

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 25th September, 1963

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## KOONGAMIA-DARLINGTON RAILWAY

### Reopening: Petition

MR. BRADY (Swan) [4.34 p.m.] : I wish to present a petition from residents of Darlington, Boya, Helena Valley, and Glen Forrest, and from members of Parliament, containing 319 signatures, and praying for the resumption of regular passenger rail services on that part of the Mundaring Branch railway lying between Koongamia and Darlington, and integration at Darlington of rail and existing bus services.

The petition having been read,

Mr. BRADY: I move—

That the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT TRUST DEPOT

#### Future Utilisation

1. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) What are the future plans regarding the Metropolitan Transport Trust depot at the corner of Hector Street and Wanneroo Road, Tuart Hill, respecting—

(a) extension and development of the existing site?

(b) establishing an alternative depot elsewhere?

(2) In either case when is action likely to be taken?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) The trust is in the process of formulating plans for this depot but as yet no firm decisions have been made.

### SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE NORTH-WEST

#### *Increase in Boarding Allowance*

2. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he now in a position to state when the school boarding allowance for north-west children will be increased from the present allowance of £80 per annum?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) and (2) No, as a decision has not yet been reached.

### TRANSPORT OF GOODS TO THE NORTH

#### *Fremantle to Darwin*

3. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it a fact that cargo is being transported by road from Fremantle to Darwin via Alice Springs?

(2) If so, what quantity is involved?

(3) What efforts are being made to have this cargo carried by State ships?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) I am not aware of any such transport as interstate transport is not subject to transport control and no records are available as to quantities which may be carried.

(3) Answered by Nos. (1) and (2).

#### *P.W.D. Materials to Carnarvon*

4. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for the North-West:

(1) Is it a fact that jetty piles and Public Works Department materials are being transported to Carnarvon by road?

(2) If so, why are these materials not carried by State ships?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) Only in the case of urgently needed supplies for which transport cannot be arranged by State shipping.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

5. *This question was postponed for one week.*

### HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AT ROEBOURNE

#### *Preservation*

6. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier:

(1) Is it a fact that a stone building at Roebourne known as The Old Court House is to be demolished?

(2) As this and other similar buildings in Roebourne are considered by many to be local landmarks of historical importance as well as tourist attractions, will he take action to have them preserved?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) No.

(2) A survey is at present being undertaken of all buildings which may be of historical importance in the north-west and a decision as to the action to be taken will be made when the survey report is available.

7. *This question was postponed.*

### STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

#### *By-passing of Coolgardie*

8. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Was he responsible for the statement and map appearing in *The West Australian* on Monday, the 23rd September, which indicated the possibility of the standard gauge railway being routed direct from Kalgoorlie through Koolyanobbing and rejoining the existing rail system at Southern Cross and by-passing Coolgardie?

(2) Has this course been definitely decided upon or is it still under consideration?

#### *Survey of Koolyanobbing Route*

(3) Has the survey of the proposed route through Koolyanobbing been completed?

(4) If so, when was the survey commenced and at what date was it finished?

(5) How much time was lost by the surveyors through wet conditions?

#### *Advantage of Koolyanobbing Route*

(6) As the proposed route is known to pass through very difficult terrain in wet seasons, what advantage would be gained in adopting the suggested route?

#### *Effect on Coolgardie of Proposed Route*

(7) Has he considered the effect a decision of this kind would have on Coolgardie?

(8) What is his reaction to the Press statement made by the President of the Coolgardie Shire Council that the town has been let down by the Government and by Railways Minister Court and that the Government was not sincere in its statement about decentralisation?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) The statement and map were produced by the newspaper following questions to me about the possibility of an alternative route.
- (2) It is still under consideration.
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by No. (3).
- (5) Surveyors were withdrawn from the area when ground conditions made it difficult for the movement of vehicles. No time was lost, however, in arriving at the final details as sufficient preliminary information had been obtained to enable other work to proceed pending return to field work.
- (6) Reconnaissance surveys supplemented by aerial photography indicate that the area of a possible route will not be difficult in wet seasons.

Advantages in favour of the proposed route include the saving of some fifty miles of construction and location through country which would appear to entail far less earthworks.

- (7) Yes.
- (8) Whilst I can appreciate the concern of the shire president and local residents at the possibility of the standard gauge railway by-passing Coolgardie, it is unfair to claim that the Government or the Minister has let the town down. Neither is it fair to claim the Government is not sincere about decentralisation.

When I received representations from Coolgardie some months ago, I promised to examine all aspects of the standard gauge railway route and the claims of Coolgardie before a final decision was made following surveys. This is being honoured. Furthermore, this is not a question of decentralisation because the total number of railwaymen and families that would be added to the population of Coolgardie if the standard gauge line went through the town would be very few. In any case, the employment will not be lost to the goldfields district. It is also fair to say—based on the comments of the shire president regarding the closure of mines—the additional employees would not be sufficient to seriously influence a decision about the future of the town particularly as the change from the present railway operations will not occur before the end of 1967.

## TEACHERS IN COUNTRY AREAS

### *Boarding Allowance for Juniors*

9. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is a subsidy paid to junior teachers in country areas to assist with the boarding costs?
- (2) If so, what is the amount paid at present, and what were the amounts paid for the years 1960-61 and 1961-62?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) An allowance is payable where the cost of board is more than £6 per week and the teacher's salary does not exceed £1,100 per annum.
- (2) The maximum allowance is £2 per week and was the same in 1960-61, 1961-62.  
The total amount paid under this item in 1960-61 was £754, and in 1961-62, £917.

10. *This question was postponed.*

## TEACHERS IN COUNTRY AREAS

### *Accommodation Lack and Erection of Hostels*

11. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) As deep concern is expressed at the lack of teacher housing accommodation in the country areas, what action has been taken by the department to rectify the matter?
- (2) As single teacher accommodation in country areas is always a problem, would the department investigate the possibilities of erecting hostels at the main country centres to correct the anomaly?

### *Transfers: Financial Aid and Insurance*

- (3) What form of assistance, if any, do teachers receive when on transfer at the department's request, as to fares and goods transported?
- (4) Is there any form of insurance coverage taken out by the department against damage and fire on goods as owned by teachers on transfer?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Consideration is at present being given to the report of a committee set up to inquire into the needs of some Government employees and teachers.
- (2) This is one of the matters which was investigated by the committee.
- (3) The fares and expenses involved in transporting furniture and effects of teachers are paid by the department.

- (4) When teachers seek insurance cover on furniture the premium on a policy to the value of £1,000 is paid by the department.

12. *This question was postponed.*

### BREEDING SHEEP

#### *Inadequate Supply*

13. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

As there appears to be an inadequate supply of suitable breeding sheep to stock farms at an economic level, what measures has the Government taken to correct the position?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The bountiful rains experienced all over the State have been the major cause of an exceptional demand for sheep this year. This includes the pastoral areas as well as the farming districts.

In a normal year the demands for sheep can be adequately handled through the agencies of the stock firms and do not require action by the Government.

I would add that the Government, through the Department of Agriculture, has been encouraging farmers to increase their stock numbers. It has been doing this on every occasion at field days and when other opportunities have presented themselves.

### VETERINARY SURGEONS

#### *Ratio to Commercial Livestock*

- 14A. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the ratio of veterinarians to commercial livestock in W.A.?
- (2) If it is conceded that there is a drastic shortage of veterinary surgeons in this State, what remedial measures have been taken to rectify the matter?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Two veterinarians per million commercial livestock, excluding poultry.
- (2) It is accepted that there is a shortage of veterinarians throughout Australia.

The Government has for many years appointed veterinary cadets and the veterinary establishment of the Department of Agriculture is gradually being built up as the cadets graduate.

### VETERINARY SCIENCE

#### *Establishment of Faculty at University*

- 14B. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is there established a faculty of veterinary science at the University of Western Australia?
- (2) If the answer to No. (1) is "No" will he undertake to make representations to have such a faculty established as soon as possible?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The matter is receiving consideration.

### 1871 PENSIONERS

#### *Number, and Annual Value of Pensions*

15. Mr. DAVIES asked the Treasurer:

- (1) How many people are currently receiving pensions under the provisions of the 1871 Pensions Act?
- (2) What is the annual value of pensions paid?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) 146 persons.
- (2) £93,284.

### SEWERAGE AT EAST MANNING

#### *Provisions for Technological College and Longmore Reception Home*

16. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

Having been advised by the department that extensive sewerage is required in the proposed residential area of East Manning before development will commence, will he advise what sewerage arrangements will be made in connection with the technological college and the Longmore Reception Home which are at present under construction in the Collier plantation?

Mr. WILD replied:

The technological college and the Longmore Reception Home will be served by septic tanks and soak wells until the department's sewerage is eventually available.

### ESPERANCE BREAKWATER

#### *Successful Tenderer and Present Contractor*

17. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What was the name of the firm which was the successful tenderer for the construction of the Esperance breakwater?
- (2) What is the name of the firm which is now doing the work covered by the contract?

- (3) If there has been a change in contractor, how was it effected?
- (4) What was the reason why work on the site virtually came to a standstill on the 14th August and remained suspended until the 2nd September?

*Date of Completion*

- (5) What is the date for the completion of the work under the contract?
- (6) Does he consider that the contract will be completed on schedule as was allegedly stated by a spokesman for the contractor?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Barbarich Construction Pty. Ltd.
- (2) Barbarich Construction Pty. Ltd.
- (3) Answered by No. (2).
- (4) On the 19th July, 1963, the contractor advised of plant difficulties causing virtual cessation of work.
- (5) The 18th October, 1963, plus any approved extension of time.
- (6) No.

**MINING RESERVES: GRANTS TO MESSRS. HILDICH AND WARMAN**

*Prospecting Operations*

18. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Adverting to the papers tabled in answer to No. (2) of question 19 in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday the 27th August, 1963, with respect to each of the temporary reserves granted to A. S. Hildich and C. H. Warman:—

- (a) When did prospecting operations commence thereon?
- (b) When did the prospecting operations cease?
- (c) How many man hours were spent in prospecting by or on behalf of Hildich and Warman?
- (d) How much money was spent by or on behalf of Hildich and Warman for the purpose of carrying out prospecting?
- (e) Was any of the prospecting, and if so what portion, carried out by Japanese nationals?
- (f) Were quarterly reports of the prospecting operation submitted, and if so, are such reports available for public inspection?

*Rents Paid for Occupancy*

- (g) What rents have been paid for the rights of occupancy?

- (h) Were the rents or any portion of them, and if so what portion, paid by one, Harry William Woodfield, or by or on behalf of any Japanese national?

*Sale of Right of Occupancy*

- (i) Did Warman and Hildich sell or agree to sell their right of occupancy or any part thereof to one, Harry William Woodfield, and if so, when was the sale or agreement to sell made, what was the price thereof, and was the approval of the Minister for Mines to such sale first obtained?
- (j) Have Hildich and Warman and/or their partners or successors in title granted an option to a foreign company to purchase their rights under the temporary reserves, and if so—
  - (i) is not the amount payable for the option £5,000 with a possible further £145,000;
  - (ii) is not the price if the option is exercised £805,000;
  - (iii) is not 90 per cent. or thereabouts of the above sums the property of, and payable to, Harry William Woodfield and/or Japanese nationals?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (a) Reserves were first granted in July, 1961.
- (b) Field operations are still continuing.
- (c) Not known.
- (d) Not known. Reports give details of work done.
- (e) Not known. Some Japanese interests have examined the deposits.
- (f) Reports were submitted. Such reports are regarded by the department as confidential.
- (g) £200 per annum each reserve.
- (h) £800 rental was paid on the 20th July, 1962 by H. W. Woodfield "on behalf of Messrs. Hildich and Warman".
- (i) Not so far as is known.
- (j) An option has been recently given by the holders to Mt. Newman Iron Ore Company Ltd., a Western Australian company which is a wholly owned subsidiary of American Metal Climax Inc.

It is considered that information of this nature which is given by the parties to an agreement should be regarded as confidential by the Mines Department but it can be said that the document does not disclose any interest of H. W. Woodfield or Japanese nationals.

### KOONGAMIA-DARLINGTON RAIL SERVICE

#### *Running Time and Cost*

19. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) How many minutes would it take railcars to run from Koongamia to Darlington?
- (2) What would be the cost of time for two wages employees on each trip?

#### *Number of Services Daily*

- (3) What number of services are run to and from Koongamia daily?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) The time taken to run from Koongamia to Darlington would be 13 minutes and, allowing for stops at Boya and Darlington, the round trip would take about 30 minutes.

Direct wage costs (without overheads and other costs of operation) for each trip would be approximately 11s. 4d. However, it is not just a question of running time and direct wages only as the extension would cause serious complications in schedules and staff working in the existing suburban services.

- (3) Weekdays—24.  
Saturdays—24.  
Sundays—16.

### SEWERAGE EXTENSIONS

#### *North of Scarborough Beach Road and West of Main Street*

20. Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has any firm decision been made to extend the deep sewerage system to the industrial area on the north side of Scarborough Beach Road and west side of Main Street?
- (2) Has he or any responsible officer of the Water Supply Department made any statement to the effect that in connection with sewerage extensions in the Glendalough-Osborne Park areas, the section referred to in No (1) would be the first to be proceeded with?
- (3) If the reply to No. (2) is "No," is he in a position to indicate where sewerage operations will first commence in the area?

- (4) When are operations likely to commence in the areas referred to?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) The plan for the sewerage of limited areas north of Lake Monger and north-east of Herdsman Lake is as follows:—

Stage I provides for the sewerage of a residential area on the north side of Lake Monger between Powis Street and Scarborough Beach Road and between Rawlins and Pollard Streets westwards to Herdsman Lake which will enable the Glendalough Home to be connected and also industrial premises fronting Scarborough Beach Road between Harbourne and Main Streets. Before any of the premises in the area can be connected a pumping station must be constructed on the east shore of Herdsman Lake and a rising main to connect with the department's main sewer at the south-west corner of Lake Monger.

Stage II provides for the reticulation of the major part of the industrial area astride Scarborough Beach Road between Harbourne and O'Malley Streets, and the third stage (the ultimate development of the scheme) a large residential area between Green, Stone, and Cape Streets and the proposed access highway east of Frobisher Road.

Work will commence on the first stage with the construction of the pumping station and rising main, followed by the rest of stage I spread over two financial years.

- (4) When water levels are at their lowest towards the end of this summer.

### CREDIT BETTING

#### *Transactions of T.A.B. Agents Donohoe and Burden*

21. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

As he replied on the 22nd August that certain information asked for by me regarding illegal credit bets made by an agent called Donohoe was not available because he had been given to understand that there were no records which would give the information, will he explain how the Crown was able to inform the court yesterday during the trial of Burden for theft that this agent's credit betting did

not show a profit to the Totalisator Agency Board and was also able to quote the amount of credit bets made by Burden?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

The Crown was able to inform the court in this manner because all telephone bets received by Burden were recorded and registered as such and in the proper way laid down by the board.

## QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

### MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT

*Materials for New Buildings at Kalgoorlie*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) In respect of the contract for the construction of the Main Roads Department new offices and laboratories at Kalgoorlie, when is it expected that this work will commence and be concluded?
- (2) What will be the nature of the building materials used in this construction?
- (3) Will any local labour be recruited for this project?
- (4) Is it provided in the contract that locally produced plasterboard will be used?
- (5) Will he please give consideration in calling future tenders for building projects in the Kalgoorlie district where plasterboard is to be used to prescribing, where such material can be supplied at a price reasonably comparable with the prevailing price in the metropolitan area, that this material should be obtained from the local manufacturer so as to assist this decentralised industry?

Mr. WILD replied:

I thank the member for Kalgoorlie for telephoning this question through to my office this afternoon, and the answers are as follows:—

- (1) Acceptance of contract made on the 23rd September, 1963. Contractor—General Constructions, Wembley. It is expected that work will commence within 14 days. Construction time has been set down at 20 weeks.
- (2) External walls and main internal walls — concrete masonry block. Internal partition walls—timber and glazing. Roof—new contour supersix asbestos sheeting. Ceilings—Fibrous plaster.

(3) This is a private contract, and the contractor is responsible for the provision of his own labour.

(4) No.

(5) No. Provided the quality and price of the local article is competitive, it is reasonable to assume that the builder would take advantage of this source of material.

## BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

### 1. Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.

### 2. Electoral Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Graham, and read a first time.

## SALE OF HUMAN BLOOD BILL

### *Third Reading*

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Health) [4.53 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Before the third reading stage of this Bill is agreed to I wish to quote some notes compiled by the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman on some of the points raised in the debate that ensued during the Committee stage of the Bill yesterday. I will read these notes for the information of the member for Gascoyne and the Leader of the Opposition in particular. They are as follows:—

Following your advice today, that certain of the honourable members have found difficulty in reconciling the construction of subclause (1) of clause 2 of the Sale of Human Blood Bill with the intended result, I have re-examined the Bill.

The construction used is commonly to be found in Statutes and it has been adopted by the draftsmen of other States and the Parliament of Victoria, in this form. However, the fact that some honourable members have found difficulty with it raises the doubt as to whether other persons, such as justices, may not experience a similar difficulty. Accordingly, after discussion with the Chief Parliamentary Draftsman, I believe I should recommend a change, so as to put the matter beyond all doubt.

As you have rightly observed, the same construction appears in subclause (1) of clause 4 and, if one is to be amended, both must be amended. I believe paragraphing to be the best

method of doing this, as this would not affect the uniformity of the measure with that of the other States.

Attached to these notes also is a motion paper which I will submit to the Leader of the Legislative Council and which he can handle during the Committee stages of the Bill when it reaches that Chamber.

Mr. Hawke: Thank you.

**Question put and passed.**

**Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.**

## **METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Report*

Report of Committee adopted.

### **WOOL**

#### *Increased Levy and Improved Marketing System: Motion*

**MR. KELLY** (Merredin-Yilgarn) [4.56 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House, the Government has failed lamentably in its duty to Western Australian wool-growers, by sidestepping its obligations to clearly define its attitude to the proposal to increase the wool promotion levy by 34s. per bale, as announced by Sir William Gunn, as Chairman of the International Wool Secretariat; and further, we consider there should be an early and thorough move made to establish a new and greatly improved wool marketing system in Australia.

The motion deals with two aspects of the nation's biggest industry. I think I would be safe in saying that for several years no subject has been more in the public eye or received more publicity than that of wool—Australia's greatest dollar earner. It is rather ironical, however, to realise also that there are few industries which have a guaranteed stability less than that of the wool industry. In 1960 I moved a motion which dealt with several aspects of the wool industry, the principal ones being marketing, cost of production, and stabilisation.

At that time the Minister for Agriculture, on the 19th October, 1960, was successful in amending my motion, but since then he has been noticeably silent on any matter relating to the wool industry. In fact I think his attitude has actually amounted to the Government's failure to meet its obligation—which was contained in that motion—to declare its attitude to the proposal to increase the wool promotion levy by 34s. a bale. No lead whatsoever has been given by the Government, and no assurance to any degree has been given that the Government is concerned about the future of the wool industry.

Of course, the benefits that accrue from the industry are accepted, but no responsibility of any kind is to be accepted by the Government, unless—it seems—both State and Commonwealth Governments are pushed very solidly by some organisation, or some section of the public. Apparently the Government does not contemplate offering any advice or assistance, in some form or other, to indicate what its feelings are towards a vital industry which greatly affects the economy of the nation.

The second part of the motion calls for early consideration of a move to establish a new and greatly-improved wool marketing system. To emphasise my contention that the Government has abandoned the woolgrowers in regard to promotion and some guidance on marketing, I can say that on no occasion in the past several years have we heard a word from the Minister or any member of the front bench for or against wool promotion and, similarly, for or against an improved marketing system.

That is a very disappointing situation, when we realise the great importance of this industry, not only to Western Australia and the 11,000 to 12,000 wool producers, but also to the whole world in an international sense on a very much broader basis.

Many woolgrowers to whom I have spoken are of the opinion that the Government should declare its attitude. They have been waiting for relief for some considerable time; but they have not received any positive lead from the Government, nor has the wool industry been given any moral support by the Government. There is no indication that the Government is in favour of wool promotion.

I should say that the Government could not be satisfied it is reasonable to ask growers to contribute all of the increased levy of 34s. per bale. Growers, through the Australian Wool Board and the International Wool Secretariat, have approached the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance in helping to meet this increased levy, but I have not heard the Western Australian Government lending its support or weight to such an approach.

Again, some indication could have been given that we at least encourage wool-growers to feel that they have the State Government behind them in their efforts to obtain relief from this very extortionate increase in the levy. In the absence of authentic data to indicate the true cost of production we can only gauge—from the degree of satisfaction that has been expressed by very many quarters in recent weeks on the 1963 trend at our wool sales—that a reasonable price is the one received at those sales. If that is the indication we are to take into account to feel that



the cost of wool production has been covered and a sufficient margin has been left to the growers, then it is the only yardstick available so far as the cost of production of wool goes.

In moving my motion in 1960 I asked this House to agree to the setting up, apart from the Commonwealth Government, of a committee to be charged with the responsibility of finding, as near as possible, the cost of production factor in Western Australia. The Minister brushed that suggestion off by stating that the Commonwealth Government had undertaken a similar type of inquiry, and that such inquiry should cover conditions in Western Australia. Of course we know what type of examination was made by the Commonwealth at that time. It very definitely made no effort to arrive at the cost of production so the wool producers not only in Western Australia, but in the whole of Australia, are entirely in the dark still as to what the true cost is.

That makes it very difficult for anyone, particularly those outside of the growing section, to arrive at a suitable factor regarding the cost of production of wool. Whether the current price has reached a level consistent with world demand, or whether the peak will go higher or recede a few points, is very hard to predict. What is abundantly clear is that wool must preserve a peak price, consistent with demand, and capable of returning to the growers a satisfactory return above the cost of production.

Again, we are frustrated by not knowing the cost of production factor; and if we did have some idea we would know better in which direction to ram hardest, in order to make certain that the wool industry is placed on a sound and stabilised basis. I have always wanted to hear how we can maintain this balanced state, which seems to be so desirable.

For instance, will promotion assure or guarantee future demand for wool at a satisfactory price level, taking into account greatly increased wool production? For what it is worth, Sir William Gunn says it will. There would be quite a few who might not agree with that gentleman. There are other points on which we should receive some guidance or expression of opinion from the Government. Will intensified wool promotion create a false demand? We are now ramming for a very much greater expenditure on promotion, and to achieve that it must mean that the promotion programme is to be accelerated greatly.

Another query is this: If the wool prices received today rise very much higher, will the demand for synthetics increase? If the demand for synthetics does increase will that bring about a recession in the wool prices? Again, will increased promotion be necessary to preserve the

*status quo*, having in mind the fact that for a number of years we have not had a surplus or carry-over of wool in Australia? Later on I shall deal with some opinions which indicate that if we are to survive we must greatly accelerate, for several reasons, the quantity of wool produced in Australia.

Another question asked is this: Will promotion guard growers against the vagaries of the present marketing system? During the past six to eight months in particular, but consistently over the last three or four years, the Press has dealt with the subject of the wool marketing system, in an endeavour to iron out some of the difficulties associated with growers, particularly in connection with what is often termed the unsatisfactory wool marketing system.

Why was promotion considered necessary in the first place? Of course the answer is quite obvious: it was the low price received for wool at that period and the threat on the world market of man-made fibres. From the price point of view it is true that during the 1960-61 season—that was very soon after promotion was first indicated—the values were very low. During the two following years values appreciated quite considerably, compared with the very low value received in 1961. The world price for greasy wool reached a reasonable level at the last sale held this year.

The industry has experienced a steady rise in price. It is a healthy rise, because there had not been anything spectacular; and, in fact, there has only been one receding market for a few years, when the price of wool did go down by 2½ per cent. Very soon afterwards, however, the price rose again, and in the case where the price had dropped by 2½ per cent., the increase was probably 5 per cent.

With such gradual improvement that has taken place, let us attribute this price improvement to promotion tactics, in an endeavour to convince ourselves that promotion is succeeding. We have heard many claims about the position which the wool industry has reached, and we have heard a tremendous clamour for a very large amount of new funds for expenditure by the board and the secretariat. To justify the expenditure contemplated we are led to believe that promotion has played a great part in the recovery that has taken place in the past three years.

We should also remember that wool is commanding the same price level in Western Australia as the level all over the world whether or not wool auctions are conducted. In every other country handling the sale of wool we find the prices being paid are the same as those enjoyed in Western Australia. But those countries do not have the same promotion scheme as exists in Australia, towards which the

Australian woolgrowers are so generously contributing. If promotion is necessary to bring about better prices for Australian wool, then all wool-producing countries should meet more of the cost of promotion. Similarly, all other interests handling or manufacturing wool should also fall into line. They should bear their fair proportion of this burden; it is a burden and there is no indication that it will not be a greater burden as time goes on.

If woolgrowers concede the 34s. increase in levy it will not be very long before the avaricious section of the industry will come back for more. This is only the beginning of the "touch." Later on there will be a very much greater amount demanded, under the threat that if the producers do not pay the wool industry cannot hope to survive.

I can point out one or two other reasons why the wool industry can survive. Whilst there is a very unequal division in the payment of this levy by many sections, some of which I shall name shortly, I feel certain the public is subscribing its fair share in paying the high retail prices for all woollen goods.

When we analyse the amount of wool in many of the clothing items we and our families use, we will find that the percentage of wool is very light; but the cost, in almost every case—unless it is an article that is thrown out because moths are in it, or there is a reduction of stock, or for some other reason—is particularly high. The price that the people are asked to pay for these garments is high when one considers the actual percentage of wool for which payment is made to the producer.

I think there is a formidable array of other interests that should be paying towards this levy. If the levy is proved to be necessary I should say that people in the industry, after they have given solid thought to the possibilities of the future without a promotion programme as against supporting it for another year or two, or the conclusion of the five-year plan that is mooted, will find they have to fall into line. That is the indication we have at the present time.

Many of these other people are gaining tremendously from wool. Today wool is bringing 70 or 80 pence, which is paid to the producer; but by the time it goes through a number of the agents that I am going to record the 7s. per lb. becomes somewhere in the vicinity of 37s. per lb. So we find that the middleman and others are the ones who are reaping the great benefit from this wonderful dollar-earner we have in Australia.

There are all the agents who get a percentage out of the handling of wool; in addition, there are the auctioneers of the various stock firms who are expecting a percentage of the woolgrowers' cheque. There are the brokers, the scourers, the

spinners, the manufacturers, and others to a lesser degree who are all getting their little bite. I am reminded of the facsimile of a cheque which appeared in the Press, depicting it as being eaten by wogs. We have the same position in the wool industry—there are wogs and parasites all over the place getting a cut out of wool long before the item that includes the wool reaches the public.

All these people that I have mentioned must be interested in the wool situation; and if this promotion programme is to be continued for one, two, or five years, and the succeeding years bring a heavier burden on woolgrowers, surely to goodness it is time the industry, through the State and Commonwealth Governments, brought those people into line so that they will pay their share of the necessary promotion levies. Up to now it is the woolgrower who has been singled out to meet the whole of the amount; namely, 34s. increase on top of the 10s. already being paid. The thought that Australia is climbing to prosperity on the sheep's back should be amended to the thought that Australia is climbing to prosperity on the woolgrower's back, because it is he who is having to do the whole of the worrying in order to make ends meet and be able to pay these calls which, from time to time, have the unpleasant habit of increasing in severity.

As we have heard nothing from the Minister or the Government, both must be satisfied that it is all right for the woolgrower to be fleeced. There does not seem to be any move by the Government to try to alleviate this position or to give some lead or advice or tender some assistance in some form or other. No, nothing at all. Apparently there are other more important things to be done than to look after 11,000 or 12,000 growers in our State. Those growers must be very secondary, because one can pick up the paper at any stage and find many other industries are being placed well ahead of the woolgrowing industry.

I have been asked quite frankly, "Does promotion exercise any influence whatever on demand?" There is a diversity of opinion in that regard. Some very definitely say, "Yes, of course promotion is playing a big part on demand." I wonder just how far that thought would stand analysis, because we have no proof. We are only receiving the same price, despite our wool promotion, that other countries without wool promotion are receiving. Therefore, no-one can tell me that promotion is making all that difference. It could have some effect, but I do not think we have any way of proving that that is so or not. I do not think promotion will progress very far, because it is on the selling side and not the marketing side; and that is where many of the woolgrowers today are losing out quite considerably in regard to their returns.

It is interesting to examine the world fibre position and wool output. For several years the bogey has been played up with regard to the influences that fibres are exerting on the wool position.

Promotion was brought into existence to take care, to some extent, of the fibre position, because it was allegedly getting out of hand. There is no doubt there was a tremendous upsurge in the requirement or demand for various synthetics, but as the years have gone by, particularly over the last three years, we appear to be regarding synthetics in a somewhat different light. I think these world figures are of great interest.

I have a cutting here which appeared in *The Countryman* on the 7th March, 1963—

World production of the main textile fibres in 1961 (latest figures available) totalled 33,400,000,000 lb.

Cotton accounted for 22,300,000,000 lb. and wool, 3,300,000,000 lb. Production of rayon and acetate was 5,900,000,000 lb., and output of other man-made fibres, 1,800,000,000 lb.

Cotton's share of 67 per cent. was one per cent. less than in 1960. Wool retained its 10 per cent. share of total fibre production, but man-made fibres increased from 22 per cent. to 23 per cent.

So we see that over a period of time wool has maintained its position. It has not slipped back so far as the quantity of man-made fibres is concerned. It is fully in demand, as some of the references I shall make at a later stage will indicate. Yet we are still being asked to provide this huge amount for promotion.

Statements appear in the Press from quite eminent sources that give an entirely contradictory impression in connection with man-made fibres. An article in *Tractor Talk*, which is not a paper that is circulated among every section of the community, but is one that rural people and members representing rural interests will know, says—

#### Fibre No Threat To Wool.

A prediction that Japan's purchases of Australian wool would continue to increase was made recently by a leading Japanese synthetic fibre manufacturer.

He is Mr. Shigeki Tashiro, chairman of Toyo Rayon Company Ltd., Japan's largest producer of synthetic fibres.

Mr. Tashiro, leader of a 14-man top management productivity team from the Japan Productivity Centre, was speaking on his departure from Sydney after a three-and-a-half weeks tour of Australia and New Zealand during May.

Mr. Tashiro said that fear of Japanese synthetic fibres was one of two widely-held misconceptions in Australia.

"There is no threat whatsoever—the fibres and wool go together. Japan is buying a lot of wool to blend with fibres, and as our economy improves, we will, no doubt, buy more."

I will comment at a later stage on that statement. However, that opinion was expressed in July of this year by the Japanese interests. We can go a little further and see that on the 25th of January this year—some few months earlier—this statement appeared in the Press—

According to estimates published by the Japan Chemical Fibre Association, production of fully synthetic fibres reached 160,000 metric tons at the end of 1961, thus doubling output within two years.

The rise in production of fibres other than nylon (the first of the synthetics to be manufactured in Japan) has been spectacular in the past two years. Polyester fibre has tripled since 1959, and now ranks second to nylon.

The Association notes that Japan is now the world's second-largest producer of man-made fibres, following the United States. In production of textile-type viscose yarn, Japan is the world's largest producer, and of this production 45 per cent winds up in exports of various sorts.

So we have two entirely opposed thoughts in connection with the position of synthetics.

Another opinion under the heading of "Influence of man-made fibres" is expressed as follows:—

A growing world-wide use of man-made fibres is seriously influencing wool price movements, according to Dalgety-NZL joint head wool valuer in Sydney, Mr. R. W. King.

Estimated world planned capacity of rayon and acetate this year was 7,803,300,000 lb. against the 1961 production figure of 5,937,100,000 lb.

He goes on in this manner and submits many of the figures which I have already given to the House, representing the world's output of fibres. He makes the statement that fibres will damage the wool situation. We have two separate fields of thought in connection with man-made fibres, their relationship to wool, and the output of both.

Concerning the first article which I read, I would say that the tendency by fibre producers to minimise the threat to wool by synthetics could be designed to lull wool interests throughout the world into a false

sense of security and perhaps apathy. That would probably be the outlook of the Australian Wool Board. It would not be prepared to swallow a bait of that sort without a very close examination of whether there was a threat to the wool industry as a result of the increased amounts of fibres which are coming into use. Of course, the use of fibres must increase the danger to wool.

What is worse is the fact that the lowering costs of production of man-made fibres will create a greater disparity between wool and those fibres about which we have heard so much. On the other hand, a statement such as that contained in the article which I read could represent the holding-out of an olive branch in an endeavour to make it abundantly clear that Japan believes the fusing of wool and synthetics would be the answer to an unsatisfactory situation.

The opinion put forward that we can live together is one which has been denied by some of our leading wool interests. One line of thought in Australia says that the sooner we get down to the point of living with synthetics, the sooner will we get some stability in the matter of being able to see where we are heading. Then again, there is another line of thought which says that under no circumstances should we allow ourselves to be placed in the position of accepting a percentage of wool as a right of the industry.

Whatever the situation, time will be the deciding factor. I do not think there is anyone in the wool industry, in the secretariat, or on the Wool Board, who can confidently and safely predict what is the general outlook at the present time. What I do know, and what everybody else knows, is that we are being pressurised with a plentiful supply of promotion propaganda for increasing the wool levy.

I am fully convinced that advertising pays dividends. Equally am I convinced that some promotion, closely allied as it is to advertising, must have a similar effect on the disposal of wool which advertising would have in connection with the sale of any commodity. But with wool, as with any other commodity, there is an economy factor which has to be taken into account. In the volume of advertising being undertaken we must receive full value for money expended, whether that money is in the form of advertising or expended on promotion schemes. There is no business firm in any part of the world which has not got to gauge very closely the degree to which its advertising account can be extended. When such a firm reaches what is determined by management as being the peak of expenditure in order to receive the maximum return, that firm no longer continues spending money on advertising and promotion schemes.

Have we at any time received an assurance from the Wool Board, from Sir William Gunn, or from Mr. Vines, that the situation is being closely watched? I sometimes wonder whether we are doing the wise thing in giving men of this type, who have been shanghaied into these positions, loose rein over the affairs of the whole industry. I have yet to be convinced that the best procedure to follow is to allow these people to have full rein in carrying out a promotion scheme. I believe there are some doubts in the minds of many people, and rightly so, as to whether the Australian Wool Board or the International Wool Secretariat is fully qualified as a promotion leader to spend all this money in advertising and in other ways on the marketing of wool.

I do not think for one moment that there are any advertising specialists on this board. We have a complete list of board members. It is not my intention to question the integrity, the ability, the honesty, or the sincerity of the members of the board. But I think it can be easily proved that there is nothing in the experience of any of these men which would classify him as an advertising or promotion specialist in connection with wool. There are approximately 120,000 woolgrowers in Australia, and there are 11 members on the board. There are six grower members on the board. I would not think that any of those six grower members, with all their knowledge of the industry, with all their knowledge of producing wool, and with all their business acumen, would be a fully qualified specialist in promotional advertising.

There are three non-grower members on the board, who can be appointed from any section of the community. They could be lawyers, solicitors, doctors, or anything else. Another member is a Government nominee. Supposing he were the highest official a Government might have, what experience would he have of promoting wool under the limited scope of training which he would have received from the point of view of a specialist?

Finally, there is the chairman of the board, who need not be a grower. Six members of the board, out of a total membership of 11, are growers. Therefore we have a bare majority of one. None of the remaining five need be a grower. Coincidence might place somebody on the board who might previously have been a grower, but there is nothing to guarantee that any of the other five members should have anything to do with producing wool; and they might not have had any contact with the wool industry other than contact with a singlet or a guernsey, so far as promotion is concerned.

I consider this is a promiscuous method of appointing committees and boards, and the system is in need of a direct overhaul.

Through circumstances there might be somebody among the 11 board members who had some previous experience; but I very much doubt whether that experience would be sufficient to place him in charge of £16,500,000 which the board is going to spend this year if the farmers of Western Australia and the woolgrowers of Australia continue to pay £2 4s. per bale. What control have growers over the expenditure of this amount of money? None whatever! The growers are taking on trust those men who have been placed in this position.

If members were to delve deeply enough into the background of one member of the board they would find he was placed in charge of the Humpty-Doo rice production project, in connection with which £500,000 of American money drifted off. After 12 months had gone by the authorities recognised defeat. This same man had a finger in the pie of the Chase Syndicate's scheme at Esperance. After only six months he put Chase people on the rocks.

This is the type of person who is charged with the responsibility of controlling the Australian Wool Board and the International Wool Secretariat. It is not good enough, and I am surprised at woolgrowers allowing this state of affairs to continue.

Mr. Gayfer: Who are the representatives of the woolgrowers who are elected under the constitution?

Mr. KELLY: I have already listed the members.

Mr. Gayfer: Did woolgrowers have a direct say in appointing them?

Mr. KELLY: Yes; a panel of names was submitted, and woolgrowers made their choice. I also belonged to the woolgrowers' organisation, and I know how the situation was brought about in the first place. The rule of thumb, or pressure, was applied in the appointment of certain people. I am not casting any aspersions on the men who are on the board, but I question their ability to carry out this very important job. Let me go further.

Mr. Hart: You are questioning how they got there?

Mr. KELLY: I am not questioning their appointment. The woolgrowers appointed six members. That does not make any difference to my line of argument. They could be the best woolgrowers in the country. As I have already stated, there are no blemishes whatever on their integrity. But I do question some of the appointments which were made. They were not made by woolgrowers. I hope I have made myself clear, because that is exactly my point: There is no guarantee that there are men on the board who are qualified in wool promotion activities. There could perhaps be somebody who has an overall knowledge, but

there is nothing in any of their backgrounds that would indicate their right to handle this huge sum of money, and also administer 400 employees. Do not let us forget that they have to be considered, too.

Immediately this wool board was appointed it set about appointing a number of small committees, and one of them was the promotion committee, while another one was the marketing committee. The promotion committee was formed from the 11 members and charged with the responsibility immediately of controlling the whole of wool promotion within Australia. Probably they would know where they were heading so far as promotion within Australia was concerned; but how many of them would have had overseas experience? I should not think there would be very many of them—if any—who have had that experience. Yet, as I said earlier, we are pinning our faith and the future of this huge industry on people who have been elected in this manner, and I think it is just a matter of passing the buck.

The Commonwealth Government did not want to have anything to do with a system or scheme that was likely to bring it into a position where it would have to pay, or guarantee payment, the same as it is doing with wheat, for wool products. The Commonwealth Government wanted to be absolved from any liability at all, and so it was quite easy for it to set up a committee and give it a few bob to carry on with until such time as the growers subscribed their first 5s. as a levy, and to enable the committee to buy stamps, envelopes, and things like that.

It was quite easy for the Commonwealth Government to do that, and it was very happy to be able to get out from under because the pressure from growers was becoming stronger and stronger, and some very unkind things were being said—unkind but true. So the Commonwealth Government decided that the easiest way out was to set up a committee, and this is the result that we are having to bear at the present time.

A marketing committee was set up and I do not know whether there are three or four members of it—it could be either three or four. That committee has been charged with the responsibility of examining the marketing situation having in mind the various divided interests within the wool industry. This has been thrown up to us for a long period of time—the argument that it is almost impossible to reach a stabilisation point so far as wool is concerned, and that it is almost impossible to alter the marketing system, and that there is nothing that can be done about it because the growers are not unanimous in their thoughts, their ideas, and their actions.

But when we analyse it, what is the actual difference in the wool industry among the 120,000-odd growers that Australia boasts it has? I think we would find

that the Pastoralists Association, and its kindred bodies, are not on all fours with the balance of the growers in the industry—the small men—and that is the only difference there is between the various bodies concerned, and it is they who, because they want their own particular policy to be adopted, have caused this breach among the woolgrowers. But is the breach a very serious one? I do not think it is. I think it is one of those things that has been magnified; and of course, it suits the interests of certain people, particularly the Commonwealth Government, to be able to say, every time there is an approach to the Government to have the conditions under which the industry is labouring altered, "Until you fellows get together and resolve your own problems you cannot come to us to resolve them for you."

I think the State Government has adopted the same idea; and, as a matter of fact, the Minister, who is not in his seat, gave that as one of the reasons why the State Government should not interfere or take an interest in this matter of where we were heading with regard to wool. He said we could not go into the question of the cost of production or interfere with marketing. I do not say we should interfere with the marketing side of the business, but what I do say is that we should have a thorough investigation in Western Australia and let us make up our own minds about what should be done.

Mr. Lewis: We have had this problem for a long time you know.

Mr. KELLY: And the Government is doing nothing about it.

Mr. Lewis: What did your Government do about it?

Mr. KELLY: We made some effort to do something about it.

Mr. H. May: They were not interested in the common market.

Mr. KELLY: I had the honour to represent Western Australian growers at the Australian Agricultural Council meeting when this very matter was brought up and discussed on my introduction.

Mr. Lewis: Where did they get with that?

Mr. KELLY: We got promises. I have all my books here with me and they will show that we got promises that they would look into the matter, and they did look into it so far as they were able to. But what has this Government done? Little has been achieved. As a matter of fact, little has been attempted; otherwise we would have heard the Minister's voice telling us about it. We know that this Government would certainly have let us know if it had done anything worth while. If the Minister had sent even one little note to the Commonwealth Government asking it to do something it would have been blazoned across

the front page of *The West Australian*, *The Countryman*, and every other newspaper in the State.

But we have not heard one word from the Minister except when he spoke to my motion three years ago, condemning various aspects, and saying that it was not our business anyway, but it was the business of the Commonwealth Government. Goodness gracious me, what poppycock! Of course it is our business! We must endeavour to present the right viewpoint of the Western Australian growers in Federal circles.

Mr. Gayfer: What is the right point of view of the Western Australian growers?

Mr. KELLY: I am endeavouring to give some of their viewpoints tonight. One is that the growers are not very happy about having to pay an extra 34s.; and they are not at all happy about the marketing conditions. Many of them have commented that we should look where we are going in regard to the cost of production. They are three of the main points. I have a file here with other points to which Western Australian growers in various numbers and in various places have subscribed. However, those are the three main points, particularly the question of marketing; so much so that at the majority of meetings held in Western Australia by Sir William Gunn the question of marketing was placed ahead of that of promotion.

So it is useless to interject, as the honourable member did a moment ago, and ask what are the requirements and what are the opinions of the growers. He knows as well as I do what they are. I did not come here without any facts, and I am not just speaking from my own point of view. I am hoping that some of the Country Party members will take a greater interest in their woolgrower friends than they have done in the past. I cannot understand why the Country Party members have not shooed their own leader on—

Mr. Gayfer: Because we want grower control and not Government control.

Mr. KELLY: The honourable member knows how far he will get the way he is heading now! I am not saying Government control is the answer, but I am saying we should inquire into all the various aspects I have been mentioning in order that we can get down to a basis which will enable us as a Government, or as a Parliament, to give some assistance to the woolgrowers of Western Australia who have not had much assistance up to now. I am very surprised that Country Party members are taking it lying down, because that is what they are doing.

Mr. Craig: Oh no!

Mr. KELLY: It is all right for the honourable member to say, "Oh no!" If the cap fits he should wear it, because that is what Country Party members are doing.

Mr. Craig: We will invite you along to a Country Party meeting.

Mr. KELLY: I do not know whether that would be a compliment, either. In answer to the honourable member who asked what were some of the matters that were of most concern to the growers, I will tell him, as I indicated earlier, that the motion covers two main points: promotion and improved marketing. I do not say that we should scrap the present system; I do not go any further than making the statement that there should be improved marketing with the full concurrence of the majority of the woolgrowers of Western Australia. I do not know whether we can improve it, but for goodness' sake let us make a decent and concerted effort to try to place this industry on a sound marketing basis.

If our marketing system is soundly based it can mean a tremendous lot to the industry. It may be that after an investigation it will be proved that the industry is at present being best served by the marketing system we now have. I do not know, but I think we are entitled to have an investigation into it to find out.

Mr. Gayfer interjected.

Mr. KELLY: The honourable member can make his own speech later on. It will be a good idea if he does make his own speech. I think it is time we got into a huddle over this question irrespective of whether we belong to the Country Party, the Liberal Party, or the Labor Party. We should get together to find out everything possible about the industry. Let us get all the data necessary to decide whether we should do one thing or the other; whether the marketing system we have now is better than anything we can substitute for it; or whether we can, by some little movement here or there, bring about better conditions.

Mr. Hart: Help the industry find out what it wants.

Mr. KELLY: Yes, help the industry to find out what it wants. I am not interested in Government assistance in so far as the setting up of schemes is concerned; but I would like to see the Government, and particularly those on the front bench, become interested and come out in the open now and again and do something by way of making a statement and giving the industry some indication of where it is heading. These are the points that the industry wants to have clarified.

I do not blame the honourable member for saying the growers do not want Government control. I suppose that would be the last thing they would want, and I would not like to see it; but I would like to see a Government-backed scheme, the same as we have for wheat stabilisation, so that the wool industry would have some security of tenure. If that were done we

would be achieving something at last; but at the present time there is no guarantee at all for the industry. If a grower got 84d. a lb. at the last sales there is no guarantee that he will get 50d., 25d., or 70d. at the next one. Unfortunately, as far as the growers are concerned, anything can happen; and it has happened at times in the past. It is very interesting when we look back at what occurred in the earlier part of the year. I think we experienced what might be termed a softening-up process of woolgrowers regarding promotion finances.

I shall now highlight some of the statements and some of the points I made earlier. The Managing Director of the International Wool Secretariat called on growers to take urgent action, not so much on promotion—although that was the underlying thought but little mention was made of it—but to increase wool production as quickly as possible.

We have been told that in order to be able to sell our wool it is necessary to have a promotion scheme that will cost a huge sum of money. But it will place our product in the forefront in various parts of the world. I think up to a point that is right, and we should not let the grass grow under our feet in promoting the sale of our wool and keeping it before the eyes of the buying public. That is most essential.

However, this chap, after saying that we should increase our production of wool; that every farmer in the country should endeavour to increase production—and I suppose that as producers, we would all like to do that—it may be necessary, and in fact it would be necessary, he went on to say a little further on, to increase the levy; and then he put in the real scorpion sting—very substantially. Of course it was very substantial. An increase of about 300 per cent. is definitely a very substantial increase.

Following that position we find that intermittently Sir William Gunn has also attempted to condition the minds of woolgrowers, claiming that advances had been made by the International Wool Secretariat and the Australian Wool Board; and hinting that the need of the secretariat for more spending money was very urgent. If we are going to allow an octopus undertaking like this to develop freely, the woolgrowers will be definitely called upon to make a big payment. There is no doubt in my mind that the sky is the limit. As time goes on this will be brought home more forcibly to the woolgrowers, who, of course, are the people concerned.

The remarks of Sir William Gunn whilst he was in Western Australia are somewhat puzzling, particularly when we consider some of the statements made, to which Sir William subscribes, on behalf of an

organisation which is struggling to convince growers of the dire necessity for increasing this fund. I have two cuttings here which relate to this matter, and which may give some indication of what I mean. In one case the comments are made by Sir William Gunn; and in the other by Mr. W. J. Vines. They are, however, both substantially the same.

Mr. Lewis: What journals are they published in?

Mr. KELLY: Both these statements will be found in *The Countryman* of the 18th April, 1963. Under the heading, "Wool Levy Rise Forecast," we find the following:—

Australian woolgrowers could expect to be asked to pay an increased levy on their wool before the end of this year, said the managing director of the International Wool Secretariat, Mr. J. W. Vines, in Canberra on Tuesday.

On a visit from London to confer with Federal Government and industry leaders, Mr. Vines called for urgent action by the Australian wool industry to increase production as quickly as possible.

This is the first we had heard of any pronouncement of that nature. Up till this point we have been endeavouring to sell. We were told, all through, that we needed a wool promotion system to sell the wool we were producing. Now, overnight, we are asked to produce a tremendous lot more for the reasons stated. The article continues—

If we cannot produce the wool to meet these demands, manufacturers will use artificial fibres and we cannot afford to let this happen.

That seems to be very sound. This great upsurge for increased production was apparently decided at a minute's notice, because there was nothing about it in the British Press. We have books on wool here, and some of us are informed of the British market position very thoroughly. But there is no mention in any of these journals that the increase is necessary.

I am all for the increase. If we can produce a lot more wool we can get ourselves into a much better international position, as distinct from our individual positions as producers of wool. The extract continues—

In the past nine years, world wool production has increased by 14 per cent, and consumption has increased by 25 per cent.

Naturally the dog will never catch up to its tail in these conditions, unless we increase the production of this article. To continue with the quote—

Stocks in producer countries are at the lowest level recorded and commercial stocks throughout the world are lower than they have been for many years.

Australia is one of the few countries in a position to increase wool production.

Referring to the need for an increased levy, Mr. Vines said that the Secretariat had a five-year plan to obtain an economic price for Australia's wool. This plan would require greater investment than was being made at present.

One of the first jobs of the Australian Wool Board—when it came into being—would be to put the case for the increased levy before the growers.

At present the levy for promotion is 10s. a bale, which raises £3,000,000 a year.

The article also contains a table which indicates the amount of return that would be available to the secretariat if the levy were at different levels. When we analyse it the advice we are receiving, and the amount of work that is being done on behalf of the woolgrowers, are quite astounding.

We find that the top man in the secretariat starts off by drawing £15,000 a year. We are told this is unconfirmed, but I have seen it confirmed in another place. Added to the £15,000 a year is provision for expenses. These are apparently quite considerable, particularly when we see what the man concerned is claimed to have accomplished in the last 12 months. In 12 months he has travelled 200,000 miles—that is in the first year. If we allow 300 working days in the year, this would mean, from my calculation, that he would do about 660 miles a day. I would like to ask woolgrowers what time this man had for promotion when he was travelling 660 miles a day. He must be a superman to be able to carry on at that rate.

Let us see what his qualifications are. He spent his boyhood on a sheep station. He probably went to college for 10½ months of the year, and rode around on a nag for the remaining 1½ months. He later studied accountancy. Accountants, of course, are an eminent class of men. In this House we have one or two bright boys who are accountants. The accountancy course is a very thorough one, but it does not equip a person for a sales promotion campaign which involves an expenditure of £16,000,000 a year—not to my way of thinking, anyway.

This same man went to the war, and rose from private to captain in the time he was overseas. When he returned he went back to his accountancy in a paint firm. I do not know whether that entitles him to be an authority on the wool industry; possibly the question of dyeing and mixing colours might have something to do with it! He then became a salesman, at which stage he was elevated to a job worth £15,000 a year.

Mr. Lewis: Who selected him?



Mr. KELLY: He was promoted to that position by the Prime Minister and his department; under Mr. Adermann.

Mr. Lewis: He must have had pretty good qualifications.

Mr. KELLY: I have read out the qualifications he owns up to in the article from which I have quoted. There is no gain-saying the accuracy of the article.

Let us now give some attention to the other member—the head of the other section. Judging from Press statements, Sir William Gunn has been experiencing considerable difficulty in convincing wool-growers throughout Australia that a steep increase in the promotion levy is necessary and warranted. I am sure members will have read of the meeting at Hamilton Hill. This meeting produced some touching results: mostly eggs, tomatoes, and bags of flour. That was the opinion of a large community as it concerned this man, who is a very highly paid officer; a man who, while he was in Western Australia, refused to give any indication of the salaries that are being drawn. He thought it was an unfair question.

Mr. Bovell: It sounds like good old political stuff.

Mr. KELLY: It certainly was as far as he was concerned. It may be that is how the Minister for Lands considers it. It is certainly not a political football as far as I am concerned. I am endeavouring to give a true record.

Mr. Lewis: How many other meetings did he conduct without eggs and tomatoes?

Mr. KELLY: He held 21 meetings, in which very little satisfaction was achieved from his point of view, because his point of view was to get the Western Australian woolgrowers to subscribe a further 34s. towards sales promotion. It is also noticeable that in one of the comments made by Sir William Gunn at the end of his tour of Western Australia he said the results were far from convincing. He even had some doubt by the end of his tour as to the success he had achieved in Western Australia.

It would be very interesting to hear what Sir William said at the end of his trip. He advised us, and told the Press, that a rise in wool production was a vital factor, and concerned the whole country. He added that we had reached the situation where world production could not meet world demand; and that that was a dangerous situation for wool. The article I have here says—

The Australian Wool Board Chairman, Sir William Gunn, said on his return from overseas last week, "If textile manufacturers were unable to secure all the wool they needed they would turn to artificial fibres."

That was the warning he gave. That is probably very sound advice, and is one thing we have been told for quite a long time—that the future of wool depends in the main on the volume of fibres that enter into competition with it. The growers have been warned of this situation. Sir William had come from a conference of the International Wool Textile Organisation where, he said, the most constant question asked of him was where textile manufacturers were going to get the wool they required.

From this, does it appear that it is necessary for us to spend £16,500,000 primarily on promotion? I do not think it does. I think we are sounding a warning that does not ring quite true. There are certainly a number of avenues in the wool industry in which we can spend a fair amount of money; but I do not think we should spend so much on the promotion side. For instance, there is a big field for research. If we are to achieve anything worth while we should put out a better product. The Commonwealth Government is undertaking a tremendous amount of research, but I think there is room for more. I am sure the Government realises that, and the Wool Board is fully aware of the fact.

So from the point of view of promotion we do not seem to have this fund that is being established by the Wool Board under the right name; because the promotion side of it seems to be taken care of. In the earlier stages, promotion was a vital factor; it was necessary then. But as time has progressed we have got to the point where we are not selling a commodity that is over-supplied; of which there is an annual surplus; and which it is necessary for us to scurry around trying to sell. We are asked to produce more. It may be necessary to keep step with the promotion side as we increase our supplies of wool. It could be that we have reached the peak of our promotion requirements.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. KELLY: Prior to the tea suspension I had gone well on my way towards presenting the triumphal tour of Western Australia by Sir William Gunn; and I had commented that it appeared when Sir William left here he was not very satisfied with the reception he had received from our woolgrowers. As a matter of fact, I think some of his remarks are well worth recording as they have a humorous tone in them. They were as follows:—

"It was a good tour. I have spoken to many groups of farmers who said they had changed their minds about marketing coming before promotion," Sir William said.

"However, I cannot tell whether Western Australian farmers will vote for the new promotion money."

In another portion he then went on to say—

At nearly every Western Australian meeting, speakers demanded a motion that a new marketing system be introduced before more promotion money was levied.

At today's meeting he said it was probable that nearly all the farmers present wanted to see a new marketing scheme developed before increased promotion.

I would have thought that after Sir William Gunn had had an opportunity of meeting so many people in Western Australia concerned with woolgrowing, and summed up the requirements of the industry so very accurately the Government would immediately rush in to support the very thing that the Western Australian growers wanted mostly.

A man from outside of the State can come in and assess the requirements of the farmers after spending only a week or ten days here and accurately gauge what the farmers of Western Australia have in their minds. However, just prior to Sir William leaving this State—he was on his way out—he made it abundantly clear that he had given up hope of achieving the object for which he toured Australia—that was, to get the extra 34s. for promotion. So he immediately adopted a new lay: he was going to approach the Commonwealth Government for a contribution so as to relieve the woolgrowers of a great amount of the money that they would otherwise be called upon to pay.

I would have thought that at that stage the Government would vigorously support that approach as it was one worthy of a lot of consideration and worthy of a lot of concerted action by the front bench. Of course, we were again disappointed. No move came from the Government and no statement was made either at the time or since; and I think it is logical to assume that the majority of growers must realise by now that they have been badly neglected by the Government when it did not give at least some consideration to this aspect to bring about an examination of the circumstances in regard to which the farmers are so united—the reason why they do not support this extra levy.

I sometimes wonder why the Government is sitting on the fence in this matter. It is not as though a minority group was howling in the wilderness, because this attitude is solidly supported by all sections of the woolgrowers in Western Australia. There are hardly any exceptions. Perhaps one would be Sir Ernest Lee Steere, who represents an entirely different body of people from those who are representative of the main woolgrowers of this State.

I think that some 30 years ago most of our wool was produced in the north-west; but in these times the scene has altered

entirely and the majority of wool production is now in the southern areas. We find that whereas in some places they claim 50 acres to the sheep, we have reached the stage where many are claiming three sheep to the acre in the southern areas. In fact, I have heard it said that some people in Esperance are carrying up to five sheep to the acre. So the matter of wool production has now changed remarkably from the northern areas to the southern areas.

As I said before, I was disappointed that the Government made no move in this matter. I was wondering if it was acting in Micawber fashion, hoping that some decision would be reached in Federal circles that would obviate the necessity of its having to take any action in this matter, and then jump on the band wagon claiming that something had been achieved for the growers—something in which the Government had played no part.

I am wondering if that is the reason why nothing has been done. Is the Government scared to indicate where it stands? I do not think the growers will bite the Government should it enter the fray in an endeavour to achieve what the growers earnestly desire. The majority of farmers would welcome some leadership from the Government; and I feel it would have a marked effect on bringing the Commonwealth Government into line and so obtain some relief from the payment of a good portion of this money which the growers would otherwise have to contribute.

I have mentioned on a number of occasions during the course of my remarks that the marketing of wool holds a priority position in the minds of the majority of the growers in Western Australia; and certainly ahead of promotion. I am of that opinion myself. Right throughout the period that wool has been on trial as far as promotion is concerned, we have gained some little result in the matter of world markets, but we have not achieved anything at all from the auctioneering or marketing point of view.

I also said earlier that I was not sure in my own mind whether we could improve the auction system; but I think we should make a wholehearted attempt by endeavouring to bring about more satisfactory conditions. There is ample room for a tremendous improvement in the marketing set-up. We have had denials from the Minister for Agriculture and from other top people that there is such a thing as pie buying, but I suppose every woolgrower knows there is pie buying. Every person who grows vegetables or produces at all knows there is a system of pie buying in the present auction set-up—and it is that which we have to overcome.

Therefore I feel this motion is fully justified as it calls upon the Government to take some concerted action to endeavour

to bring about a better set of circumstances concerning this important industry. I feel it is not too late for the Government to show its hand in this matter, and that it would be quite easy to institute, within Western Australia, a very competent committee to go into the matter of marketing so that we in this State will know what should be done. By this means we could even guide the Commonwealth in regard to some of its decisions in future times.

So it is with confidence I feel the Government will agree to this motion because it is on all fours with the line of thought of many Government members; and there is no sinking of scruples involved. I have great pleasure in having moved the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education).

## STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*Returned*

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

## ZONING OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*Extension of Concessions to 30th Parallel: Motion*

MR. BURT (Murchison) [7.42 p.m.]: I move—

That, because of the changes in the economic environment of the more remote areas of Western Australia since the war, which have completely nullified the use of the 26th parallel of latitude as a means of dividing the State into sections known, for Federal taxation purposes, as Zone A and Zone B, the House requests the Government to give urgent consideration to the following measures:—

- (a) To extend that section known as Zone A to include all that portion of this State which lies outside the South-West Land Division north of Latitude 30 degrees 30 minutes, and thus bring to the people living in this section the many concessions and allowances enjoyed under State legislation by the people who now reside north of the 26th parallel; and
- (b) to request the Federal Government to extend Zone A similarly in respect of income tax deductions and other concessions granted under Federal legislation.

In moving the motion which stands in my name on the notice paper, I would first of all like to call the attention of members of this House to the area which I trust, if this motion is carried and the Government agrees to it, will be added to

that section of Western Australia which is north of the 26th parallel. I do this because, when I gave notice of this motion a couple of weeks ago, a small map appearing in *The West Australian* was incorrect.

The area shaded on the map which I have here—it is a map of the central section of Western Australia—starts at the 26th parallel; and for the benefit of members I would point out that the 26th parallel commences on Dirk Hartog Island in the west and goes across Peron Peninsula, south of the town of Denham, and across the east side of Shark Bay below Gladstone and across Western Australia passing about 60 miles north of Meekatharra and then approximately the same distance north of Wiluna to the South Australian border.

The area I wish to add to that north of the 26th parallel is the area outside the South-West Land Division down to the 30th degree 30th minute parallel of latitude. This approximately circumnavigates the agricultural areas north of Ajana and goes down in a south-easterly direction through Tallering Peak, crosses the Mullewa-Meekatharra railway line between Pindar and Wurarga, continues east of Mt. Gibson down to east of Bonnie Rock and then in an east-west line, across to the South Australian border, 18 miles north of Kalgoorlie.

The area comprises portion of the Shires of Shark Bay and Murchison, the whole of the Shires of Yalgoo, Mt. Magnet, Cue, Sandstone, Meekatharra, Wiluna, Leonora, Laverton, and Menzies, and portion of the shire district of Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Norton: What about Northampton?

Mr. BURT: Northampton is not in it. It is necessary first of all to go into the history which caused the powers that were to give to that area north of the 26th parallel many concessions which have been enjoyed by the people living in that area for 20 or 30 years or so.

In those days the north-west was a far more remote area than it is now. Transport was more or less confined to the shipping service to the north-west and to those motorcars and motor trucks which were owned by people living in that area—and they were few and far between. The plane service was very spasmodic and the north-west generally was a very remote portion of Western Australia.

The industries in that area were confined mainly to pastoral pursuits. Carnarvon had not then blossomed into the agricultural district it is today; and apart from the pearling industry around Broome, there was little activity throughout this huge area. On the other hand the Murchison was enjoying a period of prosperity during the 1930's, mainly due to the goldmining industry which, as we all know, was booming in that decade before the war. I asked

some questions last week of the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government, concerning the population of the road board districts I have just mentioned and which are contained in this area for which I am seeking further concessions. I was told that there were approximately 20,000 people in this area on the 30th June, 1936, but on the 30th June, 1963, there were fewer than 6,000. That has been brought about principally through the decline in the gold industry there.

The pastoral industry still exists more or less on the same plane as it always has, but we all know the pastoral industry does little to bring people into an area. So there is a tremendous portion of Western Australia which is very sparsely populated and which, unfortunately, holds fewer and fewer as the years go by. It is obvious, of course, that when the population of any area declines, so do the attendant benefits decrease and the shortcomings and hardships throughout the area begin to increase.

The towns in the portion of the State to which I am referring and which was so well populated and flourishing up to 1939, now are barely alive. Wiluna is in a similar position to Laverton and Sandstone inasmuch as they were joined by a railway line in the pre-war days but are now bereft of that service. The people living in those three towns, in particular, suffer a great number of hardships. There is a nursing centre in each of these towns, but no doctor. Until the commencement of the mobile dental clinic a few months ago, the residents had never seen a dentist. They had one train a week to their nearest source of supplies, whereas in the boom days a daily train service was provided. Now they have to rely on a weekly road service to take their perishables and necessities to them. Naturally enough, their education facilities have dropped away to nearly nothing.

I was in Wiluna recently, and I will cite a few of the examples of the living conditions which apply to that town. But before I do so, I must remind members that Wiluna once had a population of 9,000, whereas today it has dropped to 300. I think I have mentioned before that Wiluna started the recovery from the great depression, because it was the first goldmining town to be rehabilitated at that time. Men came from far and wide to work in the Wiluna goldmine and earn what was then a princely wage. Today, however, Wiluna is a very sad ghost town indeed.

If one is unlucky enough not to get his perishables on the weekly mail service from Meekatharra, one has to go to the expense of a phone call to that town, which costs 6s. There is no baker or butcher in the town and the people must wire or phone for

their bread or meat. Parcels cost an extra 2s. 6d.; packages of meat cost an extra 2s. 6d.; soft drinks cost 2s., as against 9d. in Perth; a ton of firewood costs £6; electricity is 1s. 6d. a unit; and so it goes on. Yet there is a brave section of the community which for some reason or other still sticks to the town of Wiluna. The sparsity of population increases the everyday overhead, and consequently storekeepers are forced to charge a great deal because of the low turnover.

I cited Wiluna, but the towns of Laverton and Sandstone are equally susceptible to these shortcomings. The larger towns of the Murchison—Cue, Meekatharra, Mt. Magnet, and Leonora—all suffer from the same lack of amenities: amenities to which those in the more populated areas are accustomed. For instance, cinemas are practically non-existent, and radio reception is very poor.

As I mentioned before, the lack of education is very apparent inasmuch as because the towns do not cater for children above primary level, many married couples, who would be quite happy otherwise to live in the area, are forced to give up their jobs and homes and go to the cities or nearer coastal towns in order that their children might receive an education beyond primary standard. Of course, that causes dissatisfaction and discourages anyone who might otherwise enjoy a transfer to one of the Murchison towns.

The amenities about which I have spoken are provided under State legislation and do not in themselves seem very much, but individually to the people concerned they count for a great deal. For the benefit of members I will run through these particular concessions which apply to those who now live above the 26th parallel.

In regard to education, the concessions provided are as follows:—

1. Children living away from home in order to get the kind of education necessary are granted £80 per child per annum. This is £50 in excess of what is given to children in the South-West Land Division and £30 in excess of what children living on the Murchison today receive.
2. One free return air passage per year which is subsidised by the Transport Department.
3. Quite apart from the above, a further allowance of £50 per child is given to civil servants who live in the north.

An air freight subsidy on perishable foodstuffs is provided to all places north of the 26th parallel—excluding Wittenoom, which has a satisfactory road service—and normally applies from the 1st December to the 31st May each year. It is also

available to a list of enumerated places for the remainder of the year, due to lack of water supplies precluding local production of vegetables even during the cooler weather. The places which are qualified for year-round subsidy are—

Ragged Hills  
Main Roads and P.W.D. camps  
Glenroy during killing season  
Shaw River  
Balgo Pallotine Mission  
Nunyerry asbestos mine situated near Coolawanyah.

Marble Bar and Nullagine are able to receive the subsidy during periods that road transport for perishables is not available due to adverse weather conditions or breakdowns. Items approved for subsidy are—

Fresh fruit  
Lettuce  
Celery  
Tomatoes  
Mint  
Parsley  
Peas  
Beans  
Cucumber  
Spring onions  
Cauliflower  
Cabbage  
Rhubarb  
Beetroot

In addition to the above, those centres which are qualified for year-round subsidy also qualify for a subsidy on butter, bacon, eggs, and prepared baby food.

With regard to the Police Department, members of the force stationed in the north-west are entitled to one free trip south every two years. Concerning the State Housing Commission, two forms of assistance are given, the first related to the property, and the second to the income of the tenant family. As to the former, the economic rent is assessed on what it would have cost the commission to have notionally built the property at Geraldton. The land component is actual cost of the site and its development, which is generally below the comparative figure in respect of Geraldton sites.

Regarding the income of the tenant family, the first £5 of each income of individual members is exempt from calculations necessary to determine the full economic rent as required—already referred to above—which can be paid by the tenant family or otherwise. Any rent subsidy which may be allowable is then determined in accordance with the formula set out in the first schedule of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, 1945. Should the economic rent referred to above exceed £4 6s. 8d., the difference is allowed as a north-west rent subsidy.

The following is the information obtained from the Mines Department in connection with its schemes:—

#### Prospecting Scheme.

Allow £6 per week north of the 26th parallel. South of the 26th parallel, £5 per week.

#### Christmas Exemption.

South of the 26th parallel—Middle of December to middle of January (one month)—purpose to protect leases from forfeiture for non-compliance with labour covenants. Allows owners and employees to utilise this period as they think fit, recreation, etc.

North of the 26th parallel—Middle of December to end of January. Two extra weeks.

The following are the medical and health benefits for doctors and patients:—

#### Transportation South.

Free transport to Perth and return for persons requiring specialised medical attention—subject to approval of Commissioner of Public Health.

#### Medical Benefits.

The State pays medical benefits at the same rate as Commonwealth medical benefits to all areas where there is no State salaried medical officer. Where there is a State salaried medical officer the commissioner will not pay medical benefits. This applies to all the north-west, excluding Witte-noom, and also applies at Meekatharra.

#### Housing.

Doctors, hospital secretaries, engineers, dentists, and dental technicians receive a furnished house for a rental of £120 per year.

#### Special Electricity Allowance.

Doctors receive an electricity allowance where power supplied other than from the hospital. (Also applies at Meekatharra.)

This is very important because, as I mentioned earlier, all electricity rates in this part of my electorate vary from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 3d. per unit.

Mr. Bickerton: Is it supplied by a private firm or by the Government?

Mr. BURT: In most cases it is supplied by the local authority. The following are some of the concessions and allowances applicable to State public servants residing north of the 26th parallel:—

#### Child Allowance.

An allowance of £50 per annum covering each child of school age resident in the north with a maximum of £200 per annum per family unit, has been paid since the 1st January, 1960.

### Annual Leave and Associated Travel.

North of the 26th parallel—three weeks' annual leave plus free passes to Perth for officer, wife, and dependent children, by air or ship.

Other areas—Biennial leave of four weeks granted to officers in centres where district allowance payable with free passes (biennial) to Perth for officer, wife, and dependent children.

The following district allowances apply under the Public Service allowances agreement:—

North of the 26th parallel—

Area 6 £182 per annum.

Area 5 £156 per annum.

Area 4 £78 per annum.

South of the 26th parallel—

Area 3 £52 per annum.

Area 2 £13 per annum.

Ravensthorpe, Norseman, Salmon Gums, Marvel Loch £26; Cue, Leonora, Mt. Magnet, Gwalia, Yalgoo, Menzies, Ora Banda, Boogardie £52.

Those amounts are very much less than the allowances which apply north of the 26th parallel. The next item concerns departmental houses and basic furniture. Where departmental houses are provided to officers north of the 26th parallel, the normal rental charged is £120 per annum. Officers in departmental houses who request, and are supplied with, basic furniture are charged a rental based on 10 per cent. of the capital value of such furniture. Other concessions of general application north of the 26th parallel include Education Department boarding and supervision allowances, which I have already dealt with.

These allowances to public servants are particularly important, because no sooner is a school teacher, an officer of the Mines Department, or an employee of the Public Works Department appointed to some Murchison town than he is setting out to see how quickly he can finish his term in that area and get moved to some place where the climate and general conditions are more amenable; and so it goes on.

I have a long list of State Shipping Service rates, which hardly apply to my area but I noticed that just recently a concession was made in respect of rail freights to north of the 26th parallel. In other words, freights which are taken by rail to Meekatharra for road transport north of the 26th parallel are now granted a flat rate for the first 8 tons of £4 13s. 9d. to Meekatharra, and for over 8 tons, £4 5s. 6d. Those rates apply to all commodities which end up north of the 26th parallel. For the unfortunate people who are south of the 26th parallel the freight is something like £11 to Meekatharra.

Mr. Bickerton: You would not suggest that any concessions received by people above the 26th parallel should be taken from them?

Mr. BURT: I certainly would not. I have no desire to penalise the people north of the 26th parallel. What I am endeavouring to point out is that the conditions of living south of the 26th parallel in the area I have dealt with are just as difficult as, if not more difficult than, they were in the north-west when these concessions were first granted. It is the fault of nobody. It is just an unfortunate fact that this huge area in the east centre of Western Australia has really nothing to induce people to inhabit it.

Therefore I feel that a concession by the Government along the lines I have indicated would at least make the people there a little happier and encourage younger people to go there. I realise, of course, that the biggest concession of all does not, unfortunately, come within the orbit of this Government—the income tax concession, which is tremendous. The zone allowance to persons living north of the 26th parallel is £270 plus half of the total deductions under the allowable items 11 to 16. Those are the concessions allowed to a man for his wife and family. So it is not unusual for someone living north of the 26th parallel to be able to deduct £400 or £500 from his income when computing the rate of taxation he has to pay. Unfortunately, as I have said, that is a Federal matter. I can only trust that if this motion is carried the Government will make every effort to persuade the Federal Government to grant some income tax concessions along the lines I have enumerated.

I understand our Federal members have been approached and have done their best to obtain an extra area in the concession zone, but the members from New South Wales and Victoria fight against it every time and carry the day.

I would like to advise the House that many millions of pounds worth of gold, many millions of pounds worth of wool, and many millions of pounds worth of minerals and meat have come from this area of the State since it was first inhabited 70 or so years ago. We should not lose sight of that fact. A certain amount of sentiment must come into this matter—today it is almost a forgotten country.

We are hoping that when the price of gold rises—and I fully believe it will one day—we will see a complete change in this part of the world. But until then the people will find it very difficult to live within an area which is minus all the amenities that are regarded as everyday amenities by people living in the city and are more or less taken for granted by those living in the agricultural districts.

I hope the House will support the motion. I feel that it is a just due to the many thousands of people who have passed

through the Murchison and have lived there, and to those who now exist in that area. When we consider that in a period of about 25 years the population of the district has dropped from 20,000 to 5,600—a drop of 72 per cent.—we realise it is the duty of everybody to try to halt that decline; and the only way it can be done is by granting more concessions to the people who go to live there or who are already there.

I have no idea what this will cost. I have not attempted to work it out; but it would not be very much. If it cost a tanner per year per man, woman, and child who live in the area, it would only amount to £50,000 or so; and that is a small sum to spend on keeping alive an area which has meant so much to the State. I therefore have much pleasure in submitting the motion and I trust the House will carry it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brand (Premier).

## CONSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL ACTS

### *Amending Legislation: Motion*

MR. W. HEGNEY (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.8 p.m.]: I move—

That in order to extend the principle of democratic government in this State and to remove from the Statute book injustices and anomalies, this House is of the opinion that relevant sections of the Constitution and Electoral Acts should be amended to provide—

- (1) adult suffrage for the Legislative Council and thus abolish the gross injustice imposed upon large numbers of citizens, especially women, of having no vote in the election of representatives to the Legislative Council;
- (2) repeal of the right of enrolment to any person in more than one Legislative Council province;
- (3) removal of the power of the Legislative Council to veto legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly and the introduction of reasonable provisions to overcome deadlocks between the two Houses, similar to those operating between the House of Commons and House of Lords in Britain.

These three items certainly do not represent the sum total of the desirable amendments to the Constitution of Western Australia. I just say in passing—I have made reference to this aspect before—that there is one section in the Constitution which precludes any citizen under 30 years of age from becoming a member of

the Legislative Council. I do not propose to pursue that topic because it is outside the province of the motion. I have mentioned it before and I hope it will be the subject of consideration in another place before very long. That remark applies also to the matter of compulsory enrolment. I make no reference to compulsory enrolment for the Legislative Council, because I believe it is being considered elsewhere and I do not desire to indulge in duplication at this stage.

The first point I would like to make in a general way is that over a period of years efforts have been made to bring into effect a more generous franchise for another place. I know that from time to time in the past Labor Governments have endeavoured to alter the Constitution to bring it into line with a more democratic system of government by repealing provisions which have been carried on from the old colonial days. Unfortunately, however, every effort made has been frustrated and unsuccessful. I think every member of this Chamber knows that for some considerable time I have attempted, during the Address-in-Reply debate and during other debates in this House, to draw the attention of the people of Western Australia to the need for some radical alteration to the Constitution. I believe that many members opposite, if they expressed their personal opinions, would state quite openly that the time is overdue for radical reform.

The first item listed in the motion is for the House to express the opinion that adult suffrage for another place should be introduced. It may be in order if I were to quote briefly the relevant section which deals with the right of people to vote for the Legislative Council. This is section 15 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, which appears on page 169 of the 1962 Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly, and reads as follows:—

Every person of the age of twenty-one years being a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty, and not subject to any legal incapacity, who shall have resided in Western Australia for six months, shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, if qualified as in this section is provided, be entitled to be registered as an elector, and when registered to vote for each of any number of candidates not exceeding the number of members to be elected to serve in the Legislative Council for the Electoral Province in respect of which such person is so qualified, that is to say, if such person—

- (1) has a legal or equitable freehold estate in possession situate in the Electoral Province of the clear value of fifty pounds sterling; or

- (2) is a householder within the Province occupying any dwelling house of the clear annual value of seventeen pounds sterling; or
- (3) has a leasehold estate in possession situate within the Province of the clear annual value of seventeen pounds sterling; or
- (4) holds a lease or license from the Crown to depasture, occupy, cultivate, or mine upon Crown lands within the Province at a rental of not less than ten pounds per annum;

Or if the name of such person is on—

- (5) The Electoral List of any municipality in respect of property within the Province of the annual rateable value of not less than seventeen pounds; or
- (6) the Electoral List of any Road Board District in respect of property within the Province of the annual rateable value of not less than seventeen pounds.

At this stage I will not read the paragraphs that follows, because it has reference to the second item in the motion. I am sure members have read this provision, because it has been in operation for a considerable period in our Constitution, and in my opinion it is high time it was removed. What is the actual position today?

It is found that large numbers of females are not entitled to vote, because they are unable to meet the requirements which I have just enumerated. Yet those females are, in the main, wives and mothers who have the responsibility of rearing children; and, despite the fact that their husbands have the right to vote in many instances, they are denied that right. Further, many of them could be doctors, school teachers, lawyers, or highly-qualified nurses; but because they cannot qualify according to the requirements listed, they are denied full citizenship. A deliberative Assembly such as this should not be hesitant about doing something to rectify such a position.

In passing, it may be said that in those instances where the Constitution of the Commonwealth and the Constitution of any State clash, the Commonwealth Constitution is supreme. What do we find provided in the Commonwealth Constitution? I suggest the provisions of that Constitution were taken largely from the United Kingdom Constitution and the framers of it tried to introduce into it some semblance of democratic principles.

One outstanding principle which the framers of the Constitution did have in mind was to ensure that every person free of any legal disability, and of the age of 21 years, was entitled to vote for both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament; and that provision is in operation today.

I reiterate that it is quite competent for any Western Australian citizen of 21 years of age to be the Premier of Western Australia, or even to be Prime Minister of Australia; but unless that person could fulfill the requirements I have just read to the House he would not be entitled to vote for one of the Houses of Parliament in Western Australia. Despite this, he is entitled to vote for the Senate which, by comparison, is the equivalent of another place in this State, although its members are elected on a different franchise.

The Commonwealth Parliament does not deal with roads, bridges, bees, and a compensation fund for the pig industry, but deals with matters of an international character such as foreign policy, defence, trade, and so on. The members of the Commonwealth Parliament are elected on adult franchise. According to our Constitution, however, unless a person is in possession of a leasehold estate of the annual value of £17 or has a freehold estate of the clear value of £50, he is not entitled to vote for the Legislative Council. I leave that point now, because I hope members realise that the time is well overdue for some radical amendment to be made to the Constitution of this State.

In passing to the next point in the motion, I would mention that in Western Australia we have a University from which young men and women graduate as lawyers, doctors, engineers, architects, and scientists. But because many of them may not own property they are not entitled to vote for the Legislative Council; and, because they have not reached 30 years of age, they are not eligible to take a seat in the Legislative Council. In my opinion, that constitutes an insult to those people.

A lad of 18 years of age pays taxes in the same way as every member here who is over 21 years of age, and he may also pay rates. He pays his dues in the same way as a man of 38 or 40 years of age. Further, he is liable to be conscripted for war service overseas; he is considered old enough to die for his country. However, he is not eligible to vote for the Legislative Council until he is 21 years of age, owns some property, or has leasehold property and pays a rental of £17 per annum.

I now pass to the second point in the motion, which is the repeal of the right of enrolment of any person in more than one Legislative Council province. I am reminded immediately that in South Australia, where there has not been a Labor Government for many years, the Legislative Council members are elected on a



property qualification; but they are entitled to only one vote, even though they may own property in a number of provinces in that State.

But here it is competent for a citizen if he were to own blocks of land worth £50 sterling in each of 10 provinces, to have 10 votes on election day. That might have been all right in 1863, but in 1963 it is the direct antithesis of democracy. It is, however, set out in the Constitution, of which I read a part just now. The relevant section of the Constitution is a continuation of the section to which I was referring and it reads—

No elector possessing more than one qualification within a province shall be thereby entitled to be registered more than once for that province.

The Constitution certainly restricts the right of the owner of real estate to one vote in one province; but it does not restrict the right of that owner on election day. He or she may exercise 10 votes. I have always been against plurality of voting—even in the case of boards that have been set up, where the chairman is given a deliberative vote, and—in the case of an equality of votes—a casting vote. I have always contended there should be only one vote to one person. No person should be entitled to two votes.

Mr. O'Neill: He has only one vote for one candidate.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am glad of that interjection, because it shows the position does not need clarification. I agree with the member for East Melville. The elector concerned could have half a dozen blocks in the Metropolitan Province, but he would be entitled to only one vote. He could, however, have one block of land worth £50 sterling in each of nine other provinces, and this would entitle him to nine other votes—one for each of the provinces. That is certainly not right. I would refer to the position in the Senate where they are also entitled to one vote. I need not elaborate on that point, however, as I am merely trying to convince the House of the necessity for this reform.

The third point of my motion seeks the—

removal of the power of the Legislative Council to veto legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly and the introduction of reasonable provisions to overcome deadlocks between the two Houses, similar to those operating between the House of Commons and House of Lords in Britain.

If there is any reform which is desirable in connection with the machinery of government, I suggest the amendment I propose to the Constitution would, in the circumstances, be very appropriate. I have had the experience since I have been in

this Chamber of attending a number of conferences that have been arranged between the two Houses. The particular provision in the Constitution dealing with conferences between the two Houses is set out clearly. In short, however, the position is that usually three managers are elected from each House, and both Houses are advised of the personnel of the managers. In due course the managers meet, and it is laid down in the Constitution that the managers of the conference may speak freely by word of mouth. That has always been the case.

But, unless there is unanimity of opinion on the differences of opinion between the two Houses, no decision is arrived at, and the particular Bill is lost. There is no other redress, or means by which the will of the people, expressed through the particular Government in this House, can be implemented. I have had the experience of sitting in at conferences and trying to obtain from the Opposition managers—if I might use that expression—provisions which the Government of the day decided upon; and in order to save something from the wreck I have had to accept, as a representative of the Government of the day, a lot less than I considered the Government was entitled to expect. The alternative would have been to get nothing at all.

That has happened with Bills which were introduced when the Labor Government was on that side of the House. I can recall two such Bills, one of which dealt with the State Government Insurance Office. That was introduced five times. There had been an election between the introductions of this Bill—that was in the natural course of things, because the life of Parliament is three years—and on each occasion another place threw the Bill out.

We hear quite a lot about mandates. We had a mandate in those days, but that did not get us anywhere. My proposition would be to amend the Constitution on the basis of the Parliament Act of Great Britain. The British Act was originally passed in 1911. With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I propose to read, for the record, part of the original Act that was passed. I will not read the present provisions, other than to indicate where the original provisions have been made even more generous. Under the British Parliament Act of 1911 we find that section 1 states—

If a Money Bill passed by the House of Commons and sent to the House of Lords at least a month before the end of the Session is not passed by the House of Lords without amendment within one month after it is so sent the Bill shall unless the House of Commons decides otherwise, be presented to Her Majesty and become an Act of Parliament.

That deals with money Bills. I will not explain what a money Bill is, because that is set out in *Halsbury's Laws of England*. Section 2 of the Parliament Act states—

If any Public Bill (other than a money Bill) is passed in the House of Commons in three successive Sessions (whether of the same Parliament or not) and having been sent to the House of Lords at least one month before the end of the Session is rejected by the House of Lords in each of those Sessions, the Bill shall on its rejection for the third time by the House of Lords, unless the House of Commons direct to the contrary, be presented to Her Majesty and become an Act of Parliament.

Provided that there is a lapse of two years between the second reading in the first of those Sessions of the Bill in the House of Commons and the date on which it passes the House of Commons in the third of those Sessions.

Those are the original provisions of the British Parliament Act of 1911.

I am not sure who was Prime Minister of England at the time, but that measure was passed in 1911. In 1949 a substantial amendment was made to the Act and the effect was to reduce the total period from two years to one year, and to reduce the number of sessions in which a particular public Bill must pass from three sessions to two sessions.

In effect, the Act of Great Britain now provides that if the House of Commons passes a public Bill in each of two sessions—whether or not there be an election in between—and the House of Lords refuses to accept the Bill, or the House of Commons refuses to agree to amendments submitted by the House of Lords, then after a lapse of one year the Bill will become law. An amendment similar to that provision in the British Act should be incorporated in the Western Australian Constitution.

As a lad I recall reading and hearing the word "veto". It was always associated with the power of the House of Lords to dominate the will of the people. The House of Lords was not elected on adult franchise, and it was not representative of the people of Great Britain. It was representative of the ruling classes. That House was composed of very restricted representation, but it was dominant. It had complete dominance over the House of Commons, which was elected by the people. It was through some great act of diplomacy or statesmanship that that provision was written into the Act in 1911, with the result that the wings of the House of Lords were clipped.

Today the House of Lords is only a House of Review. But in Western Australia the other place is still strongly entrenched as regards constitutional powers. It does not

matter what legislation this or any other State Government passes: if the legislation does not suit the wishes of that place it will not be passed, unless, of course, the Legislative Assembly were to agree to the amendments made by the other place. The time is ripe when substantial alterations should be made to the Constitution in the directions I have mentioned.

In the case of deadlocks, the Commonwealth Constitution provides for a double dissolution; and under certain circumstances, when a double dissolution takes place and Parliament reassembles, there is provision for holding a joint session of both Houses of Parliament should there still be arguments between the two Houses. The position in Western Australia is entirely different, because the Legislative Assembly has no power to bring about a double dissolution. For that reason the proposal I have outlined would be a most desirable one for this State.

I realise that reforms of this nature take a long while to achieve. As a result of public apathy, indifference, hostility, or misunderstanding, little headway can be made in a short time, because those who are entrenched do not like to be disturbed. As time goes on people will realise that they are not enjoying full democracy. At present the people of Western Australia realise that their parliamentary representatives in the Assembly have not full control in the governing of the State, because the other place, which is elected on a restricted franchise, is still dominant. That House decides whether or not any measure shall be passed. As one believing in democratic principles, I hope the day is not far distant when the reforms to which I have referred will be implemented and written into the Constitution of Western Australia.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development).

## STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY BLASTING OPERATIONS

*Effect on Toodyay Houses: Motion*

**MR. HAWKE** (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [8.32 p.m.]: I move—

That this House expresses concern at the unfair and unjust attitude adopted by the Minister for Railways with particular reference to portions of his statement as published in *The West Australian* newspaper of the 14th September, 1963, towards those citizens in the Toodyay district who claim their houses have been damaged by blasting operations associated with the construction of the uniform gauge railway line.

It might be advisable at the commencement for me to explain briefly how I first became interested in this matter. One of the residents in the Toodyay district, who

strongly considered his house had been damaged in the walls and ceilings by the blasting operations, contacted me by telephone. At the time I was at home at Northam. He requested I grant him an interview at Northam, and I agreed to do this. He came on the following day and discussed the situation in which he was placed in relation to damage from blasting operations, and gave me to understand up to 20 other local residents were in a similar situation.

Following that, I put a number of questions on the notice paper addressed to the Minister for Railways, to which he gave answers. From my point of view those answers were reasonably satisfactory. Had the situation between the Minister and me remained on that level there would not have been any great disturbance between us later on, although I would still have continued to take an interest in the claims of the people concerned, because they had invited me to give them whatever assistance I could.

I should emphasise that had I not been invited to take an interest in the matter, and had I not been requested to grant them whatever assistance I could as the Leader of the Opposition, I would not have come into the matter at all. I would have been perfectly satisfied to leave it between the local residents concerned and their members of Parliament—one in the Legislative Assembly and three in the Legislative Council.

On the 14th September a report of a statement made by the Minister for Railways appeared in *The West Australian*. Portions of this statement gave me cause for considerable disturbance and resentment. I might add that even stronger feelings were engendered in the minds of most of the people who were affected, or considered they were affected in relation to their houses, by the blasting operations in Toodyay. This report was headed, "Blasts Not To Blame—Minister".

Mr. Graham: Fair enough.

Mr. HAWKE: I readily agree the Minister is in no way responsible for any heading which the newspaper might place above his statement. The Minister's statement began with this paragraph—

Blasting for the standard-gauge project had caused little, if any, damage to Toodyay houses, Railways Minister Court said yesterday.

Inspections by Public Works Department architectural officers had confirmed the opinions of Railway Department engineers that the cracks in the houses had occurred long before blasting started.

Clearly that was a very nasty thing for the people concerned at Toodyay to read in the newspaper, because every one of those residents was convinced in his own mind—and so were the wives—that cracks

in walls and ceilings had developed subsequently to the blasting operations starting.

When they read the first two paragraphs of this reported statement by the Minister for Railways, they were quite naturally, and quite justifiably, very upset and they did not hesitate to say what they thought. In fact, if the Minister for Railways himself had gone up to Toodyay the same day this report was published, or the following day, or even a few days afterwards, they would have told him to his face what they thought of him. I am not saying myself—because I could not be sure—that every crack in every wall and in every ceiling which I saw in the houses I inspected a day or two afterwards had been caused by blasting operations, but I think it stood to reason that some of them would have been caused by the blasting operations. In fact I think that was proved by subsequent events.

For instance, on the 17th September, there appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper a report written by one of the newspaper's own men, headed, "Contractors Plan Survey As Toodyay Safeguard," and the last portion of this report was subheaded "Farm Visited." I propose to read this portion—

After the meeting, Mr. Craig—

that is the Minister for Transport, and, of course, the member for Toodyay—

visited the West Toodyay farm of Mr. A. T. Donnelly, who showed him stones weighing several pounds which, he said, had fallen round his home from blasting 250 yards away.

Mr. Donnelly said: "My wife had to duck under the water tank to avoid one."

"We were told last year that the Government would resume our house because it is only a few yards from the railway route."

"Later we were told it would not be resumed, so we have had to stay."

That statement was given by Mr. Donnelly to a reporter of the newspaper on the 15th September, only one day after the Minister's statement—portions of which I have read—appeared in the same newspaper.

Since the 16th September, the Government has agreed that Mr. Donnelly was right, and I understand has either resumed or undertaken to resume his property. Yet, on the 13th September the Minister handed to the newspaper a statement in which he said that blasting for the standard gauge project had caused little if any damage to Toodyay houses; and he went on to quote with approval the result of inspections made by representatives of some of the departments concerned.

I am not sure what the Minister had in mind when he made those statements which I have read—whether he was trying to freeze out the claimants; whether he was trying to safeguard the department, or safeguard the contractors, or safeguard the contractors' insurance company. Sufficient is it to say—as I do again—that the statements were thoroughly unjustified and were most unfair and even an insult to all of the residents who had made claims or intended to make claims for compensation, because they were convinced damage had been caused to their houses because of the blasting operations.

After the Minister's statement had been published in the newspaper, the resident of Toodyay who contacted me in the first instance, contacted me again by telephone. He told me, as might very well be realised by all members of the House, that he and all of the people concerned at Toodyay were incensed very strongly at the particular terms of the Minister's statement to which I have drawn attention this evening; and he requested on behalf of the other residents that I should visit the affected area at Toodyay and have a personal look for myself at as many of the houses as I could spare time to inspect. That was on a Sunday evening. I agreed that I would do as requested.

I then telephoned the Minister for Transport—the member for Toodyay—and advised him what had occurred. I told him out of courtesy as member for the district of my intention to visit the district the next day. The member for the district discussed the matter with me on the most reasonable of terms. There was complete and perfect understanding between us. He told me he himself intended to visit Toodyay on the following Thursday.

However, after I had been to Toodyay on the Monday morning following the Sunday to which I have referred, and after I returned to Perth later in the day and purchased a copy of the *Daily News* I found the Minister for Transport—the member for Toodyay—had, for reasons which I have no doubt were adequate, decided to visit Toodyay that morning—the same morning as I was there. However, I think I probably carried out my inspections of the affected area before the Minister arrived.

During all the proceedings there has been the most complete and friendly understanding as between the member for the district and myself in regard to the matter; and it is a great pity indeed that the Minister for Railways did not pursue the same sort of attitude, because if he had done so there would not have been anywhere near the degree of upset, and concern, and ill feeling amongst the people of Toodyay which did develop.

Now I want to give a brief indication of how the residents concerned have been frozen off up till recent days. I propose

therefore to quote briefly what happened in one instance—and the person concerned is the citizen who sort of took the lead in trying to ascertain what the residents who felt they had a claim for compensation had to do to get their claim considered and decided. The details are as follows:—

On the 24th June this citizen lodged a verbal complaint with a representative of the Public Works Department in Perth.

On the 8th July he lodged a verbal complaint with a representative of Leighton's contractors.

On the 8th July his solicitor, whom he had consulted in the meantime, sent a letter to a representative of the contractors.

On the 16th July he wrote a letter to the Public Works Department.

On the 29th July he made a verbal complaint to Senator Paltridge who contacted a representative of the contractors.

On the 9th August he sent a letter to the Minister for Railways.

On the 15th August he made a verbal complaint to the Toodyay police.

I think I am justified in breaking in here to ask members whether or not they consider the situation or the point of view of this citizen and his family must have become very serious indeed for him to go to the local police station to ask for some action or protection and safeguard for his house property and family. Of course, he was not acting solely for himself in the line of action which he was taking. He had in mind the rights and welfare of all of the other families concerned. To continue—

On the 16th August he sent a letter to the Transport and General Insurance Company, having been referred to them by Leighton contractors.

I am not sure at this stage whether this company is the one with which the contractors have taken out an insurance policy in order that they might be protected in case of successful claims for damages. To continue—

On the 26th August he wrote another letter to the Minister for Railways.

On the 26th August he wrote a letter to the Minister for Mines.

Therefore, from the 24th June to the 28th August this citizen was trying, by all means and methods which he thought might be appropriate, to get his claim for compensation considered and decided. Now, he did not out of the blue, as it were, decide to go from one to the other in his endeavours. He went from one to the other because there was no end of buck-passing going on as between the various interests concerned. One interest would say, "It is

not our responsibility," and would put the responsibility on to someone else; and so it went on week after week and month after month.

I think the wonder of the situation is not that the people concerned at Toodyay have requested all the assistance they can obtain from whatever direction it might be available, and have made many protests to newspaper reporters and others who have visited the area, but rather that they have not made a great deal more protest and fuss than they have made up to date.

It is true the attitude of the Minister for Railways has changed very considerably in this matter since he and I clashed on it, following the publication of his statement in *The West Australian* on the 14th September.

Mr. Court: There has been no change at all in my attitude.

Mr. HAWKE: Does the Minister still say that "blasting for the standard gauge railway has caused little, if any, damage to Toodyay houses"?

Mr. Court: I will explain that to you at the right time.

Mr. HAWKE: I am asking the Minister.

Mr. Court: It is not my statement, and I will explain the circumstances at the right time when you sit down. I will reply to you tonight so that you will have the answer tonight.

Mr. HAWKE: I took it for granted the Minister would reply tonight. Is it not extraordinary that the Minister now comes forward and says this statement reported in *The West Australian* newspaper as having come from him, is not the statement he made?

Mr. Court: It is not strange at all, and I will give you the circumstances.

Mr. HAWKE: What has the Minister been doing since the 14th September that he has not made a public correction of it?

Mr. Court: I have been looking after the interests of the Toodyay people, the same as I was before you got interested.

Mr. HAWKE: If the newspaper misreported the Minister in this matter, then obviously the plain, straight duty of the Minister was to correct the misreporting in order to put the situation right with the public generally, and especially with the people at Toodyay.

Mr. Court: Well, I did.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister did nothing of the kind.

Mr. Court: I did. There was a statement in the *Daily News* the night after, if you had read it.

Mr. HAWKE: There was no correction of the statement which the Minister now tells us was an incorrect one. Surely the proper course and the honourable course

for the Minister to have adopted, if what he now says is true, was to make a clear-cut request to *The West Australian* newspaper asking for a statement to be published in his name, setting out the incorrect nature of the first paragraph as published.

Mr. Court: I will give you the details when I speak. That is fair enough.

Mr. HAWKE: I am positive that if the Minister had taken that proper course, the newspaper concerned would have been only too ready and pleased in the situation to publish the correction at the earliest practical opportunity. If, as the Minister now says, the statement was not correct, it takes away a considerable amount of the protest which is contained in my motion; and had the Minister done the right and proper thing at the right time, then in all probability the motion would not have appeared on the notice paper at all.

Mr. Court: I did the right thing and I will demonstrate this even to your satisfaction this evening, even though it takes some doing.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister has a job in front of him. My main concern in this motion, as it is the main concern of the member for Toodyay and, I think, possibly now the Minister for Railways, is to see that the best possible deal is given to the people concerned where it can be shown reasonably that damage has been suffered to their house properties.

I know that since this flare-up occurred, new conditions are being operated. I know the houses which have not so far been in the blasting areas, but which will in future be in the blasting areas, are to be inspected prior to the commencement of the blasting operations. This, of course, is a fair and reasonable procedure, and a procedure which should have been carried out in connection with the houses which have been affected up to date, and which the owners claim to have been affected up to date. Had that been done, the situation would have developed along normal lines and the people concerned might have, before now—some of them at any rate—received some reasonable compensation.

However, I think even the present procedure might need some addition. I do not know what progress the member for the district—the Minister for Police—has made in his endeavours to have independent persons authorised to make inspections. After all said and done, it might not be sufficient for a departmental inspector to look at these houses beforehand unless each resident concerned receives a copy of the report made in relation to each house. Unless that is to be done, then each resident is in the dark as to what the report will be following the inspection prior to blasting operations commencing.

However, if it is intended that each house owner will receive a copy of such report before blasting operations commence, then each such owner is in a position to agree or disagree with the report built upon the inspection carried out by the departmental officer or by the report of the contractor.

I can imagine that a lot of money could be involved in this situation, because where walls have been cracked right through from one side to the other and where repairs have to be made to ceilings, the cost of such work could total up quite heavily before all of the blasting operations necessary in connection with this work are completed.

The Toodyay area will not be the only one to be affected, because a great number and quantity of blasting operations will be necessary far beyond Toodyay; and, of course, west of Toodyay, where hilly country and heavy rock country has to be traversed.

I will await with considerable interest the explanation which the Minister proposes to give to the House, particularly in connection with the first paragraph of the statement which was published in his name in *The West Australian* newspaper on the 14th September.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands—Minister for Railways) [9.3 p.m.]: I rise to reply to this motion this evening without taking the usual adjournment, because I think it is important in the interests of the people of Toodyay that I answer the Leader of the Opposition. If I felt he had a genuine interest in getting justice for these people my attitude towards his motion would be different from what it is now.

**Mr. Hawke:** You had better not get nasty about it.

**MR. COURT:** It is all right.

**Mr. Tonkin:** What justification have you for questioning his honesty?

**Mr. COURT:** The Leader of the Opposition could not jump on the political band wagon in connection with this matter quickly enough. As soon as he thought the Minister for Railways was in trouble he said to himself, "I will do my best to embarrass him." He says, of course, that his main interest in and annoyance over this situation, and his sympathy for the local people, arose out of a Press statement. He has been at the game long enough to know that, first of all, a Minister does not write the newspaper, or print the newspaper, and he certainly does not write the headlines.

I think it is fair enough to say that the main trouble in Toodyay has been brought about by two things: Firstly, that unfortunate headline; and, secondly, the way the Leader of the Opposition was very anxious to point this out, and make out that I was the person who doubted the

honesty of the local people. I did my best next day, through the *Daily News*, to make it clear that there was no doubting the local people or their sincerity.

The true facts of the situation, so far as this particular Press statement is concerned, are very simple: On the Friday a young reporter came to see me following the report which appeared in the paper that morning of the answers I gave to the questions of the Leader of the Opposition. The young chap concerned was quite decent about it, and said he did not think the answers to the questions had been adequately covered in view of the rest of the report in the paper; and he said, "Can you give me some of the facts of the case?"

It was as simple as that. I said that I had no desire to join in any controversy on the matter because the situation which had been reported was nothing new; that the Government had been interested in the matter from the very day standardisation was conceived, and had taken special precautions. As a result, he asked me for some information, and I gave him the information which is contained in the report of the district architect who inspected the buildings at the request of the Railways Department. In the report his answer—it is not mine—is quite emphatic: that any damage, if there were any, would be very small due to the blasting, and most of the cracks would have occurred before the blasting. That was not my observation at all; and in trying to be helpful I made the report available, as I did the seismograph reports of the Mines Department.

I cannot help it if a person starts off a report by saying that I said a certain thing, when, in fact, I let him have a look at these reports in order to demonstrate that my reactions were based on these particular reports. The Leader of the Opposition smiles at this, but he has been at this game long enough to know that to try to correct these matters only gets one into more trouble than enough.

We were more concerned about getting satisfaction for the local people than we were in joining in a political "yike," because it was quite obvious that as soon as the Leader of the Opposition thought he saw a run on the rails he was going to take it.

We have not faltered at any stage in our attitude towards property owners affected by this project. Let us face facts. Any great project, whether it is the construction of a new road through anywhere; whether it is the construction of a dam; or whether it is the construction of a great railway, must involve some displacement of personal comfort and the property of individuals.

**Mr. Hawke:** There is no argument about that.

Mr. COURT: One of the tasks of the Government and the contractor is to do all they can to anticipate all these difficulties and to face up to the question of resumptions where resumptions are involved, and claims for damages where they are involved. Special instructions were given to the railway officers, and through them to the contractors and consultants, that they had to anticipate these difficulties and where possible establish their own liaison with the local people.

I want to say this: that until this business was blown up out of all proportion to its present significance the relationship between the railways, the contractors, the consultants, and the local people was first-class.

Mr. Hawke: That's not true.

Mr. COURT: The member for the district, who is the Minister for Transport, had been personally in touch with me all the time, and as soon as we realised that this railway would be going most of the way along the Avon Valley through his electorate, he asked me what arrangements were being made in connection with this matter; and he was told. I think the Leader of the Opposition will find, if he speaks to the member, that he was thoroughly satisfied with the arrangements which the Government was making.

When this railway was mooted the people of Toodyay were concerned, for some reason or another, that it might not go through Toodyay; and they realised that it would add to the status of their district if the railway did go through. Of course, it was always intended that it would go down the Avon Valley, and we took early action to confer with the Toodyay Shire Council. When the original plan was brought forward, it involved crossing the river about eight times in accordance with the original concept. We gave the shire council a copy of the plan, which it placed on display. Subsequently we found that because of advanced technical achievements we could keep on one side of the river by going through the granite outcrops; and we then gave the shire council an amended plan which it also placed on display for the local people.

I mention this to indicate that there has been complete co-operation between the Government and the local authority in this matter and that same co-operation has been carried on between the contractor and the local people. The firm of Leighton Constructions which is handling this contract in that district, has a reputation for being very thoughtful for property owners and also for livestock. Livestock has always presented a difficult problem to contractors doing this type of work.

I want to make some observations to show that this matter was given careful thought long before these questions were

ever raised in this Parliament at the insistence, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, of one Toodyay citizen.

Mr. Hawke: Acting on behalf of a number of citizens.

Mr. COURT: I think the person concerned was acting on behalf of himself or herself.

Mr. Hawke: That is not true.

Mr. COURT: It was only subsequently that a greater number came into the picture. There were two properties on the route of this railway—that is, the revised route—which it was obvious were most likely to be affected. Only two properties were in any physical danger so far as blasting was concerned. I want to make that point clear. Most of these people who are complaining are far removed from the actual site of the blasting.

Mr. Hawke: Not that far.

Mr. COURT: There were only two properties in the direct path of the railway and it was a moot point as to whether the houses as well as the properties should be resumed. This was the procedure in one case.

The contractor went to this particular farm and saw that there was a little girl of about six years of age living there. He told the parents that he did not think this little girl would be safe on the property whilst they were blasting because when the regulation warning sound was given before blasting, natural curiosity would stop her from seeking cover. Out of sheer curiosity she would come out to see what was happening. The contractor negotiated with the father and mother for the mother and child—and the father if he wished—to be accommodated away from the danger at the expense of the contractor. Does that indicate any callous disregard of the local people? This occurred long before the complaints that have been brought up in the last few days.

Mr. H. May: What happened to the old lady who dived under the tank stand for protection?

Mr. COURT: I will tell the honourable member about that in a moment. There are usually two sides to a story, and I want to be fair to the men who are trying to do a difficult job; and surely this House wants to be fair to those men. Members opposite are not attacking me; they are attacking those men.

Mr. Hawke: Do not talk stupid rot! You are very cowardly.

Mr. COURT: I have heard the Leader of the Opposition use this extreme language before.

Mr. Hawke: You will hear plenty more before we have finished with this question. You are squibbing it and squibbing it badly.

Mr. COURT: The Leader of the Opposition uses language like that when he gets upset; he cannot take it.

Mr. Hawke: I do not have to take it. You are squibbing the issue.

Mr. COURT: If I talk about your political squibbing we will have some fun and games. I want to clear up this case because it is very important and indicates the limits to which the contractors were prepared to go. This particular family is thoroughly happy. It was the decision of the father to stay on the property and he is still there; but the mother and young child are accommodated out of the district until such time as the blasting is finished, at the expense of the contractor.

Now we will move on to the other case. This family, named Donnelly, were in much the same position with respect to the blasting. These people were told by the contractor that there would be a degree of danger and it was suggested that quite apart from compensation for resumption, they should negotiate—as the contractor did with the other family—to live somewhere else during the blasting. I want to make this one point clear: The Donnelly case is not to be confused with the claims that are being made by other people. They are complaining about the blasting—resumption is not involved—and are seeking redress purely because they think they have a claim against the contractor for damage caused by blasting.

The Donnelly case is in an entirely different atmosphere and category. Their compensation was for the resumption of 30 acres of land which had to be resumed for the purposes of the railway. It was a moot point as to whether the railway went a little this way or a little that way and took the house in as well. It was discovered that this house was not to be in the actual railway reserve but it would be too close to be safe; and it was suggested the family negotiate to live somewhere else; and that was quite apart from the resumption claim.

I noticed in yesterday's paper that this gentleman said he had received no offer of compensation. In fairness to the contractor and in fairness to the officers concerned I have had to release to the Press a statement, and I think I should read it to the House because it summarises very accurately—as a result of the work that has been done by our own people—the position in respect of this man, who has received so much publicity for being under fire. That is the sort of thing that happens.

Extreme efforts were made to induce these people to go and live somewhere else and to be properly compensated. I repeat: This is not a case parallel with

the others. It is a case where resumption is involved quite independent of any blasting. My statement to the Press was as follows:—

Mr. Donnelly's statement as reported in this morning's paper that he had refused to move from his farmhouse because no compensation offer had been made is not correct and is unfair to the railway men and the contractor who have been endeavouring to negotiate an amicable settlement with Mr. Donnelly for a long time.

And I emphasise "for a long time".

Following the normal resumption negotiations by the Public Works officers a firm proposal was made to Mr. Donnelly on the 15th July.

A proposal in writing which followed a lot of discussion. Continuing—

Mr. Donnelly and his wife accepted this in writing on the 18th July.

They accepted this and it was a fairly generous approach—a realistic approach—by the officers to try to settle a set of conditions that had developed. Continuing—

The necessary formal documents were prepared by the Crown Law Department but Mr. Donnelly did not sign them.

As further evidence of the genuine desire of the railway officers to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement with Mr. Donnelly subsequent negotiations have been continued and without attempting to hold him to the original offer which he accepted.

Mr. H. May: Why didn't they sign?

Mr. COURT: The Government could have held them to the letter they had signed. The partners in this firm signed a letter, and if we had wanted to be callous we could have pushed on after the 18th July and finalised the deal and forced the formal documents to be signed.

Mr. H. May: I thought you said they did not sign.

Mr. COURT: They signed a letter accepting the offer of the Public Works Department officers, and when the formal document was prepared they did not sign that. The railway officers and the contractors were prepared to allow them, in a spirit of co-operation, to negotiate further if they wanted to; that is, if they wanted some other conditions as to where they were to live during blasting operations. My statement continues—

He has now verbally accepted a revised offer and there is an appointment for him and his wife to sign the necessary documents tomorrow.

He has already verbally accepted the revised offer which lays down clearly the conditions under which he leaves the area.



The statement proceeds—

I think I should also add that in addition to the compensation for land taken for the railway, the settlement negotiated by the Public Works Department in July provided for severance and injurious affection of 30 acres of land and also the loss of value of the house because of its proximity to blasting and to the railway route.

Does that sound like an ungenerous offer or an inconsiderate negotiation of this proposition? I think it was handled very understandably and with a degree of generosity. The report goes on—

A further amount was also offered by way of general injurious affection and to the total amount 10 per cent. was added because of the compulsory acquisition. When it is realised that Mr. Donnelly is still the legal owner of the house even after receiving this compensation it should be acknowledged that the department has endeavoured to act in a generous manner.

Mr. H. May: Some of this is departmental property now?

Mr. COURT: No; it is not.

Mr. Tonkin: How can he be the legal owner if the property has been resumed?

Mr. COURT: The honourable member has been a Minister for Works and he knows that the Government can resume some of the land and it can pay for injurious affection of another part of it.

Mr. Tonkin: A portion of the property has been resumed. That is a different thing. You did not say that.

Mr. COURT: How much more clearly can I put it? There was compensation for severance. The honourable member has been at this game for a long time and would know the significance of that.

Mr. Tonkin: Then his house was not resumed at all.

Mr. COURT: No. I am trying to demonstrate that he is still the legal owner of the house although he has received a substantial sum for injurious affection because (a) there is a danger from blasting; and (b) its proximity to the railway. The statement continues—

The negotiations with Mr. Donnelly go even further than this as the contractor offered assistance with five carpenters for Mr. Donnelly to recondition his Toodyay town house.

I want to emphasise this, because in this morning's paper Mr. Donnelly did not say that he owned a house in Toodyay. It was not habitable, and the contractor, in addition to all this offer of compensation, offered the assistance of five carpenters

of his own to go in and help the man make his Toodyay town house habitable. The report goes on—

They also offered accommodation to enable Mr. Donnelly's son to carry on with his leaving certificate studies uninterrupted.

That was at the expense of the contractor during the period of the blasting. To continue—

Mr. Donnelly declined this proposition because he thought it would prejudice his negotiations for compensation in respect of the actual resumption of land.

It is interesting also to note that Mr. Donnelly under the terms of the offer made to him by the department has not prejudiced his rights against the contractor for any damage to the farmhouse that may result from blasting.

I do not know how much further we can go. Not only have we compensated him for the land, and given him two lots of injurious affection, but we have also left him as the legal owner of his house; and when the blasting is finished, if the house is damaged by falling fragments, he can still claim against the contractor for the damage to his house. I do not know what more we can do.

Mr. H. May: If it is as simple as that, why all the bother?

Mr. COURT: I am asking members. What more can we do?

Mr. H. May: You tell us. I'm not mixed up in it.

Mr. COURT: I am glad the honourable member is not; but what more can the Government or the contractor do?

Mr. H. May: It seems to have dragged on for a long time.

Mr. COURT: Also I should add that this gentleman has made it very clear that he intended to get out of his house anyway and go to live in his house in Toodyay.

Mr. H. May: That makes it more simple.

Mr. COURT: I would have thought so; but it did not seem to work out like that. I do not know who spurred this man on, because I understand he is a decent sort of chap.

Mr. H. May: Probably the member for the district.

Mr. COURT: We can only take his statement as it appeared in this morning's paper; and if the Leader of the Opposition wants to hold me to the one that appeared in the Press, allegedly from me, I think it is fair enough for me to consider this morning's report from Mr. Donnelly as an accurate one.

Mr. H. May: This has been going on since July.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. COURT: We did not try to force this man against his will to sign any papers. We are trying to be sensible and considerate about it, realising that these people are suffering some dislocation. However, I think if members read the statement in the paper this morning they would see that he intended to use the house for a farm shed because he does not intend to live in it as a house any more.

The contractor tried to get him to leave on several occasions by telling him that the house was in a place of potential danger and it would be possible for one of the fragments from the blasting—and it would apply to this house only—to fall on him if he were outside the house. It has been made clear to him for a long time, and it is because of this that extra special arrangements in respect of resumption and other injurious affection claims were made for Mr. Donnelly.

I do not know what more any Government could do. I am quite prepared to let the Leader of the Opposition see the papers in regard to Mr. Donnelly and the offer made to him and the acceptance by him, and the new offer that has been made. I do not think I should disclose publicly the amount of compensation. That is up to Mr. Donnelly; if he wants to do so it is his own business. I have already refused the Press information on it, and we have made it clear that they will not get any information from the department. If they want to get it they should get it from Mr. Donnelly because it is his private business.

Mr. Tonkin: What about the other 19 people?

Mr. COURT: We will come to them. Be patient! I want to deal with this case in detail, because it is the most important one, and I have to make it clear to the House what happened in regard to the question of compensation for resumption and injurious affection because of the proximity of the property to the railway, accompanied by the blasting. We have done our best to try to get him to live away from the house, and the contractor has been very sympathetic. If members met the young engineer who is in charge of this project they would agree with me that he is a very patient, decent fellow who is trying to do the right thing. Now we hope that if these people sign this agreement tomorrow they will vacate in their own interests having been very handsomely recompensed for their resumption and injurious affection.

I repeat: They still own the house; and if anything happens and it gets blown to pieces they will still be able to claim on the contractor for the damage.

Mr. Tonkin: It sounds as though you are giving it to them twice!

Mr. COURT: That is how the law is and how it was intended to be when the compensation was worked out.

I now want to deal with the question of the actual mining procedures. In a project like this the work cannot be undertaken without a certain amount of blasting, and in this case there is a tremendous amount. It is the only way the project can be built satisfactorily. The company, I am assured by people who should know, has shown a great deal of responsibility in its mining operations. It has followed a line of procedure which cannot be faulted. It has consulted experts from time to time during the construction job to see if there are better ways of undertaking the blasting to cause minimum inconvenience and to get the job done as quickly as possible.

The company wants to get out of everyone's hair in Toodyay, and everyone in Toodyay wants to get rid of the company. When the company finishes its job it can be remunerated for the work it has done. It has not had an easy job, either, because of the unusually wet winter; that has played havoc with the work.

As soon as there was a suggestion that there might be claims, the Mines Department was approached as being the only authority that could be approached in a matter such as this because it was completely independent and could make seismograph checks.

Mr. H. May: Is this the case where the woman got under the tank?

Mr. COURT: One check was made on the 21st August and another on the 22nd August in respect of Horseshoe Hill. On the first day the explosive used totalled 1186.25 lb. This was what could be regarded as a normal charge there and it gave no registration at all. The official seismograph report, which I have here, says, "No deviation of trace visible." To satisfy the local people, the next day—the 22nd August—they decided to bump up the charge to 3,027 lb. This is not the charge they normally use, but to go to the other extreme and to get away from a charge of 1,000 lb., 1,150 lb., or 1,500 lb., they used a charge which was double the normal charge. This charge, made under Mines Department supervision, was of 3,027.5 lb. The resultant amplitude, as shown by the Mines Department figures, is .0002 inches; that is, to the fourth decimal place. The Australian standard for this type of operation is fixed at .008 inches.

Mr. Davies: What about the seismograph figures?

Mr. Jamieson: Did they make the charge on the same strata? That might not mean anything.

Mr. COURT: I am no Mines Department engineer, but this charge was carried out completely under Mines Department control on a position alongside a house, as requested by the local people. One was carried out at a distance of 5,530 ft., and the other was at a distance of 5,570 ft., because that is roughly the distance on

which most of the claims were made—I am leaving the Donnellys out of it for the moment—and some people are much farther away. One man even lodged a claim although he was 10 miles away, and the inspector, with some justification, said, "Fair go! I am not going out there unless there is some special reason."

Mr. Davies: Did they make the test on this level, or how?

Mr. COURT: If the honourable member wishes, I will read the whole of the report. It is as follows:—

Site: 54 mile peg (Horseshoe Hill) near Toodyay. Standard Railway Cutting.

Date: 22nd August 1963.

Rock: Granite. About 6 ft. layer of softer surface material.

Holes Fired: 38 holes plus 1 'pop' of 4 feet depth.

Spacing: 6 feet.

Burden: 6 feet.

Diameter of Holes: About 3 inches—varying due to bit gauge. Almost vertical—75° from horizontal.

Depth: 3 holes 40 ft.; 3 holes 38 ft.; 3 holes 36 ft.; 8 holes 35 ft.; 3 holes 32 ft.; 11 holes 30 ft.; 7 holes 25 ft.; (1,223 ft.).

Explosive:

2,790 lb. Ammonium Nitrate (Prilled).	} AN-FO.
112 lb. Fuel oil.	
125 lb. AN.60 (1¼" and 1½" Plugs).	
.5 lb. AN.60 (1½" plugs used in 'pop').	

3,027.5 lb.

This is the explosion that took place on the 22nd August. Continuing—

Detonation: Electric. Millisec delays.  
8 holes 0 delay (includes 'pop'),  
9 holes 1 delay, 9 holes 2 delay,  
4 holes 3 delay, 3 holes 4 delay,  
4 holes 5 delay, 2 holes 6 delay.

Result: Fragmentation—good.

Distance of instrument from blast:  
About 5,570 ft. Instrument set on granite rock outcrop about 40 feet from house. House is north westerly from cutting.

Then he goes on to list a lot of figures on siesmograph readings, and the resultant amplitude of .0002 inches. The acknowledged standard for this work is .008 inches, to the third decimal place. The Standards Association of Australia also lays down that the blast reading which will cause damage is .04 inches; that is, to the second decimal place. I repeat that there was a reading of nothing on one day, and the next day, with a heavy charge, a reading of .0002, with the acknowledged standard for this type of operation being .008 inches and the accepted standard at which blast will create damage at .04 inches.

Mr. Tonkin: Would not damage be a question of fact and not theory?

Mr. COURT: We quite agree. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has raised the question of whether this would be a question of fact and not theory. This, of course, is the reason why the district architect was brought on to the job to make some examinations because somebody completely independent had to be brought in to do this work. I will not read the whole of his report but sufficient of it to give a fair idea of his attitude expressed in it, and it is from this that the young reporter obtained his information to make up his report, which was published in *The West Australian* on the Saturday. This is what happens when one tries to be helpful!

Mr. Hawke: Yes, putting the young reporter in the blue!

Mr. COURT: No; I do not do that sort of thing. The report of the district architect reads—

Inspections of buildings in Toodyay were made on the 9th and 10th September. Inspections were made as a result of complaints made by various residents of Toodyay that their buildings had been affected by blasting operations carried out by the Broad Gauge Rail Project.

Those present at the inspection on the first day were: Mr. Wroth (Toodyay Shire Council), Mr. Wilkinson (Maunsell and Partners), Mr. Lloyd (Maunsell and Partners), Mr. Ross (Leighton Constructions), Mr. Wauchope (Public Works Architectural Division), Mr. Jones (Public Works L.R.O.).

On the second day Mr. Jones did not attend the inspections as it was not considered necessary.

The inspections undertaken, because of the time available, were of necessity only brief. Only sufficient time was spent on each house to form an opinion as to whether any cracks had formed in these buildings recently.

It was realised that with the limited time available, it would be impossible to plot the existing defects in the buildings.

The first building inspected confirmed this view. The numerous old cracks evident in the buildings would make it impossible to do more than two buildings a day on an average. From what I was told, none of the buildings had been inspected prior to the commencement of blasting operations. Consequently there is no record of the conditions existing before this work began. This is quite understandable, because with one exception, all houses are considered well beyond the radius in which any damage could

occur. The exception was the timber-framed and asbestos house owned by Mr. Donnelly.

There is a great deal more of this report which is available for perusal if it is so desired. Later it deals with other houses that were inspected in some detail and the conclusion was reached that little, if any, damage was done to these properties as a result of the blasting.

Somebody has to express an opinion on these matters, and surely the Government of the day has a responsibility to make public this type of information, particularly when the Government is under attack from certain quarters as having failed to do what it should have done when we know in our own hearts that we had done all that could be done, and that the contractor had done all that could be expected of any contractor. In fact, I think we have gone beyond what should be done and, in that regard, we are appreciative of the fact that we have a contractor who, although under the strict terms of the contract he could have drawn the line on certain things, has shown willingness to co-operate. The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the question of certain claims, and he also referred to buck-passing.

Mr. Toms: Are you sending a copy of the report to each of the claimants?

Mr. COURT: We have made a copy of the report available to the shire council.

Mr. Toms: A copy should be sent to each of the respective claimants.

Mr. COURT: It is proposed that every person who has a complaint—realising, of course, that this covers only the number of houses that were the subject of complaints at that time—will be given the information on the spot by the assessor, because the time arises when the insurance company and the contractor have to face up to the question of arriving at an amount in conjunction with the person making the claim.

I want to deal with this question, because the Leader of the Opposition has referred to a certain amount of buck-passing. We have tried, and are trying, to make this whole matter as simple as possible. The intention has been, and still is, that when a complaint is received it is taken seriously. It is recorded as a claim, even though it may not in a formal way set out in precise detail what would normally be required in a claim.

Then it is proposed, as I think has been the case with other matters that have been discussed with people there, to go to the persons concerned, and endeavour to collaborate with them with a view to arriving at a firm claim. It is best for a person to go on to the properties to examine the buildings with the owner, and if the owner feels something has occurred as a result of blasting he can point it out,

and that will become the basis of the claim. It is then up to the assessor to say whether or not he accepts it as a reasonable claim.

If he does not accept it as a reasonable claim, then the owner of the building has his remedy, and he can sue if he so wishes; or no doubt he can make representations to the local member, or the Minister. We have arranged right throughout the piece that instead of leaving the contractor on his own in this matter, the railway engineers—and senior ones at that—retain an interest in the whole of these relationships with the local people. When any complaints are made it is customary for the railway people to keep in touch.

We have railway consultants who are in touch day by day, and probably closer to the contractor than anybody else. In my discussions with their representatives I am satisfied they are in touch with the job, and in touch with the problems. In a Press report the other day it was said that there were 27 outstanding claims. We can only find 26 such claims; one appears to be in twice. But that does not matter very much. Each of these people will be interviewed by the insurance company, and it is not making any difficult legal problems out of this. It will settle these claims by discussion.

Mr. H. May: Are these brick houses?

Mr. COURT: The honourable member should know the types of houses one gets in an area such as this. They are a mixed collection of houses. Some are old, some are mud brick, and some are built of asbestos. Some are very old, and some not so old. It is the usual collection of houses one would expect to find in a district of this nature.

I am satisfied that these people will approach their task not only conscientiously, but with a degree of generosity; because instructions from the Government are to give, within reasonable limits, the benefit of any reasonable doubt that might exist. I think most of these things—had it not been for this blow-up—would have been solved in the ordinary course between the complainants, the contractor, and the insurer.

We must realise the Government cannot give a blank cheque to the contractor, or to the insurance people, or to its own officers. The matter must be approached sensibly; and with the experience we have had, together with the reports from the property owners in the district, I am certain there will be no difficulty in arriving at a settlement. I want to clarify that position, however. There is no suggestion of making the settlement of these claims, or the lodging of these claims, a difficult and complicated legal process. The normal procedure will be followed, whereby the assessor and the contractor will study the position.

We toyed with the idea of having a Public Works man—by arrangement with the Minister for Works—accompanying the assessor, in view of the fact that that department usually finishes up having to handle these claims. But it was felt there might be some suggestion of partiality in the matter; and we are endeavouring to arrange an observer who will accompany the assessor so as to see, from the Government's point of view, what action is taken by the assessor who goes around officially for the insurance company.

So far as future blasting is concerned, it has been announced that the houses will be inspected before blasting, and agreement reached with the owners as to the condition of the structures, whether they be houses or anything else, so that when the blasting takes place there would be agreement before and after as to the condition of the premises. I think I should report to the House that since this was announced we received a spontaneous reaction from the district. Certain people came back and expressed the view that that was doubting their integrity. I had to point out that surely in their own interests, particularly when we entered areas where there was greater density of buildings, there should be agreement before blasting takes place, as well as after, in order to ascertain the exact extent of the damage.

I just want to conclude on this note: This is a great national project. It is a tremendous one. It is full of difficulties from an engineering point of view. We are very conscious of the fact that in a project of this nature some inconvenience must be caused, but we are trying to minimise that inconvenience.

I hope the problem that has arisen in this area in the last few days will not make it more difficult for the Government and the contractors to go on with the work and put this railway through in the quickest possible time. The completion of the railway, according to the timetable we have set down, means a great deal to the economy and future of this State. Accordingly we ask for the co-operation of the local people. We on our part will do all we can to co-operate and assist, whether it is in respect of the properties themselves, the care of the livestock, or the actual resumption claims.

I know there are always complaints about resumption claims not being settled as quickly as they should be. If agreement can be reached on both sides it is of course quite easy. Once people can be got to agree that X is the figure, it is then only a question of documentation.

Mr. H. May: That is where you fall down; after agreement has been reached.

Mr. COURT: I think the honourable member will be reasonable enough to appreciate that we cannot force people to reach agreement. We might offer them a figure; but, if they do not agree, we must then bring in some other machinery to establish a figure. But in all cases when we have had negotiations, and it has been left to the intelligence of the local people and the Public Works representatives, in the cases of resumption—and with the contractors in other cases—we have found there has been a satisfactory arrangement worked out which causes no upset at all. I cannot go any further than that. We must press on with this project. We have tried to take a sensible view, and adopt a reasonable attitude in an endeavour to get it done with a minimum of upset; and that will be the policy of the Government in future. I oppose the motion.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Transport) (9.49 p.m.): I will be brief. I, too, must oppose this motion for the reasons stated by the Minister for Railways. As member for the district I must express some opinion on the motion submitted by the Leader of the Opposition. One refreshing thing about it all is that it has focused the attention of members of this House on a very important electorate; and on Toodyay in particular.

Mr. Rowberry: What about the lady under the tank? Is she still there?

Mr. CRAIG: If the honourable member has not been to Toodyay I will be glad to take him there to show him the tank, and also the lady. I would not like members to think I have been lacking in my duty or responsibility to Toodyay.

The Leader of the Opposition had the courtesy to ring me on the Sunday night to inform me that he intended going into the town to interview some people who alleged damage had been caused to their homes as a result of the blasting. Of course, every member of Parliament is very jealous of his electorate, and I suppose will frown upon any other member going into it. Nevertheless the Leader of the Opposition was fully entitled to do what he did.

I did say I was going to Toodyay later on in the week. I had been there the previous week, but after reading the Press report on the Saturday I became concerned to this extent: Most of the people, if not 98 per cent. of them, had been in touch with me regarding the damage that was alleged to have been caused by the blasting, as had all the other people who were involved in the resumption of land, or involved in other ways, in previous months as a result of the railway project.

Although the Leader of the Opposition referred to a claim made by a particular citizen of Toodyay, whose name he did not

mention, I think I have a very accurate assessment of the identity of the party. It is somewhat significant that this citizen approached the Minister for Railways, Senator Paltridge, the insurance company, in desperation the police, and goodness knows who else; but for some reason or other he made no approach to me.

Mr. Rowberry: Why was he in desperation?

Mr. CRAIG: It was for reasons best known to himself, as to why he did not take that course. I feel sure if he had consulted any of the other parties who had been affected he would have been told that I had dealt promptly with the complaints, referred them to the appropriate quarter, and obtained satisfaction. Quite a number of cases were involved some months previously, and it is unfortunate that the opinions of people whose claims had been settled was not obtained at the same time. Had that been done I feel sure a completely different picture would have been presented.

I have been in constant touch with the Toodyay Shire Council on this matter, and the council has assisted by informing people who consider their property has sustained damage to lodge claims—not just to talk about the damage, but to lodge claims with the contractor so that some assessment can be made as to whether or not the damage was caused by the blasting.

As the Minister for Railways said, a number of very old houses of mud-brick construction are involved. I have inspected most of these myself. I am no builder and I cannot say personally whether or not the damage has been caused by the blasting. Even the Leader of the Opposition will agree it is most difficult to assess the cause of damage, particularly in the older type of mud-brick houses. I am quite confident that sympathetic and very considerate approach has been shown by the contractors and by the Minister for Railways at all times.

It was only on Saturday morning last when I was in Toodyay that one farmer approached me in connection with the contractors who had the task of removing his shearing shed. This farmer approached the contractors some weeks previously requesting them to delay the removal of the shed until he had completed his shearing. Unfortunately for him there was a wet spell a week ago, and that held up his shearing still further. Even though the contractors were intending to start the removal on the Saturday afternoon, as a result of the approach made to them by the farmer, because shearing operations were delayed by wet weather, they agreed to delay the removal of the shed for a few more days.

That has been the approach right through the project, whether the matter concerned land resumptions, re-routing of roads into private property, providing better access to properties, or resumption of houses. Many people blame the damage on one particular blast which took place on or about the 13th August.

That blast could possibly have had some psychological effect on the owners of property. If a person says his home has sustained cracks as a result of blasting, it is only natural for his neighbour and nearby friends to inspect their houses thoroughly and to look for cracks. I would do the same thing myself.

As member for the district, I shall continue to watch the interests of the electors. I have advised them not to hesitate for one moment in referring to me cases where they consider they have suffered through the non-acceptance, or the non-appreciation, of their claim for damage by the contractors or the Railways Department.

Mr. H. May: Do you know Donnelly personally?

Mr. CRAIG: I know him very well, and he is a very good type of citizen. I have every confidence that the claims will be considered justly and fairly.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [9.57 p.m.]: I quite agree with the Minister for Railways that the uniform railway gauge project is of great State, and even national, importance. However, if it were ten times or one thousand times greater there would still be no excuse whatever for allowing small property owners, no matter how few in number, to be hurt—

Mr. Court: I agree.

Mr. HAWKE: —or not to receive a fair and reasonable deal. That is my main concern in this matter. I had better read the motion again, because the Minister for Railways spent most of his time miles away from it. My motion is—

That this House expresses concern at the unfair and unjust attitude adopted by the Minister for Railways with particular reference to portions of his statement as published in *The West Australian* newspaper of the 14th September, 1963, towards those citizens in the Toodyay district who claim their houses have been damaged by blasting operations associated with the construction of the uniform gauge railway line.

I would like to read again the portions of the Minister's statement to which the motion has particular reference. The first is—

Blasting for the standard gauge project had caused little, if any, damage to Toodyay houses, Railways Minister Court said yesterday.

The second portion is—

Inspections by Public Works Department architectural officers had confirmed the opinions of Railway Department engineers that the cracks in the houses had occurred long before blasting started.

I ask members on the Government side what they would have thought and what they would have said if they had been owners of houses in Toodyay when they read those two paragraphs of the Minister's statement? I wonder what would have been their reaction had they been in the position of the 20 or more house owners on reading a statement like that! There would, of course, have been a very strong resentment on their part, as there was on the part of the house owners concerned. Obviously such statements as those were a wipe-off of the people concerned at Toodyay. There could not be any other interpretation of them.

Mr. Court: It did not stop us getting on with the job of a normal approach to solving these problems.

Mr. HAWKE: I think it speeded up the Minister's approach considerably—

Mr. Court: Not at all.

Mr. HAWKE: —and created an entirely different attitude on the part of most of the authorities concerned towards the problem.

Mr. Court: We have been dealing with problems like this for months without any public outcry.

Mr. HAWKE: Obviously a Minister who makes a statement such as the statement in the first paragraph I have read, and who publishes with approval the second part of the statement I have read, is saying to the public, and especially to the house owners concerned, that they have no worth-while claim at all because the cracks in the houses and the ceilings were there long before blasting began. What other interpretation can anybody put upon such a statement?

However, the Minister comes along here tonight and tells us, and presumably expects us to believe, that he did not make the statement in the first paragraph at all—that some young inexperienced reporter in the fullness of his enthusiasm to do a good reporting job mucked the report up; made a mess of it; gave the public a wrong impression of what the Minister had said. That is a poor sort of get-out

Mr. Court: I never made a statement at all, so how could I be blamed for it?

Mr. HAWKE: The only thing I can say in the Minister's favour is that when he was discussing this phase of the debate he had the decency to look uncomfortable and to sound uncomfortable.

Mr. Court: What do you have to do to look uncomfortable and to sound uncomfortable?

Mr. HAWKE: It is the first time I have ever seen him in that attitude during the whole time he has been here.

Mr. Court: I have heard you make that statement a half a dozen times.

Mr. HAWKE: I will say it every time it is justified in the future; and no doubt it will be more than half a dozen times.

Mr. Court: It cannot be true every time.

Mr. HAWKE: This statement from the Minister was published in *The West Australian* newspaper on the 14th September—on the 14th of this month, and today is the 25th September. The Minister has allowed 11 days to go by and has allowed this statement, as reported in the newspaper, to be accepted by the public and particularly by the citizens concerned at Toodyay; and only now, under pressure in this Parliament, does he explain the situation as he thinks it should have been, and as I have no doubt he wishes it to be. What was wrong with the Minister making a correction to *The West Australian* newspaper on the 14th September, or on the 15th, or on the 16th, or on the 17th?

Mr. Court: I am more concerned about getting on with the job than getting into a public argument.

Mr. HAWKE: We know how concerned the Minister is with getting on with the job. I have no doubt the Minister would have allowed this report to go on for all time if it were not for the pressure put on by the development of the argument in connection with this motion.

Mr. Court: I repeat: We got on with the job of doing our job.

Mr. HAWKE: One would think from the present attitude of the Minister that he never makes any Press statements; that he never takes time off to make Press statements, whereas we all know he is all the time making them. I know they are not all published. If they were all published then, of course, he would be devoting the whole of his time to the making of more, because the more encouragement he received from the newspapers by the publication of his statements, the more he would be prepared to try to have them published. No; the Minister cannot get away with his attempt to back pedal out of this situation—he cannot get out of it at all.

Even if we gave him the benefit of the doubt in our minds as to whether or not he made this statement in the form in which it was published, we could not possibly excuse him for his failure to correct the statement between the 14th September and the 25th September.

Mr. Court: We have got on with the job. That is the best way to get these things right—not write to papers.

Mr. HAWKE: Getting on with the job is one thing, but allowing the public to be misled is another thing.

Mr. Court: They are not misled up there. It is only in your mind.

Mr. HAWKE: The people at Toodyay are not the only people concerned. Surely the public in Western Australia are interested in this matter. The management of *The West Australian* newspaper evidently considered the matter to be one of great public interest, because it gave this matter a great deal of publicity in its columns.

Mr. Court: That is its right.

Mr. D. G. May: The people in Coolgardie are not worried.

Mr. HAWKE: Apparently the Minister does not care whether the public are misled or not; and if he does not care as to whether the public are misled or not in regard to this subject, then he does not care whether they are misled or not in regard to other subjects.

Mr. Fletcher: Haven't you noticed that?

Mr. HAWKE: I have, indeed; and it is only confirmation of what has happened many times in the past. So the Minister has only himself to blame for what has happened since this statement of his was published in the newspaper on the 14th September. The Minister could have avoided all this had he wished to do so. Yet this evening, in the early part of his speech, he comes along semi-screaming that I have come into this argument, as it now is, only for political purposes. What political purpose could I have in the electorate of Toodyay?

Mr. Court: Not much!

Mr. HAWKE: No, of course not.

Mr. Court: Any embarrassment you could cause the local member would suit you down to the ground.

Mr. HAWKE: That is deliberately untrue.

Mr. Court: And any embarrassment you could cause the Government.

Mr. HAWKE: And a person who speaks deliberate untruths is worthy of only one description—and every member of this House knows what that description is.

Mr. Court: It is not an untruth.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. HAWKE: It is deliberately untrue.

Mr. Court: You can keep on going as long as you like.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister disagrees very strongly because he knows it is untrue.

Mr. Court: You thought you had a chance to embarrass the Government and grabbed it with everything you had, but it has fallen flat on its face.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. HAWKE: I thought I had a duty to assist the citizens in a part of the State who considered they were not getting a reasonable deal; and I took full advantage of that opportunity. I considered I had a duty to protect the same citizens from the insults which were offered to them in the first two paragraphs of the statement which were published in the name of the Minister for Railways in *The West Australian* newspaper on the 14th September.

Mr. Court: There were no insults at all.

Mr. HAWKE: I would do the same thing again in similar circumstance whether they occurred in the electorate of Toodyay or any other part of the State.

Mr. Court: Our relationship with the local people has been first class and this is an incident which is most unfortunate and unnecessary.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order

Mr. HAWKE: It is futile in the extremest for the Minister to make such a statement, because I went to Toodyay at the request of the people concerned and met them. I heard them express their view freely as to what they thought about those two paragraphs of the Minister's statement. They said about them ever so much worse than I have said about them; and they said about the Minister much worse things than I have ever thought about him—and I have thought some harsh things about him at times.

Mr. Court: We are still more concerned about doing the right thing than arguing over petty things.

Mr. HAWKE: Of course, the Minister is on the run.

Mr. Court: Not at all.

Mr. HAWKE: He is looking for a soft place to fall. If the Minister had a good argument and a good case, he would stand up aggressively in tiptop fighting form and would still be going.

Mr. Brady: He would have said, "What did your Labor Government do?"

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order

Mr. HAWKE: But because the Minister knew he was in a spot whichever way he turned, he now tries to make it appear that I am the villain of the piece.

Mr. Court: You would not like us to think that you were.

Mr. HAWKE: Whichever way he turned in this matter he was in a spot. If he admitted the first two paragraphs of the statement in the paper were correct he was in a spot. If he denied, as he has done, that one of the paragraphs was incorrect, then he is in a spot because he did nothing at all—until tonight, 11 days afterwards, under pressure.

Mr. Court: I did not have to do anything.



Mr. HAWKE: There is a statement from a Minister of the Crown—

Mr. Court: Better to get on and get the job done.

Mr. HAWKE: —who is supposed to have some sense of responsibility, and he tells us now that no matter how incorrect a statement may be in his name in the newspaper, there is no need to correct it. Mislead the public; allow them to be misled; make no correction! It is no wonder we have seen things done in Western Australia during the last three or four years which none of us ever expected to see done by the present Minister for Railways, or by any other Minister for Railways for that matter.

There are one or two things about which I want to speak briefly. The Minister spent a lot of time on the Donnelly case which is clearly a resumption case and therefore does not fall within the category of the people with whom I have been concerned.

Mr. Court: I have made my point because I wanted to get it clearly into people's minds that it is different. It has been confused as being one of the other cases.

Mr. HAWKE: I did not confuse it in any shape or form. I simply say that it is a resumption case and therefore is clear-cut. It is merely a matter of the authorities concerned and the Donnellys reaching agreement as to the basis of resumption.

Then the Minister told us someone from the Mines Department had taken some machine up to Toodyay to measure the effect or influence of blasting operations, and that this machine had operated, I think he said, on the 22nd August or thereabouts. The written information I have from the citizens up there is that the blast on the 13th August at 9.30 a.m. was by far the biggest blast to have taken place during the whole series of blasting operations from that date until well on towards the end of August. So, what is the use of taking a seismograph machine, or any other machine, up to Toodyay on the 22nd August when the damage had already been done prior to that date? What evidence is that? What does that prove?

Mr. Court: You are not suggesting that a bigger blast occurred than that which occurred at the special trial when double the amount of normal explosive was used?

Mr. HAWKE: I am not suggesting anything.

Mr. Court: You have to be fair.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not suggesting anything. I am saying clearly that the local people concerned told me verbally—and two of them have informed me in writing

—that it was the very heavy blast on the morning of the 13th August which started the damage. Obviously, I should think, each succeeding blast, even though not as heavy, could have the effect, once a crack was started in a wall or ceiling, of causing the crack to become gradually worse.

Now, I am a bit concerned that claimants might, as it were, be blinded by science unless they are very careful. If the stage is finally reached where claimants are going to be told that a seismograph machine was taken to a certain spot on a certain day and certain tests were made, what is the citizen's remedy or answer to a situation of that kind? He is left high and dry. He would not know where he was or which way to turn. Therefore I hope that the seismograph machine will not be the basis upon which the claims of these people will be finally decided.

Mr. Norton: The seismograph must be out of order, I think.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not well versed in the operation of seismograph machines or blasting operations such as those being carried out at Toodyay, and so I offer no opinion of my own at all. I simply express the earnest hope that the claimants, where there is a doubt, will not be blinded by science.

Mr. Court: They do not settle them that way. They discuss them on the spot, and that is the only way to do it.

Mr. HAWKE: I know; but all the build-up so far has been against the claimants—"little or no damage"; "any damage which did occur, occurred before blasting operations began"; "a seismograph machine indicated this, that, and something else." All this is against the claimants. That is the phase of the situation which has worried me very considerably.

It is true the Minister for Railways tonight has been much more conciliatory, and from my point of view that is most acceptable. I sincerely trust that in the final wash-up the conciliatory attitude he has adopted this evening will take practical effect and that every citizen who has a genuine claim will receive fair compensation.

I am not asserting that every person who makes a claim has a totally genuine claim. It may be that some of the claims unconsciously will be exaggerated; but this would be quite an understandable development in a situation of the kind which exists in that area.

I would now like to say a word or two about the architectural officer who visited the district; and I am not taking sides for or against him. However, I do want to give to the Minister and to the House the benefit of the opinion of one of the citizens

concerned. I have a typewritten statement from this person from which I propose to make a few quotes as follows:—

1. The architect gave the impression that he was not well acquainted with this building medium as he had to ask the owner what it was.
2. When asked the purpose of his visit he said he was here to inspect and report on alleged damage. When asked his opinion he said the cracks were old, mainly caused through shrinkage of bricks. When asked to explain the broken window, he gave no reason. He said it was too far away from the blasting site to have been the cause. At a later stage he gave the impression that he did not know where the cutting was. Asked where it was, he had to have it pointed out to him. It is not visible from here—

that is, from the house of the person who supplied this information—

—but he still insisted we could not possibly be affected as the distance was too great.

3. When told that three items were dislodged from a shelf from an early blast at the culvert, his reply was that that was quite impossible. When his attention was drawn to fresh wet patches on the plaster-board ceiling which we suggested might have been caused by roof nails having been shaken loose, a representative of the contractor appeared to be amused, and the architect said the remedy for that was to get up on to the roof and knock the nails in with a hammer.

Mr. Davies: He was being conciliatory!

Mr. HAWKE: He was not concerned with trying to ascertain whether the nails had been shaken loose by the ground vibration from the explosion or even by vibration in the air from explosion, but he satisfied himself with saying, "Oh well, you can solve that problem by getting up on the roof and knocking the nails back in again."

Obviously the people concerned did not want to interfere with the roof because the condition of the roof was evidence of the damage which, in their opinion, had been caused by the blasting operations.

I think it is quite clear that up to the time when the Minister made his statement which was reported on the 14th September, the stage was very largely set for these people to have a very hard road to travel if they were to get their claims admitted in any respect and if they were to get any financial compensation at all.

I do believe now, from what the Minister for Railways has said tonight, and particularly from what the Minister for

Police and member for Toodyay has said tonight, that the situation has eased very considerably. If my entry into the situation at the request of the local people has achieved no other result than that, then it was worth while indeed. In addition, if this motion which we are now debating has achieved nothing more to help in that situation and to establish the possibility that the Minister was, in fact, misreported—and further, the point that if he was misreported, he took no action whatsoever to correct the report to give the public the right impression—then the motion and the debate has also achieved some satisfactory result in that direction.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—20

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. D. G. May
Mr. Davies	Mr. Molr
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. H. May

(Teller)

Noes—23

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hart
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Cornell	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Crommellin	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayler	Mr. Wild
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. O'Neill

(Teller)

Ayes

Fairs

Noes

Mr. Curran	Dr. Henn
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Heal	Mr. Nalder

Majority against—2.

Question thus negatived.

## PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*As to Second Reading*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman) [10.28 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the member for Balcatta has not been able to obtain copies of his Bill in time for distribution this evening. The question arises as to whether a Bill can be introduced at the second reading stage without the Bill being distributed.

Standing Orders in the matter merely require the member so concerned to present a fair copy of the Bill to the House at an early date. There is a precedent. On the 1st August, 1907, a Bill was introduced with the indulgence of the House without copies of the Bill having been distributed. The point therefore arises as to whether the member for Balcatta has the permission of the House to introduce his Bill this evening without distribution.

I understand that he has two copies, which he has handed to a member of the Government.

The question is: Has the member the permission of the House to introduce his Bill without distribution? If I hear a dissentient voice, then he cannot introduce his Bill. Has the member the permission of the House?

Mr. BRAND: May I be allowed to comment on this singular situation?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think so.

Mr. BRAND: The member for Balcatta discussed the situation with me. In view of the fact that you, Sir, would rule in his favour, and the fact that we will not be sitting next week—and further, if he states that he will not take longer than a quarter of an hour—we will agree to his request.

I think it is a very dangerous precedent, irrespective of the fact that a Bill was similarly introduced in 1907. Perhaps politics then were not as they are today.

I would like to say that it must be made very clear that we are extending this consideration to the member for Balcatta in view of the fact that we will not be sitting next week, and his motion would be delayed well into the session. I do not think there is anything that I can add to this matter.

#### Question put.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): There being no dissentient voice I take it the member for Balcatta has the approval of the House to move the second reading.

#### *Second Reading*

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [10.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I desire to thank the Premier, and indeed all members, for their indulgence in allowing me to proceed under the circumstances; because had the decision been otherwise it could well have been three or four weeks before I would have had the opportunity of introducing the Bill; that being occasioned by the fact that we are not sitting next week, and also because of the volume of private members' business already on the notice paper, without having regard to any further notices that might be given.

This Bill contains three provisions to amend the Painters' Registration Act, and I am hopeful that the contents of the measure will meet with the approval of the Government. In any event, the provisions are quite simple to follow. Members may recall that as from the proclamation of the Act, which came into operation on the 1st January this year, a person who desired to engage in the business of painting had to have certain qualifications.

However, there is a provision which applies in all cases, that those who are actually engaged in the industry or the trade at the time of the coming into operation of the measure will be permitted to apply and will be accepted by the registration board.

The amendment in the Bill is to provide for the limitation of that concession. It is proposed, and I trust the House and indeed Parliament will agree, that this concession shall continue only until the 31st December, 1963. In other words, those who have not the qualifications but who have been engaged in the trade of painting will have had a period of 12 months in which to lodge their applications and be registered, for which they will pay a fee.

I think members will agree that it is quite a reasonable proposition since the Builders' Registration Act, an amendment to which was introduced by this Government in 1961, provides in section 10—

Any person not being a company or other body corporate, who at the date of the coming into operation of the Builders' Registration Act Amendment Act, 1961, is a builder or a supervisor of building work but is not registered under this Act, may within three months of that date apply to the Board for registration under this section, and shall be entitled to be so registered if and when . . .

he has paid the prescribed fees, etc.

Mr. O'Connor: Was there no limitation in the Painters' Registration Act?

Mr. GRAHAM: No. The position is that as time passes it becomes increasingly difficult to disprove a claim by any applicant that he was in fact engaged in the trade as at the 1st January, 1963. In allowing a full span of 12 months I think that, if anything, the legislation is being generous, and perhaps I can plead guilty to some extent in that I should have included some period at the time the legislation was first submitted for the consideration of Parliament.

The second amendment is again based on a provision in the Builders' Registration Act, and it will require every registered painter to affix or erect on all works under his control a sign of reasonable dimensions showing in easily legible letters and figures his name and registered number. That, with the alteration from "builder" to "painter" is practically the wording taken from section 10 of the Builders' Registration Act, and accordingly I do not anticipate any opposition in regard to the amendment.

The third and final provision is in respect of moneys received by the Painters' Registration Board. Members will recall that when the legislation was introduced it was proposed that the preponderance of those comprising the board should be

painters, because it was a painters' registration board, just as in the case of every other board of which I have knowledge the majority, and in some cases every single member, is a representative or a member of the trade or profession of those to be registered. But when the Bill finally passed through Parliament the position was that there was one painters' representative and one representative of the paint manufacturers, through the Chamber of Manufacturers.

Obviously it was the thought of the Government that the manufacturers of paint had an equal stake and interest in the operations of this board as did the master painters. But the position is that the entire moneys payable to the board are being found by the registered painters, and not one penny is being found by the paint manufacturers. It will be appreciated that the master painters are in a minority on the board—they have one member in a board of three—and yet, I repeat, those painters are called upon completely to finance the operations of the board.

I think all members will agree that such a proposition is grossly unfair, and so the Bill provides that every year the Chamber of Manufacturers will pay to the board a fee equal to the total amount of fees received by the board for the registration of painters. The Chamber of Manufacturers is given power to recover that sum of money from the paint manufacturers or, as it is called in the Bill, the Australian Paint Manufacturers Federation (W.A. Branch).

Here I would point out that any charges made by the board for certificates, or any penalties received are in a different category. What the Bill is doing is requiring the paint manufacturers, through the Chamber of Manufacturers, to pay on a pound for pound basis to match the total of the fees paid by the registered painters in any one year. That can have one of two results: First, that the present fee of 7 guineas per annum levied on the registered painters can be reduced to a lesser figure because of the pound for pound arrangement with paint manufacturers; or, alternatively, the Painters' Registration Board will have additional moneys at its disposal to enable it to prosecute its duties with greater vigour and efficiency than would otherwise be the case.

I say that because the Minister intimated that, for the time being—and no doubt one of the considerations would be finance—a part-time inspector only is being employed. Master painters, however, feel it is necessary in order that the Act be complied with and for the purpose of protecting persons who require their properties painted, there should be an inspector appointed who is able to devote a greater amount of time to his duties, bearing in mind that from time to time, if and when

prosecutions take place—no doubt this would occupy a fair amount of his time—a great deal of the inspector's time would be devoted to paper work, attendances in court, and so on.

Those are the three provisions in the Bill. I hope there will not be any pressure brought to bear with any success on the Minister and the Government with respect to the last-named provision. I am certain that if the Minister and those associated with him ponder on the proposition they will agree that if there are two parties who derive benefit from a piece of legislation, it is grossly unfair that one party only should be called upon to make contributions to enable the board to function. The answer is that as both parties have equal representation, the contributions should be made on an equal basis; that is to say, the annual registration fees that are paid by painters should be matched.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Wild (Minister for Labour).

*House adjourned at 10.43 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Thursday, the 26th September, 1963

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.