situation will ultimately be extremely serious for the individual who is sick.

In my opinion the small private hospital is doomed. It cannot provide the necessary modern equipment, and there are very few such hospitals now that will manage to survive. Therefore the time is fast approaching when another big hospital—possibly as big as St. John of God Hospital—will have to be built to accommodate those people who prefer to be cared for and treated by their own physicians.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: By the Government?

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The cost may have to be met by the Government for the benefit of those people.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It seems to me to be a little unreasonable that the Government should be called upon to provide such luxury hospital accommodation.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would like to hear from the Honorary Minister later as to how the Government will tackle this problem, and how the necessary accommodation will be provided. Whether we can get a number of organisations together to work for the provision of another hospital is another question. I would certainly like to hear the answer as soon as possible, because the present situation cannot continue for much longer.

I have noticed with interest that Mr. Robinson has asked the Government if extensions can be made to the Osborne Park Hospital. It is the general opinion of those who are employed in the Royal Perth Hospital that the building of satellite hospitals has not eased their burden in the slightest. This is a matter that has to be considered thoroughly, and I believe it can only be done by a hospitals commission.

I understand that when the satellite hospitals were built they were designed to meet the needs of the public and the general medical practitioners in the district, and were places to which senior members of the medical profession could be called to enter into consultation with the general practitioners. However, it was never expected that they would grow like Topsy and become disorganised institutions.

If the procedure of building satellite hospitals is to be continued there must be a definite plan; there must be definite organisation; there must be knowledge of how far they will ultimately extend and what part they will play in the community. It seems to me that, at the present moment, this is one of the most serious situations we are faced with in the city; namely, the treatment of the sick. A great deal more attention could be paid,

possibly, by the Royal Perth Hospital to transferring those who have been admitted to that hospital and who have been found not to require the services of a large institution to one of the district hospitals. Those patients should be sent to the hospitals in the neighbourhood of where they live. In that way the burden on the Royal Perth Hospital would be eased.

I am told that such a move is not appreciated by the local hospitals. They want to admit their own patients and carry on as separate institutions. This is a matter which the proposed commission could look into—how to organise the transfer of individuals, who no longer required the care of the major institutions, to neighbouring or outer ring hospitals. At those hospitals the patient would still receive the required attention, and he would not be taking up a bed in a major institution which is run at a terrific cost.

I could go on for quite a long time detailing what is worrying so many of us in respect of hospital accommodation, but I might leave it at that. I want to make one final statement. Not only is a hospitals commission required, but I believe a completely new insight into hospital control is an urgent necessity. With the advance of medicine, and with the coming of biochemical tests as a necessary part of the diagnosis of illness, sections are being established in the large hospitals. There is the heart section, the lung section, the gastric section, and so on. It is possible for these sections to become isolated from each other, and there might have to be a reorganisation of control, purely from the medical, surgical, and other points of view.

I have always been impressed with the procedure adopted by the Mayo Clinic, where the patient passes through the hands of one person. His illness is then detailed to the various sections, from which reports are obtained. Before the patient is discharged he finally goes through the hands of that person.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Does that system interfere much with the private practitioner?

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Not much. Many institutions, like the Royal Perth Hospital, are adopting the practice of dividing the establishments into sections. Something of that sort is required.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would the Mayo Clinic have an honorary staff or a full-time staff?

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: A full-time staff.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This makes a tremendous difference.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: If we institute a similar method we might have to appoint medical officers to the permanent staff,

but we would still require the honorary staff. There is a tendency in the various hospitals to place the staff on duty on a sessional basis. This would entail the attendance by the honorary staff for much longer periods than in the past and might lead to the controls I have outlined.

We might follow the example of the Mayo Clinic. At the present time there is a risk of a patient being delegated to one section, thus bringing about the overlooking of that person's needs. That surely must be guarded against. I have known of cases admitted to hospitals where the patients were directed to one section, whereas their general condition required a complete survey by the various sections through the control of one person.

It is not easy to predict the advance of medicine. Everything is changing rapidly, and today the training is very different from what it used to be, and this calls for a tremendous amount of thought and energy to be exercised by the senior members of the profession. We might well be able to find a solution to the difficulty which now exists, but I am afraid none of these changes can be effected until such times as the stress on the hospitals is removed. I hope the Minister can assist us to a large extent by informing us what future plans the department has in mind.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You realise there is little I can do with regard to the internal running of the Royal Perth Hospital.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes. I am putting this as an addendum to what I have said. I want to make it clear that not only will this lie with those responsible for building the hospitals, such as the department, but a lot will depend ultimately upon the profession.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: And on the turnover of patients.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: We are living in an era of advancement in medicine which was not contemplated a few years ago. I would suggest a committee be appointed, comprising men who have passed through the hospitals recently—not those who passed through in the days I passed through—to ensure that the procedures adopted in the hospitals today give the public the best possible service. Some of us feel they do not. This committee of, perhaps, half a dozen men could look into the procedure from the time a person enters a hospital to the point of discharge, to ascertain whether the patient receives adequate treatment for his condition.

It is quite simple for a patient to be treated in one section, and for the treatment to be excellent, but later on it might be discovered there was another complaint which could have been attended to if there had been an overall survey. I hope what I have said will prove helpful, not only to

the Minister but also to the profession, in considering how these difficulties can be met. This is a vast problem, but it is one of tremendous interest to the public.

The department might give thought, firstly, to the appointment of a hospitals commission. I feel this is absolutely necessary to co-ordinate the services provided by all the hospitals, both in the metropolitan area and in the country. Secondly, the department might give thought to the appointment of a small committee of men who have worked through the hospitals, for the purpose of making a survey to ascertain whether, in relation to the recent advances in medicine, changes should be made for the benefit of the public.

There seems to be a tendency to build hospitals which impose a terrific strain on the nursing staff in the performance of their duties. In both the Kojonup Hospital and the Lake Grace Hospital it takes a long time to get from one section to another. The nursing staff in those hospitals are always complaining about the amount of walking they have to do along the hard, tiled corridors. In the case of the Armadale Hospital, I do not know how the matron manages to get around. Similarly in the Pinjarra Hospital the corridors are of tremendous length. However, at the Albany Hospital there is a complete answer. I was told that in one hospital two orderlies were engaged constantly on polishing the corridor leading to the nurses' quarters. There seems to be a deficiency in the design.

When I came back from the United States of America I brought plans of hospitals which had been designed in that country. Firstly they were designed for one storey, with the possibility of adding another storey. They were designed so that all the sections were brought closer together. In those hospitals the tremendous lengths of the corridors were eliminated. The plans for these hospitals should be looked into; some of them were built by their public works department, and some by their health department.

I hope I have not offended anyone by what I have said. I did not want to. All I tried to do was to be helpful by putting forward the problem as I saw it. This situation cannot continue; it should be tackled in a very firm way. I think this can only be done through a hospitals commission and by an inquiry by senior members of the profession, who are on the verge of retiring from the honorary staff, determining whether or not they are satisfied with the manner in which the hospitals are organised.

**THE HON. A. R. JONES (West)** [5.58 p.m.]: I desire to support the Bill which is before the House, but before proceeding further I would like to take a moment to offer my congratulations to those who have

been elected to this Chamber and to wish them well. I hope their period of time here—no matter how long it may be—will be beneficial to themselves and to the State as a whole. I have pleasure in expressing my desire, as others have done, to proffer any advice that is asked for. That seems to be the general view of members of this House. Once again I wish the newly-elected members a very happy, pleasant, and beneficial stay here—beneficial to themselves and to the Parliament of Western Australia.

If I heard the Minister correctly he said he had every hope that the deficit of the State would be met by the Commonwealth Government through, I suppose, the Grants Commission. I hope he has assumed correctly, because we need all the money we can get to develop the State at this juncture and, of course, for many years ahead. I would like to ask the Minister whether the State Government, before it is reimbursed by the Commonwealth Government on the advice of the Grants Commission, has to do certain things.

On other occasions we have been told that if we did certain things, such as raise certain taxes and increase rail freights or shipping freights, the Commonwealth Grants Commission would come to the party and make a recommendation that our deficits be met.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Sometimes it is to the contrary: if you do not raise taxes in conformity with the standard States, the Grants Commission will penalise you.

**The Hon. A. R. JONES:** That is the point I am coming to. I thought that was the way it worked. I was rather surprised the other day when asking some questions on a matter we might have mentioned. If we do not do certain things we can be penalised. At the moment I have in mind goods freights. It seems that in the past 12 months Victoria has raised the rates considerably and, of course, New South Wales has done likewise. As a claimant State Western Australia is expected to do the same so that we then can have our railway deficit met, perhaps, by the commission.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** I wish it could be.

**The Hon. A. R. JONES:** It is rather a wrong thing, in my opinion, for any authority—and of course this authority stems from the Commonwealth Government—to say what we shall do with any particular phase of our development.

**The Hon. F. J. S. Wise:** Mind you, the Government uses the Grants Commission as a bit of an excuse sometimes, too.

**The Hon. A. R. JONES:** I realise that, too.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** That is the voice of experience!

The Hon. A. R. JONES: We do certain things in this State. For example, we operate a shipping service to the north-west. If the criticisms we have heard in recent times are correct, the Government is not doing the right thing by the shipping service. It could be making more money; but perhaps the Minister may be able to answer that.

Reverting to the railway situation, in the past we have done certain things such as introduce telescopic rates to reduce the burden on those who are further out and those who have the longest haul. We must keep in mind, of course, that when this was done the areas concerned, or many of them, were considered to be marginal areas not producing the yields of wheat produced in the known and assured rainfall areas. Now, of course, we have reached the situation where it is not, perhaps, so necessary for those people to be given this protection, because the marginal areas have produced in the past two or three years more than is produced in what is referred to as a safe wheatbelt area. Nevertheless our Government adopted this policy to help develop these further-out areas.

I cannot see why the Commonwealth Government should say to the State Government what it shall do and what it shall not do. Although we look to the Commonwealth Government to reimburse us and help us all it can—and so we should because we are a claimant State and a developing State the same as Tasmania and South Australia—I feel we have reached the stage where we should alter the situation, perhaps, by conferring with other States. It is not wrong that the Victorian Government should criticise Western Australia for keeping its freights as low as it can while in the meantime the Victorian Government has raised its freights sky high. It is quite likely that the situation could be in reverse in some other field where the Victorian Government feels by so doing it is beneficial for the development of that State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: By and large the Grants Commission is very helpful to Western Australia.

The Hon. A. R. JONES: I am not denying that at all; and so it should be. However, surely we are not going to allow the situation to be reached whereby it is ruling Western Australia!

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They read *Hansard*, too!

The Hon. A. R. JONES: To my way of thinking we are fast coming to the situation whereby the Commonwealth Grants Commission can tell us what we must do. So I would urge the Government—the Minister sits there and smiles and smirks. Sometimes I feel that is not the right thing to do. I am not joking.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Your impression of my smirk is, like some of your other ideas, not accurate.

The Hon. A. R. JONES: I do not know what the Minister had to laugh, smile, or smirk about, because I am not joking. I do not come to this Parliament to joke, although I may be considered to be a joke at times.

The Hon. R. Thompson: He often looks at me and does that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You gathered the wrong impression if you thought I was smiling at you.

The Hon. A. R. JONES: If that is the case I withdraw the remark made about the Minister smirking, but I thought he was taking this as a joke.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I do not know how many times I have to tell you I was not smirking at what you were saying.

The Hon. A. R. JONES: All of us have to work for a purpose. We should have a different type of assessment from the Grants Commission from what we have. Perhaps it is necessary we should meet other States in conference about this. I am certain that South Australia is not satisfied at times, and I am certain that Tasmania would not be satisfied at times, just as the State—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: South Australia is not a claimant State now.

The Hon. A. R. JONES: No; but it was for many years and was never satisfied. The honourable gentleman who was Premier there for many years was not always satisfied. I have this matter in mind, and I feel it needs some attention. If anyone can suggest any ideas at all it is only right that he should do so in regard to what should be done, because I feel we should reserve the right to attack our problems in our own way provided, of course, we do not go haywire and expect miracles.

One other matter I would like to mention is that Perth was called the City of Lights some time ago, and I feel that we have now reached the situation where, because so many lights are being installed—and particularly "Stop" lights—we could be called the city of "Stop" lights and "Stop" signs. No matter where we go we find signs being erected and lights installed, and this is a waste of money in many cases.

One instance has occurred close by at the bottom of King's Park Road where it joins Rokeby Road and Thomas Street. Some time ago this intersection was reorganised and the roads were divided and everyone used it that way for weeks and weeks with complete satisfaction to all concerned. There was no hold-up in traffic and everyone was completely satisfied. I even heard the Minister for Local Government say he could not understand why lights had been installed there,

because everything was going so smoothly. Everyone agrees with that sentiment. Now we go through there and at night it is like a fairyland and it is possible to become befuddled as to which light to follow.

These lights are in operation day and night, and it is time we took some lead from cities like Melbourne and Sydney in Australia, and other cities in the world, where the lights, with the exception of those at intersections which are vulnerable to accident and are busy at any time, are turned off once the busy period has passed. That is not the case here. The same situation occurs at the corner of Hampton Road and Stirling Highway in Nedlands. At 2 a.m., 3 a.m., or 4 a.m. it is necessary to stop because the lights are red, and yet there is usually no other vehicle in sight—not even a milk cart. Some thought should be given to this matter so that motorists are not delayed unnecessarily. We should follow the lead of other cities and switch the lights off at a given time so that the traffic which is about can flow freely.

I have mentioned previously the number of "Stop" signs around, and more and more of them are being erected.

*Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.*

The Hon. A. R. JONES: When we suspended for tea, Mr. President, I was about to speak about Princess Road. This street runs from Nedlands to Claremont. I was about to say how ridiculous it was becoming when a section of a road about one mile in length, had four "Stop" signs within that distance. I venture to say that any one of those intersections, where a "Stop" sign calls for a stop in Princess Road, would be less busy than Princess Road itself. It seems ridiculous for the flow of traffic on Princess Road to have to stop four times in a mile when there is no need for any traffic to stop when crossing that busy thoroughfare.

That is the sort of thing that motorists are becoming very vexed with. I do not know who the authority is that decides where "Stop" signs will be placed, but I think more thought should go into the matter. It is so ridiculous that on this stretch of road there is no "Stop" sign when approaching the primary school—there is a sign to slow the traffic to 15 miles per hour—but as one goes the other way, and having passed the school, there is a "Stop" sign. How ridiculous can it become!

I draw attention to this situation again in the hope that someone—perhaps within the next 10 years—will take a realistic view of this problem, and have the situation investigated.

**THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North)** [7.37 p.m.]: I desire to say something in connection with the expenditure of this £28,000,000 we are about to authorise for the Government. I think it is high time,

in fact, I am sure it is high time, that the Government—this Government—began to turn its attention northward in regard to the sealing of roads. It has become a hardy annual with me over the past six years, and this is the seventh session. Each year one voices one's protest against the very poor performance of the Government in sealing roads in the North Province.

I have in mind particularly the road known as the North West Coastal Highway. This road runs from Geraldton to Port Hedland and is the main road which serves all the new iron ore projects and ports under construction, as well as the Exmouth Gulf radio centre and, of course, the people who live in the pastoral areas in the north. Also, it serves the asbestos industry at Wittenoom Gorge.

Year after year we read that during the winter months the road is impassable from Carnarvon northwards; that the road to Onslow is closed. This happens every June and July, and it has happened every June and July since this Government took office. The Government has a remarkable record of doing very little.

During the general election campaign 12 years ago—in 1953—when the present Premier was Minister for Works, some very rash statements and promises were made. On that occasion, during the campaign at Carnarvon the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hawke, supported by myself—we were supporting Mr. Norton as candidate—made the promise that we would progressively seal the coastal highway northwards between Northampton and Carnarvon, and attempt to cover no less than a 40-mile section each year.

That was achieved. That promise was kept, but to counteract our election day promise the Government of the day and the Minister for Works of the day, who would be responsible, said that they would not stop at Carnarvon; they would seal the road to Wyndham. But what has happened in the 12 years? The section from Northampton to Carnarvon has been sealed. The final section was closed during the first term of the present Government after the Hawke Government went out of office in 1959. That closed the promise of the Hawke Government; but the contribution of the present Government towards the sealing of the North West Coastal Highway towards Wyndham during its seven years of office has been seven miles. Seven miles of bitumen between Carnarvon and Onslow.

I think that is a shocking performance; and, of course, I think it is impossible—thank goodness—for this type of Government to remain in office for so long that at the present snail pace it will be 500 years before the bitumen gets to Port Hedland and 2,000 years before it gets to Wyndham.

Once again I voice my protest in connection with that very important road. It has become immensely important in recent years—much more important than it was when the present Premier declared that he would seal the road to Wyndham. Of course, it could never happen in his lifetime if he is going to do one mile each year. So, I hope more consideration will be given to north-west members' protests and pleas in this Chamber in connection with expenditure in that area.

We had some dispute and discussion in this Chamber during the Government's first year in office, when we protested against the Premier's proposition to seal Eyre Highway towards South Australia. The Premier, of course, in his judgment, thought the sealing of that road—because of the importance of the Empire Games to be held here—was a great stroke and would attract many tourists. That is all right, but what about the people living in the north who are expected to develop the country? What about the people of whom the Premier, only a few days ago, was reported as saying in the *Northern Times* of the 29th July—and I quote his words—

The North is on the move. I wish every Western Australian had an opportunity of seeing the great development taking place there.

They have no hope of seeing this development unless they are fortunate enough to have a charter aircraft the same as the Premier had, to go there; or an ordinary aircraft. They have no hope, because the roads are impassable; and they are impassable year after year.

Apart from that, the wear and tear on the transports that must use the road is very heavy indeed. The transporters, naturally, must charge higher freights and this reacts very badly on costs in the north.

The other subject I wish to talk about may not come directly within the scope of this Bill, but I feel our salaries may come out of this expenditure of £28,000,000.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: We cannot spend the money on roads and on salaries.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I would like to say a few words on what the Minister for Mines had to say in connection with the suspension of Standing Orders debate, which he closed with words to the effect that he accused the members of this House of wasting time. He seemed rather upset, and he seemed rather rash.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He did not do anything of the kind.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: He said we wasted time. I do not know whose time, but members of this Chamber certainly wasted no time, neither the Government's nor anybody else's time, particularly in the last session of Parliament. All members who were present last

year will remember that on many occasions this Chamber was still in session and still sitting after the Assembly members had gone home. All the lights were out and one could not find an Assembly member in the place. That happened early in the session and on many occasions.

I, myself, take exception to being accused of having wasted any time in this Chamber. The Minister took the opportunity of more or less browbeating members because they were not ready to speak and were prepared to wait for another day. I venture to say that if all members speak and follow on one after the other there would be no need for this House to meet for periods of eight or ten days; and that was the practice some years ago. But things have changed considerably in recent years, and if the hours and figures relating to this House could be summarised, we would find that this House has worked as many hours as the other House and has certainly made its contribution to the Government and the Parliament of this State.

Proof that we are not responsible for this rush period at the end of the session is surely in the figures quoted by Mr. Wise when he told us that no less than 34 Government measures were introduced into Parliament during the last 14 sitting days—introduced into the Legislative Assembly, that is. In any case, they were new Government measures; so who is responsible for the late rush, or who is responsible for any delay at the end of the session? Surely the Ministry for not having its business up to the Parliament to be dealt with.

I was rather upset at the words of the Minister in connection with this charge that we members of this Parliament had wasted our time. I feel sure that on reflection he will agree with me that he was perhaps hasty when he made that statement. I support the Bill.

**THE HON. N. E. BAXTER** (Central) [7.45 p.m.]: My remarks on the Bill will be brief. On looking at the first Supply Bill last year I notice that the sum granted by way of supply from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the General Loan Fund, and the Public Account was some £1,500,000 less than this year. It is also interesting to have a look at the second Supply Bill and the Appropriation Bill of last year to see what sums of money were applied from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the General Loan Fund, and the Public Account for use by the Government.

I really rose in this debate to speak to a matter which was to some extent raised last evening by Mr. Wise—I refer to payments by the Government to persons to whom it owes money. Mr. Wise commented on the fact that storekeepers in the north-west, and possibly in other places, have to wait some considerable time before they receive money owing to them by the

Government. This is not the only instance, or the worst instance, of this delayed payment of money owed by the Government. I refer to the many contractors who are carrying out public works in this State.

It is not uncommon for some of these contractors to have to wait for many months before they are paid; and, in some cases, these contractors are owed many thousands of pounds. Naturally that must reflect on the general cost of public buildings; because it is only natural that if a contractor has to wait for up to 12 months to be paid, maybe, £30,000 or £40,000, and sometimes more, the next time he tenders for a Government job he will jack up the price. He will say, "I had to wait so long for my money I will increase the charge to compensate for it." I know I would do that if I were in their position.

Several contractors have complained to me about the delay in payment for work they have done on public buildings; and I do not think it is good enough that these Government commitments should be delayed so long, and these contractors be out of pocket in the meantime. I should think many of them would be working on overdrafts at the bank—and many of them big overdrafts—because they had not been paid what was owing to them.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You said you know of instances where they have been kept waiting for 12 months?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I should say up to 12 months. Only recently I was talking to a contractor who does a considerable amount of work for the Government and invariably he is waiting to be paid for work he has done. He is out of pocket because the Government has not met its commitments on the due date. He finds it is many months before he receives his money after he has finished a contract. The Government should look into this question, because there should be no delay in the payment of these accounts. The money should be paid as closely as possible to the due date.

I do not know whether the delay is caused by advice from Treasury Department officers, but it seems to me that with the granting of supply at this time of the year—and in this case the proposal in the Bill is for £6,000,000 from the General Loan Fund—these delays should not occur. One could realise, perhaps, that there may be some little delay until such time as a Supply Bill had been passed by Parliament, but surely the delays should not be as great as they appear to be. Naturally, of course, the Government has ways and means of juggling its finances to meet its commitments until such time as a Supply Bill has been passed, and therefore I think it is high time something was done about the position I have mentioned. The Government should meet its commitments within a reasonable time.

I feel confident that this delay in payment is causing some increase in the cost of our public buildings, and it is a cost that could be avoided. As I said, I know how I would feel if I had a contract and the person for whom I was doing the job did not meet his commitments on the due date. The next time I contracted for a job with that person I would add a little bit to the contract price to catch up on what I had lost on the previous occasion by way of interest. Somebody has to pay the interest on the overdraft in these cases and it is not fair that contractors should have to wait so long for their money. I support the Bill.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [7.50 p.m.]: I think that almost without exception the matters that have been raised on this Bill are not possible of an answer by me at this point of time, except I give an assurance to the members concerned that the matters they have brought forward will be referred to the departments concerned. I will certainly make some inquiries—and I have done so already—regarding the question of delays in payment to people who are doing work under contract for the Government.

In respect of the remarks made by Mr. Strickland, I would like to make it clear that I meant no offence. I made no charge against anybody; I merely said I thought that we, to some extent, contributed to the state of affairs referred to by Mr. Wise by reason of the fact that frequently we were not ready to go on with a debate. That was all I said, and if I left the honourable member with any other impression I apologise for it, because it was not intended. That is all I propose to say about the matter except to repeat that no offence on my part was intended. I thank members for their support of the Bill.

**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. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.**

## **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY**

*Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 3rd August, on the following motion by The Hon. E. C. House:—

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. N. McNEILL** (Lower West) [7.55 p.m.]: Mr. President, in speaking on the Address-in-Reply debate I first wish to associate myself with the affirmation of loyalty which was so ably moved by Mr. House when he moved a motion in reply to the Speech with which His Excellency opened Parliament. I should like to congratulate the honourable member on his first speech in this Chamber, for he, like me, is a new member.

I also wish to express my pleasure at being elected as a member of this Chamber and I hope, with your indulgence, Sir, and that of other members, I will be able to make some contribution in this place worthy of the electors of the Lower West Province. At least I have the advantage not only of representing a great electorate but also of benefiting from the line of succession, in part, from The Hon. Jim Murray and, in addition, of being associated with a colleague who has proved his capacity for representation by his recent elevation to the Ministry. I should like to congratulate the honourable member in that regard.

I am particularly pleased that in being here I join other members who have over many years, and in their own various selected ways, contributed to the governing of Western Australia. My ventures into political life have not always followed a predictable course, but at least one can claim, I think, that they provided some useful, if not valuable, experience; and perhaps because of the various associated circumstances they are still leaving some little bits and pieces in their wake. However, in view of those experiences I feel, as one—one of a small band; and perhaps to be a little more up to date, one of a small group—who has appeared rather briefly in Canberra, and who has re-appeared on the local stage, I would be failing in my responsibilities if I did not refer to a situation which has caused me, and I know other people, no small amount of concern for some considerable time—I refer to a subject which, perhaps, the angels would fear to raise; namely, Federal-State relations.

The electorate I represent, together with The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, is already established as a most prosperous one, one in which the development of its industries—and they are many; a great many indeed—has reached a high level. Its output in terms of dairy products, for instance, and farm products generally—meat, vegetables, fruit, and the like—can, I believe, be reckoned in terms of millions. Add to this the output of timber—at present enjoying a considerable boom—and mineral production, which is not inconsiderable, and, what is perhaps the

mightiest of all, the product of labour in all its forms in the major industries—that is, in the secondary and in the service industries—and we have a position which probably could not be equalled outside the metropolitan area of this State.

All of this has enabled community development of an extremely high order which could well be the envy of a great many other areas in this State. As I say, much has happened in this area; in fact, so much has happened that I believe if given an opportunity of having a peep into the future, we would fail, for want of adequate words, to describe faithfully what could be the destiny of that region. What agricultural production as yet remains untapped? What could be the eventual development of the port of Bunbury if in the years to come it is to serve faithfully the major industries of its hinterland?

I refer only to those two in general observation at this time, because I know that members with their detailed knowledge of their own provinces will, upon due reflection, agree that what I say is right in respect of the Lower West Province, and would be right also if it were applied to all other provinces in this State. It would be right, and I think this will be conceded, because we have a great faith in Western Australia. I am sure we have a great faith in this State. If we did not believe in this I am sure members would not be present in this Chamber.

If we are to achieve the success I mentioned, that achievement, depending on the circumstances, can be rapid or slow; and perhaps like a former and most worthy representative of a part of my area many years ago—Sir John Forrest—I believe the fulfilment of so many aspirations can be achieved through the successful operation of a Federal system, a national partnership, which Mr. Wise referred to earlier in this House—a Federal system which Sir John Forrest in his day played no small part in establishing.

If I may refer to those times, not the least of the motives behind federation was the desire of the States at that time for protection, firstly from overseas influences—whether it was from military or economic circumstances—and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, from other States in terms of their commercial interests. Under no circumstances was the Commonwealth to become a dominant partner in Federation; and, in the minds of those who framed the Constitution, the rights of the States were to be protected.

One of the weapons that was perhaps forged by the founders and which has since turned out to be a most effective weapon in establishing the paramount position of the Commonwealth has been the Constitution itself in one way, because a legal document does not have ready adaptability

in cases of future needs and cannot necessarily meet the future needs which may not at all times be anticipated. This is so in another way because almost invariably, and by virtue of its position, the Commonwealth may attempt to exploit the Constitution for its own ends, whatever they may be; and the onus then remains on the State or States to challenge the validity. That has happened on numerous occasions.

I suggest it depends upon one's point of view whether this is a good or a bad thing. No doubt the Commonwealth is at all times charged with doing those things which are in the national interest. One must always remember that despite the most sincere desire on the part of the founders and framers of the Constitution to ensure the so-called sovereignty of the States—or more correctly the rights of the States—it was equally their intention that away and above State boundaries we should be one people with one destiny—in every sense a united Australian people.

I take the opportunity at this stage of referring to a recent statement of another great Australian, in my view, the Minister for External Affairs, in which he said—

One of the chief problems that faced our federation at the outset—and indeed this problem faces all federations at the moment when a federal constitution is achieved—was to evolve into a nation with a national spirit, a full national loyalty and a national outlook. We do not achieve this if we continue to think of ourselves, not as a nation, but as six islands joined by a few strings of legal terminology. We do not achieve this if we think of a Federal Government not as national Government but just as another government among many. We do not achieve this so long as we give most of our political time to talking about State rights and not enough time to thinking about national opportunities and national responsibilities.

I would say this applies equally whether one is a State politician or a State's politician in Canberra. Perhaps it is paradoxical. The founders did not want a union—a complete union. This was far from the desire of most of them, and few people today seem to be unificationists; yet today more control is being exercised by the Commonwealth to the extent that the States are becoming to a greater or lesser degree simply agencies of a central Government, of which we have already heard this session.

May I say that the States in many instances are not unwilling parties to this process. It is possible that it is sheer inevitability, but certainly some historians and constitutional lawyers would suggest that Federation is only a preparation for a unified Government. Maybe it is, after all, just another expression of the need

for State protection, because of our physical or economic circumstances, from the domination of better endowed States.

Why else does Western Australia support the principle of uniform taxation? Why does Western Australia favour in principle, or in general terms, the financial agreement between the Commonwealth and the States, the system of financial assistance grants, and so on? The answer is, clearly, it does so because under the arrangements Western Australia does receive a treatment not necessarily enjoyed by other States. Western Australia does enjoy a Commonwealth-imposed protection—a protection which it receives in the terms of the Constitution to which I have already referred.

It is far from my purpose in this place to stand alongside the Commonwealth. I have been a Western Australian for far longer than ever I was associated with Canberra. I have no intention whatever of placing myself alongside the Commonwealth in these matters, or alongside the views expressed by certain individual Ministers in any of the current controversies. I do say, however, that we cannot have it both ways. We cannot embrace and enjoy the protection and treatment we receive, and at the same time denounce the central Government for failing us in our hour of need, so to speak.

What in actual fact is happening is that while we apparently support a Federal system with the benefits it confers upon us, we are liable to play right into the hands of the unificationists. This is the whole crux of the matter. We are liable to play into the hands of those who would change the financial arrangements, and we do so by our own unwillingness to accept the very essence and expression of a Federal system working in our favour.

Too often do I read in the Press, or hear quite outside political circles, the viewpoint, almost, that the Commonwealth is intentionally neglecting Western Australia; or, by implication, that it is bent upon our destruction; or even that our elected senators and members of Parliament cease to be Western Australians once they join the Commonwealth Parliament. I do agree that some are under a disadvantage in the party they represent, but I do believe that all of them are Western Australians first and foremost, and that they play their part in this capacity and hope for the co-operation of their colleagues in this and in other States.

To illustrate this point I would like to quote from the Commonwealth Budget papers of 1964, and in particular from the White Paper dealing with the Commonwealth payments to or for the States. In this Budget paper of 1964 we find that Western Australia received total general revenue grants of £43,800,000 compared with South Australia's £39,000,000, Queensland's £50,000,000, New South Wales'

£115,000,000, and Victoria's £85,000,000. The total payments include specific purposes funds of £69,200,000 for Western Australia, compared with £55,000,000 for South Australia, £76,000,000 for Queensland, £157,000,000 for New South Wales, and £113,000,000 for Victoria.

These are, I think, fairly striking, but they are more striking in my view if they are calculated on a population basis. On this basis they work out to Victoria receiving £36 per head of population; New South Wales £37 per head of population; Queensland £47 per head of population; South Australia £53 per head of population, and Western Australia £86 per head of population. The estimated total Commonwealth commitment on special State projects beyond 1963-64 is as follows:—

New South Wales	£17,300,000;
Queensland	£12,800,000;
South Australia	£21,900,000;
Tasmania	£2,300,000;
Western Australia	£45,800,000.

Western Australia's figure is twice as much as that of any other State. I suggest these figures adequately illustrate the point I wish to make, which may be contrary to the thoughts that some members have in mind.

The point I wish to make is that we can receive recognition of our disabilities by the presentation of well substantiated facts, and by the insistence through co-operative methods that Western Australian resources are a national asset and should be viewed in that light. There is in my view a great need for pride in one's State, but no room for parochialism. There is the need for State solvency in a Commonwealth, but no place, surely, for subjecting this to the petty party or personal aspirations at a national level.

There remain great problems in development as it affects agriculture, industry, and the community generally in the Lower West Province; and it is my belief that these problems can best be overcome—in fact can only be overcome in these days of financial arrangements, and so on—by mutual co-operation with the Federal system, and by continued good government in this State—and it is good government—in conjunction with an effectively operating and satisfactory Federal system.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee.

*House adjourned at 8.15 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 4th August, 1965

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