

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 29th July, 1971

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Toms) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

CHIEF HANSARD REPORTER

Retirement

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Toms) [11.02 a.m.]: There is an announcement I would like to make. At the meeting of the Joint Printing Committee held on Wednesday, the 28th July, 1971, the resignation of the Chief Hansard Reporter (Mr. G. Hale) was accepted with regret.

Mr. Hale, whose resignation takes effect with the close of business on Friday, the 30th July, 1971, has been a reporter with *Hansard* since 1941. He was appointed Deputy Chief Hansard Reporter during August, 1958, and was promoted to Chief Hansard Reporter in February, 1966.

As this is the last occasion on which we will have an opportunity in this House to express our appreciation for his very long and faithful service in this Parliament, I thought I would take the opportunity this morning to pay this tribute to him.

A similar announcement is being made in another place. This also pays tribute to Mr. Hale for his long and faithful service. We felt that we should record the appreciation of members of this Parliament for the courtesy and attention we have received from Mr. Hale. No doubt those who have left also received the same courtesy and attention.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [11.03 a.m.]: I would like to join with you, Mr. Speaker, in expressing appreciation to Mr. Hale for the excellent service he has rendered to the Legislative Assembly and to Parliament generally for the time he has been on the staff here. He has always been courteous and attentive and, from my own personal experience, I can assure the House there has never been a single occasion on which I have been to him with some matter that he has not been most anxious to help. He always seems to succeed in finding for me whatever I might require without the slightest trouble.

We have been very well served by the officers of Parliament over the years. I came into this House some years before Mr. Hale was appointed to the *Hansard* staff and, during the whole of the time he has been here, I have been impressed by his efficiency and his readiness to help members who might require some attention.

Accordingly I am very happy indeed for this opportunity to express my appreciation and the views which I have long held.

Some of us retire by compulsion and some by the effluxion of time. For the

most part members of Parliament generally retire by compulsion after a three year interval, or sometimes a lesser period. Nevertheless, when the time comes for anyone to retire there is always a considerable amount of regret on all sides.

I believe I am expressing the feelings of members generally when I say that it is with regret that we have to accept the situation that has now arisen. There is no doubt, however, that Mr. Hale leaves us with all good will.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.05 a.m.]: On behalf of my leader and all those who sit with me on this side of the House might I supplement the comments made by the Premier. The time comes when an officer of Parliament—or for that matter an officer in any position—feels that he must retire. There are some people who retire under slightly different circumstances from others. I think Mr. Hale's retirement would be in this category.

He has filled an honoured position in this Parliament and has been a very worthy upholder of the great traditions established many generations ago by *Hansard*. He comes from a family of people who have a tradition in reporting and I think it is to his credit that in many difficult situations he has always tried to be firm but very fair.

I echo the sentiments of the Premier that whenever one approached Mr. Hale with a problem he was able to find time to sit down and endeavour to find a solution within the responsibility and area of judgment he has. Without exception he has been able to find a solution that is mutually satisfactory to all concerned.

Mr. Hale is also a person who has been very conscious of the role of *Hansard* and the honoured place it has in Parliament. During his period as Chief Hansard Reporter he has sought, in conjunction with the Speaker and other appropriate officers, to speed up the service given by *Hansard* and to improve its general effectiveness so far as members are concerned.

I am sure it would be my leader's desire—as I know it is mine and the desire of others who sit with me—to express to Mr. Hale our thanks for his courtesy and attention and to wish him and his family well in the future.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [11.07 a.m.]: I would also like to associate myself and the members of my party with the sentiments expressed by the Premier and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Hale has carried out his duties as a reporter and as Chief Hansard Reporter for a very long time. I would like to assure him that we have very much appreciated his approach to his responsible position. He has certainly been most approachable on all occasions.

I have known Mr. Hale for many years—we were schoolboys together at the same school—and I was happy to renew my association with him when I entered this Parliament.

I have always found Mr. Hale ready to discuss any matter that might be referred to him in connection with Parliament and in the reporting of speeches. I think I echo the view of all members when I say that in this regard he is held in the very highest esteem by us.

I felt I would like to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Premier and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and take the opportunity to wish Mr. Hale and his family the very best in his retirement.

Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Toms) [11.09 a.m.]: I thank members for their expressions of appreciation and good wishes to Mr. Hale.

It is now my pleasure to announce that at the same meeting the Deputy Chief Hansard Reporter (Mr. J. A. Cox) was appointed as Chief Hansard Reporter. He will commence his duty as from the 31st July, 1971.

We all know Mr. Cox very well, and I feel sure he will maintain the high standard of *Hansard* reporting that we have, from our experience in the past, come to expect.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SIXTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 28th July, on the following motion by Mr. A. R. Tonkin:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

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

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [11.10 a.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I join with other members in congratulating you on your appointment to the high office you hold, and to extend to you my best wishes during your term of office. With such a good background in local government as you have had, I was looking for that extreme impartiality that one sees in local government, but I was amazed the other night to see the *status quo* not being maintained in this House. However, I do wish you well in your term of office.

Mr. Davies: The *status quo* was maintained.

Mr. RUSHTON: I extend my best wishes to the Chairman of Committees and his deputies, and I offer my thanks to the officers of Parliament who make our stay here very pleasant indeed. I also take this opportunity to wish Mr. Hale, the Chief Hansard Reporter, a happy retirement.

To the Premier I would offer my congratulations on his receiving the confidence of his party, and being elected to the high office he holds. To Mrs. Tonkin I would convey my best wishes; she is a woman I have known for many years. I wish that they have a happy marriage and a happy future.

To all new members of this House I would like to convey my congratulations. Already some of them must have found the reaction to their maiden speeches somewhat puzzling. We can think of the member for Subiaco who in his maiden speech set out to convey to the public his concern for the well-being of all people, of the nursing staff, and of those who participate in providing the best possible service in health; but he must have been very puzzled when his remarks were misconstrued.

The member for Wembley must have given deep thought to the very involved subject of Commonwealth-State financial relations when introducing in debate that matter in his maiden speech, and he too must have been puzzled when not a word of his contribution appeared in the media.

I say to the other new members that they have set a high standard in the presentation of their maiden speeches, and it is particularly encouraging to know that there is on the other side of the House a member who is a very keen federationist. I hope, just as I am sure he hopes, that he will be able to swerve his party away from its centralist direction. I am sure that if he is given the opportunity to express his thoughts he will in some way influence his Federal leader to follow the beliefs that we on this side of the House follow.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Who is the federationist on the Government side of the House?

Mr. RUSHTON: The member for Boulder-Dundas who is very keen on the State's rights.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Is he a federationist?

Mr. RUSHTON: He is very keen on the Federal system. We on this side applaud him for holding that view and we certainly hope that he influences the Treasurer and the Government in this respect.

Mr. Graham: The member for Dale would be well advised to devote his attention to his own Federal leader and leave the Federal Labor leadership to members on this side of the House.

Mr. Court: The member for Dale's comments were very pertinent.

Mr. Graham: The leadership of the Federal Government is changing all the time!

Mr. RUSHTON: I would also like to have recorded our appreciation to the leader of our party, Sir David Brand, for the wonderful contribution he has made to Western Australia. He is certainly in my mind, and no doubt in the minds of many other people, regarded as being on the same plane as Churchill for Britain, Menzies and Curtin for Australia, and John Forrest for Western Australia. History will record the political life of Sir David as having had a great influence on the great development and the progress of this State.

To the members of the previous Cabinet we are indebted for a job excellently done, and the State is now reaping the rewards of their efforts.

Before I progress to other issues, I think this is an opportune time for me to mention some of the changes which have taken place in the surrounds of Parliament House. I will refer briefly to the State emblem which has been placed on top of Parliament House; this is a very pleasing feature. Many of us have read the criticisms of this emblem, but whether the kangaroos which are depicted in the emblem be females, pregnant, or leaning backwards or forwards, they are a very pleasing feature. I would like this thought recorded: They give a finish to the building. All in all I think the emblem is very satisfactory.

Mr. Graham: What made you think of pregnancy? They are two male kangaroos!

Mr. RUSHTON: I did not understand that to be so. To those who are in authority and who have the responsibility for looking after Parliament House I would point out that already stains appear on the front facade of the building just below the emblem and the kangaroos. However, I am not blaming the kangaroos for the stains. This is something which often happens with various rock formations; when something is placed on top of the rock and water seeps to the base, we often find stains appearing. This is a feature which must be watched carefully.

Most important of all, I wish to record my very sincere thanks to the electors of Dale in giving me yet another opportunity to work through them for the welfare of the State. The work that one does as a member of Parliament is always very rewarding, and certainly doubly rewarding when it is recognised in the many ways that it is, small or large.

I relate with great humility to some of the results that were obtained in the last elections. I was overwhelmed with the favourable returns in many of the boxes, and it was gratifying that so many people placed so much faith in me. For that I thank them.

Briefly I want to mention a few matters on which I will be working consistently and constantly in the hope of achieving the best possible results for my electorate. Firstly I would like to refer to some of the things that are worrying my electors. Before the change of Government we had achieved a very satisfactory breakthrough in providing employment, particularly in the Rockingham area. Therefore the people there felt some concern when they heard or read the utterances of the Deputy Premier on what appears to be a preference in this regard to the northern part of the metropolitan area. I hope he remains fully conscious of the commitments of the family people in my area, of their needs, and of the very great necessity for stability of employment to be retained.

The building of the hospital at Rockingham was given the highest priority, and the people there are concerned that this might not be proceeded with as was intended by the previous Government.

Mr. Davies: You are not aware of the facts concerning the construction of the hospital at Rockingham.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am mentioning quite good things concerning the hospital. I do not want to irritate the Minister, but I would like him to place in the Budget for this year a provision for the construction of that hospital, because it is recognised as having a very high priority. We do not want any "jiggery-pokery" taking place.

The schools in my electorate—be they old or new—have been maintained to a very high standard; and we wish them to be so maintained. It was with some apprehension that we read about the discontinuance—we hope for only a short time—of the maintenance on these buildings. In time the system of deferment catches up with everything, and we do not want to see that system creeping into education. On the one hand the Government will hand out a few dollars in the form of free school books, but will recoup the money by deferring the maintenance on school buildings and the programme of development of school grounds. This is what we must watch and so ascertain the integrity of the moves involved.

As I said earlier, at this time I am not going to press the individual items relating to my electorate. The transport system through to Armadale and the employment situation there must be kept under close scrutiny, as well as the traffic problems at Kelmscott and all the other problems which arise in a very fast-growing electorate.

I would now like to make brief reference to the remarks of some of the members who have already spoken in this debate. It was amazing to hear the member for Albany taking a back flip. Last year during the Address-in-Reply debate he moved an amendment concerning the Fitzgerald

River Reserve. This year he expressed what we thought was a very genuine concern regarding the retention of the harbour at Albany for wool export and for the export of other items produced in the southern region; and yet when an amendment was moved this year it was amazing and staggering to find that he simply denounced that principle.

Another example of a change of attitude was revealed last night when the member for Perth was speaking. He was suggesting that the State Housing Commission rents should be raised and yet only last year members on the other side were castigating the then Government because it did not maintain the rents at their then existing rate. The Government was chided for having the temerity to move the rents up a margin and yet now the member for Perth is saying barefacedly that he advocates that this backlog of rents, or the loss of rents, should be recovered.

It is quite amazing to hear members opposite pressing our needs to the Federal Government. We want the Government in this State, responsible to the people, to establish the correct priorities and we will be watchful of this. We desire the best possible Federal-State financial arrangements we can obtain, but we also want the Government here to be conscious of the correct priorities with regard to the money it has available. No Government can ever have more money than it needs for the requirements of the people of this wonderful State of ours, but the priorities must be placed in their correct order.

On the notice paper is an item concerning vermin tax. I am not going to press this point at the moment because we have yet to see the legislation to be submitted, but I particularly will be very watchful of this item and if under the Bill the previous unfair tax which was levied on the people is reinstated, the Government will find it necessary to answer to a large percentage of the people of the State. It will be very interesting to see some of the intended legislation.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I will have news for thee.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am not jumping over the edge of the precipice. I am merely saying that it will be interesting to see the legislation. I am trying to indicate that any tax imposed must be fair and just if it is to be acceptable as a tax.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I think you might be disappointed.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am just raising the matter at the moment, but if when the legislation is before us we find that the previously inequitable tax is levied I certainly will be disappointed as well as hostile.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I am making a forecast that you will be disappointed.

Mr. RUSHTON: If the Minister means that in the correct spirit, I will be very pleased, but we will wait and see.

Mr. Court: If we take the interjection literally, it means a tax is to be thumped on because we would certainly be disappointed in that case.

Mr. RUSHTON: We will give the Minister the benefit of the doubt at the moment, but I do sound a note of warning that we on this side pressed for justice to be done by the relief of the vermin tax and we do not want this tax levied again.

In passing I mention the State's economy, and this is the most important factor in our State's future. It concerns members on this side. A deliberate attempt has been made by the Premier and others opposite to destroy the confidence this State has had in its future.

Mr. May: That is not right.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am pleased that the Premier made a statement regarding this matter at a meeting this week. He was speaking, I think, to the Western Australian engineers.

Mr. Norton: Have you checked the accuracy of the report?

Mr. RUSHTON: He mentioned that the deficit of \$4,300,000 had not caused serious problems. So here at last is the moment of truth. We find that things are being placed in their proper perspective. We do have financial problems, of course—everyone has—but we are viewing these problems in their right perspective and this is what we on this side of the House want done. We want a degree of responsibility exercised so that people in their daily lives are not disturbed to such an extent that a landslide or a catastrophe occurs in the well-being of this State resulting in the drying up of the most necessary ingredient for the success of the State; that is, confidence. We are therefore watchful and apprehensive of the moves the Government has been making in an attempt to show itself as being under great stress and strain, thus withdrawing certain things and changing priorities so that later on it can indicate what a magnificent magician of the financial world it is. These tactics must be recognised at this time.

Mr. Graham: We will be interested to hear in a few days' time what the Federal Treasurer says about the economic situation.

Mr. RUSHTON: He has his responsibility and the Minister has his. It is no good the Government running behind someone's apron strings. It needs to face up frankly to the people and give the facts.

Mr. Graham: We will see how much at variance the honourable member is with the Federal Treasurer.

Mr. RUSHTON: I make these points relating to the State's economy because the true situation should be revealed. We do not want the Premier and his Ministers to distort the facts. We want them to present the facts as they really are and we want the place the State has held in the world scene to be maintained. In this way employment and all other necessary advantages for the people will be retained.

I would now like to pass on to a couple of items which demonstrate how amazing is the difference between the Government and the Opposition in connection with some very serious problems in this State, and this has been revealed as the result of a certain amount of chivvying from the other side in connection with these problems.

We have only to consider the promises made by the Government concerning town planning. As we all know the Government has procrastinated and we are still waiting for the Minister to indicate what he will do. It is very interesting indeed to record this fact.

Mr. Brady: Was there not any procrastination in town planning in your Government's time?

Mr. RUSHTON: We developed our plan step by step.

Mr. May: Yes; two-inch steps!

Mr. RUSHTON: The following were our intentions had we been returned to power:—

The Government will implement the main principles of two major proposals for long range planning of Perth.

The first is a plan to channel the growth of the metropolitan area into corridors of development, with good access to large leisure parks and other open spaces on either side.

The second is a transport plan which dovetails with the corridor plan and provides for comfortable and efficient movement of people to enhance living conditions in the region.

The first plan provides four major corridors of development radiating from the more densely populated heart of Perth:

The North-West corridor running up the coast.

The South-West corridor, running down the coast past Kwinana and Rockingham to Mandurah.

The Eastern corridor, running out through Midland and over the Darling Ranges.

The South-East corridor, running down through Armadale to Pinjarra.

We will implement these broad concepts and practise a greater degree of flexibility in the management of the plan. Plans are for people—not people for plans.

It is very interesting to compare those intentions with the activities of the present Government since it was voted into office. We can see the present Government procrastinating. It is sitting on the plan without any firm intentions. In His Excellency's Speech there was some vague reference to it, but from that one would not know what was to be done. This is not good enough in the field of town planning.

The Premier said recently that he was not very much concerned about the housing situation; that things had equalised themselves. In fact, he said the situation is moving downwards but we say that constant attention is required. We do not want things to run down to such a stage that socialistic measures have to be taken to relieve the situation under the excuse of an emergency. The housing situation should receive close attention from week to week and from month to month so that the Government is not placed in the invidious position of having to bring in emergency measures of socialistic origin.

I will now refer to the Nielson report to which the Deputy Premier has referred, and has apparently misquoted to the previous Minister.

Mr. Graham: No, that is entirely wrong. I quoted the exact dates and circumstances.

Mr. O'Connor: That is quite wrong because the Minister said the Government had taken no action.

Mr. Graham: The previous Government did not make a single decision.

Mr. RUSHTON: The present Government, when setting out its policy, did not show any clear indication of what it intended to do with regard to transport.

Mr. Graham: Neither did the ex-Government, even though it had the report in front of it.

Mr. RUSHTON: That is what makes the situation so interesting.

Mr. O'Connor: What has the present Government done in regard to transport in the four months it has been in office?

Mr. Graham: I will tell members opposite when I have an opportunity to speak.

Mr. RUSHTON: I would like to get some comments in, for the record. Referring again to the Nielson report, our policy was as follows:—

In this spirit we will develop a flexible transport plan along the guidelines established by the Nielsen report released last week:

We will create a Metropolitan Region Transport Authority.

We will replace suburban rail lines with bus freeways.

We will build two major bus stations in Perth—one on the Technical College site, and one completely underground where the Perth Railway station now stands.

We will integrate the new bus stations with pedestrian thoroughways being developed by the Perth City Council.

We will provide circulating bus services around the city centre.

We will develop a financial plan to cover what is expected to be a \$400 million programme.

We shall immediately call for public comment and circulate the Nielsen proposals to those especially interested.

The next item should be noted by the Deputy Premier. To continue—

By May this year we will begin to make firm decisions.

However, the Government has nothing to offer. I thought it would be interesting to relate that decision.

I will now move on to other matters which are of grave importance to this House. Even in the last two weeks vituperation and personal invective have crept into the charges made in this House, and this is something to be discouraged. The decorum and the dignity of this House is of the utmost importance, and this jaundiced approach seems to be the only way members from the other side of the House have of facing up to the reality of the facts presented to them. That approach is very discouraging for our future while this Government is in office.

Mr. Graham: You paragon of virtue, you! I can see your halo from here.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will proceed further and mention the instance raised by the Deputy Premier relating to Mr. Swartz. I ask: What good will such remarks do on the international scene?

Mr. Graham: What good did Mr. Swartz do for Western Australia?

Mr. RUSHTON: The Deputy Premier has made certain inferences.

Mr. Graham: They were deliberate statements in accordance with fact.

Mr. RUSHTON: They were impossible statements, the basis of which could not be laid on the Table of the House, so the Deputy Premier ran for cover.

Mr. May: Why not leave this subject to someone who knows something about it? The member for Dale is a little Sir Echo. Why not allow the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to carry on with this matter?

Mr. RUSHTON: We on this side of the House fight for a principle.

Mr. Graham: The member for Dale does not know the first thing about the matter.

Mr. RUSHTON: How accurate was the figure of 10,000 which was quoted by the Minister for Railways?

Mr. May: The member for Dale is talking about another subject.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will speak on many subjects before I have finished. We have seen politics being played to the limit in the last few days, and I refer to the change in the membership of the Licensing Court. In this morning's political notes the Premier had the following to say:—

Anything sound in Sir David Brand's administration will certainly be continued by us, but we will throw out whatever we consider unsuitable.

Surely the people of Western Australia should receive an explanation from the Government regarding its actions in this matter. Surely it is fair to the person concerned.

Mr. Graham: The previous Government appointed the Chairman of the Licensing Court.

Mr. RUSHTON: Can the Labor Party produce a case showing where a situation such as that which has now been created has arisen in the past?

Mr. Graham: How did Gordon Freeth and Fred Chaney get their jobs? Were politics involved?

Mr. Court: How did Frank Wise get the job of Administrator of the Northern Territory?

Mr. T. D. Evans: The previous Government appointed him.

Mr. Court: The Liberal Government: That is the point I am making.

Mr. RUSHTON: Is the Government going to replace all those who were appointed to Government jobs during the last 12 years?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Does the member for Dale know what his Government did with the Fremantle Port Authority? It put off the union representative—who represented the general point of view—and replaced him.

Several members interjected.

Mr. RUSHTON: Let us have the facts; let us have the Liberals named.

Mr. Graham: The previous Government took the present Premier off the University Senate, and it took a Labor man off the Metropolitan Market Trust and put another man there.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Dale resume his seat? I have allowed the interjections to go on because I believed the member for Dale had already

made a half-hour speech on the Address-in-Reply through his interjections. However, I ask that no further interjections be made except on points of information. We will then get through this sitting much more quickly.

Mr. RUSHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will now have an opportunity to refer to other inconsistencies concerning the present Government. I will refer to a situation which involves the Treasurer, and the kindest word I can think of to use in this instance is that it was "unfair." We set out in our policy a plan to help independent schools with their interest charges relating to building programmes.

In my electorate there is an independent school in great need of assistance. The school will cease to operate, and this raises a dangerous situation regarding the education of the children concerned. I naturally sought the assistance of the Premier, and I received an answer from the Treasurer. It must be remembered that the Liberal policy was to help independent schools with interest rates.

I consider the answer I received was quite unfair and, in saying that, I think I have chosen moderate words. As members will recall the Treasurer was being asked what he would do about the situation and what the future would hold.

Mr. T. D. Evans: First explain to the House what the situation is.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will read it, which is the fairest thing I can do. The Treasurer said—

The Government will, I am sure, during its term of office, give earnest consideration to amending the Education Act to enable it to consider applications for assistance such as in the case for replacement of the Point Peron school.

To clear any doubts in the Treasurer's mind—

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Treasurer has no doubts at all.

Mr. RUSHTON: —this is because the Act, as it presently exists, does not allow for other than what is being done. He then went on to say—

Because of the severe budgetary conditions now confronting the Government however, I am not able at this point of time to recommend any such amendment of the Education Act.

This relates to the fact that the Act needs to be amended to provide this help. The Brand policy speech had offered to do that. The Treasurer then said—

With the urgent need to husband scarce loan and revenue funds, it is doubtful whether if such an amendment were now proposed, Parliamentary approval of both Houses of Parliament could be obtained.

Is this fair when it was certainly a part of the Brand policy? Why does not the present Government come out and say that it is not going to do it.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Brand Government was going to provide \$1,000,000 for local government. Heaven knows where it would have got it from had it been called upon to do so.

Mr. RUSHTON: Where will the present Government get its \$22,000,000 from?

Mr. T. D. Evans: What about the Brand Government's promises for uniform charges for electricity in Western Australia? It was going to work wonders in this area.

Mr. RUSHTON: That is digressing. Let us look at the fairness of the situation stated. We must have responsible attitudes at all times. I can take this a little further. When I spoke to an amendment moved to the Address-in-Reply I said that I had been worrying the Premier—and indeed I was unhappy that the need existed for me to do this—because the people in my electorate thought that free transport was to be provided for school children. I personally firmly believed this claim, which was quite an effective electoral weapon against me. It transpires that one of the Labor candidates had put the words, "Free transport to schools" in his electoral advertisement. What a weapon it was! I do not blame the Premier or the Treasurer for this. It was a misfortune of war, but an effective one.

How damaging will it be if these types of misstatements persist and we have to keep on continuing to disprove them. I am referring to personal invective, implications by innuendo, and insinuations. This is what is so damaging. Let us know what the facts are and use those facts. We should not have to wrestle with inferences in people's minds and find that it takes a week to discharge them, if they can be discharged. In many ways inference can be quite destructive. In this connection, I had the firm impression that what the Minister for Local Government was suggesting recently was Government policy, but from an explanation yesterday it turns out that it is not. It seems that he is flying a kite in relation to more people paying tax. This kind of thing is worrying.

I refer to the question of granting a pair which has received some publicity lately. Last Friday on my way home from a meeting I called in to see some friends. They asked me what we were doing to the Premier and his people and said that the attitude did not seem reasonable. What staggered me is that the Premier is claiming—I hope I am not being unfair in saying this—that the Liberals are doing an unjust thing. In any event, the Press records it this way. I am sure that the matter has not been finalised, but what

the Liberals have been doing is nothing else than consider the recommendation and suggestion made by the Premier. This kind of thing worries me. We are being shown to be unfair and unreasonable, when we are only discussing terms and conditions which the Premier has put forward. This situation is similar to another when a different Government was negotiating. I refer to a proposal made by Mr. Hawke. The situation now is that the Liberal Party is being charged with being unfair and even unjust to the member for Perth. I think the Premier should explain to the people of the State that this is not the situation.

Something else along these lines occurred last week. It is another instance of having to cope with inferences which have been drawn and having to disprove certain statements. As I say it is not reasonable for us to have to do this. I refer to the letter which has been distributed and which has so embarrassed the Premier. I fully agree that it was most unfortunate. Can anybody really believe the explanations? I am not referring to the Premier's explanation but to other explanations. How many thousands of letters were distributed? Surely we cannot believe that members on the other side of the House who support the Premier and his Ministers are incapable of reading and realising what is reasonable. This is another matter on which I think an explanation should be given by the Premier in due course. He should make known what is taking place. I am fully on his side in the concern which he feels, but I do not think it is good enough for the explanation appearing in the Press. People are laughing at us. This is another example of where something has been said and it is necessary for us to disprove it.

I draw an analogy to people who put up electoral signs where they should not be erected. Someone else, who plays by the rules, has to see that they are removed. This is the kind of action which is creeping in. I strongly sympathise with the Premier and I do not think he should be embarrassed in this way because this sort of thing is going on behind his back. I hope he will instruct his people quite firmly that he wants nothing more of it.

To refer to a matter which I have already mentioned—people in my electorate still firmly believe that the present Government will provide free transport for school children. It is taking me a long time to convince them that the Labor Government has not promised this. I have suggested that people should not saddle the Government with promises they have not made. As I have said, this is something which slipped through and at the time I did not detect that it was not part of the Labor Party's promises. I firmly believed that the Tonkin Government

would introduce free transport for children in the metropolitan area. In addition to it being firmly in my mind it was constantly put to me when I called on members of my electorate.

Mr. Davies: Tell us what you were promising about the Rockingham Hospital. That was far from the truth.

Mr. RUSHTON: It is all here for the Minister to read.

Mr. Davies: You were making wrong statements and promising that it would be ready 12 months before it will be.

Mr. RUSHTON: What I said can be backed by the file.

Mr. Davies: The file does not reveal it. It is not in the file.

Mr. RUSHTON: I suggest the Minister for Health should read the file.

Mr. Davies: You did exactly what you are charging the then Opposition with.

Mr. RUSHTON: That is a red herring to get away from the facts of life. The next matter with which I shall deal was raised by the member for Floreat last night when he expressed his concern over the intrusion of unionism into the political scene. I relate this back to local government which has been free of politics in this State and we want it to remain that way.

Mr. Bertram: You are not serious, of course.

Mr. RUSHTON: This is a joke to the Minister, but it is not a joke to the people of Western Australia.

Mr. Bertram: The honourable member made an allegation.

Mr. RUSHTON: It is not a joke to the people of Western Australia when they see the lack of concern expressed in the policy speech of the Labor Party as to what part it believes local government should play.

Mr. Bertram: Who conscientiously believes that local government is free of politics, apart from you?

Mr. RUSHTON: Then the Minister does not believe that local government in this State is non-political?

Mr. Bertram: Does anybody else?

Mr. Brady: What party did the honourable member belong to when he was Chairman of the Armadale Road Board?

Mr. RUSHTON: Let me answer that. The Labor Party has a policy of selection for local government.

Mr. Brady: Never mind about the selection. What party did you belong to? You belonged to the Liberal Party.

Mr. RUSHTON: I was not chosen to be chairman of the board because I belonged to the Liberal Party.

Mr. Brady: You didn't play party politics. Of course not!

Mr. RUSHTON: I refer to the "Constitution, Rules, Standing Orders, and Platform" of the Labor Party which says—

Subject to approval by the State Executive, where there is more than one branch in a ward of a local governing authority, a Labor councillor in such ward shall be permitted honorary membership of any branch in such ward in addition to his full branch membership.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What is wrong with that?

Mr. Graham: It is democracy at its best.

Mr. RUSHTON: Democracy at its best! It is the very intrusion we are worried about as well as everyone else who thinks sanely about the future of Australia. The member for Floreat expressed his concern last night.

Mr. Graham: By the other Liberals!

Mr. Jamieson: I am glad the member for Dale has used the term "Australia" and I suggest that he should look at the Adelaide City Council. Unless one is an endorsed Liberal candidate it is not possible to be selected. This applies even to the mayor.

Mr. RUSHTON: Concern is being shown in Canberra.

Mr. Jamieson: I am glad you said that.

Mr. RUSHTON: The member for Canberra, Mr. Fraser, is concerned at the intrusion of unionism into politics. There is evidence of this in today's paper. There is evidence of the strike actions—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Williams): The honourable member has five minutes more.

Mr. RUSHTON: This insidious move is growing deeper and deeper into our lives. I am very pleased that a member on that side of the House does not agree with it. We will have an opportunity to find out how he stands up to the remarks he made last year when he said he was appalled at the intrusion of unionism into party politics. It will be interesting to see how things go this year.

If one has any doubts about this matter, one has only to read the exhortations of the president of the Labor Party in Queensland. He tells his members, "If you don't smarten yourselves up you will feel the heavy hand again." The executive in Western Australia does the same thing when members step out of line. The Minister for Works should not interject; he has a few votes—one down the road and one up here also.

Mr. Jamieson: Where do I have all these votes?

Mr. RUSHTON: Look at how powerful the State Executive of the Labor Party is.

Mr. Jamieson: I am known as the chairman but I suppose I could vote somewhere.

Mr. RUSHTON: If there is any doubt about the power of the State Executive of the Labor Party, let me read the A.L.P. pledge.

Mr. Jamieson: We always put a copy of that in the library. We have never seen a copy of the Liberal Party's platform in the library.

Mr. RUSHTON: The application for membership of the A.L.P. reads as follows:—

I
(Full name)

of
(Address)

hereby make application to become a member of the Australian Labor Party, and in so doing I sign the Pledge of the A.L.P. as appended hereto.

Mr. May: You must know it by heart.

Mr. RUSHTON: The application continues—

The following pledge shall be signed by all members of the Australian Labor Party before admission to the Party is effective. It shall also be signed by any member of an affiliated industrial union before such member is eligible to serve in any position open to him/her under the rules of the A.L.P.

See the tie-up there. The pledge reads—

I hereby pledge myself to adhere to and uphold and support the principles of the A.L.P. I accept without reservation to be bound by the Constitution, Rules, Platform and policies of the A.L.P. and will take no action to repudiate them.

I pledge myself that while a member and/or a delegate to or officer of any section of the A.L.P. I will only work through the constitutional channels of the Party to secure any alteration of the Constitution, Rules, Platform and policies of the A.L.P. or any of its decisions.

I also declare I am not a member of the Liberal Party, Country Party, D.L.P., Communist Party or any other political party.

In the event of my becoming a candidate for parliamentary selection I pledge myself to support any other candidate who may be selected.

Here is the crunch—

If elected I will vote on any question before the House as decided by a majority of the Parliamentary Labor Party in a properly constituted Caucus meeting.

There is no freedom.

Mr. Jamieson: That is democracy at work.

Mr. RUSHTON: Let me close with these remarks. The other night I commended the Deputy Premier on his plea for loyalty within the party. For the sake of Western Australia, for a short while, anyhow, I hope he is successful in that regard because it is very necessary.

MR. JONES (Collie) [11.54 a.m.]: Sir, I would like to join with other members in congratulating you on your appointment as Speaker of this Chamber. I also add my congratulations to all the new members who have been elected to Parliament and to the old members who have been elevated in position.

Last night we heard a very bitter attack delivered by the member for Floreat on the trade union movement in Western Australia and, in fact, in Australia, generally. Unfortunately, it is difficult to follow the honourable member when he is speaking but I have now had an opportunity to read the report which appears in today's issue of *The West Australian*. I take it to be an accurate report of what the honourable member said last night.

The member for Floreat is completely out of touch. In my view, and in the view of the trade union movement in Western Australia, his speech last night contained utter nonsense. If he studied the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act he would have a better understanding of the principles embodied in our legislation and of the problems which confront the trade union movement from time to time.

I understand the honourable member has never been a member of a trade union. If that is so, one can readily appreciate that he would not be informed as to the difficulties which confront those associated directly with the trade union movement, not only in Western Australia but also on a national level. I think it would be true to say that many of the benefits enjoyed by the honourable member have been made available to him as a result of the struggle of the trade union movement in Australia over many years.

If the honourable member read a written report of the activities of the trade union movement in the early part of the century, with particular reference to the bitter struggle during the Eureka Stockade, he would understand how trade unionism originated. If the honourable member had had the opportunity, as I did, to view a film about the Eureka Stockade, he would appreciate the necessity for the introduction of unionism for the benefit of both employer and employee. I think his attack on the trade union movement last night was very unfair.

Mr. Court: He was not attacking the trade union movement.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, he was.

Mr. Court: He did not attack the trade union movement.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You could not have been listening.

Mr. Court: It was a very scholarly utterance.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have been reasonably tolerant during this debate but the interjections are now becoming far too frequent. I think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is one of the main offenders, and I would ask him to do his best to refrain from interjecting. He will have his opportunity to make a 45-minute speech later on, and I think every honourable member should be given the opportunity, as far as possible, to have the full 45 minutes for debate.

Mr. JONES: In the time available to me I am unable to mention all the points raised by the honourable member, but I wish to refer to two matters which appeared in today's issue of *The West Australian*. In his eight-point plan the member for Floreat suggested, for the consideration of the Government, the provision of heavier penalties and unconditional deregistration of unions for strikes which occurred other than for industrial reasons.

I would point out to the honourable member that a trade union must protect its members from intimidation by employers. I think anyone who has studied the activities of the trade union movement would know that there is evidence that this has taken place.

Mr. O'Neill: Who protects the employee from intimidation by the union?

Mr. JONES: I suggest that a chaotic situation would arise if this suggestion by the honourable member were incorporated in our existing arbitration legislation.

Mr. O'Neill: Who protects the worker against intimidation by the union? No answer, came the stern reply.

Mr. JONES: Because any union that did that would not be able to become registered. The ex-Minister for Labour will have an equal opportunity to answer me in the 45 minutes available to him. I am certain I will be listening with interest to what he has to say on this very important question.

Mr. O'Neill: I see you do not propose to answer me.

Mr. JONES: In my opinion there is an immediate need for more conciliation and understanding between employers and employees. I think there are obvious weaknesses in the Industrial Arbitration Act in this State, and members will recall I have raised these matters previously while I have been a member of Parliament. We should have a look at these problems.

No doubt the member for Floreat may not have considered the implications and the problems which face the trade unions in bringing their cases before the arbitration system. Firstly, there is the question of an approach to the employers. Where any worker is of the opinion that changes should be made, an approach can be made to the employer. The employer then considers the approach made on the worker's behalf by the trade union official.

He can, if he feels it is desirable, employ delaying tactics in the consideration of the matters presented before him, and unfortunately this often occurs.

The application is then considered by the employer and if it is rejected the necessary arbitration machinery must be put into operation. If they studied the Industrial Arbitration Act members would know that it takes 28 days from the date of filing an application for the matter to be heard by the industrial court. There are requirements in the Act where, under special circumstances, matters may be heard before this, but the circumstances must be very special to come within this section of the Act.

Mr. O'Neil: Who made this provision? What Government made this provision?

Mr. JONES: So it will be seen that there are obvious problems. I have information from a very reliable source that it takes two months on an average to get before the Industrial Commission.

One must realise that this causes the trade union movement some concern and one must further realise that prior to this two-month period, talks may have been proceeding for some weeks and the two-month period, as members will appreciate, could be extended perhaps by some months. One of the worst features of this is that whilst this process is being put into operation there is no provision for retrospectivity. This means that the workers, when making approaches for improvements in their conditions, have to contend with these problems which confront them from time to time knowing that if their application is delayed for some two or even three or four months until a decision is determined there is no provision in the existing requirements for retrospectivity, and no doubt the honourable member will realise that this is a cause of some agitation.

To highlight this position, if we consider one of the important Federal metal trade judgments delivered in 1967 in Melbourne before Commissioner Winter, we would know that with that metal trades application 12 months elapsed from the first date of hearing until a final determination was brought down by the commissioner; and, of course, coupled with this, there was no provision in the judgment

for retrospectivity. This means that irrespective of the economic position that was obtaining at the time—

Mr. O'Neil: The Federal commission has power to grant retrospectivity.

Mr. JONES: No retrospectivity was granted at the time.

Mr. O'Neil: The Federal commission has the power to grant retrospective operation of an award.

Mr. JONES: I did not say it had not. I said, in this instance, if the honourable member will listen correctly. I said, in this instance.

Mr. O'Neil: There must have been good reasons.

Mr. JONES: I said after 12 months deliberation no retrospectivity was granted.

Mr. O'Neil: There must have been good reason because the power existed.

Mr. JONES: There was another experience recently where a set of workers in the Eastern States took direct action because the employer was using delaying tactics in giving them an answer to their demands. This was in July of this year when we had an instance in the metal trades industry where a stoppage of 24 hours occurred and, as a result of the stoppage, one of the commissioners was brought in to hear the application. The matter was heard on the 11th July, this year, and the judgment was delivered on the 12th July. The workers concerned were granted an increase of \$6 in their award provision.

Mr. Rushton: This does not answer the question about the relationship between unionism and politics.

Mr. JONES: I am trying to indicate that in my opinion the delays in our arbitration system give rise to some of the unfortunate strikes which occur from time to time.

Mr. Court: How much notice do some of the unions take of an order from an industrial authority? On the mentioned occasion they took none; they just laughed at it.

Mr. JONES: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition again complains of the unions' attitude to certain decisions. Of course, does not the Employers Federation employ similar tactics?

Mr. Court: No, they cannot; they would be punished.

Mr. JONES: Has the Employers Federation adopted the recommendations of the court? There have been a number of occasions when they have not adopted the recommendations, and the honourable member knows this to be correct.

Mr. Court: You changed your ground. You said "decision" the first time and then you said "recommendation."

Mr. JONES: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will have his opportunity.

Mr. Court: We will have our opportunity. You stick to the facts.

Mr. JONES: I think we can look at some examples in this State. Perhaps people will charge me with mentioning a union to which I belonged, but the coalmining industry is a classic example of what can be obtained by employer/employee relationship, so much so that the achievements in the coalmining industry were recently discussed at an industrial seminar held in Melbourne.

Members may not be aware that the 35-hour week which was introduced into the Collie coalfields was achieved following conciliation. The matter started when the employers came to the Coal Miners' Union and offered them a bonus system. In return the unionists countered and said, "We would rather accept a 35-hour week in lieu of any bonus system." So by conciliation and by understanding between employer and employee, where all parties were prepared to get around the table, the system was introduced on a trial basis in October, 1961, and became law under the authority of the Coal Industry Tribunal in 1968.

I think I should say here that the late Mr. W. J. Wallwork was one of the best commissioners that this State has ever had and where he saw any signs of disputation or any likelihood of strikes occurring he very quickly moved in. I think some of our commissioners today could follow the lead which was shown by the late Mr. W. J. Wallwork in moving in and intervening before anything drastic occurred.

Mr. Williams: Would you not agree that some of these delays are not caused by the commissioner on some occasions?

Mr. JONES: Some of the delays are caused by the employers, by their delaying tactics.

Mr. Williams: And the unions?

Mr. JONES: The union is required to comply with the Industrial Arbitration Act. It is required to approach the court when any alterations are desired.

Mr. Williams: What happened prior to 1963? There was a two and a half year wait for some of those.

Mr. JONES: We can discuss the old Industrial Arbitration Act at another time.

Mr. O'Neil: I am interjecting to obtain some information so perhaps, Mr. Speaker, you will forgive me. Has the Trades and Labor Council yet ratified the A.C.T.U.'s policy on conciliation prior to arbitration?

Mr. JONES: I understand so, yes. As a matter of fact I intend to spend some time on the report that was delivered on behalf of the Australian Labor Party by The Hon. Clyde Cameron. I do not know whether the honourable member has read the report, which is in line with A.C.T.U. thinking, but my information is that the T.L.C. in this State has adopted

the recommendations for conciliation and arbitration brought down by The Hon. Clyde Cameron which are now going to the A.C.T.U. for its recommendation.

Mr. O'Neil: I meant the other way around. The A.C.T.U. agreed to a policy of negotiation before arbitration. This was set out by a special committee set up under the Federal Government, but the Trades and Labor Council in this State refused to ratify that. I would also be interested to know what progress has been made in relation to the talks initiated by the previous Government between employers and unions on the basis of conciliation before arbitration.

Mr. JONES: In answer to the honourable member I would say I am not now directly associated with the trade union movement. I was for 17 years but I cannot keep abreast of all the movements in this Parliament and also in the trade union movement so I am not in a position to answer the question. However, I do know the recommendations in the Cameron report are to be forwarded to the A.C.T.U. to be looked at.

Mr. Taylor: The same group—that is, employers, employees, and the Government—will be looking at the same problem.

Mr. JONES: The next point I would like to mention in reference to the eight-point plan put forward by the member for Floreat is the proposal to make it unlawful to use union funds to acquire a decisive interest in any industrial or commercial enterprise. What right has anybody to say what unions shall do with their funds? Would the honourable member support that recommendation if it applied to the Employers Federation? It will not be denied that the Employers Federation makes money available to assist the Liberal Party.

Mr. Court: How do you know?

Mr. JONES: Is it not wrong to suggest, as the honourable member did, that in our democratic system a union should not be allowed to make its own decision in respect of where its money shall be applied? No-one has the right to say where a union shall expend its funds. For the honourable member even to suggest this clearly indicates to me that he is not fully aware of the repercussions that would flow in other directions.

Mr. Williams: Don't you think union members should have some right to say where the money is to go?

Mr. Rushton: Shouldn't union funds be subject to normal taxation?

Mr. JONES: The member for Bunbury showed his ignorance of the trade union movement when he commented on a matter associated with Laporte last year. He showed he was not capable and he was brought out in very poor light in the *South Western Times* as a result of a statement he made in this House concerning a

union activity at Laporte. The honourable member must admit he was proved wrong on that occasion.

Mr. Williams: I did not mention the company at all. I said, "a company." You don't know to which company I was referring.

Mr. JONES: The honourable member knows what happened.

Mr. Court: The people of Bunbury still loved him at the last election.

Mr. JONES: I don't think the member for Bunbury would be very happy with the result.

Mr. O'Neil: He is here.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Collie.

Mr. Williams: One gets used to this sort of claim.

Mr. JONES: When members have finished I will continue.

Mr. O'Neil: Is that a threat?

Mr. JONES: In my view there is an urgent need for an overhaul of the existing industrial arbitration system, from the point of view of both the employers and the unions. I think we should consider three concepts. Firstly, there is the question of mediation; secondly, the matter of conciliation; and, thirdly, as a last resort, the matter of arbitration.

I will explain what I have in mind. In regard to mediation I think the parties should join together to discuss any matters which are concerning either side. If agreement cannot be reached a private mediator should be appointed to reach a decision. Of course, if agreement cannot be reached at that stage the normal processes of arbitration may be brought into operation. However, I think there is an urgent need for cases to be brought before the court in a much speedier fashion than has been done in the past. The long delays that have been occasioned in bringing matters before the court probably provide part of the reason for direct action being taken in some cases by various unions.

Union dues concern all members of unions because, in line with our economic trend, union costs are rising. I mention that point in answer to the remarks made by the member for Floreat. Under legislation introduced by the Liberal Government unions are required to have any amendments sought to the Industrial Arbitration Act certified by a lawyer. The unions have been involved in additional charges as a result of that legislation. Might I say that it will not be denied that for 12 years we have heard the slogan, "The State on the move" under the Liberal-Country Party coalition. In the light of that slogan being widely publicised from time to time, was it unreasonable for the trade union movement

to say, "We want to join in this prosperity." That is precisely the policy applied by the trade union movement in instances of increased productivity.

Mr. Court: No, that is not so. If the cases had been related to productivity no-one could complain. But it has been just the reverse.

Mr. Davies: The last major case was based on productivity.

Mr. Court: The whole inflationary problem in Australia is due to the fact that wages have outstripped productivity.

Mr. Davies: You are saying the courts are wrong.

Mr. JONES: I will leave the question of the attack on unions at this stage, but I would conclude by saying I consider it desirable that the honourable member should acquaint himself with the provisions of the Act and the problems which confront the trade union movement. It is not an easy task; I had the experience of being a trade union leader for some 17 years and I had great difficulty on a number of occasions in endeavouring speedily to bring matters to the right conclusion. On some occasions this was due to the existing provisions of the Act and on others it was due to the attitude adopted by so many employers who are not prepared to sit down at the conference table and settle matters at that level.

During my first three years in Parliament I paid special attention to the power production policies of this State and the policies enunciated by the then Government in relation to the use of coal. Members will recall that I asked a number of questions in relation to power generation. I also moved for an inquiry into the greater utilisation of Collie coal. Last year I moved for a Royal Commission to be appointed to inquire into the State Electricity Commission of Western Australia. Prior to my election to this Parliament the then member for Collie (Mr. H. May) asked several questions regarding the price of fuel oil. Of course, the answer given invariably was that the information was secret and could not be made available.

What concerns me is that last year Parliament was misled in answer to a question asked by the then Leader of the Opposition. In my view it was bad enough that the Government refused to discuss the price of oil; but when Parliament is misled I feel that is a most serious situation. As we had the situation of the price of oil being known to the consumer but not to the coal industry, I consider this to be a serious breach. I would like this matter on record to indicate that the breach did occur. The question to which I refer was asked of

the then Minister for Electricity by the then Leader of the Opposition. It is as follows:—

- (1) On the occasion of the most recent price rise in motor spirit was the price of fuel oil supplied to the Government also increased?
- (2) If "Yes" did the increase apply to the fuel oil being supplied for the Kwinana power station?
- (3) By how much was the price of fuel oil increased?

The answer given was as follows:—

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) See (1).

However, if we consider what actually occurred we find that the price of fuel oil to the State Electricity Commission did, in fact, increase.

The answer given to the question asked in this Parliament was incorrect, because the information made available to me showed that on the 1st July, 1970, the price of fuel oil at Kwinana was \$12.26 per ton and on the 1st August, 1970, it rose to \$12.48 per ton; an increase of 22c. per ton. It also shows that the price of fuel oil at South Fremantle, as at the 1st July, 1970, was \$12.67 per ton and that it rose, on the 1st August, 1970, to \$12.89 per ton; an increase of some 22c. per ton.

So it will be appreciated why I find it necessary to raise this matter. In my view, in the view of the people I represent, and in the view of a number of other people in Western Australia, the Government was wrong in not disclosing the price of fuel oil. Taking the matter a stage further, it was very unfortunate that Parliament was given the wrong information in the answer to the question asked in the State Parliament on the 11th August, 1970.

I notice that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is now advocating a fuel policy. This was advocated at the 24th annual conference of the Australian Institute of Metals. One wonders why the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not put this policy into operation when his Government was in office.

Mr. Court: That was a national policy, not a State policy.

Mr. JONES: I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that it was a national policy, but there was room for such a policy to be introduced on a State basis. What concerned me about the suggestions made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in his speech at this conference of the Australian Institute of Metals was the fact that he was outlining the source of fuel available to Western Australia for the generation of power. In his speech to the conference, he had this to say—

Other potential alternatives for Western Australia were fuel coal from Queensland and natural gas from Western Australia.

My main concern is the fact that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggested that coal might be brought to Western Australia for power generation when we are still unaware of the coal reserves in this State at present. It would have been preferable for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to have delayed the making of this statement until he knew accurately the total coal reserves in Western Australia that are suitable for power generation.

Mr. Court: You are not quoting from my speech; you are quoting only from a Press report, and a very brief part at that. I dealt with coal in my speech and if you want a copy of it I can make it available to you.

Mr. JONES: I do not want a copy of it. The matter I am referring to is the importation of coal to Western Australia from other parts.

Mr. Court: We are talking of power generation, which is far beyond your capacity to think about, I am afraid.

Mr. JONES: We will deal with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in a moment. Never mind his arguing about my capacity. We have had plenty of feuds in the past and no doubt we will have plenty more in the future. It is quite apparent that if anyone puts forward any views in opposition to those held by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition such views are not acceptable by him. Apparently he considers he is the only one capable of making any statements on policies relating to fuel.

Even the Premier at that time (Sir David Brand), when speaking in Bunbury, clearly indicated that he supported the contention that the State had not been made fully aware of the amount of coal reserves in Western Australia. He spoke in Bunbury on the 15th September, 1970, and he was reported as having said—

We must have confidence in the great natural assets of this part of the country and also think of the development of Collie. He believed Collie had much more coal than the government knew of.

From that it is quite apparent to me that the then Premier supported the views which I have been advocating for some years; namely, that a grid boring programme was highly desirable at Collie so that the State, by and large, would be made aware of the coal reserves available in Western Australia.

I am extremely happy to say that the present Minister for Mines, since being elected to this very high office, has had the opportunity to visit Collie on two occasions to discuss a grid boring programme for the Collie coalfield. In conjunction with the Collie coalmining companies I am confident that the State Electricity Commission will be able to enter

into a grid boring programme for the Collie coalfield. I think members will agree that this is highly desirable.

Nobody can lay down a policy on fuel for power generation until it is known what fuel is available to the State for this purpose. I think the action taken by the present Minister for Mines, in conjunction with the State Electricity Commission, should be fully recognised as a move which I, and the former member for Collie (Mr. H. May) have been endeavouring to achieve for some years in the Collie coalfield, because as a result of this grid boring programme a better knowledge will be gained of the coal that is available to us.

Mr. Williams: Who will be conducting the grid boring programme?

Mr. JONES: Two companies will be carrying it out in conjunction with the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. Williams: Why not with the Government?

Mr. JONES: Is not that a form of Government?

Mr. Williams: Semi-government.

Mr. JONES: What concerns me is that the Collie coalmining companies have had applications before the Mines Department for six years during the terms that the previous Government was in office and they are still awaiting a reply. It is pleasing now to know that agreement has been reached on the grid boring programme and it is hoped that it will be put into operation shortly.

The next matter which causes me great concern is the current effect the Hawker Siddeley agreement is having on the sawmilling industry. Many members of this House will know that when the State Building Supplies were sold to the Hawker Siddeley group in 1961 opposition was expressed to the action of the Government in disposing of this State instrumentality at such a low figure. My concern now is the effect of the group's policy on the small mill operator in Western Australia, because if we look at his position at present it will be found that he has a very bleak future indeed.

I will outline to the House what has happened in the sawmilling industry since the State Building Supplies were sold to the Hawker Siddeley group. The Worsley mill, which was sold to the group, had a sawmilling permit covering 43,060 acres and the mill was eventually closed. The Banksiadale mill which held a permit covering 136,509 acres, was destroyed by fire on the 23rd June, 1963. The Shannon River mill held a permit for 133,660 acres and this mill was closed on the 22nd November, 1968.

All of these mills were taken over by the Hawker Siddeley group and we are now seeing the effect of the agreement entered into by this company with the

previous Government and its impact on the small mill operators in Western Australia. The effect is disastrous to say the least. The Buckingham mill, which was also included in the sale of these mills to the group, has now been leased. What concerns me is that we have small operators—such as Mr. Allan of Bunbury, Mr. Coli of Darkan, Messrs McCamish and Stephen, and F. Mills of Bowelling, together with many others who have battled through the years—whose future, to say the least, looks very glum, because Crown land is not available to them.

At the same time, however, other areas have been reserved. An area of some 24,000 acres is being retained in the North Bowelling district for the Hawker Siddeley group. I consider the Forests Department should have a close look at this with a view to trying to assist the sawmiller to get over his problems; to allow him to remain in business.

It is disgraceful, to say the least, that the Hawker Siddeley group should have been given all these leases. There is the Worsley lease where there is no mill; and there are also the Shannon River and the Dean Mill leases in which areas also there are no mills operating. Yet we have these reserves made available to Hawker Siddeley while, in the interim, the small operators are forced out of business, because no areas are available to them.

Mr. O'Neil: Is millable timber the only problem? Are there no problems connected with markets?

Mr. JONES: There are no problems connected with markets, and this is what concerns me. It has long been the practice to allow these forests to remain with the Hawker Siddeley group, even though it has gone out of operation. It still retains its permits. As a result of this we will now see the small operators thrown out of business; workers will be unemployed, and this will have a most serious effect on their wives and families.

I have already taken this matter up with the Minister for Forests in the hope that some assistance might be given to the small operators.

Mr. Court: Had these continued with the State Building Supplies the small operators would have been in the same position.

Mr. JONES: It would not have been so bad had the agreement specified that the permits would be made available to the company provided it continued to operate the mills in the area. Had this been incorporated in the agreement it would have given the State some protection. Unfortunately, however, and in spite of the views expressed by members on this side of the House, no notice at all was taken of our submissions.

Mr. Court: These people must still conform with the agreement.

Mr. JONES: I now come to the question of the Western Australian Government Railways which, to say the least, are in a hopeless mess. There is little doubt that at some point of time we must face the position and determine what rightfully belongs to road transport and what rightfully belongs to rail transport. I am not suggesting there is no room for road transport, but at the moment there appears to be little co-operation and understanding between the Transport Commission and the W.A.G.R., as a result of policies that have been instituted from time to time.

I will not argue or say that there is no room for road transport. I think this is desirable in protecting the farmer, particularly where cattle are involved, and where a truck can move on to the property at about midnight and have the stock at the Metropolitan Markets within a few hours. At the same time, however, I fail to understand why road transport operators should be permitted to transport such a large volume of minerals.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I particularly refer to the cartage of ilmenite by road from Capel to Bunbury. From information given to me I understand that some 750,000 tons of ilmenite are transported over the roads annually from Capel to Bunbury.

It is my view that the transport of this type of commodity belongs to the railways and not to the roads. Anybody knowing Bunbury will appreciate the congestion caused by these trucks, and the interference by them to the people living in the area. To get back to my earlier point, I feel that this is where it is necessary for an appropriate policy to be implemented in connection with our Western Australian Government Railways system. If something is not done I can forecast further rail closures within our railway system. This may not take place during our time; we may not pay the penalty; but in years to come we could pay the penalty when the population of Western Australia increases. If our railway system is not retained we will be faced with serious problems in years to come.

To say the least, I think this matter is worthy of very urgent consideration. I notice that some mills are able to transport all their timber by rail, while other mills are using road transport. This is mainly a matter of policy between the two departments and it requires urgent consideration.

Another matter which concerns me a good deal is the number of derailments which have occurred within the railway system. I notice that the member for Northam has been strongly advocating the retention of railway gangs.

A question was asked on Tuesday, the 27th July, seeking information about the cost of derailments. The answer given was that the cost of one derailment amounted to \$13,700. It is possible that there are good reasons for introducing the policy of contract systems as these relate to the permanent way on our railway system. In my view this could be having a big effect on the number of derailments that have occurred.

It will certainly have an effect on the question of employment in the Railways Department, because gangs working in the Gosnells, Cannington, Harvey and Waroona areas—and of course other areas are involved also—will be out of work. That is the effect the contract system is likely to have.

It will be seen, I think, that there is an urgent need for a thorough examination of the Western Australian Government Railways. There should, particularly, be more co-ordination between the Transport Commission and the W.A.G.R. itself.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [12.37 p.m.]: I with other members in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to the Chair. I was rather interested in a few remarks made by the member for Mt. Lawley the other night, inasmuch as he informed us of the occupations of the various Ministers on the front bench. He said that there were so many school teachers and mentioned the fact that the Minister for Works was a carpenter. I think it is appropriate for a Minister for Works to be a carpenter!

It is obvious from the debate this morning, and from what we heard last night, that you, Sir, will need a great deal of aplomb in ruling this Assembly during the next few months, if the Government lasts that long, or during the next few days.

The dexterity that I feel you will need to possess, Sir, will come natural to you because you are a man of great wisdom and, above all, you have had similar training to the worthy gentleman whose blessing you invoke every day when you open the proceedings. If you follow in His footsteps I think we can all be assured of your good and sound judgment.

Mr. Williams: He was a carpenter.

Mr. GAYFER: Yes; a most honourable profession.

Mr. Graham: Cabinet material.

Mr. GAYFER: I should imagine, therefore, that leading questions which require an answer from the Speaker will be permitted to members on both sides of the House. In the event of their getting out of hand they will be disallowed whether they be asked by members on the Government side, or by members on this side of the House.

In view of your ruling today, Sir, I do not expect any trouble during the few short remarks I have to make. I am, of course, also mindful of your powerful physique, and I am fully aware that while we have the front benches three sword lengths apart—in the traditional manner—that you will, if necessary, be able to wield the weapon which sits on the end of the Table.

I would like to congratulate the Government on its election to office. I think the members of the Government fought very hard to win the election. I do not say whether or not the fight was fair or it was won on points, but anyhow they are in Government. Whether it be a good or bad Government is beside the point; let us face the fact that it is the Government, because what we have to put up with is the decision of the Government.

In view of those comments my speech today will centre around requests to the Government to heed the needs of a badly affected section of the people; namely, the farming community. Knowing the association of the members of the Cabinet with the farming people and the rural industries, I am sure we can expect the very best from them in matters affecting agriculture.

The Premier did not make a very sound judgment as far as public relations are concerned when he named the Minister for Lands and Agriculture in eighth position in the Cabinet. The Government does not seem to place a great deal of importance on the agricultural industry, by lowering the portfolio from second place to eighth place in the Cabinet; and it further aggravated the situation by naming him as the Minister for Lands and Agriculture, with the portfolio of Lands preceding the portfolio of Agriculture. However, this does not really matter; it is the same title by another name but it is amazing how some country folk have cottoned on to this change. Even if the Minister for Agriculture is eighth in line in the Cabinet I am not going to hold that against him. However, I am puzzled why he was not entitled the Minister for Agriculture and Lands; if that were done it would sound more appropriate. The farming community would then feel that a degree of importance is attached to the title, and the rural industries have some bearing on the welfare of the State.

Likewise, in the policy speech delivered by the Premier who was then the Leader of the Opposition, I thought the degree of importance he attached to his recommendations relating to agriculture had low priority, because they appeared on page 28 of the speech. That does not matter either, and I think we were lucky to have had a mention.

Many of the recommendations in that policy speech sounded excellent to me. What I would like this Government to do is not to argue across the Chamber as

to whether something is right or wrong, but to get on with the job of doing what is required. That is what the farming community wants. The people in the country areas are sick of hearing excuses from this Government, from the previous Government, from the Federal Government, or from any other Government. What we want is quick action to alleviate the existing problems, and that is possible.

The agricultural areas of the State are facing a huge drought, but it seems that the people in the city and some members of Parliament are not aware of its magnitude. Finance does not seem to come into the question of providing relief, because the Premier has said that the Government could make available \$10,000,000 as Queensland has done that. Apart from the statement which Mr. Burvill, an officer of the Department of Agriculture, made that the matter was being investigated, nothing has been said by the Minister, although in opposition he said that we were late in making investigations in 1969. He put forward the argument that the Minister for Agriculture had not become sufficiently aware of the situation, and said that mistakes were being made. However, we now should learn by those mistakes. For goodness sake let the present Minister for Agriculture go out and have a look at the problems.

Mr. H. D. Evans: We have been out to have a look, and we have set up a committee. That should have been done a long time ago.

Mr. O'Neill: I thought the Minister was critical of committees.

Mr. GAYFER: We have heard this argument in times gone by against the appointment of committees.

Mr. H. D. Evans: The matter is being examined now. What is the honourable member grizzling about?

Mr. GAYFER: Because I have not seen any results. I make the suggestion that before water carting in areas from Tooday to Wickepin and from Brookton to further east becomes widespread, the recommendation that water boring teams be engaged to explore underground water resources be implemented immediately.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr. GAYFER: Before the luncheon suspension I was quietly explaining the excellencies of the Cabinet members opposite and appealing to them yet again, as they are so concerned about agriculture, in an effort to get something done in respect of the drought which is definitely hitting many of the agricultural areas at the moment.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Quote the news release which was made, and was read to you over the phone, and it will clarify the whole thing.

Mr. GAYFER: I have not queried that Press release which was read to me over the phone by Mr. Burvill. When he had read it to me Mr. Burvill asked me what I thought should be done; and I replied that possibly we should get those water boring machines out in the field now and start looking for water. Therefore we are both on the same foot now and he would confirm that that is what I said to him.

I am now appealing to the Minister to do something. Let him use some of the \$10,000,000 set aside for drought aid mentioned in the policy speech. If it can be found in Queensland, it can be found in Western Australia. Let us get on with the job and spend it. Do not let us wait for the nth hour which the Minister claimed the last Government did. That is all I have said up to date.

Now I want to prove to members that drought conditions do exist. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn is in extremely dangerous country at the present time as far as the elements are concerned. The crops are extremely bad up there and the country does not look the best, as would be revealed if members were to drive through it. The same applies to the area in the electorate of the member for Narrogin, particularly around Wickepin.

Mr. H. D. Evans: A lot of driving has been done in those areas.

Mr. GAYFER: Yes; but those farmers in the east have water which is just not available in the Toodyay, Northam, York, Beverley, and Brookton areas. To stress the importance which is placed on this matter, I refer to a letter which the York Shire Council wrote to the Premier pointing out that to the end of June only 598 points of rain had fallen in that shire compared with the 585 points which fell in the drought year of 1969. In other words, only 13 points more have fallen.

An appeal has already been made for a water subsidy because of the huge amount of water being carted. To this letter the Premier replied as follows:—

I am surprised to hear that there are still farms in your area which depend on dams for stock water and which have not had their dams replenished.

Mr. Nalder: Who said that?

Mr. GAYFER: To continue—

I am informed that heavy rain fell in most agricultural districts late in March and that in most cases farm dams were adequately replenished. Dams which did not receive water at that time are believed to have very inefficient catchment areas and the farmers concerned might well consider an approach to Department of Agriculture officers stationed in Northam who will be available to offer

advice with respect to improving the efficiency and run-off from catchments into farm dams.

That is crazy and has only dodged the issue. Certainly the catchments of those dams which for 100 years have been providing water for the farmers may not have been good enough in the last three years. I know experiments were being conducted at Esperance in an effort to obtain a run-off after 10 points of rain had fallen on the bitumen surfaces.

I am now referring to an area which has not a few dams empty, but a multitude of them. I can refer to a letter to me from the Brookton Shire Council asking me the procedure with regard to a petition containing 64 names of farmers east of Brookton who want water reticulation immediately. This petition will be forwarded to the Minister for Works and, I have no doubt, ultimately to the Treasurer.

Another piece of evidence to prove that we are facing a drought of serious proportions is the fact that the farmers are at present trying to buy, in particular, oats for stock feed, and I know of one farmer who recently bought 1,000 bags, and many have made inquiries about this.

Here I might add for the sake of my farming community that if any farmers have an over-quota of wheat, they have only to write to the Australian Wheat Board, get a form which they must fill in and return to the board with a cheque representing 9c handling fee and 5c tally for each bushel of wheat they want and, upon receipt of the cheque, the board will sign the authority and allow the farmers to take out of the bin their over-quota of wheat. I understand that already four inquiries have been made and there have been two deliveries. This is mounting up.

However, there is nothing surer: we are reaching a stage where, if it does not rain fairly soon, we will be caught with our pants down. The long range forecast for the next two months is for an all-time dry. We have to be prepared for the future.

As I have said previously, the farmers who are suffering from drought conditions, and the general farming community, are a very unfortunate lot. Those farmers need a certain amount of encouragement so that they can face the future with some degree of confidence.

I was rather surprised to hear the remarks made by my friend, the member for Fremantle, and also the remarks made by others. Their remarks about the general populace of the country were almost snide, especially when referring to the farming industry and, in particular, the wool industry. The member for Fremantle mentioned the case of one of his friends who had to leave the farming industry. He walked off and did not receive any help. The inference to be drawn was: why should others be helped? The member for

Fremantle also mentioned that he was involved in a business which went out of existence. He had to walk away from that business and did not receive any assistance.

Let me emphasise that if the wool industry does not receive some sort of cost assistance—some form of prop—the country towns will die within 12 months.

Mr. Nalder: What will happen to the Port of Fremantle?

Mr. GAYFER: When the country towns eventually die, the effect will snowball right back to the city. Last night the member for Perth was complaining about the building industry. He implied that we should worry about the building industry.

If the people on the land are given an opportunity to look forward to some degree of prosperity, and a brighter future—an opportunity to protect their terrific industry which is still the backbone of this country—the towns in the country will live, and so will the cities and everybody concerned with them. I am not blaming this Government, but I am saying that the remarks of the city people concerning the farming industry should cease. Instead, the city people should be helping to prop up the farming industry because if we in the bush go bung then thousands of other people will go bung, too.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn, the member for Northam, and others who represent farming communities, know that the whole of the agricultural industry has to be propped up until it can stand on its own feet. That is possibly the only way to protect the people in the country towns.

Mr. Bickerton: One would not think these circumstances could be possible when one considers that the Country Party has been part of the coalition Government for the last 12 years.

Mr. GAYFER: That is a very eloquent interjection from my amiable friend. The member for Pilbara has brought this matter forward previously. Had he been present before lunch he would have heard what I had to say. Help is required now, not tomorrow. The Labor Government has pledged its support.

Mr. Bickerton: What happened previously?

Mr. GAYFER: Do not mention what happened previously.

Mr. Bickerton: What has Mr. Anthony done about the situation?

Mr. GAYFER: Mr. Anthony has done quite a lot.

Mr. Bickerton: Is it not enough?

Mr. GAYFER: I do not know, yet. I will be able to tell the honourable member on the 17th August. Indications are that the industry is to be propped up to a degree. The situation must be receiving

consideration because the member for Fremantle, and half a dozen others, have referred to it. So there is possibly some truth in the statements even though it does not seem to have got through to our Labor friends who are not interested in the farming community.

Mr. Bickerton: Is the member for Avon happy with the Commonwealth policy?

Mr. GAYFER: If the Commonwealth policy of stabilisation will bring into being a complete orderly marketing system then I am very much on its side.

Mr. Bickerton: Orderly marketing?

Mr. GAYFER: That is one of the basic plans of stability.

Mr. Bickerton: We agree on that.

Mr. GAYFER: Well, the member for Pilbara should get up and support this little bit of propping up in the interests of my people and our country towns.

Mr. Bickerton: What about telling us what Mr. Anthony is doing?

Mr. GAYFER: Members will hear what he is doing in the near future. Might I refer the member for Pilbara to the newspaper room where I suggest he reads the papers.

The point is that right now we need a little encouragement so that we can live with the industry we have at present.

Mr. Brown: More encouragement than we have had in the past.

Mr. GAYFER: I did not say that.

Mr. Brown: No, I did.

Mr. GAYFER: Let us forget the past. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn spoke the other night and I did not interject on him. What I am saying now is that we are looking for some encouragement at the present moment—right now. I think that federally we have achieved some results. There might be an attempt to help protect this multi-million dollar industry.

There seems to be a light on the horizon. From the general tone of other markets there seems to be some degree of stability, even with wheat quotas and our grain production. There seems to be good sales of coarse grains which, too, is a light on the horizon.

At present there is a feeling of despondency. The people feel that they are living in the country only to hold the land, without much help, and that feeling has to cease. Some of the taxing measures envisaged in the Governor's Speech will not provide a great deal of help to the people in the farming industry, and will not create much confidence.

Why should we have arguments at the present time about the police takeover of traffic and the finance involved in that, for instance? Why interfere with it at the present moment? Why not do it in three or four years, when things improve?

Mr. Brown: Or road maintenance tax.

Mr. GAYFER: What is the alternative to road maintenance tax? We will find out when that measure is introduced. There is a feeling of insecurity at the present moment. Promises have been made and not kept. I admit that the Government has not had much time to get on its feet. It has only been in office for five months, which is 16 per cent. of its life term. Something must happen very soon. We dealt with the lack of living-away-from-home allowances the other night.

Mr. Speaker, some farmers at Shackleton received letters dated the 29th April from the Public Works Department which informed them that if they did not pay their bills their water supply would be cut off. They immediately got in touch with the Water Supply Department at Merredin and stated that no finance was available until the next wheat payment was received in June or July.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Do you know of any instances where the water has been cut off?

Mr. GAYFER: This is what I am dealing with now. Cattle have died because of it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Do you know of any instances where the water has actually been cut off?

Mr. GAYFER: Yes.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: If that is so, it is contrary to directions.

Mr. GAYFER: Very well. On the 8th May these people wrote to the department saying they were prepared to pay their bills in instalments. On the 26th June they wrote a letter to the department suggesting to Mr. Bond that they pay their accounts in two moieties. Mr. Bond prepared a statement on the 4th July, which was signed by them, agreeing to the payment of these moieties, and a letter was received, under the signature of Mr. Stapleton, agreeing to the terms and conditions of payment. What happened? On the 23rd June—

Mr. Bickerton: Of what year?

Mr. GAYFER: —the Water Supply Department at Merredin contacted a share farmer who was farming land at Shackleton for some other people and told him the water was to be cut off. On the 24th June the farmers went to Mr. Bond and asked, "Why is the water being cut off when we have signed an agreement?" On the 25th June Mr. Bond said he would ring Merredin immediately and make sure it would not be cut off. On the 25th July the water was cut off, and on the following day the share farmer was contacted and told it would be turned on again; but it was not turned on.

I have here letters from veterinarians at Merredin, valuations from Wesfarmers at Bruce Rock, Northam, and Merredin, and reports from officers of the Department of Agriculture at Merredin and Bruce Rock who inspected the dead cattle. There was not a great number of dead cattle; these people were not farming in a big way, and that is why they were living in Perth. The dead stock were four cows valued at \$100 each, two calves valued at \$40.45 each, and one bull calf which was not worth much—only \$350!

Mr. Jamieson: What are the names of these people?

Mr. GAYFER: The people are named Moir, and they do not mind my mentioning it in this House.

Mr. Jamieson: They did not make representations about this matter to me.

Mr. GAYFER: This type of thing breeds a feeling of insecurity in the country. I am not blaming the Premier or the Minister, but we must ensure that in future nobody turns off water supplies, causing the stock to go into the sheep dip and drink the dip, as they did in this case. When people have negotiated for the gradual payment of water rates they should be able to have confidence that the agreement will be honoured.

I know that when I take this case further the Government will pay for the stock that were lost as a result of the water being cut off after an agreement had been signed that it would not be cut off. This is an interesting case, but I want to ensure that no more water is cut off until the department is absolutely certain there will be no trouble because of it.

Mr. Jamieson: The only occasions when I have sanctioned the cutting off of water supplies have been when people refused to reply to correspondence after a further and final letter had been sent to them under my instructions. There have been many such cases. If people do not reply and tell us where they stand, we must do something.

Mr. GAYFER: In this case the people had already replied and had signed an agreement in Mr. Bond's office. We want the security of knowing that this sort of thing will not happen when we have to leave our farms and get jobs; that someone does not march in and turn off the water, making life very difficult.

Yesterday the member for Northam had something to say about railways. He wondered why I had placed on the notice paper certain questions asking whether it was expected, or when it was expected, that farmers would be able to cart their own wool to the wool stores. I drew a fang I did not expect from about a dozen

speakers. My questions must have raised a query in a few minds. I did not mean any harm by it.

The member for Northam said that if farmers were permitted to cart their own wool they would have to pay greater haulage fees on the railways, and he might be right. I asked the questions because there are people in my area who live on the narrow gauge railway line between Corrigin and Merredin whose wool is placed on narrow gauge railway trucks. The wool does not go down the narrow gauge line from Bruce Rock to York, through to Northam, and then on the narrow gauge line to Fremantle to be put direct into the wool store. The wool goes another 40 miles from Bruce Rock up to the broad gauge line, where it is transshipped, then down to North Fremantle on the broad gauge railway. The farmer has to pay 36c a bale to have that wool carted by motor truck into the wool store.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: For how long has this been going on?

Mr. GAYFER: For a long time. I asked the Premier when he would allow farmers to cart their own wool, and had it not been for this other argument nothing more would have been said about it.

Mr. May: You may recall that I brought this up last year.

Mr. GAYFER: I have an account sales which shows that one farmer at Bruce Rock paid \$186 freight on 101 bales of wool loaded onto the narrow gauge. I maintain that the wool should have been taken by narrow gauge right into the wool store, whereas the farmer pays an extra 5c a bale to have the wool shunted into the wool store.

However, in this case—and in every other case—the wool is taken to Merredin, loaded onto broad gauge rail trucks and taken to North Fremantle. The farmer paid a further \$36 which is an increase in rail freight—or call it what one likes—of 16½ per cent. That is my reason for asking when farmers are to be permitted to cart their own wool. I repeat that since the broad gauge scheme was introduced farmers are faced with an increase in wool cartage of 16½ per cent. In 1952 wool was given a prosperity loading. At that time it was bringing about 80c to 90c a pound.

Mr. W. G. Young: It was 240 pence a pound in that year.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It was £1 a pound.

Mr. GAYFER: No, I do not think that is quite correct; however, that does not matter for the purpose of my argument. In 1952 wool was greatly higher in value than it is at present. Consequently it was made to carry a prosperity loading and, although it was grizzled about at the time, let us face it, the industry was able to afford to pay and it was a fairly justifiable loading. But there is an equally justifiable reason for the loading to be removed

now. Members know that it would cost the farmer to whom I am referring \$36 to shift his wool from North Fremantle into the wool store. How will he shift the wool? He will drive his truck down alongside the railway line to pick up the wool at North Fremantle and cart it to the wool store himself.

Mr. May: I told you about this last year. What did you do about it?

Mr. GAYFER: My question to the Minister is: When is he going to do something about it?

Mr. May: I told you that the then Minister for Railways approved of it last year, but you did nothing about it.

Mr. GAYFER: Well, I am asking the Minister to do something now. What is the point in the farmer having to come down and cart his wool from the railway trucks at North Fremantle to the store? If he was paid for carting the wool he could make \$36, which would be a good day's wage for him—certainly more than he is earning on the farm. Why cannot the wool be sent down on the narrow gauge line and simply shifted into the store?

Mr. May: I agree.

Mr. GAYFER: The Minister has had five months in which to do something. It requires only a signature.

Mr. May: Have you made representations to the Minister for Railways?

Mr. GAYFER: The Minister knew about this five or six months ago. I say let us get on with the business.

Mr. May: That is a pretty unilateral statement—we knew all about it five or six months ago. You knew all about it for five years.

Mr. Court: I think the member for Avon had better move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply whilst the Minister is agreeable to his proposal.

Mr. GAYFER: I say this unnecessary expense should be removed. That is why the farmers want to cart their own wool; otherwise they have to run their trucks down alongside the railway to shift their wool into the store on arrival at its destination.

I would like the Premier to use his good influence to make further representations to the Commonwealth in regard to the extension of the comprehensive water supply scheme as soon as possible to cover that area of the State—noticeably my electorate—which has not yet been covered. I know the Premier wrote a letter—I think it was one week after he took office—supporting the submissions of the previous Government in relation to the extension of the scheme to the York-Green Hills area and the Bullaring-Corrigin area. I am of the opinion that Mr. Swartz, in view

of the fact that the income from agriculture has dropped considerably at present, may be inclined to shift his affections from that part of the State which has been waiting for water for only 120 years to somewhere else.

This area is the only one within the bounds of the original scheme still not covered, and we feel a concerted effort should be made to have the whole area fully investigated with a view to including it in the next seven-year plan or five-year plan—whatever it may be—when the current plan expires in 1972 with the completion of the second stage of the modified comprehensive water supply scheme. I am not advocating that other areas should be deprived of water because if one looks at the boundaries of the original scheme, one will see that my area has been left out.

I have said before in this Chamber that certain farmers voted against the scheme, but there is no reason at all why the sins of the fathers should be visited on the third and fourth generations. We must get on with the business and get water to the areas which are screaming for drought relief and water subsidies at the moment. I make this plea to the Government in the hope that it will investigate the matter so that the third stage can go ahead and bring to fruition something we have wanted for many years. Of course, I have spoken about the extension of the scheme many times in this Chamber—I think my remarks would just about fill a *Hansard* weekly number.

Some years ago I pointed out that at the rate we were going it would take another 150 years to extend reticulated water to the whole of the agricultural area, and I put forward the idea of providing dams at low cost to the farmer, financed on a similar basis to the S.E.C. loan.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. GAYFER: The loans could be at an interest rate of 5 per cent., with 25 per cent. down and the balance over 25 years. I think that suggestion should be investigated further because it would provide a rapid means of getting a central supply of water to the farmer.

In the few minutes remaining to me I would like to compliment sincerely the new members of this Chamber. We have heard some very fine speeches from them. However, in some instances one had to leave one's seat in case one was forced to interject. One of my friends opposite nearly caused me to commit the grave sin of interjecting. However, I would like to compliment each and every one of them.

The present Leader of the Opposition quoted Sir Earle Page in 1958 and said that most members come into Parliament on a pedestal and some of them are wise enough to get down from the pedestal

after a short while; but others wait to be knocked down. I think that was not a bad statement. However, possibly the best statement I have ever heard in this regard was made on an occasion when I was walking along the corridor with a new member. We passed a coffee table at which Mr. Hawke, Mr. Wise, and one or two other Labor members were sitting. Mr. Hawke said, "Good morning" and I replied "Good morning." But the gentleman with me was a little raw—he had taken a bit of a belting during the election—and he looked the other way. As we walked down the corridor we heard Mr. Hawke remark, "We even tame lions here!"

MR. THOMPSON (Darling Range) [2.49 p.m.]: It is indeed with considerable pride that I rise today to deliver my maiden speech in this place. I hope the electors of Darling Range who sent me here to represent them will have cause to be happy in the choice they made.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with other members of the House who have congratulated you on your election to the high office of Speaker of this Chamber. You have had some 15 years' service in this House and prior to that I believe you performed considerable service in local government. I think the experience you have gained in both fields will equip you to be a worthy occupant of the Chair.

I would like also to congratulate the members of the House who have been appointed to various offices and committees in this Parliament, and I would also like to extend my very best wishes to the other new members of Parliament. I feel a certain affinity will exist between the new members who have recently entered this Parliament, as I believe there must have been an affinity between the new members of previous Parliaments.

I would sincerely like to congratulate the Premier and his Ministers on their election. It must have been, indeed, a great personal satisfaction to the Premier to have been elected to that high office. I believe he is the oldest elected member in this House, having come here in 1933, which, I might point out, was two years before I was born. It is very humbling to me when I consider that aspect.

I must say I reserve the right, as did the member for Pilbara, to differ with him from time to time, and I will deal with one subject on which we disagree later.

I wish to thank the officers of this Parliament and the staff for all the assistance they have given to me and, I am sure, to every new member who has entered this place. They have made the ordeal of entering Parliament a lot less of an ordeal than it might otherwise have been.

I would like particularly to thank the officers concerned with the organisation of the seminar conducted in this Parliament, for the first time in its history, a

few weeks ago. It was of great benefit to me as I am sure it was to other new members—and not only to the new members, because there were some older members present also.

Perhaps the only lesson the seminar failed to get across was that one must be in the House at 12 o'clock on the first day of the opening of a new Parliament to be sworn in. I hope the member for Boulder-Dundas was not sworn at for not having been sworn in at 12 o'clock.

My entry into this Parliament was not as sensational as the entry of the former member for the district during the 1962 election. He finished one miserable vote ahead of the Country Party candidate, and was finally elected on the distribution of the Labor Party preferences. The matter was referred to a court of disputed returns as a result of which there was another election a few months later.

On that occasion the candidate finished up with 14 more votes and accordingly became the member for Darling Range. He was the member for that electorate in this House during a time in which great changes took place in the electorate of Darling Range.

Kalamunda and its environs have become very densely populated residential areas. I suggest that the area will become one of the premier residential areas in the State. I am pleased to note that there are two other members in this House besides myself who recognise the benefit of living in the hills. I refer to the member for Mirrabooka and the member for Kimberley.

During his period of membership of this House Ken Dunn was under a fair amount of pressure as a result of great changes that took place in the electorate. To give some illustration of how dramatic the change has been I would point out that the enrolment for Darling Range increased from 6,000-odd electors in the 1968 election to over 10,000 in the recent election. This constitutes an increase of about 4,000 electors.

This type of increase brings tremendous pressures, and one of the pressures that has been placed on the services in the area has been in connection with water supplies.

Kalamunda did not have any reticulated water supply until the early 1950s when a pipeline was built from the Mundaring Weir to service what was a fairly small urban development. When more people started to come to the Kalamunda area the pipeline proved to be inadequate, so an 18-inch main was installed from the Victoria Reservoir and the Metropolitan Water Board took over the supply of water to the area.

In these few years prodigious amounts of money have been spent on the amplification of older mains, and the provision of new mains and service tanks, and I

believe the people of Kalamunda and some of the adjoining areas owe a debt to the Metropolitan Water Board. If they are not grateful they indeed ought to be.

Whilst speaking about the Metropolitan Water Board I would like to say how grateful I have been for the co-operation shown me by the General Manager of the Metropolitan Water Board. It has been a pleasure to deal with him. There have been differences of opinion on a number of occasions but he is one who is always available to anybody who cares to ring him up. It is a real pleasure to do business with him.

Ken Dunn was, I believe, a popular member of this House. I think he had close personal friends on both sides of the Chamber. He is still an extremely popular man in his home town of Kalamunda and I would like to wish him and his wife well in their future life—I cannot call it retirement because he has not really retired.

Very little has been said in this debate so far about the record period of the Brand Government and the great achievements that resulted from that 12-year period of Government. I could spend the whole of the time available to me today and still not cover all that could be covered under this heading.

There are, however, one or two other matters on which I wish to speak, so I will keep my comments fairly brief. When the Brand Government came to power in 1959 this State had one of the highest rates of unemployment and one of the lowest average take-home pays of any mainland State in Australia. We had an antiquated railway system; little industry was established here, and we relied mainly on Eastern States and overseas supplies for our manufactured goods. Our roads were in a very poor condition and there was virtually nothing north of about Geraldton.

We found that school leavers and graduates from the university were leaving this State to go to the Eastern States to follow vocations that were limited in this State, or not available at all.

As a result of the activities and the policies adopted by the Brand Government there has been a dramatic change. Job opportunities have increased and we have now one of the highest average wages of any of the States in the Commonwealth. We have seen industries grow daily and I believe we should be proud of what has taken place in these few years.

We now have good bitumen roads. Before I was elected I travelled the whole of the State and there were very few places I visited where one did not travel all the way on a bitumen road. One graphic illustration of the change that has taken place in the 12-year period of the Brand Government is reflected in the conditions of the railways.

My father is a railwayman and I have always had a fairly close association with the railways of the State. We have shifted all over the State from one railway town to another. I have had an opportunity to observe this service and I would say without question that the railway service today is something of which most railwaymen are proud. The morale in the service has never been higher.

I would like to congratulate the leader and deputy leader of my party for what they did, not only for Western Australia but, I believe, for Australia itself. I feel they have made a significant contribution to the future of Australia, and I am sure that history will record them as being two men who have contributed to the foundation on which a great Australia will grow.

I believe that Australia has the capacity to become one of the foremost nations of the world. As Britain and America have emerged as economic powers, and as Japan will, I believe, so, too, will Australia and I consider Australians owe a debt to the performance of the Brand Government during the last 12 years. I might add that if we listened to some of the comments from the other side of the House one would imagine the past 12 years have been purgatory.

Earlier on I said I would make reference to a matter about which the Premier and I have a difference of opinion. I refer to the proposed State Electricity Commission power lines to be constructed across the face of, or somewhere through the Darling Range. The purpose of the lines is to take power from the Kwinana power station to a northern terminal at Balga. The decision as to which of two routes under discussion will be adopted is to be made in a very short while.

The supply is to be taken on dual lines each capable of carrying the load on its own, the idea being that one line will be in service while the other one will be out of service, thus allowing for maintenance.

The State Electricity Commission would ideally prefer to run each line along completely separate routes for the safety of the line and security of supply. However, because of difficulties in skirting the city it has agreed to construct both lines along a common five-chain reserve. Two 140-foot pylons are to be constructed, each being 30 feet square at the base, every one-fifth of a mile along the five-chain reserve.

I would like to refer to the history of the negotiations the commission has had with the shires through whose areas the line is to pass. It goes back something like two years when the commission had considerable discussion with the shires concerned. About 12 months ago the Kalamunda Shire, and I believe the others concerned, were under an impression that the lines would pass to the east of Kalamunda.

I must indicate that at no stage during those negotiations was the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority involved. However, it appears that the authority was contacted early this year and asked to make some comment on what was proposed. The authority threw up its arms and said that it did not want the lines to go along the proposed route and to my complete amazement it has recommended—I might say not recommended, but suggested—that the lines go across the foothills and pass between Perth and the face of the Darling scarp.

These lines, if they follow the foothills route, will run parallel with and very close to what has become known as the green belt, and during the past few years the people of Western Australia, through the Government and the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, have paid \$8,800,000 to buy land to be set aside as recreational reserves and thus provide a backdrop to the city. I believe that one day the people of Western Australia will come to regard the green belt and other reserves being set aside adjacent to Perth as they regard King's Park today. I would shudder to think what would happen if someone suggested we construct a power line of the magnitude of the lines under discussion anywhere near King's Park—not that that is likely to occur.

I believe that the Government owes it to future generations of Western Australians to take many aspects into consideration—more than it is required to do under the State Electricity Commission Act. The physical features of the metropolitan area are few. We have the Indian Ocean, the Swan River, and the Darling scarp and that is about all we have in terms of physical attractions. I believe it will be a sacrilege if these areas are impaired because we have raced ahead and constructed a line without taking these aspects into consideration.

I might point out that according to our planners a scenic drive is to be constructed along the Darling scarp and as far as I can determine from the contours and the general area that the lines are to follow, the scenic road will be at about eye level with the insulators of the pylons and all the way along the scenic road a person will most assuredly look through conductors. To those people who consider power lines and pylons majestic this scenic road will be a boon, but I suggest that the great majority of people who regard mother nature as the principal architect of beauty will not want to use that road very much. I believe the commission should have a look at other alternatives.

The shortest distance between the two points for a dual line is somewhere in excess of 30 miles. However, the two routes under consideration are 85 miles and 89 miles respectively.

At a public meeting in Kalamunda on the 7th June last the General Manager of the State Electricity Commission said that the commission would construct the line as far east as the two routes being surveyed because it was concerned with the aesthetics. I suggested the lines would look no worse if they were placed close to the city and I suggested a huge sum of money could be saved. I have made several suggestions and have asked for the commission's comments on other alternatives. I asked the commission why it would not be possible to take the line parallel with and fairly close to the standard gauge railway line. Already the land values in that area have depreciated—or at least have not risen—because the line has been constructed there and I believe that would be an ideal route through which to take the power lines.

I believe that some difficulties are associated with the lines passing the Perth Airport. However, I am also told it is not a complete impossibility for the lines to be lowered where they pass the runways of the airport and still have the required clearances.

I have asked the commission to consider yet another route. This one was discussed at some length by the planning authority, and has become known as the easterly route. What I and others have suggested is that the lines could go a little further east than the most easterly of the two now under consideration, cross Great Eastern Highway at right angles, skirt the John Forrest National Park, and cross the coastal plain to Balga. In that way very little urban development would be involved.

However, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority in preparing its drawing, for some reason best known to itself, has taken a most devious line which darts and dives all over the place and involves 111 miles. I suggest a shorter route than that is possible, but the Minister has told us no other routes will be taken into consideration.

In reply to a letter I wrote him recently the Premier said that the estimated cost to take the lines on the more easterly route would be \$4,000,000. This sounds a tremendous sum of money, and indeed it is; but when related to the overall cost of the project, I do not think it is so great. Future generations of Western Australians will not thank us if we race into this and construct something ugly just to save a few dollars.

I believe, Sir, that one day a power station will be built in the north of the city. This does not mean to say that we will not need to have power lines to interconnect points of generation. Perhaps I could just read a passage from a letter I received from the general manager of the commission dated the 17th June this year. He said—

The generation capacity up to at least the late 1970s to early 1980s will

be located south of the City, and it is necessary to provide the outlet for this capacity to serve the areas north of the City.

He should have said, "necessary for some of the capacity to be transferred to the northern areas," because most certainly the whole of the generating capacity of the power station south of the city is not required to be taken north.

It appears a power station is to be established in the north by the late 1970s or early 1980s, and the power lines which are under construction now would, I suggest, be constructed to serve a period of at least 20 years. No-one has been able to tell me this. The commission will not comment on how long it estimates the power lines will be sufficient to carry the load.

The point I am making is that if a power station is constructed before the capacity of the line is reached, there would never be any need to increase the size of the line. Consequently the commission would not have the fear of having to construct more lines later on as indicated to me in a letter from the Premier.

I would like to stress that I believe there are other alternatives that ought to be examined and I ask the Government to consider them. For a brief moment I shall look at the situation as far as the State Electricity Commission is concerned. I consider that the State Electricity Commission Act is too powerful when one considers it in relation to power lines that are now under construction. I suggest that when the State Electricity Commission Act was passed there was never any suggestion that there would be lines of this type. I think that the Act gives the commission too much power in this regard.

I wish to quote a letter from the Premier on this matter. I asked him a number of questions—three to be specific. Firstly, I asked the Premier to consider other routes. He replied—

It is considered that the foothills route and the escarpment route represent the most westerly and easterly alignments which could reasonably be followed.

Secondly, I suggested that the decision should not be left to the State Electricity Commission, but that he should allow a decision to be made by Parliament. The Premier replied—

The State Electricity Commission is charged with the responsibility of providing an economic and reliable supply of electricity. It is inherent that under its Act it must relieve the Government of the detail of running a major public utility.

I suggest that the power lines under consideration are no mere detail. Costing millions of dollars as they will, and affecting thousands of people as they will, the decision ought not to be left entirely to

the State Electricity Commission. It is true that the commission has the power under its Act to do this, but I suggest it has too much power in this regard. I would like to see the Act amended so that the commission does not have the right to go on as its does.

The Minister for Electricity said in the House the other evening that people have the right to lodge objections. They have no right, as far as I can determine from the State Electricity Commission Act. Section 38 gives the right to local authorities to object to the commission on any proposal, but no individual has the right to object. The Minister replied that there is some power under the Public Works Act. I should imagine that this would apply only in the case of resumption. However, I do not think that people objecting to individual resumptions will have any impact on the overall route to be adopted; that is the fundamental difference.

In cases like this Parliament ought to have more say. I do not think we should let the State Electricity Commission, or any other statutory authority, make decisions on such gigantic undertakings. I pose this question: If this is allowed, what is the purpose of Parliament?

Environmental protection is a subject that has been on the tips of many people's tongues in the last few years. Never before has the community been more aware of the dangers that threaten our environment. All political parties have recognised this and all political parties have come out and said that they will take steps to protect the environment. I know the present Government does not agree with the environmental legislation enacted in the last Parliament, and it has said that the Act will not be proclaimed. The Liberal-Country Party Government did not proclaim the Act for reasons which I think have been explained. However, the previous Government did give the people of this State an undertaking that no decision on the State Electricity Commission power lines would be permitted until after the matter had been referred to the body to be set up under the environmental protection legislation.

I believe the present Government has a moral responsibility, if not a legal responsibility, bearing in mind that it has come out and said that it will take steps to protect the environment, to take the decision out of the hands of the S.E.C. The present Government has said that the measure which it will bring down will have "big teeth." This is one of the first issues affecting the environment since the new Government came into office. I believe the Government has an obligation to do something about it.

I would like to quote another passage from a letter I received from the Premier dated the 15th July. I asked the Premier whether he would defer the decision on

the power lines until such time as the new environmental protection legislation is enacted. The Premier said—

The Commission is broadly responsible to its Minister and hence the Government. The Act provides for proper procedures in matters of this nature. Any further reference by the Government of the dispute to an area where legislation has yet to be enacted would introduce unwarranted delay.

I suggest that the Premier's attitude on this is not consistent with the policies he has been enunciating.

Another subject which I wish to mention this afternoon relates to the Midland Junction Abattoir. Might I say that I believe the previous Government was wrong in allowing the Midland Junction Abattoir complex to grow as it has. A number of problems have been created and one of them is the disposal of effluent from that abattoir. I consider that the additions which are currently in progress at the abattoir will make the problem more acute than before.

If we look at the history of the disposal of effluent at the Midland Junction Abattoir, we find that the system has always caused some concern. On a number of occasions I can remember reports appearing in the Press of the system overflowing into the Helena River, and great concern has been expressed by the Swan River Conservation Board. At the present time the amount of effluent discharged from the abattoir is 680,000 gallons a day. This is considerably higher than it has been in the past, because of the increased number of stock killed but, more particularly, because more water is used by the abattoir to meet the fairly stringent regulations placed on it by Americans; I refer to the regulations which enable us to partake of the American meat market.

About two years ago a new lagoon system was installed to cope with this additional quantity of water. The system cost in excess of \$100,000, and I suggest it may have been as high as \$150,000. It consists of three lagoons which act, as the old ones did, as huge septic tanks. The water flows from one to the other and, in each of them, the bacterial action is supposed to break down the effluent. The water is pumped from the second lagoon to a third lagoon, which is located three miles from the Midland Junction Abattoir in an area known as Ridge Hill Road, which is Commonwealth land. It is at this point that the water is pumped and sprayed on the surrounding hillside.

The new system has not operated satisfactorily from the time it was installed. No blanket has formed on it. As soon as a blanket attempts to form, wind action has broken it. It has been suggested to me by people who, I believe, are fairly

experienced in this problem that the design of the lagoons is such that the system will never really work. This applies particularly when we consider the increased quantity of water that will soon be used. It will have no chance in the world of working. The problem is that the lagoons cannot be made deep enough, because they are sitting on a water table and they cannot be taken deeper than the water table will allow. To have the lagoons big enough to cater for the volume, they have had to be made large in area and, because of this, there is no chance for the blanket to build up and the bacterial action will not work.

The Midland Junction Abattoir Board, at the suggestion of the Public Health Department, has done a great deal of work in trying to get the system to work. The lagoons were seeded with sludge from the old lagoons and that had some degree of success. Then they were reseeded with more sludge and they improved a little further. However, it is still not working satisfactorily. The lagoons are not sufficient to cope with the quantity of water coming into them.

To give some indication of how foul is the water which is being pumped out on the Ridge Hill Road site, I mention that it is killing all the vegetation in the area. Jarrah trees are dying. On three occasions the abattoir board has sown grass but this just continues to die.

The third lagoon—and this is a point which I believe somebody should stand up and answer—is located outside the noxious trades area. In the opinion of legal advisers—I am told of a Queen's Counsellor—legal action could be taken against the abattoir and an injunction would succeed. The ramifications of this are that the abattoir would be rendered useless. It could not use the lagoon if people took legal action and the abattoir would be forced to close. I suggest somebody should answer why that situation has been allowed to develop.

The smell from the Ridge Hill Road lagoon of the disposal system has been a matter of controversy for some months now. Two sets of answers have been supplied. The Public Health Department says it is O.K. It recognises this area smells a little now but in a short while the system will work satisfactorily. That opinion is not shared, I suggest, by the members of the Midland Junction Abattoir Board, because at the present time that board is going ahead with plans to investigate a new method—a newer system. I believe that the Manager of the Midland Junction Abattoir Board is doing all he can to rectify this problem.

The board has invited suggestions and quotations from a number of world-wide authorities on this. It will take some months before the new system will be operating, and if indeed someone can come

up with one that is sufficient to meet the needs of the Midland Junction Abattoir Board I believe the new system could cost a lot of money—\$1,000,000 would not buy it, I suggest.

What really concerns me is that with the new plan nearing completion there will be an increased quantity of water flowing into the lagoons that have already proved inadequate to cater for the effluent now being handled. The management of the Midland Junction Abattoir Board tells me that although the additions will be completed in September there will not be a very greatly increased amount of water because some of it will be recirculated. However, the capacity of the Midland abattoir, by virtue of these additions, is to rise by 30 per cent. I should imagine the Midland abattoir will find it very difficult under those conditions to keep the amount of effluent discharged from the place below what it is now, and I feel that unless something is done, and done very quickly, there will be a lot of trouble associated with this plan.

The completed abattoir, when it gets to its maximum capacity, will discharge 1,500,000 gallons of effluent a day; almost two and a half times the amount handled there today and considerable problems are going to be associated with this unless some quick action is taken.

I would urge the Government to have a look at this matter and do something about it very very quickly.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the courtesies extended to me and I also thank members of the House.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr. Brady.

(Continued on page 388.)

QUESTIONS (29): ON NOTICE

1. ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Upgrading: Loss of Beds

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

As the board of management of Royal Perth Hospital has decided to upgrade the patient accommodation in a number of wards, what is the resultant estimated total loss of beds for these wards?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

A scheme for adding wards and departments to the hospital and to adapting part of the existing hospital to provide more beds is already under way. The board has also approved, in principle, a scheme to improve some of the existing wards where the standard of patient accommodation is below an acceptable level. Details of this part of the scheme are still

being worked out and a final submission has not yet been placed before the board. However, it is anticipated that there will be a net increase of 82 beds when the whole scheme is completed.

2. ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Total Running Cost

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

What was the total running cost for the Royal Perth Hospital for the year ended the 30th June, 1971, and what is the estimated total running cost for the year ending the 30th June, 1972?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

1970-71—\$13,583,753.

1971-72—Hospital's estimate—\$16,301,636.

3. ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Radiologists: Payments

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many full-time radiologists were employed at Royal Perth Hospital for the year ended the 30th June, 1971?
- (2) What was the total of salaries paid to these officers for the year ended the 30th June, 1971?
- (3) What additional payments were made to these officers during that year?
- (4) From what source did these additional payments come?
- (5) What additional services were rendered in respect of these payments?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Nil. All radiologists are part-time.
- (2) to (5) The formula for payment of radiologists is most complicated, but I am advised the administration of Royal Perth Hospital will be happy to give the honourable member any information he may desire if he contacts the administrator direct.

4. PRICE CONTROL

Rent

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Prices Control:

In view of the statement in the Governor's speech that legislation will be introduced to provide selective price control, would he inform the House whether rent control will be included in this selection?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

I refer the member to question 10 of Wednesday, the 21st July, 1971, and reiterate that until such time as the legislation comes before Parliament it is not desired to make any preliminary announcement.

5. SCHOOL CROSSWALK ATTENDANTS

Industrial Union

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Labour:

Is there any industrial union covering school crosswalk attendants?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

There is no award coverage for crosswalk attendants, but I understand that a union is currently claiming on country shires for award coverage and wage increases.

6. SCHOOL CROSSWALK ATTENDANTS

Full-time Employment

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

Will his department consider to employ all school crosswalk attendants on a full-time basis?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

No. Attendants are mostly pensioners or married women who can attend only at the present hours.

7. STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Rents and Rebates

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

In view of the opinions frequently expressed by the present Government when in opposition that—

- (a) State Housing Commission rents were too high;
- (b) the methods of assessing rental rebates were inequitable; and
- (c) the State Housing Commission should not evict tenants,

would he advise whether it can be expected that—

- (a) State Housing Commission rents will be reduced;
- (b) rebates will be increased; and
- (c) no action will be taken to evict State Housing Commission tenants for non-payment of rents?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

The question of rents, rebates and evictions is now under study.

8. SOUTH WESTERN HIGHWAY

Bridgetown-Manjimup: Proposed Work

Mr. REID, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) With the upgrading of the South Western Highway between Bridgetown and Manjimup, will any houses cause obstruction to the proposed road works?
- (2) If "Yes" how many?
- (3) Has the Main Roads Department offered to relocate these houses free of expense to the owners?
- (4) If not, what compensation has been offered?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) One.
- (3) No. Following a detailed inspection it was considered that the house could not be moved without considerable structural damage.
- (4) An offer of compensation of \$6,280 was made in January, 1971, to the owner, but no reply to this offer has been received. Improvements consisted of a house and a small water supply.

9. STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Rental Account: Loss

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) In view of the net loss on the State Housing Commission rental account of—
 - (a) \$577,864 in 1969-70; and
 - (b) \$560,000 (estimated) in 1970-71,

is it proposed to take any action in this matter?

- (2) If so, what action is proposed?
- (3) Has the State Housing Commission ever adopted a policy of making profits from rents to increase its building activities?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) This is being studied.
- (3) Yes.

10. KINGSLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

P. & C. Association: Reticulation of Oval

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has approval been given for the Kingsley primary school parents and citizens' association to pro-

ceed with the reticulation of the school oval in terms of the association's submission?

- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) Will the go-ahead be given in time to enable the association to have this necessary service ready for summer?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) An alternative reticulation scheme to that proposed by the Public Works Department has recently been submitted by the Parents and Citizens Association and referred to the Public Works Department for examination and recommendation.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Yes.

11. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Safety Bay-Waikiki-Warnbro

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the survey of the Safety Bay-Waikiki-Warnbro districts for siting and need for the next primary school in these areas been completed?
- (2) If "Yes" what are the findings?
- (3) Where and when is the new school to be sited and to be available?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A further school will be required as housing develops but the Safety Bay School has adequate accommodation for present needs.
- (3) Sites are available at Warnbro and East Safety Bay. Developments in these areas will be kept under review to determine the most opportune time to provide a school.

12. ROADS

Report on Damage, and Case for Road Maintenance Tax

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has the Main Roads Department ever reviewed or reported to the past or present Ministers for Works on the damage various vehicles inflict on roads?
- (2) Has the Main Roads Department ever prepared data and statistics showing the case for or against road maintenance tax?
- (3) Should the answers to (1) or (2) be "Yes" will he make this information available to the House?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No. However, an interdepartmental committee appointed by the former Premier and chaired by the Assistant Commissioner, Main Roads Department, submitted a report in December, 1969, covering many aspects of the road maintenance charge.
- (3) Yes. With permission I table a copy of the Report.

Copy of report was tabled.

13. ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Collection from Interstate Hauliers

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What road maintenance tax has been collected from interstate hauliers each year since the inception of the tax?
- (2) If road maintenance tax is repealed, of what sum will interstate hauliers be relieved in comparison with their local counterparts?

Mr. MAY replied:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| | \$ |
| (1) April 1966 to June 1966 .. | 11,680 |
| July 1966 to June 1967 .. | 113,412 |
| July 1967 to June 1968 .. | 248,809 |
| July 1968 to June 1969 .. | 218,712 |
| July 1969 to June 1970 .. | 212,644 |
| July 1970 to May 1971 .. | 191,870 |
- (2) Interstate hauliers will be relieved of payment of any charge.

14. EXPORTS

Investigation of Indonesian Market

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Has an investigation been undertaken by his department to open up an export market to Indonesia for such items as dairy produce, meat, fruit, etc.?
- (2) To what extent is the department able to assist primary producers in obtaining markets for their produce?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Since 1963 the department has sponsored six trade missions to Indonesia.

Members of primary industry have been involved in departmental studies of trade with Indonesia during that time.

A limited market has been found for meat. Skim milk powder is the only dairy product supplied. Apples and grapes are finding a market, shipments being both direct and through Singapore agents.

- (2) The department is able to assist primary producers in trade development and is currently carrying out investigation into markets for live sheep, fruit, vegetables and wine in Asia and the Middle East.

15.

TRANSPORT

Milk

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) When did the Director-General of Transport commence an inquiry into all aspects of milk transport in Western Australia?
- (2) At whose request is the inquiry being made?
- (3) Does the inquiry include cream transport in all dairying districts?
- (4) What progress has been made, and when can a report be expected?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) No enquiry has been commenced. The offer was made to do so provided milk distributing and processing companies would co-operate. This co-operation was declined.
- (2) to (4) Answered by (1).

16.

PAYROLL TAX

Payments by Local Authorities

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What would be collected in Western Australia from payroll tax in a full year at the present rates of tax, and how much of this would be paid by local authorities if exemption were not granted?
- (2) What would be the amount of extra tax collected in a full year if the rate of payroll tax were lifted by one per cent., and how much of this would be applicable to local authorities if they were not exempted?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) \$25 million of which local authorities would pay \$600,000 and State departments and authorities \$6.5 million.
- (2) \$10 million of which local authorities would pay \$240,000 and State departments and authorities \$2,600,000.

17.

STAMP DUTY ON RECEIPTS

Refund

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it intended to pay, in the financial year 1971-72, the first instalment of the refunds of receipt duty, promised in his election policy speech?

- (2) If so, what amount is proposed in the financial year 1971-72?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) Repayment is not possible during 1971-72 but procedures will be commenced to enable persons concerned to establish claims for repayment with a view to a commencement being made with a planned scheme of repayment during 1972-73.

18. LAND

Bunbury Technical School Site

Mr. JONES, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) On what conditions was land made available on reserve 670 on which to build a technical school at Bunbury?
- (2) Was the land acquired portion of land endowed to the Municipality of Bunbury in 1884?

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) and (2) The new Bunbury Technical School is situated within Reserve No. 670, which is an endowment created in favour of the Town of Bunbury in 1884. Conditions under which any excisions will take place have yet to be resolved.

19. KALGOORLIE-ESPERANCE RAILWAY

Upgrading to Standard Gauge: Finance

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he received an answer to his most recent request to the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance to upgrade the Kalgoorlie-Esperance railway line to standard gauge?
- (2) In the event of Commonwealth Government assistance being refused, is he still considering the offer of assistance made by the Western Mining Corporation?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Acceptance of the assistance offered by Western Mining Corporation is completely dependent upon agreement by the Commonwealth Government to the State Government's request for authority to borrow.

20. DAIRY PRODUCTS

Butter Production, and Imports

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What was the butter production in Western Australia for 1970-71?

- (2) What quantity of butter was imported into Western Australia in 1970-71?

- (3) What was the cost of dairy products imported into Western Australia for 1970-71?

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) 5,034 tons.
- (2) Approximately 3,848 tons.
- (3) Not available for 1970-71.
- 1968-69—\$7.8 million, 1969-70—\$8.9 million. (All imported dairy products.)

21. DAIRY PRODUCTS

Exports

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) What dairy products are exported from Western Australia?
- (2) What is the value of these exports for 1969-70 and 1970-71?
- (3) To what countries are the exports consigned?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Milk and cream (including butter-milk, skimmed milk and whey); butter; butterfats and oils; and cheese and curd.
- (2) The value of these exports for 1969-70 was:—

Item	Inter-state	Overseas	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Milk and cream	27,473	160,410	187,883
Butter	235,907	7,214	243,121
Butter, fats and oils	—	10,480	10,480
Cheese and curd	11,176	100,911	112,087
	274,556	279,015	553,571

Details for the year 1970-71 are not yet available.

- (3) Burma, Ceylon, Christmas Island, Cocos Island, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Spain, and United Kingdom.

22. SWIMMING POOLS

Grants and Subsidies since Inception

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) With the exception of those towns north of the 26th parallel and within a 15 miles radius of the coast, how many towns have been given grants for the construction of swimming pools?
- (2) What has been the total amount paid in grants for each year since inception?
- (3) What operating loss subsidies have been paid in each year since inception?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

(1) 50.

	\$
(2) 1954-55	10,000
1955-56	25,880
1956-57	18,040
1957-58	67,390
1958-59	61,174
1959-60	20,278
1960-61	52,238
1961-62	95,204
1962-63	60,130
1963-64	66,938
1964-65	31,856
1965-66	137,252
1966-67	103,251
1967-68	50,066
1968-69	47,212
1969-70	402
1970-71	16,280
(3) 1965-66	10,989
1966-67	14,747
1967-68	20,440
1968-69	21,800
1969-70	33,246
1970-71	66,416

23. SWIMMING POOLS

Grants and Subsidies since 1969

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) How many coastal towns, situated within a 15 miles radius of the coast, have—
 - (a) received;
 - (b) applied for,
 grants for the construction of swimming pools, since the change in policy in 1969?
- (2) What is the maximum subsidy payable to these towns for annual operating loss?
- (3) How much has been paid in subsidy to these towns since 1969?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) One.
- (b) Nine.
- (2) \$1,500 p.a.
- (3) Nil.

24. TIMBER

Worsley and Buckingham Mills

Mr. JONES, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What were the intake loads at the undermentioned timber mills—
 - (a) Worsley for 1966-67 and 1967-68;
 - (b) Buckingham for 1966-67, 1967-68, 1968-69, 1969-70, and the first six months of 1971?

- (2) Is it a fact that Hawker-Siddeley has leased the Buckingham mill?
- (3) If "Yes" can Hawker-Siddeley retain the sawmilling permits granted under the terms of the agreement?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) Worsley—
 - 1966-67—13,182 loads.
 - 1967-68—13,659 loads.
- (b) Buckingham—
 - 1966-67—13,813 loads.
 - 1967-68—13,245 loads.
 - 1968-69—14,293 loads.
 - 1969-70—13,577 loads.
 - January-June, 1971—3,617 loads.
- (2) No.
- (3) Answered by (2).

25. MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Course for Meat Inspectors

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it proposed to conduct any further courses for meat inspectors at the Midland abattoirs?
- (2) If "Yes" when will such course begin?

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) September 6th, 1971.

26. GRAIN ALCOHOL

Investigation into Use

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What progress, if any, has been made with further studies for the use of grain alcohol?

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

A consortium of major overseas companies has made a preliminary study and it is understood a more detailed study is under way. Advice received from a representative of this group is that the feasibility of economic production of alcohol from grain would depend on the continuous operation of large scale plant with an assured and continuous supply of grain. Successful disposal and marketing of by-products is also important. To secure a market for grain alcohol legislation to compel its use would be necessary.

The agricultural aspect—the supply of grain on a continuous basis, not as an outlet for periodic surpluses, would have to be arranged at prices not less favourable than other outlets.

The industrial aspects require development of new technology by a group such as the overseas consortium referred to above.

27. *This question was postponed.*

28. LEOPOLD MINERALS N.L.

Inquiry

Mr. COURT, to the Attorney General:

- (1) To what stage has the inquiry into the operations of Leopold Minerals N.L. progressed—
 - (a) under the Companies Act;
 - (b) other police inquiries?
- (2) Under which section of the Companies Act have inquiries been initiated?
- (3) What is the relationship (if any) of proceedings currently before the court in respect of the company and/or any of its directors, and inquiries proceeding under the Companies Act?
- (4) What is the nature and extent of police inquiries?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) (a) Inquiries under the Companies Act are proceeding.
(b) Court records show that a person has been charged with an offence. I have no other knowledge of the stage reached by the police in their inquiries.
- (2) Section 124.
- (3) They relate to the actions of persons associated with the company.
- (4) This question should be directed to the Minister for Police.

29. RURAL INDEBTEDNESS

Statistics

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the total rural debt in Western Australia?
- (2) What is the average per farm unit?
- (3) Are the figures available for—
 - (a) South West Land Division;
 - (b) Pastoral Division?
- (4) If figures are available for (3), what is the average per unit?
- (5) Are figures available in detail for rural debt in sections of the agricultural industry—
 - (a) wool and sheep;
 - (b) wheat and other cereals;
 - (c) cattle raising;
 - (d) dairying, whole milk;
 - (e) dairying, butter fat;

- (f) orchards;
- (g) market gardens;
- (h) poultry?

- (6) Can he supply the totals of rural debt in each of the other States?
- (7) What is the average debt per farm unit in other States?

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Estimated at approximately \$300-330 million as in January, 1971, these being the most recent statistics available.
- (2) Estimated at \$15,000 to \$16,500.
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) (a) to (h) No.
- (6) At mid-1970 total indebtedness of the Australian rural sector to trading banks, pastoral finance companies, the Commonwealth Development Bank, Ex-service Settlement Schemes, other Government Agencies and Life Offices was \$2,087 million. It is thought that this is about half the total indebtedness.
- (7) Average debt per farm unit to the institutions listed in (6) above was \$8,200 in mid-1970.

QUESTIONS (5): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. TOWN PLANNING

Green Belt Reserves: Cost of Acquisition

Mr. GRAHAM (Minister for Town Planning):

I wish to apologise to the House and more particularly to the member for Darling Range for having inadvertently given wrong information in reply to question 35 on yesterday's notice paper. The honourable member asked—

How much money has been spent in acquiring land for the recreational reserve or "green belt" along the Darling scarp adjacent to Perth?

The answer I gave was—
1959-60 to 1970-71—\$8,870,717

In point of fact the figure I quoted relates to the total expenditure on parks and recreation reserves in the region scheme. The expenditure on land acquisition along the Darling scarp is \$2,576,672.

I repeat that I am sorry for the error that was made in supplying the figures, more especially as the member for Darling Range

used the incorrect figure in the course of his speech this afternoon. The fault is mine.

2. LEOPOLD MINERALS N.L.

Inquiry

Mr. COURT, to the Attorney-General: In reference to the reply to part (1) of question 28 on today's notice paper, in which he said that inquiries into the Companies Act were proceeding, my question was directed at the stage the inquiries had reached. Could the Attorney-General indicate whether the inquiries are at an advanced stage, and would be completed within weeks or months?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

I would say they are not at an advanced stage. I think, therefore, that they will not be completed within a matter of a few weeks.

3. QUARANTINE

Eyre Highway

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Have the results of the trial stock, plant, and fruit inspection centre on the Eyre Highway, been appraised?
- (2) Does the Government intend to take any further action with regard to inspections of the kind referred to in (1)?

Mr. DAVIES (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.

It is intended that a mobile checkpoint will be set up by the Department of Agriculture in relation to traffic on the Eyre Highway based at Norseman. The checkpoint will carry out inspection functions in relation to the quarantine needs affecting animals, plants, seeds, fruit, soil, bags, coverings, etc.

The requirements of the Agriculture Protection Board which will assist in the operation will also be met.

The operation of the checkpoint will be kept under review by a departmental committee to gauge the hazards arising from interstate traffic, changes in the pattern of the traffic, and the facilities required.

4. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Reply to Question

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Electricity:

Will the Minister for Electricity correct or otherwise the statement made by the member for Collie today in the Address-in-Reply debate that I, as the then Minister for Electricity, misled the House in my answer to a question asked by the then Leader of the Opposition, The Hon. J. T. Tonkin, on the 10th August, 1970?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

I consider this to be a matter between the Leader of the Country Party and the member for Collie. If the Leader of the Country Party considers he has been misrepresented by another member of the House he has recourse to the Standing Orders to have the position corrected.

Mr. NALDER:

Will the Minister have any objection to my obtaining this information from the State Electricity Commission?

Mr. JAMIESON: No.

5. TIMBER MILLS

Number Operated by Forests Department

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) How many timber mills are operated by the Forests Department, and what is their purpose and locality?
- (2) How many persons are employed in each mill?
- (3) Are all mills operating?
- (4) If not, in which locality have mill operations ceased?
- (5) What steps are being taken to ensure the employment of the men concerned?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I note that in reading the question he altered the order of the parts. However, I think I can answer the question in the order in which he asked the various parts. The answer is—

- (1) Six.

(a) Softwood

Purpose: To utilise thinnings from small plantations remote from the metropolitan area and to

maintain a trained reserve of men for emergency fire protection in the plantation.

Location: See under (2) below.

(b) Hardwood

Purpose: To train staff in timber conversion and sawn timber quality and output in relation to log size and quality. To provide information on some of the problems encountered by the timber industry. To maintain a trained reserve of men for protective burning and emergency fire fighting.

Location: Dwellingup.

(2) Location Number of Men
(Under Mill Roof)

Harvey	....	9
Grimwade	....	10
Ludlow	....	11
Margaret River	....	9
Pemberton	....	6
Dwellingup	....	10

(3) No.

(4) and (5) Operations ceased at Pemberton and Margaret River but have recommenced at Margaret River. All men have continued in employment on productive forest work.

Pine orders fluctuate with seasonal requirements and with activity in the building and furniture industries.

Sitting suspended from 3.49 to 4.07 p.m.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SIXTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [4.08 p.m.]: Before the Address-in-Reply debate concludes I would like to take the opportunity to refer to a number of matters concerning my electorate. I do not intend to get on to the bigger problems of the State as I will have opportunities to do that later.

I would commence by offering my congratulations in a different form from the way they have been offered, in the main, by most members who have spoken. My usual congratulatory remarks will be made at a later stage of my speech. Firstly, I offer my congratulations to the Ministers of the Government who have seen fit to visit the Swan electorate and examine the problems associated with the area.

The Minister for Agriculture recently visited the Midland Junction Abattoir, at the invitation of the Swan Shire Council,

to examine the effluent discharge problem. On that occasion a member of the Swan Shire commented that it had taken 10 years to get a Minister to visit the abattoir. Such a visit could not be arranged before the Labor Government was elected. To date, six Ministers have visited the Swan electorate and I hope that as a consequence of those visits the area will benefit.

I would also congratulate the Minister for Agriculture for his decision to abolish the fruit-fly baiting scheme as it operated in the metropolitan area. The abolition of that particular scheme was long overdue.

Mr. Nalder: I think the member for Swan is wrong in his statement.

Mr. BRADY: The member for Katanning will have his opportunity to address the House.

Mr. Nalder: It is not the baiting scheme which has been abolished.

Mr. BRADY: Well, the necessity to register, and pay a fee, has been abolished. That means that the scheme, in the main, will go overboard. I do not dispute that the fruit-fly baiting scheme was worth while as far as the State is concerned. However, I hope that something will be done, eventually, to end the situation which has existed in the metropolitan area for many years. The position has been that some areas have had baiting schemes in operation while others, right alongside, have done nothing.

The result is as I found it to be in Guildford last year. I found, on one property, apples, oranges, and rosebuds saturated with fruit-fly cocoons and fruit-fly grubs. The fruit fly had come from the next shire which had not been baited. As I have said, the Minister has to be given credit for abolishing the scheme as it has been operating. It must have been far more costly than it was worth.

Mr. Reid: How will the department be able to do its work if it does not know where the orchards are situated?

Mr. BRADY: The Minister has enough nous to keep his eye on anything which is likely to affect the orchards. His departmental officers will move around the metropolitan area, and the Minister will receive reports and deal with situations which might arise. For the benefit of the member for Blackwood I will say that the old scheme was farcical from start to finish. Half of the metropolitan area was involved in fruit-fly baiting schemes and the other half was not. In some areas people were going around with dubious chemicals for eradicating the fruit fly while in other areas nothing was done. In my opinion, the scheme could not be a success.

I am not unmindful of the very important part the fruit growers have played in the progress of this State during past years. I would like to see them continue to play

their part, but I do not want to see people being charged 20c a year under the pretext that the department would do something for the fruit growers in the metropolitan area and throughout the State generally.

I regret that the European Common Market agreement, between Europe and Britain, will ultimately play havoc with the fruit-growing industry in the south-west and the great southern. I hope that other markets will be found in the south-east Asian countries so that some of the poorer people will receive the benefits which they have been denied for many years.

Mr. Reid: They do not like fruit fly in those countries either.

Mr. BRADY: I do not think the member for Blackwood wants the fruit fly down his way, the same as we do not want it in the metropolitan area.

My main reason for speaking tonight on the Address-in-Reply debate—which I have now been doing for over 20 years—is to highlight one or two matters which affect my electorate in the hope that Ministers will take some action. Putting first things first, I will refer to education. It has been claimed that there is an education crisis in Western Australia, and that claim has been denied. However, the fact remains that in my electorate—in the areas known as Eden Hill and Lockridge—there is tremendous overcrowding in the schools. The parents and citizens' associations are up in arms about the overcrowding, and in one instance a man took his child away from school and sent him to a private tutor because he felt the child was not getting a proper education in the crowded school at Lockridge.

That school was built to accommodate 240 students. It has been used for about four or five months only and it is now housing 400 children. The parents are up in arms, and they are hoping that the Government will see that the position is remedied immediately. They also hope the same state of affairs will not occur in 1972.

If the State Housing Commission continues to build houses in the Lockridge area, at the same rate as it has done in the last 12 months, the overcrowding will become even worse than it is at the present time.

The overflow has to go to another school nearby, at Eden Hill, which has accommodated up to 800 students when it should have been carrying no more than 600. This is playing havoc with the education of the children. Up to 16 classes are changed around from week to week in order that these children can be accommodated.

In the Lockridge area the people are very resentful because many of them are there under sufferance. They have been forced to go to Lockridge, otherwise they will be denied the right to have a house or flat.

They therefore have to get their children into the school. At Lockridge there are no amenities of any description. There are no doctors, health clinics, kindergartens, shops, dentists, or any facilities of that nature. In addition to having been forced to suffer the difficulties of living at Lockridge, people find that their children are denied a reasonable education.

I have taken this matter up with the Education Department, but the P. & C. associations at Lockridge and Eden Hill wish me to bring the matter to the notice of the Minister for Education. That is why I am mentioning it in this House, in the hope that the difficulties that are now being faced by these people will be overcome.

I think the Premier will have got the message that something must be done urgently because it seems that another 2,000 people could be moving into the Lockridge area before the end of this year, and unless several school rooms are built and other additions are made to Lockridge School the same debacle will take place next year. It is a matter for regret that the Housing Commission has sent families to Lockridge in such large numbers, causing consternation and difficulties in the area.

The next matter I want to touch on concerns the inadequate playing grounds and facilities for children at the Governor Stirling High School. I know the Minister for Education has had his attention drawn to this matter. It seems that in recent years the parents of children attending Governor Stirling High School have had to pay in the vicinity of \$10,000 to enable their children to take part in sporting and recreational activities around the metropolitan area instead of in their own school grounds.

I will now read an extract from a circular sent out this year by the principal of the Governor Stirling High School. The extract reads—

In 1970, total payments for sport buses hired for Governor Stirling students totalled \$1,541.35, while total receipts from students were only \$701.43. This represents a loss of \$839.92, which has to be paid by the school out of the amenities fund.

The amounts quoted refer to one year, and this has been going on for several years in the Midland area. There are 1,600 children attending that school and I understand the school is lagging behind in inter-school competitions because of its inadequate sporting facilities. I hope that when the Premier and Minister for Education is considering the matter of finance for education he will not overlook the difficulties that are being experienced at Governor Stirling High School in regard to recreational and playground facilities.

The next matter to which I wish to draw attention in regard to the Governor Stirling High School is one which I have previously mentioned in this House. There are, as I said, about 1,600 children attending that school, and many of them have to cross over very dangerous roads in order to reach the school. In this morning's issue of *The West Australian* the headmaster of the school said, among other things—

"It really is a bad spot," the school principal, Mr. F. E. McKenzie, said.

The crosswalk at the intersection should be manned with a guard or replaced with a pedestrian bridge, he said.

Members who have been in this House for some time will recollect that for 10 or 12 years I have advocated the erection of a pedestrian bridge. It must be 12 years ago that the P. & C. association at the Governor Stirling High School first raised this matter with me.

A few years ago I was told that when pedestrian bridges were first introduced in Tasmania they were considered to be unsafe. I have subsequently found that to be untrue. I have in my hand six photographs of bridges near schools in Tasmania. The first one is on the Brooker Highway at Goodwood. It is a steel structure which was erected in 1957 at a cost of \$2,900. This is the sort of thing we need around the metropolitan area instead of temporary guards waving flags on the crossings, at a cost which has to be repeated every year.

The next photograph shows a bridge over the Tasman Highway at Rose Bay. That bridge cost \$4,900. Another photograph shows a bridge at the Argyle Street crossing in Hobart, which cost \$8,500. There is another over the T. and G. railway line at Chigwell which cost \$2,700. Another one has been erected on the Brooker Highway; the cost is not stated. The next photograph shows the bridge erected over the Brooker Highway near Bowen Road at Moonah in 1956-57, and another one was erected on the Midland Highway at Claremont at a cost of \$4,500.

Mr. O'Neil: There is a bridge over the Leach Highway in Rossmoyne, Western Australia.

Mr. BRADY: It is strange that the honourable member should mention that. When I was in Victoria and saw a bridge over the highway between Melbourne and Sydney I wrote to the Minister for Education in Victoria and asked him where he got the idea from. He said, "From the one on the highway at Como, Western Australia."

It seems to be possible to build bridges over highways in certain places, but not near a school which caters for 1,600 children where there has been a number of

accidents. I would like the Minister for Education to ask his officers to confer with the Main Roads Department and the local shire council with a view to taking urgent action to build a crossover near the Governor Stirling High School and also near the Government school at Guildford, where a similar problem has arisen.

I will not get the votes of the teachers at the Governor Stirling High School for saying what I am about to say now. A strange thing is happening. The teachers seem to be able to drive their cars into the school grounds, which could be a source of danger to school children, but the children have to park their vehicles outside the school grounds.

In my opinion, this practice is illogical. The people who should park their vehicles outside the school grounds are the school teachers. I just mention in passing that this matter might require some attention in the near future. Some problems will ensue because students of 17 or 18 are driving cars to the school and parking them around the suburb of West Midland, near the Governor Stirling High School. The point I make is that the teachers should not be permitted to drive their vehicles into the school grounds when there is a risk of accidents occurring. It has been reported to me that recently a child was knocked down by a teacher's car in the grounds of the high school.

Let me say, finally, that, as the member for Swan, I have been very concerned for 23 years about what I might call the imbalance in the higher strata of education for children in the area. In order to acquire higher education the children have to go to the W.A. Institute of Technology at Bentley, the university at Nedlands, or the teachers' training colleges in other western suburbs of the metropolitan area.

I think it is high time something was done in the eastern suburbs to encourage young people to take up the teaching profession and play their role in life to help the younger people of the community. The eastern suburbs are growing at a tremendous rate. The number of electors on the roll in my area has grown from 5,000 in 1948 to over 16,000 at the present time. I am reminded that every electorate between Mt. Lawley and Northam is represented by a Labor member.

We are looking forward to the day when a teachers' training college or a university is built in the eastern suburbs, just as we are looking forward to the day when the S.E.C. will build more power stations in the northern suburbs. The thousands of children in the eastern suburbs should not have to go to the western suburbs of the metropolitan area in order to receive higher education. Three or four years ago I advocated the building of a university in the eastern suburbs. I hoped that the Minister for Education at that time would see his way clear to have

an agricultural university erected somewhere between Northam and Toodyay. With the development of rural industries in Western Australia, I think it is about time we considered the possibility of having a university similar to the one in New England in the Eastern States.

I have endeavoured to put first things first in this address to the House. The next thing I want to refer to is the matter of assistance to the native population of Western Australia. It seems that we are now arriving at the crossroads in regard to what should be done for our natives. Some members of Parliament are now standing up and telling us that some of the white children in the north are not getting the same facilities as the native children because Commonwealth funds are being made available to the natives in the north. Jealousy will creep in and it will develop into a situation of whites *versus* blacks or blacks *versus* whites.

I suggest that it is about time somebody had a look at the Colombo Plan and considered all the money that has been channelled into Indonesia to help that country obtain a correct economic balance. At the moment we have Mr. Kallis—and I give him due credit—bringing Indonesians to Fremantle so that they may learn how to build trawlers. A number of business firms from Western Australia are going to Indonesia to establish businesses in that country. Yet we have thousands of Aborigines in Western Australia who could do the jobs for which the Indonesians are being trained.

Last week the member for Katanning asked a question of the Minister for Agriculture in regard to the Midland Junction Abattoir. I will read part of the question—

- (9) What will be the total number of slaughtermen required for the mutton chains at Midland abattoirs?
- (10) Will the total slaughtering facilities on the mutton chain be only on a seasonal basis?
- (11) Does the board expect to obtain sufficient slaughtermen locally to operate the new mutton chain?
- (12) If not, where does the board expect to recruit them?
- (13) How many will be required?

The relevant part of the Minister's answer is as follows:—

- (9) 160.
- (10) Indications are that with increased stock numbers the mutton chain could be fully used throughout the year.
- (11) Not at first.
- (12) New Zealand.
- (13) 50.

So it would seem that the Midland Junction Abattoir Board is considering bringing people—Maoris and whites—from New

Zealand to work on the mutton chain at the abattoir. Let me say that I have discussed this matter with people from the north-west during the last week and I have been given an assurance that young Aborigines from various missions in the north of our State could be trained to perform this work at the Midland Junction Abattoir, and they could do the work just as efficiently as people from New Zealand.

I believe it is about time the missions of the various church denominations—whether it be the mission at Derby, Broome, Mowanjumb, or any other place—were encouraged to send Aborigines to the metropolitan area so that they can be properly trained to become slaughtermen at the abattoir. This could have economic advantages for the State, the abattoir, the missions, and for the Aborigines themselves.

If we look at the 1970 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Native Welfare we find on page 41 that there are 1,521 Aboriginal males in the northern division of the department's jurisdiction. There are 818 Aboriginal males in the north-west division, 284 in the north central division, and a further 554 in the rest of the State, making a total of 3,177. Those people are all full-blood Aborigines, and the part-Aborigines total 3,257.

Many of those Aborigines are acquitting themselves well in many fields of work in the north-west. Many are working on the various wharves and the port authorities would not be able to carry on in the north-west were it not for the work performed by those people. Many Aborigines are working with the Main Roads Department and the P.M.G., and some are actually working in the abattoirs in the north. My point is that I believe the young Aborigines should be brought to the metropolitan area and trained at the Midland Junction Abattoir so that ultimately they might be able to take their place in this field of work, both in the metropolitan area and in the north.

At the moment whites are taken to Wyndham to do the slaughtering work at the abattoir there; whereas, in my opinion, if the Aborigines were trained the Wyndham Meat Works and the abattoir could carry on with the labour of local Aborigines rather than have white people travelling up there at great cost to the State. I understand from an expert to whom I spoke about this matter—one who has handled stock with the help of natives for many years—that Aborigines adapt themselves well to monotonous work. The mission Aborigines are strong, their standard of hygiene is equal to ours, and they are eager to carry out work associated with stock.

It is that gentleman's experience over 15 years that the Aborigines can be easily trained and they give excellent service. He said they can be relied upon but that in

the early stages careful selection would have to be made to ensure that the right people were brought to the metropolitan area to be trained, and they in turn would ultimately encourage other natives to come to Perth to be trained. The gentleman said there is only one weakness in the idea and that is Aborigines are great family people. They would be most eager to return to the missions at the earliest opportunity. He thought one way of keeping them here and encouraging them to take up abattoir work would be to promise them a free trip home to the north once every year, just as many white people in the north are provided with free trips to the south every year. So I believe there is much to be said for the idea of training our Aborigines to carry out abattoir work.

I read an article this week in the booklet *Facts and Figures*, No. 108, page 6, where it is reported that Mr. McMahon announced that \$11,000,000 is being spent in helping Indonesia under the foreign aid programme. We are spending that amount of money to help the Indonesian people and yet we have young Aboriginal people from missions and stations hanging around towns and the metropolitan area, in many cases without an opportunity to improve themselves.

In recent years the Midland Junction Abattoir Board built what is known as Silver City alongside the abattoir in order to provide proper accommodation for slaughtermen brought here from the Eastern States and New Zealand. I would advocate in this House that half of that Silver City be turned over to the Native Welfare Department, together with the native missions throughout Western Australia, so that accommodation could be provided for young Aborigines brought here to work in the abattoir. This would be most valuable to the Aborigines, to the missions, and ultimately to the north-west. So I leave the suggestion with the members of this Chamber.

I wish also to mention a report recently issued by a member of the Australian Union of Students. In the report it was stated that it is not always in the best interests of young people from overseas to be trained in Australia because even with their qualifications they are not readily sought after when they return to their own countries. As a consequence of being here for three or four years, the young people themselves are sometimes not able to settle down. That would not apply to our Aborigines if they were given the same opportunity.

I think all members must have been appalled the other night when the member for South Perth referred to the Aborigines in the Warburton Range and Wingelinna area. The honourable member pointed out that practically nothing has been done for those 500 people, even though a committee recommended 12 years ago that certain

things should be done. Perhaps some of them could be brought into the scheme I am advocating. I know the member for South Perth is concerned about those people and I would like to have his support for the suggestions I have made to help our young Aborigines.

I could speak for another hour in connection with this matter because as I go through life this is one section of the community I have always endeavoured to help. I went to Guildford the other day to see some Aborigines who were living in tents and camps. There were young Aboriginal men—with their wives—who, in my opinion, could have been employed at the abattoir. These people want the opportunity to pay rent. They want the opportunity to buy houses.

Recently a deputation from Aboriginal people was received on the steps of Parliament House. The deputation advocated that the Government should do something in relation to their housing problem. For the first time in my life I heard the Premier speak with a frog in his throat when he met that deputation and accepted the petition. I felt his heart was with them and he would like to do more than he is doing as Premier at the moment to help them. Here is an opportunity to help those people by training them to carry out work which a gentleman with over 15 years' experience with Aborigines—he is an expert in my opinion—has assured me they can perform.

The next matter I would like to deal with concerns the Midland Railway Workshops. The Minister for Railways has been good enough to visit the workshops and meet some of the employees. They pointed out to him that the railway workshops are rapidly declining. The number of men employed at the moment is about 600 fewer than it was 12 years ago when the Liberal-Country Party Government took office. As a consequence, anything up to 45 or 50 machines are lying idle. This in itself is bad enough, but there is \$5,000,000 worth of plant and machinery in the workshops and the Government is letting contracts for rolling stock and locomotives to be built by private concerns instead of being built in the Midland Railway Workshops. In my opinion this work should be carried out at the workshops where proper tradesmen can supervise the construction and apprentices can be given an opportunity to work on this type of construction. The workshops were built for this purpose and the department should use them to their full capacity.

It is pathetic to hear of men leaving the workshops and going to private industry when they should be retained. So I make an appeal this afternoon to the Minister for Railways and the Government, generally, that if there is insufficient work to occupy the railway workshops, an effort

should be made to channel the work which is at present going to private industry into the workshops.

Let me make a suggestion. We have a Government concern known as the Metropolitan Transport Trust which runs into debt to the extent of thousands of dollars each year. In my opinion the M.T.T. and the railways should be amalgamated, especially in view of the economic difficulties we are experiencing at the moment. As a Parliament we should be thinking of ways of cutting down costs and I believe that much of the work being carried out in the M.T.T. workshops could be carried out in the Midland Railway Workshops and, conversely, some of the railway bus work could be carried out in the M.T.T. workshops. I think there should be an amalgamation of all State transport organisations in an effort to cut costs. As I see the position, we will be facing grave economic difficulties in the near future and the only way out is to economise by amalgamating Government departments and activities.

As a matter of fact anybody who picks up the annual report of the Commissioner of Railways and looks at the map at the back of the report will wonder whether it is a railway concern or a road transport concern that put out the report. The red lines on this railway map show the road transport services while the black lines indicate the railway lines.

I think it will be found that there are more road services than there are railway services, even though this department is under the aegis of the Western Australian Government Railways.

We must do a lot of hard thinking in regard to this matter. The north-west must in the near future have either railway services according to the policy of the Labor Party set down at the State conference, or it must have improved road services. I believe there should be a little of each. It is possible that more of the private railway lines will ultimately have to be taken over or worked in with the idea of providing better transport services.

If it were not for the mining industry I hate to think of the depression in which this State would find itself. It is for us to do all we can to encourage the mining and other industries in the eastern gold-fields, in the north-west, and in the Kimberley, by providing the best transport services we can in those areas as quickly and as economically as possible.

I say this because I believe the whole solution to our economic problems in this State is bound up with transport. Anybody who reads the report of the Director-General of Transport for this year will see that he, too, is moving in the same direction—he feels there must be greater co-ordination of transport and greater interaction in transport. Once we overcome the transport problems we will be able to save

hundreds of thousands of dollars in each of the departments concerned. As I said before, the economics of transport will either make or break the Government in the future.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. BRADY: Thank you, Sir, for reminding me. I would like the Government to do more in regard to the building of houses in the eastern suburbs. I still have many people applying for houses rather than flats. It would seem that the majority of the people do not want flats; they prefer to be allocated a house.

Only this morning I rang the State Housing Commission about a woman who applied for a house in 1970. She has seven children and it is possible she will receive an eviction order in the morning. She has been advised that she cannot be given a house; that she must wait her turn; because of the many hundreds of people who have applied before her. I believe the waiting list for the Midland area goes as far back as 1965. This means that people who have applied between 1965 and 1971 are still on the waiting list.

Other services that we want in the Midland area are water supplies and sewerage. As a matter of fact the lack of sewerage is holding up progress in the Swan Shire at the moment. Many multi-storied buildings could be built in that area and many industries could be established in the eastern suburbs if the area were provided with adequate sewerage.

I started my speech by saying that I wanted to offer my congratulations, which I did, to the Ministers who have visited my area to have a look at some of the problems at first hand. I want to do the right thing and offer my congratulations to the Government on being returned.

I agree with the honourable member who made the remark last night that this Government should have been returned earlier. The fact remains that it has been returned and I suppose it is better late than never.

Mr. O'Connor: I wish they had been returned.

Mr. BRADY: I am sorry the economic position was so grave when the Labor Government took over. This, however, is not unusual when Labor Governments take office. When Labor Governments are returned they invariably solve the problems that exist and having done so they find that the people have a change of heart.

I wish the Government well, and I also wish the Speaker the very best in his new job. At one stage it was portended that I would be the new Speaker. I do, however, offer my congratulations to the present Speaker. I believe he deserves the honour bestowed on him.

I worked with his father for years as a member of the superphosphate union and my only regret is that his father is not

here to see him elevated to this high position.

I should also like to offer my congratulations to members of Parliament on both sides of the House. Having listened to debates in this House for 23 years I feel that the standard of debate on the Address-in-Reply this year is as high as I have ever known it to be in the 23 years I have been here.

May I also offer my congratulations to the officers who have been promoted in recent years in this House. They deserve their promotions, because they are conscientious and helpful at all times.

In conclusion I would like to pay a tribute to Mr. Hale for the work he has done as Chief Hansard Reporter. I first met Mr. Hale in 1930-31 when I visited the Arbitration Court as secretary of one of the unions. He was always a gentleman when approached and was anxious at all times to provide the necessary facts. He did not have any flights of fancy as to what should be incorporated in the transcripts. He does things in a factual manner and lets one have the transcript as it is correctly recorded.

I want to pay him a tribute and I trust he and his wife enjoy good health in his retirement, and I hope they will live long to enjoy the results of the hard work he has done for the State over these many years.

I thank the House for the opportunity to make these few remarks without a great deal of interruption.

MR. RIDGE (Kimberley) [4.52 p.m.]: In the absence of the Speaker I would like to join with other members in congratulating him on his elevation to his high office. His appointment was well received by members on both sides of the House, and I think it is fitting that his long service to this Parliament and to local government in Western Australia should be so rewarded.

I would also like to congratulate the members who were newly elected this year. If my short experience in Parliament is any guide I think they will find their task most frustrating while at the same time finding it very demanding.

In spite of this, however, our efforts are occasionally acknowledged, and for one to be the recipient of a letter of appreciation from a satisfied constituent can be most rewarding at least from the point of view of personal satisfaction.

Without being facetious, I would like to congratulate the Premier and his Ministry on their electoral successes. It goes without saying that whilst I hope the State continues to prosper I do hope to see my own party return to the Treasury benches in the not-too-distant future.

While good wishes seem to be the order of the day, I would also like to extend my most sincere appreciation to Sir David

Brand. As Premier of Western Australia and Leader of the Liberal Party he led the State with intelligence, dignity, respect, and a great deal of understanding of the needs of people in all walks of life.

I am sure that even members of the Labor Party will concede that his record as Premier is a most enviable one. As a bumbling back-bencher who has not the aggressive qualities which I think are desirable for a politician, Sir David has proved to be a tower of strength and I am sure his guidance has been a source of encouragement and inspiration to all members of the Liberal Party.

For the second time my electors have given me the task of trying to justify their faith in my ability. I can assure them that I will undertake the task with some enthusiasm.

The previous Government took office at a time when politicians were not particularly welcome in the north. I say this because the people up there had heard so much about the great potential of the region but had seen so little done about exploiting it that they had lost faith.

I can recall, as the shire clerk at Derby, receiving a letter from a disgruntled ratepayer who objected to the council fattening and flattering politicians "who probably didn't give a damn about the north anyhow." That his views were not shared by the council does not really matter, because I think there is ample evidence that somebody did care and as a result of positive and forward thinking by the Brand Administration we witnessed the most dramatic developmental transformation that the north is ever likely to experience.

It can be said that the transformation was bold, imaginative, and successful. But I do not think it can be said that it was complete. I say this for a couple of reasons. For a start it was mainly restricted to the Pilbara area. I do not suggest that the development did not go right through the north, but the Pilbara seemed to get the bulk of it. On the other hand it still has not solved many of the social problems which are inherent with remoteness.

Despite the fact that William Dampier landed at Roebuck Bay 71 years before James Cook dropped anchor in Botany Bay, the Kimberley is still one of the most isolated parts of the continent, and if the isolation cannot be counteracted by quick development, there would then be justification for putting the cart before the horse by extending to the people in the region the basic necessities which they crave and to which they are entitled.

In the far north I consider we are backwoodsmen and we are getting sick of it. I do not think sufficient emphasis is

placed on human values, and not enough people are recognising our right to equal opportunities.

This is the year 1971, and while the members of this House are sitting back and watching television and seeing the Apollo astronauts hurtling towards the moon they might spare a thought for the people who still have not got a reliable telephone service or radio reception.

I hope members also take time to consider the high cost of living in the north; to think about the shipping delays; the problems associated with educating children; the dilemma of the Aborigines, and the hundred and one other things that detract from stabilised settlement.

Members should also try to appreciate that while we are up to 2,000 miles away from the seat of Government, our natural resources are an immense asset and eventually the nation will become more and more reliant on us, than *vice versa*.

Nor do I think the national Government can be absolved from criticism. It is time that Government woke up to the fact that Australia is quickly becoming a dependant of this State, and instead of bleeding the proverbial golden goose it could do well to observe that the north could be the future root system of Australia's greatness.

Despite the lack of initiative and national guidance that has been displayed by Canberra, Western Australia has emerged as a powerful force in the nation's economy. But to achieve the ultimate we need Federal participation to ensure that the region is developed sensibly and as part of a national plan.

From the point of view of security alone, the Commonwealth should be two jumps ahead of the State in planning the development of our resources, but they should also scrap the Uncle Scrooge image and replace it with an attitude which acknowledges the importance of people and the security of their investments.

I do not think there is any doubt that the Commonwealth and State Governments have faith in the ability of the Kimberley region eventually to become a major earner of export income. What worries me is that many of the people in the north have not a great deal of confidence in their Governments, and this feeling is generated by the fact that in some instances progress seems to be undertaken for the sake of progress and not for the sake of people, as it should rightly be.

In the north we welcome any sort of development we can possibly get because we recognise the desirable side effects it has by way of providing employment and career opportunities for our children and by way of creating a demand for consumer services, and many other things. But there must be

a point where even Governments concede that the door to prosperity will be opened only by a happy and contented worker, and contentment is not obtained by just having a steady job and a boozier to go to after work. We must have the allied refinements of services at realistic prices. We must have educational establishments which compare with those in the densely-populated areas, and recreational and cultural facilities to stimulate the body and mind.

It is 92 years since the Forrest brothers told the nation of the limitless opportunities in the far north. To the credit of pioneering families such as the McDonalds, the Duracks, and so on, the potential of the area was recognised; but ever since then development has been painfully slow and cumbersome; and I submit that this has been because Governments have been too content to regard modern settlers as being pioneers who are prepared and willing to accept hardship and adversity. I believe this attitude must change.

Let us take a quick look at the Pilbara where private enterprise faced a form of compulsion inasmuch as the developing companies were required to provide many of the necessities for a basic modern life. They did this; but in most instances went a little further. They accepted the philosophy that people could be motivated to give of their best if they had a firm foundation on which to build a secure future. Quite apart from providing modern civic amenities such as deep sewerage, grassed ovals, television, and the like, they provided water and electricity either free or at prices which encouraged a better standard of living.

In some cases they subsidised the cost of foodstuffs and other general commodities and in instances went as far as granting substantial financial aid to parents of children who had to go away for higher education.

Under these circumstances stabilised settlement is certainly within the bounds of reality. Unfortunately, the older established but equally important towns which have not shared in the glamour of the industrial boom have been left to go it alone and it is just not possible for the local authorities in the far north to provide the same amenities and facilities of the high standard the mining companies have provided.

In my opinion local government in the north is on the bones of its backside and is not able to satisfy even its most basic functions.

Mr. Brady: Not only in the north. A lot in the south are in that position, too.

Mr. RIDGE: If we want councils to accept their rightful responsible role they will have to be given financial inducement.

Had the Opposition been successful in the State elections in February it was planned to acknowledge this difficulty, and whilst I appreciate the fact that the

Premier did not commit his party to the same undertaking, I would urge him to give consideration to the institution of a similar plan; because many ratepayers are not aware of the responsibilities of their local authorities and, through a lack of understanding of the financial structure of a shire council, they are becoming over-critical and have lost confidence in the ability of their shire representatives.

This is a very real problem that is with us now. The member for Swan said that it not only affects the local authorities in the north, but I say it affects the local authorities in the north to a far greater degree than it does those in the south.

I have abounding faith in the electorate I represent, but I believe that the people who express doubts about the future of the area are not necessarily knockers; because I know in many instances they are realists who have recognised the inability of our democratic processes to overcome some of the problems we experience.

These problems, I think, can be placed in four categories; that is, local government to which I have already referred, community welfare, transport, and education. I do not intend to go into detail because I will have the opportunity at a later stage in the session to refer to these matters, but I would like to make a brief reference to some of them.

As members of this House will know the success of every venture we undertake depends largely on an efficient transport organisation which is geared to operate at acceptable prices. In the north there are varying views on the efficiency of some of the organisations operating up there, but it is not my intention to buy into an argument of this nature right now. However, there is certainly no argument about the fact that the freight rates and handling charges in the north are denying the people up there access to better living conditions and very good marketing opportunities.

Within the last week or two the State Shipping Service announced a deficit of some \$4,000,000, and the big question on the lips of every person in the north at the moment is: Does this mean we can expect an increase in shipping rates? I do not like subsidies any more than anyone else does, but in the north the people are slowly being submerged by rising costs, and if the freight burden gets any heavier it will drag down a lot of good people. So once again I urge the Government to carry the burden rather than push it on to the people who are not financially equipped to carry it.

Speaking of shipping, I would like to know the future of the Ord project. Before very long we will have another 178,000 acres of irrigable land on the Ord River. I do not doubt the ability of the area to become productive, because I firmly believe the sheer enormity of the scheme will

ensure us large-scale marketing opportunities. However, the problem as I see it is that no-one in his right mind will enter into an agreement to buy our produce unless satisfied we have the facilities for coping with that produce through our ports and so forth.

At present the port-handling facilities at Wyndham are working under pressure trying to cope with the turn-off from the present small acreage. I do not know whether the Government has a fairy god-mother in mind to build new facilities, and I do not know what stage the planning has reached, but I do hope the importance of this project will not be underestimated.

Mr. May: Representations were made to the Commonwealth Government some time ago in regard to this.

Mr. RIDGE: That is very good. An old hobby horse of mine is—

Mr. Bickerton: Before you get off shipping, what did you think of the letter in *The West Australian*? Did you read it?

Mr. RIDGE: No, I did not.

Mr. Bickerton: It is quite good reading.

Mr. RIDGE: An old hobby horse of mine is education. I think the Minister will find the people in the north are not particularly encouraged by future prospects purely and simply because they have not heard of any plans which are indicative of radical changes. If we are to satisfy the people in the north that their children will get a good education, radical changes in the education system up there must be made. There is one junior high school in the Kimberley region, but I think it is necessary to upgrade each of the primary schools in the other three major centres to junior high school status; and I also consider there should be senior high schools in both the east and west Kimberley regions. Boarding hostels must be provided for the white children from station properties and be available whether the children are undertaking primary or secondary courses.

As many other members have mentioned, increased living-away-from-home allowances are important and at present the supervision allowance which is accorded to mothers who look after their children's education through correspondence courses is completely unrealistic and is penalising parents who have large families.

I also firmly believe that remedial classes and preschool education is an absolute necessity for Aboriginal children. Although I do not know to what extent television has been utilised in classrooms, I think the opportunity for its use up there with some effect is almost limitless, and I hope that the Premier will give favourable consideration to a letter I addressed to him a couple of weeks ago in regard to this particular matter.

So until we can achieve a desirable standard of education in the north parents will continue to send their children away from the area, and this is very undesirable.

On the question of Aborigines, my only comment at this stage is to urge the formulation of a policy based on a personal involvement of the Aboriginal people. We must encourage them to participate in their own well-being and make sure they are not denied the opportunity to tread their own path to total integration. I emphasise this point because I have in the past been critical of former Governments as I thought they were pushing these people too quickly.

In relation to the new Ministry I think the most unenviable task of office has fallen on the shoulders of the Minister for Community Welfare, because whilst he can be a successful administrator he faces a job that is almost humanly impossible, unless his office is the recipient of a massive financial grant from the Commonwealth Government.

On the question of welfare I would like to make a very brief reference to pensioners, although I appreciate that this is not a problem necessarily concerning the State Government. These old people in the north are generally old timers who have been up there all their lives. Through the generosity of local government and the Lotteries Commission they are living in small huts for which they pay a very nominal rental, which includes electricity. The sorry part of their lot is that they receive the basic pension only.

In almost every walk of life in the north the people are paid a district disability allowance, but the Commonwealth Government, which incidentally pays the highest allowance to its employees, does not recognise the right of the pensioners to qualify for the same type of allowance. I feel they should be given some consideration for having spent almost all their lives up there. Should a pensioner want to come to Perth for a holiday it would cost something like \$230 in fares alone, and it is impossible for a pensioner to save this amount when he is receiving only \$15 a week. So perhaps members of this House could raise this matter with their Federal counterparts.

On the occasions I have spoken in this House I have probably displayed some parochialism towards my electorate, but at the same time I have been free with my criticism of my own party if circumstances have warranted it. It follows therefore that I cannot blame the new Government for many of the problems in the north and it is not my intention to do so at present.

However, I can challenge the Government. I can challenge it to show compassion for the reluctant pioneers in the

far north; I can challenge it to face reality and in doing so not deny us what other sections of the community are able to take for granted; and I can challenge it to accept the philosophy that progress must be for the sake of the people. The acceptance of these principles will result in the development of our greatest resource; that is, people.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville) [5.15 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity on the Address-in-Reply to correct an omission I made on the Supply Bill in extending to you, Sir, my congratulations in being appointed Speaker of this House, and also to extend my congratulations to those who sit on the Government side. It may well be that those who have been in the Ministry for some five months now may feel that condolences are more in order, because probably they will have already experienced the pressures that can be placed upon the Ministry in a State which is developing and progressing as rapidly as Western Australia. One would imagine that these sorts of pressures will certainly not diminish in the future. I would also like to extend my congratulations to all new members. We have all been new members at some time or another and it seems but a very short time since I, too, was in the position of having to make a maiden speech in this House back in 1959.

It might be timely for someone who has been a member of this House for a brief 12 years to offer some suggestions to those who are completely new. I say to them, "Be careful about what you say." This applies to members on the Opposition side as well as those on the Government side, because anyone who has been in this Chamber for a little time will recognise the astuteness of people sitting opposite and their ability to turn a debate or question in the direction of putting a member on the spot. We had this experience the other night when the member for Albany, who is a relatively new member, found himself in exactly that position. After determining that he personally was in support of a particular proposition, he found he was not exactly certain that the Government he sits behind would, in fact, carry out the recommendations of that proposition. I am not being critical of the member for Albany in so doing, but it is an easy trap for any member to fall into.

When sitting on the Government benches, I can recall interjecting on speakers on the other side and saying, "Be careful. One day if you sit on the Government benches, you may have to do some of the things you are suggesting." If anyone cared to research the speeches of members of the present Government, when in Opposition, he would find innumerable examples

of ideas which the Opposition was threatening to put into effect, many of which will be found completely impracticable if not impossible.

Mr. May: There were some occasions when back-benchers of the previous Government were put in an invidious position.

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes, and that will happen in the future, too. I am offering a friendly word of advice to new members. I suggest they should not fall for the three-card trick.

I do not want to be regarded as the Father of the House because you, Mr. Speaker, are that honoured personage, but I would like to refer to one other point of general interest. It has often been said to me that the only question worth asking is the one to which a member thinks he knows the answer. In my brief experience in Opposition I find the answers are couched in much the same terms as I would have given them, had I still been a Minister.

Mr. Taylor: They are prepared by the same people.

Mr. O'NEIL: This reminds me of an experience which occurred when I was first in the Ministry. Among the first questions I answered was one asked by the member for Gascoyne. It so happened that I had moved into a ministerial office that had not been used for six years. The stationery available to answer questions was extremely limited and the letterhead on that particular stationery is quite clear. I received a suggested reply to the question from the department and, as it was my responsibility as Minister to answer the question, I worded the reply the way I wanted it, although I did not alter the facts. After all, a question is asked of the Minister and not of the department. The member for Gascoyne chastised me for altering the answer to the question. There was nothing wrong with that. It is the Minister's responsibility to see that a question is answered in the way he thinks it ought to be answered.

Many questions are asked simply for the purpose of eliciting information. This is fair enough and it furnishes a member with information on a subject upon which he intends to speak. Of course, many questions are asked because a member thinks he knows the answer and tries to take the opportunity to put the Minister or the Government of the day on the spot. This, too, is fair enough. As I have said, in my brief time in Opposition I have noticed that the answers are pretty much in the form in which I would have designed them, anyway. I am not objecting to that.

I mentioned when speaking to the Supply Bill that I am concerned with the proposal of the Government to interfere—I think that was the word I used—with the operations of the building society movement. I do not propose to proceed with that any

further. My concern has been recorded and I presume in due time an opportunity to expand upon that issue will be available if and when legislation is introduced to amend the Building Societies Act. I assume that is the Act which will be affected.

I have a little to say on the operations of the State Housing Commission beginning with the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement. This agreement expired on the 30th June this year. As members well know, the agreement is entered into by the States and the Commonwealth and runs for a period of some five years. Under the agreement a portion of the loan funds for works and housing is allocated to the State housing authorities in the various States. In this State it happens to be a commission; in South Australia it is a trust; and in Tasmania it is a department. In any case, the agreement is entered into as between the Commonwealth and the Premiers of the various States. Under the agreement some funds, determined by the State, out of the total housing and works loan fund programme, are allocated for the building of houses for people of low and moderate incomes.

Certain conditions apply to the use of these funds in certain cases. The State housing authority must obtain permission to use funds for certain purposes. There is a concessional interest rate in respect of this money. It is lent to the States at 1 per cent. below the long-term bond rate so that, in fact, it is cheaper money for housing than is normally available. However, to ensure that not all of it is used for State purposes, or more correctly to provide for people who desire something other than a Government-built house, there is a requirement that some 30 per cent.—or not less than 30 per cent.—of the loan funds so made available are allocated to building societies.

In this State in recent times the apportionment of the 30 per cent., together with some return from the revolving fund, amounted to something in excess of \$4,000,000. This has been allocated, half to what are commonly known as permanent building societies, and half to what are known as terminating societies. The terms and conditions upon which these societies may finance loans for housing are also strictly controlled. Consequently, a source of funds from building societies is available at relatively low interest rates, possibly at 1 per cent. or a little more below the normal available funds. This, of course, comes under the terms and conditions of the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement.

Considerable discussions have taken place, not only between officers of the State Housing Commission and Commonwealth officers, but also between various State Ministers for Housing as to the conditions

under which the States and the Commonwealth would enter into a new agreement which should have commenced on the 1st July this year and run, I presume, for the usual period of five years.

The reason why there is not an agreement in existence is known to me. The Federal Minister for Housing (Dame Annabelle Rankin) was appointed as High-Commissioner for Australia in New Zealand, and because of other changes the final negotiations relative to this new agreement did not reach the point where the agreement could be available as at the 1st July. I have ascertained, by way of questioning, that a 1971 Act of the Federal Parliament has extended the provisions of the old agreement at least until the time when a new agreement can be entered into.

I want to make a point about at least three areas of the old agreement upon which the States were almost unanimous that the Commonwealth should show much more generosity or consideration in regard to the problem of housing. The first of these three areas was the building of houses for serving service personnel, which is usually termed "service housing." The second area was the interest rate at which the money was to be made available; and the third was the method of assessing rebates so that they would operate more fairly.

In respect of the first matter regarding service housing, it is a condition of current and past Commonwealth and State Housing Agreements that 5 per cent. of the total loan funds available must be set aside for the provision of housing for serving service personnel. Therefore, of the original amount some 30 per cent. was directed to the building society movement and a further 5 per cent. was directed towards the provision of housing for the armed services.

Under the clause which designates where this 5 per cent. is to go there is a provision that if a particular branch of the armed services requires more housing than its share of the 5 per cent. would meet, the balance of the money was to be found from the services loan fund. An example of this was the development of the housing complex at the air base at Pearce, where I think it was originally decided that over a period of four years 300 units of accommodation would be needed. As I understand it—and I am only talking in round terms—190 houses were built under the services clause of the housing agreement, and since then, for reasons best known to the Commonwealth, the programme has not been proceeded with.

It is possible that there will be a requisition from the armed services for additional housing. All the Ministers in all the States objected strongly to the fact that 5 per cent. of the loan funds made available to

the States had to be earmarked and, in fact, spent on service housing. Perhaps I should qualify that by saying that the State of Tasmania was not particularly concerned about it because that State does not have very many service personnel, but in general terms Tasmania joined with the other States and felt that it was inequitable that the funds should have to be made available and that all funds which were to be used for service housing should come out of the services vote, although the housing authorities in the various States were quite prepared to undertake the building, supervision, and even the management of service housing.

There was another reason for this decision. Under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreements the State has a right to determine where service housing will be built. Naturally, the R.A.A.F. was insistent that the houses should be built at Pearce. Western Australia was not particularly happy with this proposition because, in the event of service houses being no longer required for the purpose for which they were built, the houses would revert to the responsibility of the State housing authority, which would be required to meet the loan fund repayments on the cost of construction.

I do not think we can conceive a position where the air force base at Pearce would be closed, but if this were ever to happen I cannot imagine a demand for some 300-odd houses at Pearce to house people who would work in that vicinity. I think the State took a calculated risk in this matter and felt that Pearce had a life of at least 45 years. We would hope this is so because that is the period over which the cost of those houses must be amortised and, therefore, it was a fair risk to undertake the construction in that area. However, if the army ever decides to establish a major base in Western Australia, I should not imagine it would be very close to the metropolitan area. I think it would need to be some distance away and if it is a requirement of the next Commonwealth agreement, that the State be responsible for the repayment of loans for army houses on that base, then I think we should look carefully at it.

I mention another matter which is that of interest rates in respect of loans. The Premier might be interested to know that the charge on loans under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement varies from time to time. In other words, the State housing interest rate on the loan that it borrows to build houses has a tendency to go up and up and up. If this money is advanced from Commonwealth sources to build houses, then surely in respect of that particular amount of money the interest rate on that loan should remain constant. At the moment it does not and I think members will find that our Treasury adopts similar procedures.

There is a tendency for interest rates to rise even though the original loan has been granted some time ago and at a different interest rate. This, of course, intrudes upon the problem. Indeed, the Premier has implied that the Government will peg interest rates in respect of housing loans from building societies. However, as Ministers from various States, we felt that something could be done to look at this matter in order that there was no requirement upon State housing authorities to lift the cost of housing to the people who buy from them or rent from the housing authority because of the movement in interest rates on the basic loans.

I think it is important to mention these figures. I am sure the Minister for Housing is aware of the negotiations and procedures that have gone on, and I trust, if he is able to introduce legislation into the House before the end of this session to establish a new Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, that he will have success in negotiating with other States an agreement in the same terms.

Mr. Taylor: I received a message only today to meet with the Federal Minister for Housing on the 23rd of next month. Very late but—

Mr. O'NEIL: I trust the Minister will go over with all guns filled and blazing. Of course, at some of these conferences, there are threats not to enter into agreements unless the terms and conditions of State demands are met. It is rather surprising—and I think the member for Boulder-Dundas will appreciate this—the Commonwealth seems to have the big guns in the end anyway.

Having dealt with that in very general terms, I want to make reference to another matter which is a part of the new Government's policy—that is, the establishment of a consumer protection authority. In this regard there was little difference in the policies of the Liberal Party coalition and the Australian Labor Party. The differences would only be, I think, in the methods which are to be employed to set up some form of consumer protection authority. We made an announcement that we would, in fact, introduce a consumer protection council and I am not sure whether the Minister for Prices Control and Consumer Protection knows it yet, but a considerable amount of research work had been done by the department which comes under the Minister for Labour, and, in this State at this point of time, and in every other State has, in fact, the responsibility for looking after the consumer protection legislation. In other words, there already exists a department with a staff with some expertise which would be of great assistance to the Minister for Prices Control, but that staff happens to exist in the department under the control of the Minister for Labour.

I am sure there has been some liaison between the two. Perhaps I might mention that the little brochure that was produced by the Premier's Department on the 12th May, 1971,—an extract from the *Government Gazette* (No. 35), of the 14th May, 1971, contains the list of the Ministers and the various Statutes and instrumentalities which come under their authority.

I note, with some surprise, that even though we have a Minister for Prices Control and Consumer Protection, the following Acts are still listed as being the responsibility of the Minister for Labour: the Factories and Shops Act, which I admit has, only in part, matters concerning consumer protection; the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act, which, in fact, is legislation dealing with consumer protection; The Trading Stamp Act, which is a very interesting Act, and if any honourable member wants to know more about it I suggest he read the debates which took place in this House many years ago when it was decided to introduce a Trading Stamp Act. The divisions on that particular matter were as much of a fruit salad as I have ever seen in my life. It seemed to me no-one really knew what it was about, and certainly it was one of the few matters which, in my view, was decided on non-party lines. It may well be it will disappear altogether.

There is, of course, the Weights and Measures Act, and the Department of Weights and Measures is in fact a section of the Department of Labour. Included in this Act, of course, is a considerable amount of legislation dealing with protection of the consumer in respect of weights and the checking of weighing machines, uniform packaging, and the like. So essentially the Weights and Measures Act is part of the responsibility which should fall on the Minister for Consumer Protection.

And then right at the bottom I notice one which many of the old members will recall—a substantial Act known as the Wheat Products (Prices Fixation) Act.

Mr. Davies: That one had some title.

Mr. O'NEIL: I recall arguments that occurred when it was first amended shortly after the election in 1959. I do not know whether the Act is warranted under the conditions that prevail today.

Mr. Taylor: It is still operative today. It controls the price of a loaf of bread.

Mr. O'NEIL: Does the honourable member propose to do that?

Mr. Taylor: We are considering the matter.

Mr. O'NEIL: Thank you. I realise there were a number of reasons why questions were asked in this House, but I have discovered there is another reason and that

is, if one happens to have moved on to the Opposition side, one can verify some of the answers given as a Minister.

I do not deny the right of the then Opposition to criticise the operations of the Government in respect of housing, or the operations of the Housing Commission, but certain statements were made—certain refutations were also made, but these did not seem to make a great deal of difference. For example, in the matter of increasing rents of State Housing Commission properties, I was more than once accused of making profits out of rents. Every time the rents went up the commission was alleged to be making profits out of the poor, and so on.

Despite the answers to questions when the present Government was in Opposition these questions were posed. In order to make perfectly clear that the statements I made as a Minister relative to the operation of the commission were correct I have asked a number of questions. Surely there is no better way to do this, when in Opposition, than by asking the Government certain questions? For example, I asked the Minister for Housing on Tuesday, the 27th July, questions relating to the profits on the rental account of the State Housing Commission, and I admit again that I had a pretty close knowledge of what the answer may be.

Mr. Taylor: You almost knew the answer before you received it.

Mr. O'NEIL: This is one of those questions which is not worth while asking unless one knows the answer. It also falls into the category that it must be asked in order to confirm that some of the things one said as a Minister are, in fact, correct. It was pointed out that the State Housing Commission had a loss of some \$600,000 for the year ended the 30th June, 1971—and, of course, I appreciate that the accounts are not yet finalised.

I was not surprised at that because I know—and it was reported in this House but disbelieved by certain members at the time—that the loss on the rental account for the previous year was \$577,864. The Minister for Housing has been kind enough to supply the information that for the previous year, 1968-69, a profit of \$96,340 was made. Of course, that made it quite evident that the information I supplied to this House in respect of the rental account in previous years was, in fact, correct.

Mr. May: What would be the reason for the vast difference in profits and losses for such a short period?

Mr. O'NEIL: I do not know because I have not asked a question, but I could hazard a guess. The commission builds its accommodation on a progress payment system. The payments start virtually when the contractor signs the contract, but no

income is derived by the commission until the project is completed. We had difficulties early last year in respect of the times of completion of contracts and that came at a time when the building work force was complaining about the lack of employment opportunities. Certain pressures were applied to the contractors by the commission and they were told to perform their work according to the contract specification, or else. Of course, other things have intruded since then and the new Minister has many problems because contracts have been let and payments made, but no income is coming in from the projects.

Mr. Graham: There is interest to be paid, too.

Mr. O'NEIL: That is right. I think it may well be that, despite the accusation that rent levels are too high, this result warrants an increase in rent. I have made the point so often that the commission operates on borrowed capital and it must repay funds. It must get the money to repay its loans either from rents, payments for houses being purchased, or by dealing in such things as land. It must do this not only in order to repay its debts, but also to build up a reserve which will enable it to supplement the normal allocation it receives under the agreement, and the loan allocation from the State, as well as funds raised by its other method of financing housing; namely, by the raising of debentures.

So I am simply making the point that, as distinct from increasing rents purely to make a profit, it is necessary that this account be kept under very close scrutiny so that it does not show a substantial loss.

It is true that in Tasmania the housing authority's rental account does not show a substantial loss because for some reason or other the Minister responsible for housing in that State has the ear of the State Treasurer who subsidises the housing authority to the extent of the rebates and losses occasioned for acceptable reasons. That could be the answer to the problems of the Minister for Housing here if he wants to meet the rebate situation. I am sure he could ask the Premier to ask the Treasurer to subsidise the losses on rents.

Mr. Graham: Under the present circumstances I think the honourable member could have a soundly calculated guess as to the answer.

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes, I think so. I asked other questions relating to the availability of funds for housing under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement. Members should appreciate that there is more than one method of financing State Housing Commission operations. Firstly, there is the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement; secondly, there are funds made available under the State

Housing Act which was introduced to continue the operations of the old Workers' Homes Board; and, thirdly, the commission by its own right has the power to raise money by way of the sale of debentures. So three sources of finance are available to the commission to build houses for the people who constitute its application list.

Of course, the commission also builds houses for other State Government departments and for Commonwealth departments under the War Service Homes legislation and the like. However, to meet its essential commitments in regard to those who are its applicants, it has the three sources of finance I have outlined. During the year ended the 30th June, 1971, the amount made available to the commission under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement was \$12,500,000. According to an answer given to me on Tuesday, the 27th July, the allocation to the State Housing Commission for this financial year under the same agreement is also \$12,500,000. I have yet to find out just how much money is available to the commission under the State Housing Act, and just how much money the commission will be authorised to borrow. I do not propose to ask a question regarding those sums because I know the Minister probably would not be in a position to answer at the moment. He might be hoping for a large amount of money, but he will have to wait and see and so will I.

By way of a question I tried to clarify a position mentioned by the Deputy Premier in respect of a Treasury minute dated, I understand, Friday, the 19th February wherein the Under-Treasurer stated that it would appear the commission overspent its loan allocation fund by some \$2,000,000 as a result of its accelerated programme. I was rather amazed because I think every member in this House and probably most people in the State realise that great pressure was placed upon the Government to increase the performance of the State Housing Commission in the production of units of accommodation.

In answer to a question without notice the Deputy Premier indicated that he was quoting from that particular Treasury minute. If one refers to the speech made by the Deputy Premier recently one finds that he made a few comments in relation to the facts stated in the minute. I think one of the comments he made was that the State Housing Commission had not "gone a million" but that it had "gone two million." I was a bit chary of his comment, so on the 27th July I asked the Minister for Housing what was the total amount of money available to the commission for building operations in the last financial year. That includes all the funds I have already mentioned, plus the money available to the commission by way

of its acting as agent for other departments. In round figures, the answer supplied to me was \$37,000,000.

I also asked the Minister whether the sum available was exceeded during the financial year 1970-71. The Minister clearly replied, "No." Therefore, the statement—no matter from where it came—that the commission had overcommitted itself, or overspent its total resources, was not correct.

Mr. Taylor: If the Stevens Street and Alday Street projects had been under way it is anticipated the amount would have been \$2,000,000.

Mr. O'NEIL: Those propositions were never programmed for that financial year. I have the programme before me and even if they were programmed they would never have been able to get off the ground.

Mr. Taylor: There has been a change from the time when I took over from you.

Mr. O'NEIL: Those projects are in anticipation, but even if they were under way I would defy any builder to spend the sum of \$2,000,000 on one project in three months.

Mr. Taylor: I am trying to confirm the information put forward by the Deputy Premier.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am not arguing with the Minister, I am simply saying that, contrary to the statement that the commission had overspent by \$2,000,000, it is clear from the answers supplied to me that it did not overspend. This is not the first occasion on which there has been a difference between the Treasury and the State Housing Commission either on what is being done or what is not being done.

After all, it is very true that it is not the hand that rocks the cradle that rules the world, but the hand that holds the purse strings, and I think the Minister for Housing will find that out in due time.

Mr. Taylor: He has found out.

Mr. Nalder: I do not think this is correct in every instance.

Mr. O'Neil: No, probably only in relation to the State or Commonwealth Treasury. I asked a question some time ago as to how many individual houses remain under construction for long periods of time. This was not intended to be critical in any way, because I can recall that early last year a considerable number of houses or contracts had exceeded the normal time laid down in the contract documents. The reason given by the builders in the first instance was that there simply was not the labour available to build any faster. Then we found a downturn in building activity generally at the beginning of that year because of the completion of 19,000 units of accommodation for the previous year. Then, mainly because of a build-up of building workers,

we found that the men in the building industry were unemployed, and so the Housing Commission, in an endeavour to build homes at a faster rate in order to provide accommodation more rapidly, and to provide work for those men in the industry who were unemployed, applied considerable pressure on the contractors in order to make them measure up.

I think Mr. Ray Clohessy, secretary of the building workers' union, I think it is called, was vocal for a long time before the election and during the election, but only once after the election.

Mr. May: You are joking!

Mr. O'NEIL: He complained that there were no work opportunities for members of his union and that more and more should be done. Certain things were done, of course, prior to the election, but I cannot recall how long before the election.

Through the medium of the R. & I. Bank an amount of approximately \$10,000,000 in housing loan funds was made available with a view to stepping up this programme, and the building societies announced the release of additional money for housing. So, as far as the State was concerned, such funds as were available were injected into the building movement and one would have expected that this would have relieved unemployment in the building industry and also that we should not have had the situation of seeing new units of accommodation remaining unoccupied for some time. In order to overcome some of the major difficulties connected with housing the commission did adopt a policy of building other than individual houses; that is, not too many major flat blocks—only a couple at Bentley—but terrace houses, walkup flats, and the like because it was felt that, in these circumstances, it could overcome the problem and provide additional houses much more rapidly than by building traditional individual houses with the services that were available.

Therefore, the latter part of the 1970-71 programme of the State Housing Commission was centred more on the building of individual houses. I was amazed to hear from the member for Swan when he complained initially in his speech about so many houses being built at Lockridge because this had a tendency to overcrowd the schools in that district, and then later hearing him state that he wanted more houses built in the area.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. O'NEIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Press recently some publicity was given to the fact that a considerable number of homes were under construction and had not been completed. People had been waiting four or five months for

accommodation. This criticism came about simply because the deposit had been paid, the house was under construction and had been allocated, and it had always been the policy of the commission that such homes would be completed in a reasonable time for occupation.

However, I gathered that a considerable number were not completed. As the reply to the question asked on the 21st July, 1971, indicates, in fact 329 individual houses in the metropolitan area which had been under construction exceeded the time for construction by six months. There are many reasons, and the Minister can probably supply some, but if the shortage of labour is the reason for 329 houses taking more than six months to be built, then I think someone wants to check some of the statements made by those men who are spokesmen for the building workers.

There are some 208 houses that have been under construction for between five and six months, and there are some 143 that have been under construction for between three and four months. One would expect that the majority of houses would be completed within three months, but only 73 have been completed within this time.

So a considerable number of houses were under construction for periods in excess of the time allowed or for a time that can be regarded as being reasonable. As I mentioned before I know there are certain problems. I would like the Minister to look at these to see whether the pressures that were being applied in respect of those contracts are still being applied and, if not, make an endeavour to ensure, if it is within his power, that the houses are completed as quickly as possible.

There was another comment on the Treasury minute of the 19th February that was referred to by the Deputy Premier. That was that the commission would be required to let no further housing contracts for the balance of the year if the \$2,000,000 excess was not to be exceeded. I asked a question as to how many units of accommodation under all schemes had been put to tender in each month of this current calendar year. That is, from January right through to the present month of July.

It was on the 19th February that the Treasury minute purports to suggest that no further contracts be let. I think an analysis of this provides the answer. If my mental arithmetic were to be checked it would indicate that from the election of the new Government until this month, contracts for some 270 units of accommodation have been let. If the Treasury statement was true that the Housing Commission had overcommitted itself to the extent of \$2,000,000—and I think that has been disproven—then certainly the recommendation of the Under-Treasurer—namely, that

no more contracts should be let for the balance of the financial year—was adopted by the present Government.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. I. W. Manning.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Answer to Question: Personal Explanation

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [5.58 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the indulgence of the House to make a statement?

The **SPEAKER**: Has the Leader of the Country Party the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation? There being no dissentient voice, leave is granted.

Mr. NALDER: This morning during the debate on the Address-in-Reply and whilst I was not present in the Chamber, the member for Collie made the statement, or implied, that I had misled the House when answering a question that was asked on the 11th August, 1970, by the then Leader of the Opposition. I did ask the Minister for Electricity a question without notice as to whether he would be prepared to correct that statement, if it should be corrected, but he indicated that I should seek advice and reply to the member for Collie.

I did ask the question again as to whether he would be prepared to let me discuss this matter with the State Electricity Commission, and I have since done this in the intervening period. In order to explain the position perhaps it would be as well for me to relate the question. It is as follows:—

Mr. Tonkin asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) On the occasion of the most recent price rise in motor spirit was the price of fuel oil supplied to the Government also increased?
- (2) If "Yes" did the increase apply to the fuel oil being supplied for the Kwinana power station?
- (3) By how much was the price of fuel oil increased?

The answer was as follows:—

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) See (1).

The answers I have just quoted were correct. So as to clear the matter up I would explain and point out that the most recent price rise in motor spirit at that time was on the 22nd June, 1970. So at that particular point of time there was no rise in the price of fuel oil supplied to the State Electricity Commission.

Any increase in the price of oil was agreed to by the commission and the suppliers of fuel oil on the first of each month. On the 1st July the price decreased by 9c, and this was after the price rise for motor spirit.

In August, however, the price of fuel oil supplied to the State Electricity Commission went up 22c. Accordingly I make the point that the answer to the question at that stage was absolutely correct; and after checking with the officers of the S.E.C. I find their interpretation of the questions indicates that in their opinion the answer was correct.

I merely wished to make this explanation to the House because of the accusation levelled by the member for Collie.

House adjourned at 6.03 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 3rd August, 1971

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

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

DAYLIGHT SAVING

Responsibility for Decision

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Chief Secretary:

In view of the publicity that has been given to the question of daylight saving, and particularly having in mind his comments in this afternoon's Press to the effect that the changeover "will mean that I will get it from both sides," and that it had become a "can't win issue," does it appear to him, as it does to me, that the Government has left him with this problem?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS replied: I wish to thank Mr. Griffith for prior notice of the question. No; I do not think the Government has left me with it. It is simply a Government decision made after a review of all the submissions.

QUESTIONS (3): ON NOTICE

CATTLE Movement

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY, to the Leader of the House:

As regards movement of cattle from northern areas of Western Australia to properties in South West division—

- (a) Would it be possible to consider relaxing the provision which requires properties receiving cattle from northern areas to be quarantined for six months;