

I am deeply grateful for being permitted to speak on the Address-in-Reply debate. I trust my time in this House will be spent in helping the people who live in the province I represent.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. R. F. Claughton.

House adjourned at 5.19 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 31st July, 1968

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

MACE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Origin: Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) [4.32 p.m.]: With the indulgence of the House I wish to make a statement concerning the Mace. I wish to inform members that until this time no official record exists of the origin of the Mace as used in this Chamber. Research has been made by the Clerk over a period of many months, extending from London to Australia, including not only parliamentary records but also public accounts, newspapers, and the State archives, prior to the inscription on the Mace, namely, 1887, and no mention of it could be found.

Finally, as a last resort, contact was made with a retired Western Australian newspaper reporter who indulges extensively in research into early Western Australian history, who disclosed that only a few weeks ago, when researching another matter, he came across a reference to the Mace in the *Inquirer* the year after the Mace was supposed to have arrived in this State. From this point it was easy to establish the following—and I shall read the extract from the issue of the *Inquirer* dated the 29th February, 1888—

Some months ago Mr. Nesbit, the well known Hay-st. jeweller, had an order placed in his hands for a mace for the Legislative Council. After some consideration Mr. Nesbit decided to have the article made in Adelaide, instead of sending the order to England for execution, and the result proves the wisdom of his decision. The mace arrived safely in Perth last Saturday and is now on public view at Mr. Nesbit's establishment. It has been made from ornate designs supplied by the Public Works department of this Colony, at Mr. S. Schlank's Beaver Factory in Adelaide. The workmanship is really remarkable for its elaborate character, richness and exquisite

finish, and certainly redounds to the credit of Australian craftsmen. The "bauble" measures 2 ft. 8 in. in length and is of standard silver heavily gold gilt. The mace begins with a large burnished boss quartered with beads, and bearing the Imperial monogram admirably chased. These quarters are divided by representations of the rose, shamrock and thistle. From the boss rises the shaft, which is elaborately chased in front; and above is a small boss of a highly ornamental description, surrounded by the Western Australian coat-of-arms, which is in itself no small work of art. The then national emblems appear again, and there is a massive ornamental band which bears the inscription "Western Australia", while another bears the British motto "Dieu et Mon Droit". The shaft is surrounded by the burnished bole—a very chaste piece of workmanship. It bears the British coat-of-arms, alternatively with leaf scrolls, on the other side being engraved "Legislative Council of Western Australia", and above all is the Imperial crown most elaborately wrought. Below the crown are medallion, one representing a swan surrounded with laurel leaves and relieved by native flowers and foliage. There is a great deal of repousse work in the article, the execution of which is as artistically clever as the result is strikingly effective. The cost of the mace is £70, exclusive of freight and insurance. It will be borne before the Speaker, the Hon. J. G. Lee-Steere, at the next meeting of the Legislative Council.

To ensure that this information is available for the future, I will instruct the Clerk to record this reference in the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House; and, needless to say, the reference will also appear in *Hansard*.

QUESTIONS (44): ON NOTICE ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL *Geriatric Block*

1. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has it been decided to establish a geriatric wing (or centre) at the Albany Regional Hospital?
- (2) If "Yes," have plans been prepared?
- (3) When is it expected to commence building?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A sketch plan will be available shortly.
- (3) This financial year.

Nurses Training School: Establishment

2. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has consideration been given to establishing a nurses' training school at the Albany Regional Hospital?
- (2) If "No," will an immediate investigation be carried out with this object in view?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) The Albany Regional Hospital is a training school for nursing aides. It is expected that the changing pattern of nurse education will make possible the inclusion of regional hospitals in providing facilities for the training of general nurses.

DRUNKEN DRIVING**Blood Tests: Form Used**

3. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Police:

Will he please supply me with a form used by officers of his department for presentation to a medical practitioner chosen by a member of the Police Force to take a blood sample, pursuant to section 32 B(6), from a person suspected of having committed an offence under section 32 of the Traffic Act?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Yes.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION**Pneumoconiosis Medical Board: Examination Procedure**

4. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) What is the procedure required to be followed by a person wishing to be examined by the Pneumoconiosis Medical Board pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act?
- (2) Has there been a change in such procedure since the inception of the said medical board; if so, in what way?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Whenever a claim—including a claim for review—is made by a worker, it is obligatory on the employer to refer it to the Pneumoconiosis Medical Board and there is no further procedural requirement on the worker. Any difficulty or undue delay should be referred to the Registrar of the Workers' Compensation Board.
- (2) No.

TOWN PLANNING**Highways and Regional Roads: Positioning in Metropolitan Area**

5. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Has the Town Planning Department made a final determination re the positioning of all highways and regional roads in the metropolitan area, as envisaged in the Stephenson Plan?
- (2) If "Yes," what is the final position of all such roads?
- (3) If "No"—
 - (a) What highways and regional roads have been finally determined and what is the positioning of each;
 - (b) Which highways and regional roads are yet to be determined and positioned to complete the road pattern as proposed in the Stephenson Plan, and when will this be known?
- (4) Are any other highways or roads, apart from the above, being considered in the metropolitan area; if so, where?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2) No.
- (3) and (4) The metropolitan region scheme report, 1962, lists 16 controlled access highways, 14 major regional roads, and 43 important regional roads with a total length of more than 500 miles. In the continuous process of implementing the metropolitan region scheme, this framework is subject to amendment as subdivision takes place and major road needs are assessed. It would be impracticable to give a report of the detailed nature indicated by the honourable member, but if he has any particular highway in mind I will do my best to obtain the information sought.

SCHOOLS IN MAYLANDS ELECTORATE
Enrolments

6. Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) In respect of the—
 - (a) North Inglewood Primary School;
 - (b) East Maylands Primary School;
 - (c) Mt. Lawley Primary School;
 - (d) Maylands Lower Primary School;

(e) Maylands Upper Primary School,

what were the total number of students enrolled in 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968?

(2) What was the number of students enrolled in Grade I in the above schools in 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) and (2).

	Total Enrolment				Grade I Enrolment			
	As at the 1965	As at the 1966	As at the 1967	Feb. 1968	As at the 1965	As at the 1966	As at the 1967	Feb. 1968
North Inglewood Primary School	609	649	646	649	79	75	78	69
East Maylands Primary School	281	283	295	287	39	36	45	40
Mt. Lawley Primary School	502	502	519	528	72	75	62	66
Maylands Junior Primary School	211	236	250	258	80	88	93	89
Maylands Primary School	324	329	321	323	....	....	....	....

CATTLE IN THE KIMBERLEYS

Records of Sales

7. Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Are records kept for each season of cattle sold by each pastoral station in the Kimberley region; if not, why not?

Mr. NALDER replied:

A record is kept showing—

- (i) Cattle slaughtered on behalf of each station.
- (ii) Cattle movements by permit across pleuro boundaries within the State.
- (iii) Cattle movements into and out of the State.

Movements between stations not included under these headings would be small within Western Australia, and there has been no justification for obtaining this information.

HEALTH

Septic Tank Installations: Subsoil Testing

8. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Could he advise which Government department is responsible for testing the subsoils for septic tank installation?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

Local authorities in association with the Public Health Department.

SABIN VACCINE SERVICE

Cost in North-West

9. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will he make available a detailed statement of cost of the north-west sabin vaccine service as follows—

(a) salary and periods worked;

(b) flying time per trip;

(c) aircraft running and maintenance;

(d) travelling allowance?

(2) Is the officer concerned paid whilst engaged on private employment?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(1) (a) Salary—from 5th May, 1967, to the 27th December, 1967, and from the 17th April 1968, to the 1st August, 1968—\$2,352.

(b) and (c) The aircraft is operated by the owner at a contract rate of 20c per mile. Payments to the 30th June, 1968—\$5,790.

(d) Whilst travelling, the public service rate for travelling allowance is paid.

(2) Not by the Public Health Department.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE BOARD

Loan Money Received in Last Three Years

10. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

Including provision for sinking fund for loan redemptions, what was the cost, expressed as a percentage, of loan money obtained by the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board for the years 1966, 1967, and 1968?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

	Treasury Loan Funds Interest and Sinking Fund Per cent.	Private Borrowings Interest and Sinking Fund Per cent.	Average Overall Interest and Sinking Fund Per cent.
1965-66	5.25	6.25	5.34
1966-67	5.50	6.375	5.58
1967-68	5.50	6.375	5.59

DENMARK HOSPITAL*Fees*

11. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) In February this year were fees charged in Denmark higher than at the Albany Regional Hospital?
- (2) If "Yes," was this because Denmark had four-bed wards contrasted with Albany Regional Hospital's six-bed wards?
- (3) Were the fees which were being charged at Denmark in February also being charged at all four-bed-ward hospitals throughout the State?
- (4) What alteration, if any, has been effected in the position which existed in February last?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The scale of fees is identical at Albany, Denmark, and all public hospitals. Fees charged in February of this year and at all other times were in accordance with this scale.
The standard scale of fees provides:

2-4 bed wards—\$13.50 per day.

Over 4 bed wards—\$10 per day.

- (2) Denmark Hospital's larger wards have four beds, whilst at Albany there are wards containing six beds.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No changes have been made in the fees structure since February of this year.

In further clarification I attach copy of a communication addressed recently to the Shire Clerk of Denmark on the subject matter—

The Shire Clerk,
Denmark Shire Council,
Denmark.

18th July, 1968.

Dear Mr. McCutcheon,

I refer to your recent letter relating to fees at the Denmark Hospital.

I wish to advise that the charge of \$13.50 per day at Denmark Hospital is regarded as the charge which should apply to persons who are not involved in financial hardship.

It is pointed out that persons throughout the State need to be adequately covered by hospital insurance, and cover to the extent of \$13.50 per day is recommended, in which case the patient does

not pay anything out of his own pocket when hospital treatment is involved, unless receiving private ward attention.

Should a patient receiving treatment in the Denmark Hospital be unable to meet the \$13.50 per day hospital charge without financial hardship, an application for a reduction in the account may be made by declaring his financial position to the Managing Secretary, Albany Regional Hospital, who is also responsible for the administration of the Denmark Hospital.

I recognise that there is a problem in respect of the charge of \$10 per day at Albany. At the present time Albany residents have an advantage over persons attending the Bunbury and Geraldton Regional Hospitals, where, because of the size of the wards, the minimum charge is \$13.50 per day, but in both these cases, as at Denmark, a reduction to \$10 per day may be allowed by the Managing Secretary where financial hardship is proved.

I would appreciate your Council encouraging local residents to insure to the extent of cover of at least \$13.50 per day, despite the fact that the charge could be lower if treated in the Albany Regional Hospital.

I would point out, however, that in a recent case involving one Denmark resident, the patient had to be transferred to the Royal Perth Hospital, where the charge \$13.50 applied after the hospital had assessed the patient, and it is wise that residents outside the metropolitan area appreciate that should hospital treatment be required in the metropolitan area, it is highly desirable for patients to have hospital benefit fund cover to the extent of at least \$13.50 per day.

Yours faithfully,

G. C. MacKinnon,
Minister for Health.

KWINANA FREEWAY: DAMAGED LIGHT POSTS*Replacement Cost and Relocation*

12. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What number of vehicle-damaged light posts have been replaced or repaired on Kwinana Freeway since installation?
- (2) What is the total cost involved?

- (3) For what reason were the posts not placed in the freeway median strip with each post carrying lighting for north and south bound traffic?
- (4) As presumably the same intensity of lighting could be thus achieved with half the number of posts, has any thought been given to re-location?
- (5) If "No," will consideration be given to the suggestion with a view to reducing damage and casualty?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

- (1) 100 approximately.
- (2) \$7,000 approximately.
- (3) In street lighting the nearside kerb should be lit and lights should be placed on the outside of curves.
- (4) and (5) See (3).

PROSPECTING AREAS

Regulations, and Numbers Granted

13. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Was he correctly reported to have stated in *The West Australian* on the 30th July, 1968, that a mineral claim had to remain in force for a year before a prospector could apply for a prospecting area within it?
- (2) If so, was he referring to regulation 55(14) under the Mining Act?
- (3) Is it not a fact that this said regulation is regarded by his department as being *ultra vires* section 28(1) of the Act?
- (4) How many prospecting areas have been granted in the Coolgardie and East Coolgardie Goldfields within the last 12 months pursuant to regulation 55?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) There is some doubt; the matter is being examined.
- (4) None.

WAR SERVICE LAND

Availability in Canning Electorate

14. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Housing:

What war service land is available in the following areas:

- (a) Gosnells;
- (b) Kenwick;
- (c) Maddington;
- (d) Cannington;
- (e) Thornlie;
- (f) Lynwood;

- (g) Rossmoyne;
- (h) Riverton;
- (i) Brentwood;
- (j) Maniana?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(a) to (j) Nil.
Land is held in East Manning which is to be developed, and in Bentley lots will be made available in the near future.

ROAD TAX

Payment by Overload Permit Holders

15. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Transport:

If it is necessary to pay \$12 per ton for an overload permit to carry a certain tonnage per trip to one Government department, why is it necessary to pay road tax on the same load to another Government department?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

All vehicles are subject to normal license fees under the Traffic Act calculated according to the gross laden weight of the vehicle. If approval is given for an increased load the gross laden weight is greater accordingly and fees are payable in relation to this.

Road maintenance charges payable on all vehicles with a load capacity exceeding eight tons are additional to license fees due under the Traffic Act, but normal license fees under the Traffic Act are reduced by half in cases where road maintenance charges are paid.

POWER STATIONS

Comparative Costs of Production

16. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What is the present cost of production per unit of electricity at the following power stations:—
 - (a) South Fremantle;
 - (b) East Perth;
 - (c) Bunbury;
 - (d) Collie;
 - (e) Muja?
- (2) What was the cost of production per unit of electricity at the South Fremantle and East Perth power stations prior to converting to fuel oil?
- (3) What is the anticipated cost per unit of power from the Kwinana power station?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Operating costs per unit are—
 - (a) South Fremantle, 1.06c per unit (coal and oil fuel).

- (b) East Perth, 2.96c per unit (coal fuel).
- (c) Bunbury, .65c per unit (coal fuel).
- (d) Collie, .71c per unit (coal fuel).
- (e) Muja, .33c per unit (coal fuel).
- (2) These generating stations are not yet burning fuel oil only. See (1).
- (3) It is anticipated that the Kwinana power station will not be in production until early 1970. It is too early to make a useful estimate of the cost per unit of power.

Kwinana Area:

Establishment, and Type of Fuel

17. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Is the Government considering the erection of a power house in the Kwinana area in addition to the 480 MW oil burning station at present under construction?
- (2) If "Yes," what type of fuel will be used?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No decision yet made on next power station.
- (2) See (1).

South Fremantle and East Perth: Cost of Fuel Oil

18. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Electricity:

What price per ton is the State Electricity Commission paying for fuel oil for the South Fremantle and East Perth power stations?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The price of fuel oil is confidential.

19. *This question was postponed.*

RAILWAYS

Use of Diesel Locomotives in South-West

20. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is the railways considering the use of diesel engines on the Wagin to Bunbury section of line?
- (2) When is it anticipated that the railways will be completely dieselised?
- (3) Will Collie be the last depot to be dieselised; if "Yes," in what year?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes. It is anticipated that the Wagin-Collie section will be dieselised in 1971.
- (2) Present planning provides for full dieselisation by July 1974, provided finance is available.
- (3) Yes in 1974.

POWER STATIONS

East Perth and South Fremantle: Policy on Peak Loads

21. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Electricity:

Is it the policy of the State Electricity Commission to keep the East Perth and South Fremantle oil burning power stations at peak load?

Mr. NALDER replied:

East Perth generating station will be used principally at times of peak load. South Fremantle generating station will be used a little more than this.

Bunbury: Coal Consumption

22. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What is the highest tonnage of coal consumed in any one year at the Bunbury power station, and what year?
- (2) What was the coal tonnage consumed at the Bunbury power station in individual years from 1960 to 1967 inclusive?
- (3) What is the anticipated consumption for 1968 and the anticipated consumption per year in the future?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) 469,968 tons in 1965.
- | Year | Tons |
|-----------------|---------|
| (2) 1960 | 287,650 |
| 1961 | 299,565 |
| 1962 | 378,685 |
| 1963 | 399,710 |
| 1964 | 417,196 |
| 1965 | 469,968 |
| 1966 | 417,678 |
| 1967 | 294,402 |
| (3) 1968 (est.) | 236,500 |
| 1969 (est.) | 230,000 |

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

West Arthur: Extensions and Cost

23. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Will he advise the planned programme for the State Electricity Commission's power extensions within the boundaries of the West Arthur Shire?
- (2) What has been the average cost per farmer for connection to State Electricity Commission power within the boundaries of the West Arthur Shire?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) As with other farming areas, progressive extensions will be made by means of the contributory extension scheme to those farmers who require electrical power.
- (2) A capital contribution of \$342 plus an annual charge of \$93.

POWER STATIONS

Muja: Water Requirements

24. Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it the Government's intention to drill for water in the Collie district for the purpose of meeting any additional water requirements for the Muja generating station?
- (2) If "Yes," when is it anticipated that the programme will commence?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

- (1) Not at this stage.
- (2) Answered by (1).

GASCOYNE RIVER BRIDGE

Inspection of Piles

25. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) When were the piles under the Gascoyne Bridge last inspected?
- (2) Over the past 10 years has any movement of a pile or piles been noticed?
- (3) If "Yes," how many piles are affected and to what extent?
- (4) Has any movement taken place during any of the river flows this year?
- (5) If a movement of a pile or piles has taken place, is any corrective action planned?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

- (1) Early this year.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Several piles moved under flood conditions prevailing at the time, which brought about some movement in the bridge structure—i.e. a pier.
- (4) No.
- (5) Additional piles have been driven to properly support the pier. This remedial action appears to be permanent.

LAND

Reserves 10921 and 24807

26. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What is the purpose of reserves 10921 and 24807?

(2) What is their classifications?

(3) In whom are they vested?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) to (3) Reserve 10921 is a "C" class reserve vested in the Carnarvon Shire Council for the purpose of a "Kindergarten Site." Reserve 24807 is a "C"-class reserve for the purpose of "recreation" and is not vested.

WOORAMEL RIVER BRIDGE

Completion

27. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

When is it anticipated that the new bridge over the Wooramel River will be completed?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

November, 1968.

HOUSING

Applicants North of 26th Parallel: Qualifications

28. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is the maximum permissible income that an applicant for a State rental home may earn when he resides north of the 26th parallel?
- (2) Does this vary with the number of dependents?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) \$4,225 per annum or \$81.25 per week.
- (2) The amount stated in (1) is increased by \$50 per annum for each child under 16 years of age.

CHILD WELFARE

Officer at Collie: Transfer

29. Mr. JONES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:

- (1) Is his department transferring the child welfare officer stationed at Collie to Bunbury?
- (2) If "Yes," when will the transfer take place?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No; but Mr. Penton, district officer at Bunbury, has about one week's study leave each term to come to Perth to study as he is doing a course at the University. Mr. Arndt of Collie is asked to take care of any emergency and cater for Bunbury during this week.
- (2) Answered by (1).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Report

30. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

When was the Local Government Assessment Committee report first made available to Cabinet?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The 21st May, 1968.

DAIRYING INDUSTRY

Inquiry

31. Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Does he contemplate having an inquiry into the dairying industry in the near future?
- (2) If an inquiry is proposed, what aspect of the dairying industry would be investigated?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).

OUTSTANDING DEBTS

Receipts

32. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Is a person, by law, entitled to a receipt for money paid for an outstanding debt?

Mr. COURT replied:

It is an offence under the Stamp Act to refuse to give a receipt for payments of \$10 or more, except in cases where, under the Act, the payee is exempt from giving a stamped receipt.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

Inquiry

33. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is it intended to conduct a full scale check of W.A.G.R. operations, as intimated by him in Press statements following recent railway accidents?
- (2) If so, when will this be held?
- (3) What will be the form of the inquiry?
- (4) Will W.A.G.R. employees be represented on the inquiry?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) to (4) The check will be made in the form of an intensification of the general supervision and inspection of the department's operations.

This will be carried out by those officers normally charged with this responsibility. I would like to point out that research is already well under way.

DENTISTRY

Dentists: Ratio to Population, and Quota

34. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) At the present rate of growth of population in this State, what number of newly qualified dentists is required for each of the next 10 years to maintain the present ratio of dentists to population?
- (2) How many dentists have qualified in Western Australia in each of the past three years?
- (3) Does a quota exist in the Faculty of Dentistry and, if so, what is the number in each year?

Dental School: Extension

- (4) Is the recently projected plan to extend the buildings and facilities of the Dental School a firm undertaking?
- (5) If so, will a quota still apply in the Faculty of Dentistry and, if so, what number in each year?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) If the current population growth rate continues, to maintain the present dentist to population ratio, it is estimated that we should graduate approximately 25 dentists in 1970, increasing to 30 by 1980.
- (2) 1966—11.
1967—11.
1968—8.

There are 22 students in the current final year of the course.

- (3) Yes. A quota limits the entry to 25 students in the second year.
- (4) No. Australian University Commission funds have been requested and may become available.
- (5) In any dental school, the number of applicants that can be accepted is limited by the facilities available.

35. *This question was postponed.*

MAIN ROADS GRANTS

Avon Electorate: Receipts by Shires

36. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Works:

What have been the amounts of the main roads grants to each of the shires of Bruce Rock, Quairading, York, Beverley, Brookton, and Corrigin for this current year and each of the preceding two years?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

Grants made available to the shires of Bruce Rock, Quairading, York, Beverley, Brookton, and Corrigin for the years 1966-67, 1967-68, and 1968-69 by the Main Roads Department are shown on the attached statement.

Main Roads Department

Allocations—1966-67-1967-68 and 1968-69.

Shire	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69	Total (3 Years)
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Bruce Rock—				
Main Roads	....	14,300	2,500	16,800
Important secondary roads	7,000	1,150	2,050	10,200
Developmental roads	39,440	40,870	43,370	123,680
	46,440	56,320	47,920	150,680
Quairading—				
Main roads	....	22,000	5,500	27,500
Important secondary roads	500	4,050	3,350	7,900
Developmental roads	54,860	44,720	57,320	156,900
	55,360	70,770	66,170	192,300
York—				
Main roads	96,200	36,800	3,500	136,500
Important secondary roads	....	....	....	....
Developmental roads	32,180	33,670	33,670	99,520
	128,380	70,470	37,170	236,020
Beverley—				
Main roads	400	4,900	....	5,300
Important secondary roads	9,000	1,100	11,700	21,800
Developmental roads	50,390	36,490	33,880	120,760
	59,790	42,490	45,580	147,860
Brookton—				
Main roads	19,000	200	32,500	51,700
Important secondary roads	700	....	....	700
Developmental roads	29,220	61,590	54,430	145,240
	48,920	61,790	86,930	197,640
Corrigin—				
Main roads	....	55,900	24,400	80,300
Important secondary roads	9,000	3,150	22,950	35,100
Developmental roads	73,840	68,550	41,250	183,640
	82,840	127,600	88,600	299,040
Totals—				
Main roads	115,600	134,100	68,400	318,100
Important secondary roads	26,200	9,450	40,050	75,700
Developmental roads	279,930	285,890	263,920	829,740
	421,730	429,440	372,370	1,223,540

MINERAL SANDS

Leases at Albany-Cheyne Beach Area

37. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has the Government any determined plans for the usage and development of mineral sand resources in the Albany-Cheyne Beach area?
- (2) If "Yes," what are the determinations?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) No. Claims for beach sands are held along the south coast by Messrs. Hancock and Moore, who are currently having the deposits tested. To carry out the investigation the partners have brought in an operator from Sydney who has special equipment for under-water sampling.
- (2) Answered in (1).

TAMMIN SCHOOL

Area of Classrooms and Administration Block

38. Mr. McPHARLIN asked the Minister for Education:

What is the total area, in squares, of the new classrooms and administration block of the Tammin School?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The total of the new construction at the Tammin School is 86.69 squares. This total is made up of the following areas:—

	Squares
Four classrooms	30.60
Administration block	9.07
Toilets, cloakrooms, and staff toilets	11.48
Covered ways, verandah, covered teaching areas	35.54
	86.69

SUPERPHOSPHATE

Demurrage and Extension of Unloading Time

39. Mr. McPHARLIN asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is he aware that in the season ending the 30th June, 1968, many debits for demurrage were raised against farmers who, through no fault of their own, were unable to unload their superphosphate in the time of eight hours allowed under clause 32 (b) (11) "Demurrage on Wagons Railway Goods Rates Book"?
- (2) Has he considered extending the time allowed for unloading wagons of more than 10 tons?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes. Each case is treated on its merits.
- (2) Yes; but in view of the consistent demand for wagons to meet other orders, this is not practicable.

NURSES

Salary Increases

40. Dr. HENN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Would he inform the House whether the Medical Department is actively participating in efforts to have nurses' salaries increased?
- (2) Will he take into account the fact there is little advantage in building more and better hospitals throughout the State if these cannot be adequately staffed with trained nurses?
- (3) Will he also examine this problem, bearing in mind that the main reason for the present shortage of trained nurses is their inadequate remuneration?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes; an offer was made some time ago but not accepted by the Royal Australian Nursing Federation.
- (2) and (3) The matter is now within the jurisdiction of the Industrial Commission—all aspects of wages and working conditions will receive consideration.

VENEREAL DISEASE

Notification and Control

41. Dr. HENN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Would he give figures for notifications for venereal disease to the Public Health Department for the last five years—
 - (a) male;
 - (b) female?
- (2) What percentage does he consider these figures to be of the total cases of V.D. in the community in this State?
- (3) Will he consider instituting any methods whereby notifications of V.D. cases could be more effectively controlled by the Department of Public Health?
- (4) Is there any Government pathological laboratory open at weekends to confirm any doubtful cases of venereal disease?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) V.D. Notifications (W.A.):

		Males	Females	Total
1963	.....	297	93	390
1964	.....	333	70	403
1965	.....	383	79	462
1966	.....	615	95	710
1967	.....	695	143	838
1968 (to the 30th June)	.....	323	61	394

- (2) An accurate estimate is impracticable, but the department considers that the majority of cases are now being notified and that the percentage could be around 75 per cent.

- (3) A circular on venereal disease which is about to be issued to medical practitioners includes a reminder of their statutory obligations in this connection.

- (4) Yes; a weekend service is provided by the Public Health Laboratory at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

BENTLEY HOSPITAL

Accommodation, Area, and Proposed Extensions

42. Mr. MAY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

In connection with the Bentley Hospital, will he advise—

- (a) How many patients can be currently accommodated;
- (b) what provision is made for maternity cases;
- (c) total acreage of land set aside for this hospital;
- (d) present acreage occupied;
- (e) what further extensions are envisaged;
- (f) anticipated date of extensions?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (a) 70.
- (b) 23.
- (c) 29 acres 1 rood 27.9 perches, including about 4 acres for power line easement.
- (d) 5.
- (e) Another ward block of similar size.
- (f) This has not been determined.

HIGH SCHOOL AT SOUTH COMO

Name, Grades, and Enrolments

43. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Education:

In connection with the new high school being constructed at the corner of Bruce and Henley Streets, South Como, will he advise—

- (a) proposed name of school;
- (b) what grades will be accommodated in 1969;
- (c) number of children to be accommodated in 1969;
- (d) from which areas will children be enrolled;
- (e) what is the proposed upgrading programme for this school?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (a) The school is at present referred to as the Manning High School. Consideration is being given, however, to a change of name on account of the location of the school in reference to district boundaries.
- (b) First year.

- (c) 280.
- (d) Contributing schools will be Collier, Como, Koonawarra, and Manning.
- (e) Upgrading will not be possible before the school has been established for three years. Upgrading will then be under close review.

44. *This question was postponed until Tuesday, the 6th August.*

QUESTIONS (6): WITHOUT NOTICE DRUNKEN DRIVING

Blood Test: Form Used

1. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Police:

I refer to question 3 on today's notice paper. The Minister let me have the form which I requested, and I would like to ask the Minister if he agrees with me that a reasonable construction of the reading of this document would suggest that a doctor to whom such a form was presented by a member of the Police Force would, by law, be required to take a blood sample from a person suspected of driving while under the influence of liquor?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

This is a matter of law and I feel that I have to get a legal opinion on it. The honourable member has a copy of the form referred to, but in view of his further question I will seek further advice.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: If the answer to my question is "Yes," would the Minister also let me know what the law is which requires a doctor to take such a blood sample.

Mr. CRAIG: I shall do that.

HOUSING

Provision by B.H.P. at Kwinana

2. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

Can the Minister inform the House the extent of the assistance which B.H.P. has given to its employees at Kwinana in the way of housing?

Mr. COURT replied:

In some respects I suppose this question should more properly be addressed to the Minister for Housing, but in view of the fact that it refers to a particular matter over which I have been criticised I will answer as I know the position to be. If my colleague desires he can add to my remarks, if you will permit that, Mr. Speaker.

As far as B.H.P. is concerned the situation is that the company has leased some 140 houses or flats for married people. The company heavily subsidises the rents of those flats or houses, and it has also made a substantial contribution by way of providing capital for furniture for some of the flats and houses. Most of the houses are in the Rockingham and Safety Bay area. I should add that I am fairly well informed on this matter because, as the Minister responsible for the 1960 agreement, the company keeps in touch with me regarding its housing requirements.

In addition, the company has some 80 units for single people in hotels and boarding houses and, again, it heavily subsidises this accommodation.

It should be borne in mind that during this very critical period the number of employees has risen from 710 to 1,140. The number required by September will be 1,250, when the sinter plant follows the blast furnace into operation. The company has brought over 200 employees from the Eastern States. So I think it is fair to say that the company has helped its employees very considerably in the Kwinana area.

MINERAL SANDS

Leases at Albany-Cheyne Beach Area

3. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Referring to my question 37, on today's notice paper, I would say this question has been raised in the House many times and has received the same shelving on each occasion. I would like to ask the Minister what the intentions are for the development of these deep mineral sands in the south-west corner of Cheyne Beach, and why there has not been any activity.

The SPEAKER: I cannot permit a question of this nature without notice to be addressed to a Minister when he only represents a Minister in another place. I think the member for Albany must put the question on the notice paper.

CLIFFS-ROBE RIVER PROJECT

Commencement

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

Can the Minister inform the House of the latest development regarding the Cliffs-Robe River

project; and, in particular, can he advise when a decision is likely to be made in connection with the commencement of the project?

Mr. COURT replied:

The situation at the moment is at a very delicate stage of negotiation. The representatives of the company, with their technical advisers, are currently in Tokyo undertaking discussions both at technical and commercial levels. I cannot hazard a guess as to when these negotiations will be completed. Quite frankly, we expected them to be completed by the end of July but I do not think they will be completed within the next fortnight, the way things are going, because there is a big disparity between the price offered by the Japanese steel mills—in respect of limonite fines—and the price at which the company considers it can afford to export. I refer to limonite fines as distinct from the pellets. There does not seem to be any great difference of opinion with respect to the price of pellets. If negotiations can be completed within the next few weeks work will commence fairly soon after, as the company is very well advanced with its engineering side.

We would expect that work will be undertaken, if not at the end of the year, then early in the new year, to keep up with delivery dates expected in contracts under negotiation. I think I have already advised the honourable member that the port proposed for this particular project is based at Cape Lambert.

PARLIAMENTARY SESSION

Sitting in Southern Division

5. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

In view of Cabinet's decision to hold two sittings of Parliament in each session, could Cabinet give consideration to holding one sitting in the metropolitan division and one sitting in the southern division, where climatic conditions are more suitable?

Mr. BRAND replied:

We have sufficient problems holding the sitting of Parliament where we have it now.

HOUSING

Case of Mr. C. V. Furey

6. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has he inquired into the case of Charles Vincent Furey of Nollamara, a married man with a wife,

five young children—all below seven years of age—and another child expected, who has a court order against him expiring next Saturday?

- (2) If so, will he use his good offices in order to ensure that this family will be offered accommodation before the bailiff ejects them and their possessions?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (3) I thank the honourable member for advising my office of his intention to ask this question. This case had not previously been represented to me. I will undertake to have the matter re-examined.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 25th July, on the following motion by Mr. Ridge:—

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

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

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [5.12 p.m.]: I must warn members and I ask for their forbearance because I have a number of important subjects with which I must deal at this opportunity. I am afraid my comments will keep me on my feet for some time.

I have already congratulated you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to your high office, and I will content myself at this juncture with repeating that we, on this side of the House, have every confidence in your judgment and impartiality. I would like to congratulate the member for Narrogin upon his reappointment as Chairman of Committees. After the election I did believe, for a short time, that there was a possibility that the member for Narrogin would be the next Speaker, and I think he would have made a very good Speaker. However, he happens to be in the minority part of the Government, so that was not possible. He has always discharged his duties as Chairman of Committees with efficiency and we have full confidence in his ability to continue to do so.

I extend to all new members, whether they are on my side of the House or on the Government side, a welcome to Parliament. No doubt they have all come here

with the intention of turning the place upside down. We have all done that in our time but we soon come back to our field, as will those new members before they are very much older.

Parliament is termed the highest court in the land, and in courts one expects to get both law and justice. Well, in this highest court one cannot depend on getting either. I might tell the new members—from one who knows—that the ones who have come here with some special purpose will learn before they are very much older that they cannot depend upon getting justice and law in the Parliament.

Mr. Nalder: This has been your experience over the years you have been in this House?

Mr. TONKIN: I would not advise the Minister to come in too early, because I have something for him later.

Mr. Nalder: I would be disappointed if I missed out.

Mr. TONKIN: As is known, it is not argument that wins the day in Parliament, it is numbers.

Mr. Brand: Irrespective of which party is in office.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes; I did not put any qualification on my remark.

Mr. Brand: I thought you might have been misunderstood.

Mr. TONKIN: No.

Mr. Brand: Well, we have that understood.

Mr. TONKIN: I am dealing with Parliament, and fortunately Parliament does not always have a Liberal-Country Party Government.

Mr. Brand: That is the point.

Mr. TONKIN: I have said on many occasions, both in the Parliament and outside, that majorities do not necessarily prove the truth of any proposition. All they do is to decide questions for the time being. Many examples can be cited to prove that minorities have been right when majorities have been wrong. However it takes time for minorities to establish their point of view; the new members will find that out.

I congratulate them upon their election. They are embarking upon a career which is exciting, interesting if they do their job, and very satisfying; because, despite their failures in the Parliament itself, as members they will be able honourably to discharge an obligation to their constituents which will enable them to help their constituents in a great variety of ways. They will be thanked by some for what they do; other constituents will take it as a matter of course and will not hesitate to come back again for further assistance when it is needed. However, that is human nature. We are not all built in the

same mould, fortunately. Some constituents are highly appreciative of efforts made on their behalf while others could not care less.

No doubt with the added debating strength in the Parliament, proceedings will be more interesting and more beneficial to the State generally; because there is nothing better than a good clash of opinion and an interchange of ideas, despite the fact that, as a result of the debates, decisions may be contrary to what one desires.

I now want to say a little about the general election which has resulted in the Government being returned to office by the skin of its teeth. Whatever view one takes of the result, the Government received a very severe shaking, but there is not the slightest doubt it deserved that shaking. It might be interesting to consider for a moment or two what the actual results were.

The total votes recorded in the general election, which of course include the informal votes as well as the formal votes, were as follows:—

Party	Votes	Percentage of Votes cast
A.L.P.	145,002	43.05
L.C.L.	132,546	41.82
C.P.	16,281	4.91
D.L.P.	10,457	3.16
Independents and Communists	7,966	2.4
Democratic Party	2,216	.67
Informals	10,251	3.09

It is my understanding that the Democratic Party—or some name of that kind—was a special party which came in as a sort of offshoot.

The valid votes would be a better guide, because an informal vote does not indicate anything at all. The total valid votes cast were as follows:—

Party	Percentage of Votes Cast
A.L.P.	45.35
L.C.L.	43.15
C.P.	4.8
D.L.P.	3.26
Unendorsed and Independents	2.22
Democratic Party .....	.69
Communist Party ..	.53

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, that a very substantial number of voters in Western Australia preferred the Labor Party to any other party.

Mr. W. A. Manning: How does the Leader of the Opposition bring the unopposed members into account in a total like that?

Mr. TONKIN: I bring them into account in this way: because they have found their way into Parliament without a vote being taken, therefore there is no method of calculation known to science which would enable one to work out a percentage in those circumstances. I prefaced my remarks in the first place by giving percentages of the total votes cast, and in the

second illustration by giving percentages of the total valid votes cast. If the member for Narrogin can indicate to me how I can work out a percentage when no votes are cast, I would be pleased to listen to him.

Mr. Craig: Isn't it logical to assume you would not put a candidate up against certain Government opponents because of the prospect of not winning? If you had done so, the percentage would be less.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister has so much to say on this question I offer the advice to him that he should get up and make a speech.

Mr. Craig: I might do that, too.

Mr. Fletcher: He is just grasping at straws!

Mr. TONKIN: It has to be admitted that in the Subiaco electorate not many votes would have been required—some 50 only were needed to go the other way—to have deprived the Government of that seat, and a similar situation in Kimberley—about which I will have a little more to say—would have reversed the decision in that electorate, and, further, if 150 voters in Merredin-Yilgarn had voted the other way it would have reversed the result in that constituency. So altogether, if a mere 250 votes out of the tens of thousands that were cast had gone the other way it would have changed the Government in Western Australia.

Mr. Bovell: You don't quote Canning in reverse.

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot see the point of that interjection.

Mr. Bovell: Well, 110 votes there, or whatever it was.

Mr. TONKIN: What I am saying is a fact.

Mr. Bovell: But there is something on the other side.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister has an argument to develop, let him get up and develop it. I have an argument to develop as I see it.

Mr. Bovell: I can quote the other way.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister may be able to quote the other way, but had I had any indication that the resultant vote in Subiaco was to be so close, we would have won the Subiaco seat. So, if the Minister wants to pursue that line about ifs and buts, the Minister can get some very strange conclusions.

For some time we seriously considered lodging a complaint before the Court of Disputed Returns in connection with the Kimberley election. I want to make it clear at the outset that I am not ascribing any responsibility for what happened to the new member for Kimberley. I am dealing with a set of established facts which will prove beyond any doubt that

there were breaches of the law. There is a difference of opinion between the Chief Electoral Officer and myself as to the magnitude of those breaches, but that is not unexpected.

I will leave members to judge the position for themselves, but there is no doubt whatsoever—and I will establish it—that there were breaches of the law in the conduct of the election in the Kimberley electorate. When rumours are rife one naturally listens to them, endeavours to form an opinion as to whether there is any sound basis for them and, according to what one thinks of them, either accepts the rumours or rejects them, makes further inquiries, or drops them altogether. I had heard rumours of bribery in the district which, of course, is a very serious offence; offers which had been made to native voters on the return of certain "how-to-vote" cards after they had voted.

I endeavoured to establish whether there was any evidence to support this rumour. I could not get any evidence at all so I did not pursue the matter. I must admit I am not entirely satisfied about the position, but I could not find any evidence, and it was evidence I needed. But there is undoubted evidence in connection with the voting which took place at Mowanjum Mission, which is out of Derby, and at Gogo Station, where there was a preponderance of native voters.

In the 1965 election, the Labor candidate, Mr. Rhatigan, obtained 28 votes at Mowanjum Mission, and the L.C.L. candidate obtained five. At the recent election the position was completely reversed. Mr. Rhatigan polled four votes, and Mr. Ridge, 38. Let us have a good look at these figures. They are completely distinct from the pattern of voting throughout the whole of the rest of the electorate. That polling booth stands right out as being away from the pattern. Those members who have been through a series of elections will know that there is a trend in elections. One finds it in one box and it can be carried through to another.

I know from my own experience that I can look at a couple of boxes early and I can pretty well calculate what the ultimate result will be, because the trend seems to be carried through to other boxes; and, not only does the trend go through districts, but it also goes through the whole of the State. Here is a situation where the voting at Mowanjum Mission was completely unrelated to the voting elsewhere in the electorate, with the exception of Gogo Station, where, I think somewhat similar conditions were obtaining.

At the Mowanjum Mission a man was appointed as assistant presiding officer; not as a poll clerk. There was a presiding officer and assistant presiding officer for voting, which was completed at that

polling place, so I am told, in a couple of hours. So one wonders why extra expense was incurred by appointing an assistant presiding officer when a poll clerk, whose rate of pay is lower, could have been employed equally well for a couple of hours' voting.

This assistant presiding officer, out of the goodness of his heart, to assist the voters, arranged for a native to go into the polling booth when it opened, and to be seated at a table in the polling booth, and to mark the ballot papers of a number of voters who came in.

Mr. O'Connor: Is this the recent election or a previous one?

Mr. TONKIN: I am dealing with the last general election that was held.

Mr. Court: Is this the first time this was done?

Mr. TONKIN: I do not know.

Mr. Court: It is rather pertinent.

Mr. TONKIN: I am dealing with the Kimberley election held during the last general election, and I am telling the Minister what happened and why I considered the party should make a claim to the Court of Disputed Returns.

I have received a report from our scrutineer who was in the booth and who did not know a great deal about the Electoral Act. Had he known he would have objected to this procedure straightaway. But this confirms what I have just said. I would like to read the relevant portion of the Act to show that there was a serious contravention. Section 115 of the Electoral Act reads—

No candidate, shall in any way take part in the conduct of an election; and no one—

I repeat, "no one," Mr. Speaker—

—other than the Chief Electoral Officer or an officer deputed by him, Presiding Officer, Assistant Presiding Officer, the poll clerks, doorkeepers, scrutineers, and any member of the police force on duty at a polling place, and the electors voting or about to vote, shall be permitted to enter or remain in the polling place during the polling.

There is a distinct prohibition and the assistant presiding officer should have known of that, as should the presiding officer. But despite that distinct prohibition a native was brought in and given a table to sit at and allowed to mark the votes of certain of the voters coming in. That is what the Chief Electoral Officer calls a trivial breach—something done in contravention of the law, where there is a distinct prohibition against its being done.

Mr. Graham: I think I will try this out in Balcatta.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us now have a look at section 129 which states—

At the request of any elector who is blind, or who satisfies the presiding officer that his sight is so impaired, or that he is otherwise so physically incapable that he is unable to vote without assistance, or is unable to read or write, the presiding officer shall permit a person selected by the elector to retire with the elector into an unoccupied voting compartment and there mark the paper according to the instruction of the elector and on behalf of the elector comply with the requirements of paragraph (b) of section one hundred and twenty-seven of this Act, after having done which the elector and the person so selected by him, if not an electoral officer, shall quit the polling place.

It does not say that the assistant presiding officer can get hold of somebody, bring him into the polling booth, seat him conveniently at a table, and allow him to stop there and mark votes. But this is apparently one of those trivial offences, at least in the opinion of the Chief Electoral Officer.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker—and you are probably as well equipped as anybody in this House to answer this question—why are rules laid down in the law? Why are prohibitions laid down in an Act of Parliament? Are they expected to be obeyed, or are they to be disregarded and then treated by those in authority as trivial breaches not requiring any attention?

Let me read what was said by the gentleman himself, John Francis Gordon Watts, who was the assistant presiding officer. I have here a statement supplied to me by the Chief Electoral Officer after I complained that he had not given sufficient attention to the matters I had brought before him.

In order to maintain some sort of sequence perhaps I should start at the commencement and read the letter I sent to the Chief Electoral Officer. This is dated the 5th June, 1968, and reads as follows:—

Mr. S. E. Wheeler,
Chief Electoral Officer,
Electoral Department,
54 Barrack Street,
Perth.

Dear Mr. Wheeler,

As you probably concluded, I have been very concerned about the conduct of the election for the Kimberley seat. Evidence has been produced to me of irregularities and also suggestions that there was bribery involving money and the promise of the issuance of taxi plates.

As I have been unable to obtain any evidence of bribery I make no charge in connection with this aspect of my concern.

A reference to the voting results at the booths of Mowanjam Mission, Gogo Station (including La Grange Mission) and Fitzroy Crossing, at all of which places there was a preponderance of native votes, reveals a pattern of voting at those places which is very different from the general trend of voting throughout the whole electorate. The large majority of votes secured by Mr. Ridge at the polling places mentioned (128 Ridge—23 Rhatigan) is suggestive of a regimentation of the native vote and in fact there is evidence to support such a view.

At Mowanjam, for example, the Reverend John Watts, the Minister in charge of the Mission, who was an Assistant Presiding Officer, took into the booth with him a native from the Mission who remained throughout the hours of polling (so I am informed) and in the presence of the Rev. Watts, marked the ballot papers of all the natives who came in to vote.

Section 129 of the Electoral Act makes provision for assistance to be given to a voter who is blind, is disabled or cannot write, but it stipulates that the person who has been asked and has given assistance shall quit the polling place after having done so.

It is obvious therefore that the presence of the native in the polling booth at Mowanjam was a contravention of the Act and an incident which was reported to me by Mr. Rhatigan's scrutineer, is highly suggestive that the native brought into the polling booth was intent on getting as many votes for Mr. Ridge as possible.

A native obtained his ballot paper and then went over to the small table at which was seated the native who had been brought into the booth by Mr. Watts for the purpose of marking ballot papers. The voter placed how-to-vote cards on the table with Mr. Rhatigan's card uppermost and indicated his desire to vote for Mr. Rhatigan by placing the point of his finger on the Labor card and pointing to Mr. Rhatigan's photograph. The native filling in the ballot paper looked up several times at the voter, but did not record the vote and moved the pencil from over the square for Ridge to partway over the square for Rhatigan, then back again to a position immediately over the square opposite Ridge. He again hesitated and then finally placed "1" in the square opposite Ridge and "2" in the square opposite Rhatigan. Mr. Rhatigan's scrutineer immediately requested that the Returning Officer have the ballot paper destroyed and a new one supplied, as he claimed the voter had clearly indicated a vote in favour of Rhatigan.

The native filling in the ballot paper then spoke in his native tongue. The Returning Officer acceded to the wish of the scrutineer and issued a new ballot paper. This was laid on the table and the native who was there for the purpose of marking ballot papers, again spoke in his native tongue, following which the voter altered the position of the how-to-vote cards and placed Mr. Ridge's card uppermost. The ballot paper was then marked accordingly.

The presiding officer at Gogo was a school teacher, who admitted to the Hon. Mr. Strickland, M.L.C., who was acting as Mr. Rhatigan's scrutineer, that prior to the poll he had instructed a number of natives in the method of recording a vote; he also admitted this to Mr. Rhatigan. I consider that the presiding officer is open to criticism in playing any part in the election outside the official duties required of him.

Serious consideration has been given to the lodging of an appeal with the Court of Disputed Returns and had it been possible to secure evidence to substantiate the rumours of bribery which were current, this course would undoubtedly have been followed. It having now been decided not to lodge an appeal, I feel obliged to direct your attention to the complaints mentioned above, in the hope that you will have enquiries made and in due course advise me of the result.

I received an interim reply to that letter saying that my letter was receiving attention; and under date the 19th July, 1968, I received the following letter from the Chief Electoral Officer:—

The Leader of the Opposition,
Dear Sir,

Conjoint Legislative Council and
Legislative Assembly General
Election—23rd March, 1968.
Kimberley District

Referring to your letter of the 5th June, 1968, I have to advise that enquiries have been carried out in regard to the complaints made.

The suggestion of irregularities at the Mowanjam polling place was fully investigated by the police and whilst the report received does show that some minor technical breaches of the Electoral Act, 1907 (not warranting prosecution) did occur, the report does not support the suggestion of a regimentation of the native vote as made in your letter. I now have no reason to doubt that the natives who voted at Mowanjam voted in accordance with their desires.

I communicated direct with the person who acted as Presiding Officer at the Go Go Station polling place, Mr. A. B. Jones, and his reply refutes any suggestion that he is open to criticism.

He contends that any advice to the natives in the method of recording a vote was supplied at the request of the natives during adult classes some weeks before the election. Mr. A. B. Jones, who is a school teacher, is the local Officer in Charge of Adult Native Education.

I was not at all satisfied with that perfunctory attention to a serious complaint, so I told the Chief Electoral Officer what I thought about it. Under date the 22nd July, 1968, I sent the following letter to the Chief Electoral Officer:—

Dear Mr. Wheeler,

Conjoint Legislative Council and
Legislative Assembly General
Election — 23rd March, 1968.
Kimberley District.

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 19th instant in reply to complaints contained in my communication to you of 5th June.

I am extremely disappointed at your reply. You ignored completely my reference to the Reverend John Watts who was an Assistant Presiding Officer and who took into the booth with him a native from the Mission who remained throughout the hours of polling and who marked the ballot papers of the natives who came in to vote.

Is this what you call a "minor technical breach" of the Electoral Act?

In view of this occurrence I cannot accept your view that the natives who voted at Mowanjum voted in accordance with their desires, as it appears to me that under the circumstances it is not unreasonable to assume that some, if not all of them, could have been intimidated.

As you did not contradict the statement that the Reverend John Watts had taken into the booth with him a native who remained throughout the hours of polling. I assume that this indeed was the position and I regard this occurrence as being a serious breach of Section 129.

That letter brought forth the following reply dated the 30th July, 1968, from the Chief Electoral Officer:—

The Leader of the Opposition.

Dear Sir,

Conjoint Legislative Council and
Legislative Assembly General
Election — 23rd March, 1968.
Kimberley District.

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd July, 1968, relative to this election.

The reference to the Reverend John Watts in your communication of the 5th June last, was not ignored and he was one of the persons interviewed by

the police in their investigations. A copy of the statement made by him is attached.

According to the police report, Alan Mungulu is the victim of poliomyelitis and is an invalid pensioner requiring the aid of two metal appliances to support him from the elbows, enabling him to walk with difficulty. He only remained in the polling place for approximately one and a half hours. Also according to the police report, Alan Mungulu did not mark papers in the immediate presence of Mr. Watts, but did so under the direct supervision of both Scrutineers, and he only assisted approximately half of the native voters.

I shall read what the Reverend Watts said, and I quote from the copy of his statement which has been furnished by the Chief Electoral Officer. It is as follows:—

John Francis Gordon WATTS states:

I am a Minister of Religion and Superintendent of the Presbyterian Aborigines Mission. It is referred to as Mowanjum Mission and situated six miles south of Derby.

I am 39 years of age.

At the State Elections held on the 23rd March, 1968, I was appointed the Assistant Presiding Officer at the Mowanjum Mission Polling Place.

The Presiding Officer was — Cyril ARCHER.

The scrutineers were, Ron GREEN, headmaster of the Derby Junior High School for the Liberal candidate, and Jim NEVILL for the Labour candidate.

Alf BROWN and Ray GRANT-FROST were outside the hall handing out "how-to-vote" cards for both candidates. BROWN was handing out the Labour cards with GRANT-FROST handing out the Liberal cards.

The Polling Place was the Church building. The Presiding Officer and I were seated at tables in the centre of the building, towards the front. There are double doors on both sides of the building.

Alan MUNGULU was sitting at a table alongside one of the entrance doors, about 15 to 20 feet from the Presiding Officer's table which was next to my table.

I understand—

I would like to repeat that because I am going to refer to it later. Continuing—

I understand that in previous elections, both Commonwealth and State, it has been the practice for Alan MUNGULU to be present in the Polling Place, for the purpose of assisting illiterate native voters. At this election this was a continuance of previous arrangements.

Notice the difference! He does not now say, "I understand." He now says, "to my knowledge." Continuing—

To my knowledge he was not asked by Mr. ARCHER to be present in the Polling Place, but on the day of the election, I assumed that he would be required to assist native voters who were illiterate, and I sent the vehicle to convey him from his home to the Polling Place.

Alan MUNGULU is a native aged 45 years, who is an invalid pensioner and has been reasonably well educated and can speak and write English. He manages the Mission store. I understand that he was a teacher at the Derby State School for one year, 1957.

At 8 a.m. on the 23rd March, 1968, those persons I have mentioned were at the Mowanjum Mission Polling Place.

At 8 a.m. a bell was rung to advise the people that the Polling Place was open.

Most of those who were eligible to vote had done so by 9.30 a.m.

The voters entered the Church building individually, came to the table where ARCHER and I were sitting to confirm that they were enrolled, and to have their name crossed off the roll as they were given a Ballot Paper.

All the natives who voted were known to both ARCHER and myself by sight. I think they were all known to ARCHER, but they were definitely known to me.

When a voter came to my table, I would recognize that person, announce their name, which they acknowledged. I then crossed the name off the roll and ARCHER would give that person an endorsed Ballot Paper. The voter then proceeded direct to the ballot booth which was situated in the back corner of the Church, or, if they required assistance, to Alan MUNGULU's table.

Apart from seeing individual voters going to Alan MUNGULU's table, I did not observe what went on there.

I knew that the scrutineers would be watching the proceedings at MUNGULU's table.

I know that on the 23rd March election, there was one request for a new Ballot Paper to be given to a voter. I do not know the circumstances of that incident. It was attended to by Mr. ARCHER. The original Ballot Paper was burnt and destroyed in the presence of myself and Mr. ARCHER, and also the scrutineers.

As I knew all the native voters, and when I knew that they had all voted, and after the two scrutineers had gone, I left the hall to go to my house.

This is the assistant presiding officer! To continue—

That would have been about midday. MUNGULU had also left the hall prior to my first departure.

I returned to the hall at various times during the day. The only time Mr. ARCHER left the Polling Place was when we went to my house for lunch. He took the ballot box and all voting material with him.

Mr. Jamieson: Highly irregular!

Mr. TONKIN: To continue—

He returned to the Polling Place after lunch and remained there until official closing time at 8 p.m. when he brought the ballot box to the Derby Court House.

MUNGULU did not mark the Ballot Papers of all those who came in to vote. He only assisted those who required and who went to him for assistance.

Those natives whom we thought did not require assistance were directed towards the polling booth at the far end of the hall.

Mr. Davies: Did he quote any figures?

Mr. Jamieson: He could have given the numbers before they had been boxed.

Mr. Rushton: Did you inquire if they did this in other years?

A member: I did.

Mr. TONKIN: To continue—

About half, or less, of the eligible voters went to MUNGULU for assistance. The others were able to complete the Ballot Papers themselves.

As MUNGULU is a cripple requiring the aid of two sticks to enable him to walk, it was impossible for him to readily leave the Polling Place after each request for assistance. He would then have had to walk back into the hall to assist the next person requiring help.

Alan MUNGULU was not brought into the Polling Place to get as many votes as possible for the liberal candidate—Mr. RIDGE, he was merely there to assist those voters requiring help.

I know that the natives at Mowanjum had been discussing the election since about November last year when the two candidates became known. Neither I, nor any member of the Mission staff took part in these discussions with the natives. I did not influence them, or attempt to influence the natives in any way concerning the elections.

The only exception to this was one day, Albert BARUNGA approached me and discussed the general tenor of the way in which the candidates were presenting their campaigns.

I know that shortly before the election, the Liberal Party Branch at Derby sent Albert BARUNGA to Broome for election purposes.

Prior to the Election, on a visit to Derby by Mr COURT M.L.A., I received a request from representatives of the Liberal Party to convey the people of Mowanjum Mission into Derby for a Liberal Party public election meeting. I refused the request as the people could decide for themselves whether they wished to attend the meeting.

Although the Labour Party were holding a similar meeting on the following Thursday night, no request was received of a similar nature.

One day as I was pulling out of the baker's shop in Derby, there was a big sign quoting Mr RHATTIGAN as being born and bred in the Kimberleys and to my surprise a native in my vehicle—Eikin UMBAGAI, remarked to me—"He's done nothing for us all these years".

In the native language there is a term known as 'RUMBID' which is the equivalent of 'relative' in the European language only it covers a wider range of relatives, including 'in-laws'. People connected by 'RUMBID' amongst the natives, are not permitted to face each other at any time. A 'RUMBID' is always male and female.

Therefore such people will avoid each other and must do it according to their tribal law. In this way natives can be seen to go out of their way to by-pass each other as they are connected by 'RUMBID'. Even in a family group, through 'RUMBID' connections, the members of that family affected, would not look at each other.

In a formal situation, if strangers, particularly white strangers are present, the native is apt to be reserved and keep their eyes averted from other people. Also this is brought about by the 'RUMBID' situation.

A 'RUMBID' is also not permitted to mention the name of another 'RUMBID'.

The present strength of the native voting, is contained amongst those natives of the age groups who still adhere to tribal laws and social customs. Younger natives have yet to attain the voting age, in my opinion, these younger natives will be more independent of tribal customs.

For the life of me I have been unable to work out what this stuff about "rumbid" has got to do with the irregularities that occurred in the election.

Mr. Jamieson: Who was the "rumbid," Rhatigan or Ridge?

Mr. TONKIN: There are a number of points about this which disturb me very greatly. Firstly, there was so little voting at this place, so we are told, that it was all over in 1½ hours. Yet it required a presiding officer and an assistant presiding officer, and the assistant presiding officer was able to run in and out at will, and both the presiding officer and his assistant went off at 12 o'clock. Presumably they closed the booth, although the law states that it must remain open continuously from 8 a.m. till 8 p.m.

Mr. Graham: Perhaps they left Mungulu in charge.

Mr. TONKIN: The Chief Electoral Officer considers this ragtime show just a matter of some trivial breaches. I direct the attention of members to the following part of the statement:—

Those natives whom we thought did not require assistance were directed towards the polling booth at the far end of the hall.

Let us have another look at section 129, which reads—

At the request of any elector who is blind, or who satisfies the presiding officer that his sight is so impaired, or that he is otherwise so physically incapable that he is unable to vote without assistance, or is unable to read or write, the presiding officer shall permit a person selected by the elector—

Not planted there for him. To continue—
—to retire with the elector into an unoccupied voting compartment—

Not to vote there at the door in the full view of other people coming in. But this is just another trivial breach! I think it must be agreed that what took place at the Mowanjum Mission was unlawful.

Mr. Lewis: How many votes were cast there?

Mr. TONKIN: I think about 30-odd. There were 38 votes for the Liberal candidate and four for the Labor candidate.

Mr. Graham: That does not happen even in the middle of Dalkeith.

Mr. Lapham: Jack Rhatigan had the bone pointed at him.

Mr. TONKIN: If that is not proof of preregimentation, I do not know what is.

Mr. Lewis: Any informal?

Mr. TONKIN: No. There were no informal votes under these circumstances!

Mr. Jamieson: Too well organised! Mungulu earned his money!

Mr. TONKIN: A very good point!

Mr. Jamieson: Glad you made it.

Mr. Lewis: There were plenty of people apparently who voted without assistance.

Mr. Fletcher: They were very well drilled!

Mr. TONKIN: We do not know how many voted without assistance. We have only an *ex parte* statement that about half of them did. We have no evidence as to how many did and how many did not. My information is that all the natives received assistance.

Mr. Lewis: Where did you obtain the information?

Mr. TONKIN: That is my business.

Mr. Lewis: I thought you might be prepared to disclose it.

Mr. TONKIN: I want to state what happened at Gogo, where Mr. Strickland was the Labor scrutineer. At Gogo the natives came in with Mr. Ridge's card which had the name of the native neatly typed on the back of it. The procedure was for the native to go to the table, say nothing, but present the card, upon which the returning officer, without asking any questions at all as set out in the Act, issued a ballot paper. When a native had proceeded some short distance in this way, Mr. Strickland queried whether the native presenting one of these cards was the person he purported to be.

He purported to be George Widdjoe, number 2659 on the Kimberley roll. But he was not George Widdjoe. When Mr. Strickland challenged him and said to the presiding officer, "I do not think this is the man he is supposed to be," he was asked his name and he gave an entirely different one. Therefore he was hustled out of the polling booth. Now the question arises: How many other impersonations took place?

Mr. Court: I cannot imagine Mr. Strickland—

Mr. TONKIN: It is no good imagining anything!

Mr. Court: —letting them get away with anything. He knows the Kimberley district so well.

Mr. Jamieson: He was not there all the time.

Mr. Brand: Why not?

Mr. TONKIN: Here is a case where a native presented Mr. Ridge's how-to-vote card with his name on it. I have evidence to substantiate that a number of others did the same thing.

Mr. Jamieson: They were issued to anyone.

Mr. TONKIN: On one occasion the Liberal Party worker was outside. This was not at Gogo. This was another booth. He came into the booth, displayed a card, and asked the presiding officer, "Is this man on the roll?"

The Labor scrutineer objected, at which the presiding officer, to his credit, told the inquirer to get outside and find out. He was not a voter at all. Now the strong suspicion here is based on what happened in connection with George Widdjoe. The strong suspicion is that there were others who acted similarly. How many, of course, is mere conjecture. That, however, is no good; we want evidence. But here is definite evidence of what was tried out. That native could not have printed his own name on the back of the card; it must have been given to him by someone who knew he was not the person concerned.

Mr. Jamieson: That man has gone walk-about.

Mr. TONKIN: Is it any wonder that Labor fared so badly, under those circumstances, in certain polling booths where there was a preponderance of native votes? If one looks through the returns for the Kimberley electorate, and checks the polling booths one by one, one can see how the voting at Gogo and Mowanjum was completely out of character. Less than 100 votes separated the candidates at the finish. That is a most unusual circumstance.

As I said earlier, when dealing with this question, the trend of voting seems to carry on from district to district, from electorate to electorate, and from polling booth to polling booth during an election. Whilst it is not impossible that such a situation could genuinely arise, in my opinion it is unlikely. If other members have a different idea, I cannot say much about that.

Mr. Bovell: But you have cast doubts on the integrity of a school teacher and a reverend gentleman.

Mr. TONKIN: I will satisfy the Minister: I am casting a lot of doubts on the validity of this election.

Mr. Bovell: You are casting doubt on the integrity of these two men.

Mr. TONKIN: Not only saying so, but producing evidence of definite breaches of the law.

Mr. Court: I do not understand why you did not take the action open to you if you felt so strongly.

Mr. TONKIN: That remark does the Minister for the North-West less than justice. The Minister, as an accountant, would have to study a lot of law. He is not in the kindergarten stage in connection with the study of law, and if he reads the section of the Act dealing with the Court of Disputed Returns, he will know how difficult it is to upset an election unless one is in the position to prove bribery. Although it could be established that there were a number of unlawful procedures, in the reading of the Act that would not necessarily cause the Court of Disputed

Returns to upset the election, or to order a fresh election. We considered all these aspects. We had to consider the expense involved, the chance of succeeding without being in the position definitely to prove bribery. Then, a further consideration was that it would not make any difference to the ultimate result of the election. I will tell the Minister this: Had the change of Government depended on this seat, there is no doubt whatever what we would have done.

Mr. Court: That surprises me because in your mind there must be a principle involved one way or the other.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, there is a principle.

Mr. Court: You have cast a reflection on a school teacher and a reverend gentleman and those poor chaps have no chance of answering you in this place.

Mr. Jamieson: You have the answer in a deposition.

Mr. Court: They have made their statements and have been excused.

Mr. TONKIN: Which, in my opinion, involves them very substantially.

Mr. Court: They have been accused, to say the least, of some malpractice. That is how I understand it.

Mr. TONKIN: They have been guilty of a breach of the law, and what is more I have proof.

Mr. Court: I do not think it is fair to those gentlemen that you do not let the case rest.

Mr. Graham: The fact is that the Minister was in the north and had something to do with this.

Mr. Court: I was not in the north when the elections were held.

Mr. TONKIN: Are we to accept the proposition that when the law says one cannot do something and one does it, then that is all right? It is as simple as that. The law says that one cannot sit in the polling booth during the hours of polling. Yet, on the Reverend Watts's own admission, the men who presided there permitted just that.

Mr. Court: As they did at the previous election.

Mr. TONKIN: That is number one. The next thing is that a voter, requiring assistance, has to request it and the person giving the assistance has to retire with him to a voting compartment. Neither of those things was done. The third thing is that having given the assistance—whether the person giving it had poliomyelitis or not—the law says he has to quit the booth, and Mungulu did not.

Mr. Brand: I think a lot of these irregularities became apparent because the Labor Party did not win the seat.

Mr. TONKIN: That is your explanation. Does the Premier agree that these breaches of the law are trivial?

Mr. Brand: I should think so.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: In reply to my query the Premier expressed the opinion that the occurrences at Mowanjum Mission and Gogo, about which I have complained, were trivial. His attitude is very disappointing, because it apparently means that no effort will be put forward by the Government to prevent a repetition. One wonders why such provisions are in the law if they are as trivial as the Premier would have us believe. Surely they were included in the law for a special purpose; that is, to preserve the secrecy of the ballot and to prevent undue influence. I regard them as very important provisions. When they are so flagrantly disregarded it is very disturbing to hear the Premier of the State express the opinion that they are trivial.

Before I leave the subject, I think I should make some further explanation as to why we did not proceed to the Court of Disputed Returns. Earlier I did not have an opportunity to turn up the Act; but I indicated that, because of the provisions in the Act, we felt it inadvisable to proceed since the fate of the Government did not depend on the result.

I shall quote the relevant sections of the Act and it will be readily seen how in the circumstances it would have been quite a gamble to take the matter to the Court of Disputed Returns. However, that is no reason why we should not complain about unlawful practices. Section 164 reads in part—

The Court of Disputed Returns shall not declare that any person returned was not duly elected, or declare any election void—

- (a) on the ground of any illegal practice committed by any person other than the candidate and without his knowledge or authority;

We could not proceed under that provision, because we are making no charge at all against the candidate, nor do we say that what went on at Mowanjum or Gogo was with his knowledge. That brings me to the only other ground under paragraph (b), which reads as follows:—

- (b) on the ground of any illegal practice,—

That, of course, was our ground. To continue—

—other than bribery or corruption or attempted bribery or corruption.

unless the Court is satisfied that the result of the election was intended to be and was actually affected thereby,—

The margin was 99 votes. We were certainly concerned over what took place at Mowanjum and Gogo, but there were not sufficient votes, even if they had all been cast our way—and we could not claim the lot—to have affected the result of the election. It was extremely doubtful. As they were the only grounds upon which we could give consideration to proceeding it is perfectly obvious that, as we would not be able to prove bribery or corruption, we would be unlikely to succeed. However, I repeat that had the fate of the Government depended upon it, we would have contested it since there is not the slightest doubt we could have established illegal practice.

Mr. Court: Are not cases on record in connection with our Legislative Assembly where a court of disputed returns has ordered another election when there has been no question of bribery or corruption?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, but they were on matters different from illegal practices. There were some disputes over irregularities through nominations by telegram instead of in the ordinary way. I believe they were concerned with technical difficulties such as that. I remember the case of the late Mr. Coverley, who was involved in one of these disputes before the Court of Disputed Returns. The late Norbert Keenan was his counsel and he succeeded in obtaining a fresh election. However, it was not in regard to illegal practice but in connection with some irregularity against which a challenge had been made. This is an entirely different matter.

We could have lodged a claim in the Court of Disputed Returns only on the grounds of illegal practices. We sought counsel's advice, but in our view we were not in a position to be reasonably sure we could demonstrate that, although the illegal practices occurred, they concerned a sufficient number of votes to have actually affected the result of the election. That was the important question. Had there been only one seat in doubt, and if that seat could have decided whether or not there would be a change of Government, we would certainly have tested it out.

However we do not have funds available to us such as those which are available to members on the Government side. Our resources are very limited. We spent to the limit in connection with the election and we were not in the position of being able to face substantial expenditure on a case which was doubtful anyhow and which, even if it had been won, would still not change the Government. It is better to save our funds for next time.

Despite the opinion of the Chief Electoral Officer, who considers these are only trivial matters which should not exercise

his mind very much, I hope we obtain some assurances—for what assurances are worth coming from the Government side—that steps will be taken to stop this sort of practice and for elections to be run in accordance with the law. That is what we ask. Let the Chief Electoral Officer see that officers are appointed who stay at their job and keep the polling booth open and who, furthermore, obey the instructions which exist for the guidance of presiding officers and assistant presiding officers.

It was part of Labor policy during the election to say that if we became the Government we would favour the construction of the northern section of the inner-ring road as against the southern leg. I believe the proposal for the construction of the southern leg should be scrapped. I said that at the election and subsequent to the election I have received some support for my point of view. I quote from *The West Australian* of the 30th May, this year, which reads—

The Perth Chamber of Commerce believes planning authorities have not convincingly answered criticisms of Perth's planned ring road and freeway system.

The chamber's civic affairs committee, after completing a study of the metropolitan region plan, says that there could be a strong case for a major modification of the scheme.

The committee believes there could be a case for scrapping the controversial southern leg of the ring road.

I hold the same opinion. That is further emphasised by a statement which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 16th July last, which reads—

Implementation of a report on the inner-ring freeway system by consultants De Leuw Cather could have a detrimental effect on Perth's growth, according to a report submitted to the Perth City Council yesterday.

The P.C.C. report was prepared by acting city planner Leif Nilsson.

Mr. Nilsson said that the conclusions of the study appeared to have been reached by having regard for highway planning principles to the exclusion of the overall interests of the city.

He said that priority in the freeway system should be given to the construction of the Burswood Island bridge and the northern leg of the freeway.

The city needed the northern leg, and without the southern leg (on the Perth Water foreshore) a better environment would result.

I hope the Government will take some notice of those opinions—which are not without authority—and will have a very

serious look at these proposals before deciding to go ahead with the southern leg and to neglect the northern leg.

I now propose to say something about taxation and the very steep increases which have resulted from new valuations. However, before I do so I would like to remind the Minister for the North-West that I did not have long to wait for confirmation of the view I expressed last night that the stamp tax, as between States, was causing income tax to be discriminatory.

In this morning's paper there is an indication that the Civil Service Association had obtained Queen's Counsel advice to the effect that it was discriminatory. So that would appear to provide some ground for the remarks I have already expressed. I know the Government does not take much notice of what I say in these matters, but a Queen's Counsel has expressed his opinion on the subject, and apparently there is likely to be a challenge in the court on the question.

In the Assembly yesterday I asked a series of questions of the Treasurer on taxation. The important questions were evaded. It could be that the information I sought was not readily available in the records of the Taxation Department—I repeat: readily available—but there is no doubt it is available in the records of that department. It has to be. To be more specific, I asked the Treasurer which districts have been revalued since last year for the purpose of assessing land tax and metropolitan region improvement tax. In answering that question the Treasurer gave me a list of districts.

In the second question I asked what was the average percentage increase on valuations on all private homes to be valued. I believe, rightly or wrongly, that an officer could obtain a list of the districts revalued and he would have an idea where the valuations are highest and so calculate the percentage of the highest one. Surely records are available for that purpose.

In question three I asked what was the largest percentage by which the valuation of any private home had been increased, and in which district was the property located. Those two questions were lumped together and the answer to them, which had been given previously, was that since land tax is assessed on the unimproved value of land, it was taken that private homes referred to land on which homes are erected, and that information was not available from taxation records.

So we are told it is impossible for the Treasurer to ascertain the average percentage increase in valuations and the district in which the highest increase had taken place. If the records are so incomplete as to make it impossible to answer those questions, I am amazed.

The next question I asked was which districts had been revalued more than once during the last eight years; which districts once only; and which not at all. From the answer we find that there are two districts which have not been revalued in the last eight years, and yet other districts have been revalued more than once.

What is going on? I can understand there will be a rotation and that one group of districts will be revalued and then another group, but what is the justification for revaluing some districts more than once and others not at all in eight years? My word, those districts which have not been revalued during the past eight years are certainly having a holiday!

My interest in this matter arose from some assessments which were sent to me for perusal by way of complaint. In the list which the Treasurer gave me I noticed the district of Mosman Park has been revalued more than once in the last eight years and it is from this district that a number of complaints has come. The first one I quote is from the owner of the property situated in 25 Swan Street, Mosman Park. Last year he was taxed on a valuation of \$1,300, and his tax amounted to \$9.34. This year he was given an assessment which showed that his valuation had risen from \$1,300 to \$5,100, and his tax had increased from \$9.34 to \$41.43.

Mr. Bickerton: The Treasurer has certainly got the gift of the grab.

Mr. TONKIN: From the district of Mosman Park, which has been revalued more than once in eight years, I have another complaint from the owner of the property at 23 Swan Street. Last year the value of this property was \$1,040, but this year it has risen to \$3,500. The tax has increased from \$7.47 to \$28.43. The next complaint is from the owner of a property situated at 4 Swan Street, Mosman Park. Last year his valuation was \$1,260, and this year it is \$6,500. His tax has gone up from \$9.06 to \$40.62.

There was a further case which apparently I have mislaid, but it was the shining example of them all, and represented an increase of some 600 per cent. in 12 months.

Mr. Dunn: They are all related to the current market value of the land.

Mr. TONKIN: How would the honourable member like to be confronted with a bill this year which was 600 per cent. more than it was last year?

Mr. Dunn: I would rather sell the land at the current market price than at the old price.

Mr. TONKIN: So the honourable member thinks these increases are all right?

Mr. Dunn: They are all in accordance with the legislation passed.

Mr. TONKIN: I certainly do not think they are all right. I have found the case I had mislaid, Mr. Speaker. It happens to be in your own district. The valuation last year was \$2,680 and this year the valuation is \$13,650. The tax has gone from \$19.26 to \$117.74. It is little wonder that the Premier's Department could not find the information to give the percentages.

There are serious effects flowing from the substantial increases. The Administration Act provides that if an estate does not exceed \$5,000 in value, application can be made direct to the Master of the Court. In other words there is no need to employ a solicitor, and a member of Parliament or some other person can put the estate through for probate with the assistance of the officers of the court.

But if the estate exceeds \$5,000, that cannot be done. These very substantial increases in valuation will result in practically everybody being forced to engage the services of a lawyer, even when the estate consists of only one item, the house in which the person resides.

I think some attention ought to be given to this aspect, because it is bad. People should not be forced to go to lawyers and be compelled to find the fees when there is only one item in an estate, simply because the valuations have risen so steeply.

So I hope that when the Premier introduces his legislation to deal with land tax—and he has already indicated he proposes to do something about it—he will do something to check this system which seems to be in operation—that of revaluing some places once in eight years; of revaluing other districts more than once in eight years; and of revaluing other districts within 12 years. That needs some explanation. It will never be justified, but it needs some explanation.

Apropos this question of land and houses, I asked some questions yesterday in connection with procedures adopted by certain land agents who charge letting fees to tenants as well as to landlords. As a result of what was published in the paper I had some telephone calls today from people who complained about some other aspects of which I had no knowledge. I have been told authoritatively, and evidence has been produced, that it is the custom of some people, who have invested fairly substantially in flats for the purpose of letting them, to appoint estate agents as managers on the basis of a straight-out percentage on the gross proceeds.

It has been found that, in addition to this remuneration which they regard as adequate, the agents concerned have also charged letting fees to tenants who come into the flats; and, of course, the more frequent the turnover the more fees they receive. One of the complainants told me that when he took up this question with his managers the answer he received

was, "We were not going to be left out in the cold; everybody else is doing it."

It did not matter about the situation in which the tenant found himself. I just cannot imagine that these people have consciences at all. Here they are being paid an adequate remuneration to manage blocks of flats—and the percentage was quoted to me, and I agreed it should be adequate—but on top of that they demand one week's rent from the tenants before allowing them into the flats.

The situation is crying out for Government attention, and I hope Cabinet will give a great deal of attention to tightening up the law in connection with this matter, in an attempt to control the situation in the interests of the unfortunate tenants who are being pushed from one place to another, and who are finding it extremely difficult to get accommodation.

A very good suggestion was put to me—at least that is my opinion of it—that the Government should endeavour to establish a scholarship or foundation to permit one trade unionist a year to attend the University to become better qualified for the task ahead of him. I think there is a great deal of merit in this suggestion which comes from the Trades and Labour Council. The unions appreciate that in their appearances before the Industrial Commission at the moment their advocates are at a distinct disadvantage because the men against whom they are opposed have a far better education.

The trade unionist normally comes from a working class family, and with university fees as high as they are, and with these fees rising almost every year, it is becoming increasingly difficult for young people from working class families to obtain a university education. I think it is in the interests not only of good relationship within the State, but of improved relationship between employer and employee that the advocates of trade unions should be well-educated men.

Education must, necessarily, bring enlightenment. There is no satisfactory substitute for experience, but add to experience a sound education and we then have some very good equipment.

I put the suggestion forward on behalf of the trade unions, that the Government should give consideration to financing at least one trade unionist a year to permit him to leave his employment and study full-time at the University—perhaps he could study a course in, say, economics. He could then graduate and be fully informed on the subject with which he has to deal.

I think that would justify itself in the dividends which would be paid as a result of a better employer-employee relationship, and there would be less wasting of

the time of the court which is inevitable if those handling the cases are not fully qualified and knowledgeable. I trust the Government will give some consideration to this question.

I know the Government will be disappointed—especially the Minister for Police—if I do not have something to say about the Totalisator Agency Board. This is a very disturbing situation; and it is an illustration which I promised earlier when I told new members that although this Parliament is the highest court in the land, they can never be sure that they will get either law or justice. To take the events in their sequence, I refer back to a question which I asked the Premier on the 12th November, 1963. It is recorded on page 2619 of the 1963 *Hansard*. My question was—

Is he aware that because the chairman of the Western Australian Totalisator Agency Board is allowing the board's agents to accept telephone bets without requiring the establishment of adequate credit accounts the board's agencies are common gaming houses?

The Premier's answer was—

No. I am informed that proper credit accounts are established.

A Royal Commission was appointed to go into this question. On the assurance of the Premier that he had been informed that proper credit accounts had been established, let us see what the Royal Commissioner had to say. On page 137 of his report the following appears:—

However, on the positive side I have the most firm view that the board should not leave itself in a situation where the legality of a telephone credit betting system is, putting it as neutrally as I can, open to argument.

On page 138 of the report he had this to say—

Furthermore, in my view there are other cogent reasons which suggest that the system should be changed. They are:—

- (1) It is a credit betting system which was not contemplated by the original Act and which therefore has no direct legal limitations.

With distinct relevance to the answer given by the Premier which I have just quoted, I find this in the report of the Royal Commissioner—

The deposit account procedure has been aptly described by many witnesses as a "sham" and a "fiction", and I do not consider this description is inaccurate. The agent signs the form as agent for the bettor, and puts a nominal deposit on the form and the bettor does nothing more than bet "on the nod".

Yet the Premier was informed that proper credit accounts had been established.

On page 143 of the report the Royal Commissioner recommended—

That the present practice of permitting an agent of the board to establish or maintain the bettor's account in credit should be discontinued immediately.

This report was made last year, following which the Government took so much notice of the Royal Commissioner's recommendation that it declared it would allow this procedure to continue for a further six months. From what I have been led to believe that procedure is still continuing, although the Royal Commissioner recommended that it should be discontinued immediately.

Mr. Craig: He recommended that alternatively a credit rating system be introduced.

Mr. TONKIN: He recommended that the system should be discontinued, but the Government was prepared to allow it to continue for a further six months.

Mr. Craig: If you read the whole of the recommendation you will find the Royal Commissioner said, "Or alternatively introduce a credit rating system."

Mr. TONKIN: No, he did not. From time to time the Chairman of the T.A.B. has attempted to justify its procedures by saying that what was being done was in accordance with the legal opinion given by the board's solicitors, Parker & Parker.

Mr. Craig: And by the Crown Solicitor.

Mr. TONKIN: I asked that that opinion be tabled in Parliament, but my request was refused. I was fortunate enough subsequently to come into possession of that opinion, and I have it here. I say without the slightest hesitation that the board's procedures were not in accordance with that opinion.

When the Royal Commissioner was appointed to inquire into these matters, and the T.A.B. was arguing that what it was doing was in accordance with this legal opinion, the solicitors for the *Daily News* sought the production of that opinion. Believe it or not, the T.A.B. declined to tender this opinion, and successfully asked that it should not be made to do so for the very obvious reason that had this opinion been tendered the whole case would have fallen to the ground. Lest there be any doubt about this I quote from page 137 of the Royal Commissioner's report. This is what he had to say about the point—

Whatever may be the legal merits of this scheme, it is quite clear that for practical purposes it places the agent in a somewhat invidious position. In effect, in what is the one transaction the agent is acting both as the agent for the board and agent

for the better. I am not unmindful of the fact that for legal purposes the transaction can be divided up into watertight compartments, so that the agent really at no one precise time can be said to be acting both for the board and the better. But have legal sophistries any real part in a gaming transaction such as this?

Naturally enough, before it commenced to put such a scheme into operation the board obtained advice by way of opinion from its solicitors, Parker & Parker. This is the relevant portion—

The production of this opinion was objected to before the Commission by Counsel for the Board, on the ground that it was privileged. Although I ruled that technically this was correct, it appeared to me to be a rather peculiar claim to make, as the evidence of the Chairman of the Board indicated that copies of the opinion were given by him to some six agents in 1961 and no restrictions whatever were placed or endeavoured to be placed on their use.

The obvious reason, as I have already said, was to prevent the production of this opinion so as to make it impossible for the judge to know that what the board was doing was not in accordance with the opinion at all.

When I found out that the Government was not going to heed the recommendation of the Royal Commissioner, I wrote to His Excellency the Governor and pointed out—

Mr. Craig: The Government did heed the recommendations of the Royal Commissioner.

Mr. TONKIN: It did not.

Mr. Craig: It did so.

Mr. TONKIN: The Royal Commissioner said that this should be discontinued immediately, and the Government said it would carry it on for a further six months.

Mr. Craig: Three months.

Mr. TONKIN: Until the end of June, which was six months.

Mr. Craig: We did not need six months.

Mr. TONKIN: The Governor, of course, is advised by the Cabinet, but it is expected in a democracy that he will be given the correct and truthful advice. But this Government sees it a different way. When I say, "This Government" perhaps that is not strictly true. Perhaps I should have said, "A Government of the same complexion as the present Brand Government," although I think I am right in saying, "This Government." It would be "this Government" in 1960. I asked the following question:—

If in determining the "appropriate time" for the appointment of Commissioners under section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act the Government leaves insufficient time for the

Commissioners properly to discharge their duties under the Act, would the Government be giving the right advice to the Governor with regard to the appointment of the Commissioners?

Mr. Speaker, listen to this reply—

Whatever advice is given to His Excellency the Governor, it will be what the Government considers to be the right advice.

I suppose we can add, "in the circumstances."

First of all, I propose to read this legal opinion of Parker & Parker which the T.A.B. would not produce. It is dated the 24th May, 1961, and reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,

re—Appointment of Agents and Establishment of Credits.

After a consideration of Sections 17, 33 and 34 of the Act, and regulations 13, 20, 21 and 23, we have reached the following conclusion.

There does not appear to be anything in the Act or any of the Regulations to prevent an agent for the Board lending money to a better for the purpose of establishing or maintaining his credit account; but the money would have to be lent in cash or by cheque "paid by the Bank" before the bet is accepted; and before accepting the bet the agent would have to perform some overt act, which amounts to a recording of the deposit in the trust account he keeps on behalf of the Board and an acknowledgment of receipt of the money, i.e., the making out of a receipt in the name and on behalf of the Board.

I have no hesitation in saying that at no time did the board comply with that legal advice. If there is any doubt on the subject, I suggest to members they read this report where it says that the deposit account system was a sham and a fiction. That being the situation, this went on—

If the agent lends the money to the better to open a deposit account he must ensure that an application in writing signed by the applicant has been received by him on behalf of the Board before he accepts any bet.

Yet the evidence before the Royal Commissioner showed that the agents themselves wrote out the application forms without receiving any money at all. We have the situation where the Premier comes and says, "I am informed that proper credit accounts are established."

Perhaps I should complete this quotation before I develop the matter further. It says—

In view of the need for the agent to perform the overt acts mentioned above, we doubt if it would be practicable for the transaction of loan to be

arranged and the bet to be made and accepted by the agent in the same telephone conversation.

Mr. Maher asked if it would be sufficient for the agent to make out a cheque in favour of the board and the answer in this legal opinion is, "No." Nevertheless that is the procedure which the board followed. So, because I was completely dissatisfied with the way the Government was disregarding the report of the Royal Commission, I wrote to His Excellency, and I propose to read this correspondence.

Mr. O'Connor: What is the date?

Mr. TONKIN: The 18th April, 1968. The letter reads as follows:—

Your Excellency,

It has been reported that the Government is permitting the Totalisator Agency Board to continue in operation for a further three months a system of credit betting—

That is a further three months from the 18th April. Continuing:—

—of which Royal Commissioner Judge Forrest reported to Your Excellency in part as follows:

"In my view it is not desirable for a semi-government organisation to persist with a system the legality of which is at least open to attack. I desire to state my position very clearly on this point. I am not to be taken as saying that I disagree with the opinion of Parker & Parker.

May I interpolate here and say that the Royal Commissioner was not in a position to know whether he disagreed with the opinion of Parker & Parker, because he had never seen it.

Mr. Craig: It was not in his province to do so even if he had seen it. He did make reference to that in the report.

Mr. TONKIN: The point I am making is that the Commissioner said, "I am not to be taken as saying I disagree with the opinion of Parker & Parker."

Mr. Craig: That is it.

Mr. TONKIN: I am pointing out he was in no position to agree or disagree as he did not know what was in it, because the T.A.B. would not show it to him. The opinion he gained of what was in that opinion was from what the chairman of the board told him was in it. That is the point. It goes on—

Whether or not the Board is now complying with that opinion no doubt is another matter, but again I am not deciding that.

Again I say that he was in no position to decide it because he did not know what was in the opinion. The T.A.B. saw to that.

Mr. Craig: The magistrate at Bunbury upheld Parker & Parker.

Mr. TONKIN: To continue the quote—

However, on the positive side I have the most firm view that the Board should not leave itself in a situation where the legality of a telephone credit betting system is, putting it as neutrally as I can, open to argument. Furthermore, in my view there are other cogent reasons which suggest that the system should be changed. They are:—

- (1) It is a credit betting system which was not contemplated by the original Act and which therefore has no direct legal limitations. The only factual limit would appear to be the size of the agent's bank account.
- (2) The deposit account procedure has been aptly described by many witnesses as a "sham" and a "fiction," and I do not consider this description inaccurate, i.e. the agent signs the form as agent for the bettor, and puts a nominal deposit on the form and the bettor does nothing more than "bet on the nod."

Yet the Premier told Parliament he had been informed that appropriate deposit accounts had been established. My letter to His Excellency goes on—

Your Excellency is aware that I have consistently maintained that the telephone credit betting system in operation is illegal.

Judge Forrest, putting the matter as neutrally as he could, has reported that the legality of the telephone betting system is "open to argument".

The Crown is bound to observe the law both by statute and the terms of the Coronation Oath. (See Halsbury's Laws of England, 3rd Edition, Vol. 7, p. 232).

In such circumstances the Government is not entitled to continue the telephone betting system but is obliged to approach the Court for a declaratory judgment not for the purpose of disobeying the law but of obeying it.

I trust Your Excellency will impress upon the Government the seriousness of the situation which exists.

To that letter I received the following reply from His Excellency:—

3rd May, 1968.

Dear Mr. Tonkin,

I refer to your letter dated 18th April concerning the Totalisator Agency Board, which I referred to my Ministers for advice.

I have been given to understand that the legal opinion referred to in

your letter, and submitted at the inquiry on behalf of the "Daily News" was one issued to the Board by its Solicitors—

May I point out that His Excellency was unfortunately in error there because this opinion was never submitted to the inquiry; the T.A.B. prevented it. I do not imagine His Excellency would guess this; I think he must have been told. Someone must have told him this opinion was submitted to the Royal Commission. Surely he would not guess that. However, the fact is that the opinion was never submitted to the Royal Commission at all. To continue—

—Parker & Parker, in May, 1961, since when both the Act and the Regulations on credit betting have been amended.

The only amendment of any consequence made to the Act was the deletion of the words, "before the beginning of the race meeting."

Mr. Craig: And the regulations!

Mr. TONKIN: The regulations are *ultra vires*, anyway!

Mr. Craig: Of course they are not!

Mr. TONKIN: Of course they are!

Mr. Craig: That is a matter of opinion!

Mr. TONKIN: No, it is not!

Mr. Craig: The judge did not decide in your favour on this one, anyhow, and I think his opinion is more valuable than yours.

Mr. TONKIN: The letter continues—

I have also been given to understand that His Honour, Judge Forrest, made it clear at the beginning of the inquiry that, as a Royal Commissioner, he did not have the power to determine questions of legality, and had no intention of doing so. Thus, Counsel for the Board did not in any way touch upon the legal issues involved.

Notwithstanding that Judge Forrest could see nothing wrong with the Board implementing a credit rating system, it has been decided that some 70 credit accounts still remaining with Agents of the Board, all of which have been "credit rated" in a manner similar to that suggested by His Honour, are to be converted to true cash deposit accounts or closed by the 30th June, 1968.

If, however, you can let me have a written legal opinion supporting your claim that the Board is operating in an illegal manner, I am quite prepared to request that the matter be given further consideration.

To that letter I sent this reply—

8th May, 68.

His Excellency the Governor,
Sir Douglas Kendrew, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
C.B.E., D.S.O.,

Government House,
Perth.

Your Excellency,

I refer to your letter of 3rd instant in reply to mine of 18th April concerning the Totalisator Agency Board and I am astonished at the advice tendered by your Ministers.

The legal opinion to which I referred in my letter was the one issued to the Board by its solicitors (Parker & Parker) in May, 1961, and it is significant that the Board's solicitors at the Royal Commission were most anxious to prevent its production and were successful in their objection to its being produced. (See page 53 of the printed Report).

It is true that the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act has been amended since Parker & Parker gave their opinion but there has been one amendment only to section 33 which is the section relating to credit betting and this amendment in no way whatever affects the opinion given by Parker & Parker, that the money loaned by an agent to a bettor "would have to be lent in cash or by cheque 'paid by the Bank' before the bet is accepted, and before accepting the bet the agent would have to perform some overt act which amounts to a recording of the deposit in the trust account he keeps on behalf of the Board and an acknowledgment of receipt of the money, i.e., the making out of a receipt in the name and on behalf of the Board".

In connection with this requirement I quote again the statement by Judge Forrest: "The deposit account procedure has been aptly described by many witnesses as a "sham" and a "fiction", and I do not consider this description inaccurate, i.e. the agent signs the form as agent for the bettor, and puts a nominal deposit on the form and the bettor does nothing more than 'bet on the nod'."

The only amendment made to section 33 of the Act was the removal of the words "before the beginning of the race meeting at which the horse race is to be held" and even to suggest—as Your Excellency's Ministers do—that this amendment could in any way modify the view expressed by Parker & Parker as quoted above, is an insult to one's intelligence.

I enclose a copy of Parker & Parker's opinion given in 1961; a copy of the 1960 Act; and a copy of the

amending Act No. 39 of 1962. If Your Excellency will refer to page 22 of the 1960 Act and page 2 of the amending Act and then read Parker & Parker's opinion, the truth of the explanation I have made will be seen.

If Parker & Parker's opinion is considered in relation to the procedure followed by agents of the Board betting on credit with the Board's knowledge and permission, it will be clearly seen that the credit betting is not in conformity with Parker & Parker's opinion.

That Your Excellency's Ministers continue to misrepresent the situation which exists regarding illegal credit betting and which has been allowed to exist for the past seven years, is surely a matter of the gravest concern and should no longer be tolerated.

To that letter I received the following brief reply, after his Excellency had gone to Great Britain. It reads as follows:—

Dear Mr. Tonkin,

In the absence of His Excellency the Governor, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has asked me to reply to your letter of 8th May, 1968, and to say that he has noted its contents and read the enclosures submitted therewith, all of which had been referred to his Ministers, who carefully considered the matters raised and re-affirmed the view that the Board is operating lawfully.

They deny the allegation in the last paragraph of your letter that they misrepresented the situation.

My purpose in reading this correspondence is to show the utter futility of trying to get a situation redressed—even though it is crystal clear—by making an appeal to the Queen's representative, because the Queen's representative will immediately refer the matter to his Ministers, who give the Governor what they consider to be the right advice in the circumstances.

So that is what leads me to say that Parliament, although it is the highest court in the land, is not a place where one can get what one ought to be able to get in any court—and that is, a proper application of the law and justice. In this place one cannot be sure of getting either.

I ask any impartial observer to read the Royal Commissioner's report and then think of the advice which the Government tendered to His Excellency—that the T.A.B. has been operating lawfully—when the Royal Commissioner stated that the deposit account system, which is the very basis of credit betting, was a fiction and a sham.

My last subject is in connection with land prices. This is a very disturbing matter for our people generally. It is heartbreaking to young couples who are

contemplating being able to set themselves up in their own homes. They find what money they have saved is insufficient to enable them to buy a block of land. The future is almost without hope for them.

I quoted, the other evening, a review that was carried out by the Housing Industry Association. The association, in a letter I received from it, made a very pertinent remark on this subject. The relevant section of the letter reads as follows:—

On land, there is no physical shortage of good residential land in and around Perth. However, large acreages of such suitable land and large numbers of building allotments are being withheld from building by their owners, presumably in expectation of further increases in prices. Because of this, housing construction is already forced to more distant areas, but the advantages of more readily available and cheaper land is largely outweighed by the cost of providing amenities and services. The Government has made land available to builders in certain areas, and the extension of such a scheme is seen as a most effective method of curbing land prices and providing more lower cost housing.

I read with greatest interest the report—part I—which has been put out by the McCarrey committee. I am wondering when we are to get part II. If we turn to the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report—and by the way I think the committee did its job excellently—we find that the committee has made a number of recommendations to deal with the situation.

There has been very little indication from the Government of its intention to implement very many of these recommendations, and I am wondering why. I think the idea of a betterment tax, for example, is a good one. A surcharge to be imposed on land which is being held out of use, and to be refunded when the land is used within a reasonable time, is a good measure which would contribute towards the solution of this problem.

Does the Government really want to solve this problem of increasing land prices? If members have not already read this report I think they should do so, because this is a very important question; and in my view the fact that the Government shirked its duty in connection with this was one of the reasons for the adverse vote it received at the general elections. Not only are those people who are directly affected irate about this, but the people generally appreciate that what is going on will speedily get out of hand if something is not done to check it. It is no exaggeration to say that at the present time, so far as land is concerned, Western Australia is a speculator's paradise.

Because of what is going on we get the result, which I detailed earlier, of the steep increase in land valuation by the Taxation Department. This increase is putting ten of thousands of dollars into the Treasury by way of land tax, and giving large sums to the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority. Surely something needs to be done, and done quickly, to make it possible for land to be obtained at reasonable prices. I do not want to anticipate a debate that will take place later when the proposals for the rezoning of a lot of rural land in the corridor through to Armadale is brought here. There will be plenty to say about that when the proposal gets here, but that is not the solution to this problem. The Government has to get to grips with the causes, and the McCarrey committee has set out very clearly what the causes are. The main cause is speculation, about which the Government has so far done precisely nothing.

Seeing the Government appointed the committee, there is a responsibility upon it either to implement the findings or to give reasons why it is not prepared to do so. Otherwise, the whole thing becomes nothing but an academic exercise and a waste of public funds. The committee went to the trouble of setting out a proposed surcharge scale; that is, what it recommended ought to be charged on the unimproved capital value of the land; and it also recommended what ought to be done if the land is subsequently used. In my view the action which is being taken by certain authorities—that is, imposing the provision at certain land sales that the land must be built on within two years—shows a lack of appreciation of the real difficulty.

Consider the young couple who have saved up for the purpose of buying a block of land on which they plan to build. If they have to use all of their funds and still some more in order to buy the block, what position are they in to build? They have to hold onto the land until sufficient finance is forthcoming to enable them to engage a builder.

What is the sense of imposing a penalty upon those people if, after they have bought the block of land, they do not build within two years? It is a crazy idea. It would be all right if some source of finance were available to them and the Government was in the position to say, "You have your block of land and here is the finance. If you do not use it within two years you will have to sell the block of land back." That would be all right; but to force them into the situation where they use all their money and still some more in order to buy the land, and then give them two years in which to build, is absolutely ridiculous. The Government should take a careful look at the situation.

Amendment to Motion

Mr. Speaker, in order to afford an opportunity properly to develop our argument on this question I propose to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency. Accordingly I move—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

But we beg, with regret, to inform Your Excellency that the continuous rise in the cost of land is exceedingly perturbing to our citizens; and that effective measures to check speculation and halt the rise have not been taken by the Government.

MR. TOMS (Ascot) [8.44 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, you will fully appreciate that for some time now I have expressed my concern in the House in regard to ever-spiralling land prices. Indeed, Sir, you may recall that last session you and I exchanged words across the Chamber on the subject.

I have been very much concerned over the years at the continued spiralling and inflationary trend in land prices. It does not matter what other commodity we look at, we will find that over the years there has been a reasonable levelling out in the process; but in this one commodity, which I say is very vital to the people of Western Australia, no thought has been given to curbing the spiralling prices in any way whatsoever.

I was slightly encouraged in 1965 when the *Daily News* of the 31st March of that year carried the great headlines, "Government Puts Break on Land Specking." It is also applicable to mention that *The West Australian* on the following day—that is, the 1st April, 1965—carried the headlines, "Government Says Speculation In Land Must Stop." I would like to read a small section of the *Daily News* article, and I ask members to take careful note of one spot which I will refer to at the conclusion of what I have to say. I have already quoted the headline and the article goes on to say—

The State Government has decided to stop speculative subdivision of rural land on the outskirts of the metropolitan area.

Premier Brand, announcing this today, said that many hundreds of five-acre and ten-acre subdivisions were apparently being held by people who hoped for speculative gain.

He warned these people that they were "completely misled" if they believed that these blocks would be rezoned as high-value housing areas in the near future.

"There is no reason to believe that the urban zone will extend into the rural zone for decades," he said.

Later on the article says—

For this reason Cabinet had decided to stop speculative subdivision on the fringe of Perth's zoned urban area.

Mr. Brand said the Government realised that its decision would have "some impact" on many investors. But this was outweighed by the general public interest.

They are very laudable words; if only they had been applied! Last year when I spoke on this subject I indicated that for a young couple setting out today the task of obtaining a block of land and building a home was near enough to a heartbreak. I said that in 1939 when the basic wage was \$8.20 the price of land in any part of the metropolitan area was \$60 per lot. I calculated that if a young couple saved every penny for a period of eight to 10 weeks they would have been able to buy a block of land. In 1946-47 the basic wage was \$10.20. After the last World War, soldiers who returned home could have bought a block of land for \$200 even in the salubrious suburb of City Beach. However, members know the story since that time. In July, 1967, the base rate was \$37.55. The same blocks of land to which I have referred had risen to the ridiculous figure of round about \$4,000, and now in 1968 the same land costs \$5,000.

It does not take much calculation to establish that a person on the basic wage who could have bought a block of land in 1939 after eight to 10 weeks' saving would today be called upon to save solidly for 18 months to two years in order to buy exactly the same block of ground. The basic wage has not risen to the same extent as the price of land. Perhaps this is fortunate; if it had, we would want wheelbarrows in order to carry our petty cash around.

I do not know whether any Government member has gone recently to land sales and taken the trouble to watch young couples who have gone along with their savings which they have accumulated over a number of years. Perhaps they have \$3,500 to \$4,000. They see the first block to be auctioned reach \$4,500 and they constantly watch sales, even out in the Morley area, go to the \$6,000 mark.

I have attended these land sales and after the first three or four blocks have been sold I have seen many young couples leave the auction with a look of disappointment on their faces. I cannot see any young couple obtaining a block of land at a reasonable price within the next few years at least, even if some action is taken immediately, yet the Government stands idly by taking no action whatsoever to stop this trend.

The Government is obliged to purchase and resume land for housing, schools, hospitals, and other public utilities, yet it seems to have no desire to take any action

to prevent these steep increases in land values from continuing. I believe that young couples today have an attachment for each other just as strong as young couples had for each other in our day, and their desire is just the same as ours was in years gone by; that is, they are anxious to obtain a block of land on which to build a home. However, what hope has any young couple today even of saving sufficient money to buy a block of land?

Members will recall that when they were young and were looking forward to purchasing a block of land, the average price of a block was \$60 or \$80, or \$200 in the more select suburbs. In those times the block was used as a deposit for the purchase of a home. That was all the collateral a builder wanted, or the security that any finance institution required in order to advance a loan for the building of a home. Today, however, after a young couple are married both the husband and the wife have to continue working in the hope of trying to save sufficient money for a deposit on a block of land. I know of a young couple who are related to us through marriage and they are anxious to buy a block of land so they can erect a home on it. However, my wife has told me they will have to wait another 12 months before they are in a position to purchase a block of land.

What lies in store for the youth of our country if this situation continues? I believe the Government has, for too long, had its eyes clouded with iron ore which prevents it from having a good look round to observe what is happening on its doorstep. Young people represent the future of our nation, and I am most concerned as to what will happen in the future in regard to their housing needs. Although I did not participate in the debate on housing yesterday evening, I support wholeheartedly the statements that were made relating to the serious housing situation, and I believe that one of the contributing factors is that the Government is not making sufficient finance available to enable young couples to obtain decent housing accommodation.

If finance could be made available to young couples to buy a block of land, they could probably arrange finance for the construction of a home without being dependent on the Government. Instead of this, the Government has done nothing except encourage speculation in land.

Following a series of questions that have been asked from 1965 up to the present time, this House has been informed that land in the Woodlands area has cost the Government \$200 an acre. After a great deal of investigation on my part—I have had some experience of developmental costs, and so on—I ascertained that those blocks of land had cost the Government \$900, which included the cost of providing

roads, other essential services, and also making provision for public open space and church sites.

Yet, when this land was put on the market—which I claim should never have happened, because the State Housing Commission should have built homes on it—we learned that the blocks were available at prices ranging from \$3,500 up to \$4,000. As I have pointed out, the land originally cost the Government \$200 an acre. In April, 1965, this Government stated it intended to put the brake on values, but I claim it did nothing more than aggravate the existing problem of rapidly increasing land values.

On the 3rd April, 1967, the *Daily News* published an editorial which contained the following:—

PERTH'S LAND SCANDAL

Perth's housing land situation has now become so scandalous that a Royal Commission or something similar may be needed to set matters straight.

Far from halting the artificial price spiral, the State Government has joined the ranks of the speculators.

Saturday gave us another example of the activities of the speculators—this time the Perth City Council.

It is only natural that private investors, big and small, would want the price-spiral to continue. But when the Government and Council join them, instead of protecting the public interest, then the situation becomes grim.

I do not think those words are in any way short of reality. The editorial continues—

DISGRACEFUL

The Council's attitude is disgraceful. Surely this land—endowment land—was not handed over to it many years ago so that it could become one of the biggest of Perth's land-boomers?

The endowment land history is extremely interesting. Under the original Act the money gained from sales must be spent on developing the areas.

Does this justify an average \$8291 a block at Saturday's City Beach auction? Hardly.

The land-hungry are growing restive. Some left Saturday's auction in near-despair; others made bitter comments.

The Council, for the moment, is probably crying all the way to the bank about this anger; \$447,700 is a nice sum for 54 housing blocks.

I cannot help but feel that most of our ills today have been due to the fact that a great many of our people cannot be accommodated in suitable housing. As a result

there is not the happy family life there used to be; instead, young couples have the heartbreak of making a fruitless endeavour to save for a block of land on which to build their own home. After marriage, young couples are keen to raise their families and enjoy life as normal human beings, but today, because of the extremely high land values, they have no chance whatsoever of even saving sufficient money to pay the deposit on a block of land. Even if they are fortunate enough to gather together a sufficient sum with which to buy a block of land, they then find themselves saddled with large mortgages on their home. This was clearly illustrated by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday evening.

Such a burden is a killer to the hopes of any young family. I believe that instead of making it difficult for a young couple, in the early years of their marriage, to obtain a home for themselves, any Government worthy of its name should strive to ensure that those young people are placed in a position whereby they can obtain and enjoy the real necessities of life.

In September, 1967, possibly as a result of the Government's lack of concern about land prices, I asked some questions about the revenue derived from land tax and the metropolitan region improvement tax in the years 1959-60; 1962-63, and 1965-66.

The figures show that in 1959-60 the land tax was \$2,570,336, and the anticipated revenue in the year 1967-68 was \$3,820,000, or an increase of just on \$1,300,000.

The metropolitan regional tax during the same period has gone from \$421,186 in 1959-60, to a figure of \$549,000. At least that was the figure given to me on the 4th October, but it was amended by the Premier a week later to the astronomical figure of \$883,000.

The Government boasts of having a surplus of \$800,000 this year. I would point out that in those two items alone the surplus has been collected from individuals who own land at the moment. The local authorities cannot do this sort of thing; they cannot rate in this manner. Local authorities—with the possible exception of the Mosman Park Town Council—adjust the rate in the dollar as the valuation rises. Some of them do not, of course, but the local authority in my electorate certainly does.

I would conclude by saying that one other thing which amazes me is the continued connivance of the members of the Country Party in this particular matter. Surely they must realise that inflated values of land in the metropolitan area must be reflected in land prices in the country areas; or are the members of that party happy to approach the insurance companies with a view to assuring themselves for large sums to enable them to pay probate on the inflated prices of their land?

Over the years the members of the Country Party have been happy to play along and watch the ridiculous rise in land prices in this State. As a nation this is something which we cannot afford to allow to continue. When I have spoken on this matter previously I have had members on the other side of the House ask how are we going to overcome the problem. The Government is constituted of members on that side of the House and if they have enough courage to do so they will try to overcome the problem. The Government has let this matter drift long enough.

The amendment to which we are speaking is a motion of censure, and if any Government deserves to be censured it is our present State Government, for the manner in which it has been neglecting to control the rising cost of land in this State.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [9.4 p.m.]: I rise to support the amendment to the Address-in-Reply. The Government is doing virtually nothing to stabilise the costs which young couples or anyone else have to pay when they seek land to build a home of their own.

When one reads the various statements made in the Press and listens to the reports on the wireless, one can be forgiven for feeling that the Government is at times at variance as to what it intends to do. For example, on occasions the Premier and the Minister for Industrial Development do not seem to think along the same lines at all on these matters. I have here a report from *The West Australian*, dated the 17th October, 1967, dealing with an address by the Premier when opening the 15th meeting of the Australian Real Estate and Stock Institute. The article is headed, "Law No Answer to Land Prices: Brand." It reads as follows:—

The problem of land prices was closely associated with human nature and could not be resolved by passing a law, Premier Brand said yesterday.

He said the problem could not be overcome by taxing speculators, because this would punish people who bought land to provide for their future.

I do not know what the Premier means when he refers to people who are speculating by buying land to provide for their future. When a person buys land to provide for his future it usually means he intends to build a home on it for his family. But in this context it would seem that speculation in land to provide for the future means doing so to avoid accepting the old age pension.

Later in his address the Premier said—

Young people with a block of land were a country's greatest asset. They

should not be burdened with heavy land prices and forced to pay off a block perhaps over a lifetime.

It has virtually come to that, because young people who have blocks of land find that they are generally paying for them for the rest of their lives. As the member for Ascot said, with the price of land these days it takes a lifetime to pay it off.

On the 28th June, 1968, we find the Minister for Industrial Development adopting quite a different outlook altogether, according to the A.B.C. news of that date. Where the Premier could not see any way of reducing land prices by Act of Parliament or by regulation, the Minister for Industrial Development—according to the news article to which I have referred—had something quite different to say. I quote—

The West Australian Government might take action to stop people speculating for high prices for industrial land. Mr. Court said that if Western Australia was to continue attracting the right industries to the right location more land would have to be available at cheaper prices. To achieve this the Government might have to adjust its powers to give industries access to industrial land at reasonable prices. Mr. Court criticised the high cost of industrial land in the metropolitan area, pointing out that as soon as land was zoned as industrial it became almost prohibitive in price, and even some so-called wealthy companies were forced to look elsewhere when speculators beat them to the land they wanted. Mr. Court was speaking after a meeting with the Armadale-Kelmscott Shire Council which sought his support for more industry in the district. Mr. Court promised his support but felt that the land in the district, zoned for industrial development, was too dear for the current demand.

So when land becomes too dear for industry we find the Minister for Industrial Development considering the prospect of introducing legislation to regulate its price by force, as it were.

At the same time we find in *The West Australian* of the 12th July, a further article with the large headlines, "G.M.H. Drops W.A. Project After Land Prices Rise." The article reads—

General Motors-Holden has given up a plan to start making vehicles in W.A.—partly because five people holding about five acres of a 149-acre site refused to sell the land or asked too much for it.

Further we find the Minister for Industrial Development stating that this was to be a \$20,000,000 project for the manufacture of cars, because the article continues—

The company wanted to build a manufacturing plant there with scope for future expansion. Even the first stage of the project would probably have equalled the \$20 million G.M.H. plant at Acacia Ridge, Brisbane.

On the following day a statement came out contradicting what had been said. The newspaper report went on to say—

S.H.C. VALUES

In 1964 the State Housing Commission was prepared to sell to G.M.H. 142 acres at Kewdale for \$2,500 an acre. A further seven acres which G.M.H. wanted was owned by seven people. Two agreed to sell but the other five refused or set prices that G.M.H. considered ridiculous.

In 1966 the government got the power to force these owners to sell, but the S.H.C. had meanwhile raised its price to \$7,500 an acre.

That means in a period of two years the State Housing Commission had trebled the price it had asked for originally. In the first place it was prepared to sell the land in 1964 for a total of \$355,000, but in 1966 it increased the price to a total of \$1,065,000.

Mr. O'Neill: It is a wrong assumption that the commission increased the price it had asked for.

Mr. NORTON: In the newspaper report to which I have been referring the following appears:—

Mr. Court said yesterday that the S.H.C. could not use its land for housing because it had been zoned industrial. It could sell it only at market value because it had to devote the proceeds to house building.

In the report that statement is attributed to Mr. Court.

Mr. Rushton: Sometimes it is wiser to look further than Press reports.

Mr. NORTON: On the following day, which was the 13th July, a report appeared in *The West Australian* under the heading, "G.M.H. Still Keen To Get Assembly Plant In W.A." In it Mr. Hayward, a director of General Motors-Holden, denied the statements attributed to Mr. Court. In it he said the main trouble had been the small sit-tight owners, but there was also the problem that, while negotiations went on, the whole 150-acre site increased too much in price. The report went on to say—

Mr. Hayward denied a statement by Industrial Development Minister Court in *The West Australian* yesterday that the company planned a manufacturing plant.

So the Minister for Industrial Development was opening his mouth a little too wide. The report continued—

The new plant for W.A. was not an immediate project, and would be much smaller than the \$17,000,000 Acacia Ridge plant in Brisbane. Yesterday's report said that it probably would have equalled it in size. That plant supplied the big market of Queensland and the northern rivers district of N.S.W.

"Just because a Kewdale proposition falls flat, we don't abandon our plans," he said.

The Minister for Industrial Development made his statement a little too hastily.

It is very interesting to see the reactions which came from the Shire of Belmont at the time. In that report of *The West Australian* the following also appeared:—

DISPUTED

Belmont Shire Council president E. J. Miles yesterday disputed Mr. Court's claim that five sit-tight land-owners had prevented G.M.H. starting vehicle-making at Kewdale.

Mr. Miles said no-one in the council had known of any private landholders within the site whose land had not been resumed and he invited Mr. Court to have talks with the council to clear the matter up.

Further on in the report Mr. Miles pointed out that when this land was resumed originally, the owners were given the right to get back the land if it was not used by the Housing Commission for the purposes for which it had been resumed.

Over the past 20 years land prices have risen very substantially. In 1946, after World War II, the cost of a building block was equal to 8 per cent. of the average cost of a house; by 1961 the cost of the land had risen to 25 per cent. of the cost of an average house; and today we find that the cost of the block is equal to at least 50 per cent., and perhaps more, of the cost of an average house. Therefore, under those circumstances, it becomes very difficult for young couples to be settled in a home of their own.

The State Housing Commission makes land available to war service homes applicants. I think the commission can do the same for the average home seeker. In a report which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 30th October, 1967, we find that 21 lots had been sold for an average of \$9,226. In the adjoining area at about the same time the Housing Commission had allocated 99 blocks for war service applicants and this land was released at between \$1,100 to \$1,400 a block. Yet when the other blocks which I have mentioned were put up for sale by auction they averaged \$9,226 each. This made it absolutely prohibitive for young couples

to purchase them. According to that newspaper report most of those blocks were bought by speculative builders and land speculators. The report also pointed out that in that area over a period of six months there had been an average rise in the price of a building block of \$225 per month. That shows how quickly and how steeply land prices were rising.

As members are aware, the Housing Commission allocates 30 per cent. of its funds to terminating building societies which have the right to make the money available, under certain circumstances, to home seekers. The conditions under which this money is made available are very reasonable, and both the interest rate and the repayment rate are very favourable. In fact, a number of people have been housed in Carnarvon through this medium of finance.

Under the regulations governing the advances to the terminating building societies the maximum value of the land and house when it is completed is to be \$10,000, and the maximum loan is \$8,000. There is, therefore, much latitude for a home builder to erect a reasonable home at a reasonable price. However, when a home builder has to pay \$5,000 to \$6,000 for a block of land on which to build a house the maximum loan will be reduced from \$8,000 to \$4,000. In those circumstances the home builder will have to get a second mortgage to cover the cost of his home.

If land is made available, as it is under the War Service Homes Act, at around \$1,000 to \$1,400 a block, then the home builder will be able to take full advantage of the maximum loan of \$8,000 which is available at the present time.

I think I remember the Minister for Housing saying this loan was to be increased in the very near future; and this is very necessary if the people receiving the loan are to meet the increasing costs of house building.

Mr. O'Neil: You were not referring to war service loans were you? I have never had control over them.

Mr. NORTON: No; terminating building society loans.

Mr. O'Neil: The amount has gone up from \$8,000 to \$8,700.

Mr. NORTON: An article appeared in *The West Australian* on the 12th July under the heading, "Group Puts Land Plan to Government." It reads as follows:—

A plan which could include the compulsory acquisition of land for housing has been put to the State government by the Housing Industry Association.

I do not intend to read the whole of the article, but further down it states—

An association officer said it should be remembered that the government

and its instrumentalities had big areas of land suitable for this type of development in and around Perth.

This statement is right in line with the McCarrey report. As was said by the member for Ascot and by the Leader of the Opposition, this is a wonderful report, and I commend it to members. A tremendous amount of information is contained in it, and it puts forward seven very good recommendations.

On page 23 of the McCarrey report, paragraph 4.3 reads as follows:—

Nevertheless a Sunday afternoon drive within a short distance of the city in any direction is sufficient to convince anyone that there is a great deal of vacant land still available. The question arises: what forces have been at work and are still at work to restrict the supply of land entering the market and (more important) likely to enter the market in the near future?

I think that is very true.

The report goes on to deal extensively with speculators and those who are obtaining big profits from various sections of the community. We find that on page 30 the report deals with private schools and charitable organisations that hold considerable areas of vacant land which, incidentally, is tax free. These institutions just release a few blocks at a time to make the most of the prices that are ruling.

The report goes on to point out that the State Housing Commission also holds large tracts of land astride Wanneroo Road north of Nollamara. The report does not say how much land is held, but it points out many other areas in which the Housing Commission holds land. It also points out that the University holds land throughout the metropolitan area and that this land is not being used. This amounts to 3,114 acres.

Another section in the report points out that when the Rural and Industries Bank, the Lands Department, and the Bayswater Shire Council put land up for auction, they do so under restrictive conditions so that it will not go to speculators but to genuine home builders who have certain conditions to fulfil, such as building within a certain time. If the buyers do not comply with this condition they forfeit their land. This reduced the price of land by \$750 in some cases and by \$1,000 in others. So it is clear that if land is disposed of under restrictive conditions it will definitely help to reduce the price.

As I said before, the McCarrey report contains seven very good recommendations and I am sure they should all be implemented. In my opinion the second recom-

mentation should be implemented as soon as possible. It reads as follows:—

A statutory authority should be set up with the function of acquiring land for urban development and subdivision. An Urban Land Commission with appropriate powers could assemble land, subdivide according to an approved planning scheme and make it available by auction or private treaty to individuals, speculative builders, project developers and the State Housing Commission on the condition that it would have to be improved within a specified period.

If that recommendation were adopted, together with another which suggests that a progressive tax be instituted on undeveloped land, then I think we would find that the cost of land would be reduced. Land would be made available at a price within the range of the average person. I support the amendment.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [9.28 p.m.]: I am sure most members of the House will wholeheartedly endorse this amendment because it asks that only two things be done. The first is that we inform His Excellency that the continuous rise in the cost of land is exceedingly perturbing to our citizens. I am sure there is not one person in this House or in the State who would deny this is indeed a fact. The second part of the amendment regrets that effective measures to check speculation and halt the rise have not been taken by the Government. About this I think there might be some argument. Those on the other side of the House will say the Government has acted in a proper manner, while we on this side of the House say exactly the reverse. However, we will be nearer the truth than those who deny what we assert.

We are all aware of the distress which is being caused to countless families and individuals by the alarming rise in the price of land. This is a matter which is continually brought to our attention, as is the housing position. Here again, I speak particularly on behalf of the low income family group—those people who thought they had found a new affluence and who thought they were going to enjoy unbounded prosperity with the advancement of the State but who, instead, have suffered because of this supposed prosperity.

In a large measure this is due to the speculators who have come here after a quick dollar, just as they came to Western Australia during the days of the gold rush, hoping to make a fortune. Some of the speculators have made fortunes, but at the expense of the ordinary working man, particularly the man in the low income bracket. He is the fellow on whose behalf I wish to speak tonight.

We are all familiar with the problem, and we all know what has caused it, but what we do not know is what the Government is doing about it, because we are aware of the inactivity of the Government in this direction.

Earlier this evening the member for Ascot read a number of headlines which would have given heart to a great many of the people on whose behalf I am speaking tonight. They would have imagined they would at least be in an income bracket to enable them to achieve their desire of obtaining a quarter acre on which to erect a modest home. However, once again the headlines have turned out to be nothing more than that—headlines and headlines only, not followed by any action.

We want to know what the Government has done. Of course several members this evening have spoken about the committee appointed and known now as the McCarrey committee. It was a committee appointed by the Premier of Western Australia to inquire about taxation of unimproved land and land prices, and the terms of reference were quite generous. I might remind the House of them. The committee was directed to—

- (a) Study the proposals contained in the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill;
- (b) Examine suggestions and amendments put forward by various members of both Houses when the Bill was under consideration;
- (c) Recommend steps to—
 - (i) increase the yield from Land Tax by a suitable additional charge on unimproved land;
 - (ii) discourage speculation in land dealings; and
 - (iii) avoid prejudice to intending home-builders and to people who may be unable to improve land held by them because of town-planning requirements.

So, as I said, the terms of reference were reasonably generous.

However, I do not think the Government was moved by any genuine concern over soaring land prices. What prompted this action was the fact that the Government's legislation in 1966 to increase land tax had been defeated in the Upper House, and the Government found that the revenue it had been looking forward to collecting would not be forthcoming. If members will recollect, some hasty adjustments were made to the Budget on that occasion.

The Government said, "If the method by which we intended to increase land tax has been rejected by the Legislative Council, then let us appoint a committee to see how we can overcome the problem." This was precisely the reason for the

appointment of the McCarrey committee—it was not out of a genuine concern to do something about the low income man, but to raise more money for the Government. This is evident if we look at the order of the terms of reference which are—study proposals in the land tax legislation; examine suggestions about land tax; recommend steps to increase land tax; and then discourage speculation in land dealings and avoid prejudice to intending home builders because of town planning requirements.

So there are five objectives in the terms of reference and only one says anything about discouragement of land speculation. Three of the others are concerned with land taxing measures, and the fourth is concerned with town planning measures. This is the report which is being held up as the answer to all the problems in regard to land speculation; and yet, as I pointed out, the idea of appointing the committee was principally to establish what could be done in regard to land tax. The committee was probably appointed in a fit of pique by the Government after its 1966 land tax legislation was defeated.

However, I suppose we can be thankful for small mercies. The committee was appointed in January, 1967. Incidentally, I do not know whether the committee held any public hearings. I do not know that under its terms of reference this was required of it.

Mr. O'Neill: In the back of the report is a list of the people with whom the problem was discussed.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister for Housing—the Minister for “No Housing” might be a good name—who is also the Minister for Labour, states that there is a list of people invited to make submissions. The report contains a list of articles and publications suggested for further reading, a number of graphs showing land price increases—the graphs nearly run off the page in a number of cases—and an appendix showing the composition of the committee. However, there is no list of persons who gave evidence. Be that as it may; it does not matter.

The committee was appointed in 1967 and the report was made available 12 months later, in January, 1968. I applaud the report as have other members of the House tonight. The first intimation that the report had been made public was printed in *The West Australian* of the 29th February, this year. However, on the day before, the Premier's policy speech had been reported in the paper. When compiling his policy speech the Premier had the advantage of knowing what recommendations had been made by the committee. One would think he would have adopted the recommendations because they are very sound. But what did the Premier say in his policy speech in regard to land speculation? Did he show any real con-

cern? He is reported in *The West Australian*—I think on the front page—on the 28th February, 1968, as follows:—

He proposes a big increase in the release of deferred urban land and more releases of Government land for housing, all subject to strict conditions of development.

Having indicated he was going to adopt some of the recommendations which he knew were contained in the McCarrey report, but which at that time had not been made public, one would think he would study the other recommendations; but apparently he seemed to believe that his sweeping statement as to what would be done to ease the burden on the low income man—a burden brought about by land speculators—was sufficient. One would have expected him to be more explicit than to adopt such a general statement.

However, he need not have waited for the report because much of the information contained in it had already been released in the report of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority which had been tabled in this House during last session. This report was covered in *The West Australian* on the 22nd November, 1967, which was, I think, about the time we all quit Parliament for the year. I cannot remember the exact date as it now seems too long ago.

The authority's report contained much of what was subsequently included in the McCarrey report. It suggested a variety of controls. It also stated that there was enough urban and urban deferred land for 1,400,000 people, and that this would be adequate for a long time. The article in connection with the authority's report continued—

The relationship between the number of undeveloped blocks and land values was only one of the many factors that influenced land prices.

The survey showed beyond doubt that land was being held off the market and there was widespread land speculation.

Remedial measures were recommended to the government for investigation and action.

A combination of effective measures could be put forward.

If resolutely implemented, these would result in the release of many residential building blocks.

That is what we want—some resolute action by the Government. It is fast approaching 12 months since that report was issued and hardly any action has been evidenced, let alone any resolute action. The newspaper report continues—

Speculators kept ripe land off the market because the cost of holding it was likely to be greatly exceeded by the capital gain from its eventual sale.

Of course, that is history now. It has been related to us on many occasions. When moving the amendment tonight, the Leader of the Opposition drew attention to some of the opinions expressed by experts from the Housing Industry Association. That association said that speculators were to blame for the housing shortage in Perth. I do not think one could say that the Housing Industry Association has any political affiliations, and I guarantee it has no affiliation with the Australian Labor Party. If it has any political sympathy I imagine it would lie with the other side of the House. However, the Leader of the Opposition pointed out some of the opinions that have been expressed by the authority in its correspondence to him. I draw attention to the headline from the *Daily News* of Wednesday, the 10th July, "Speculators Blamed For Perth Housing Shortage."

There is not the slightest doubt that some people are "in the know" and know what land to buy. They are able to apply pressure to get the land released. I have had some shocking examples brought to my notice regarding policy switches on the part of the Government in regard to town planning. There have been changes of attitude which have suddenly meant greatly increased values for certain land.

It is certainly not the low income man who receives the benefit from the increases. What happens when an ordinary working man wants to buy a block of land? He saves up the deposit and looks around to see what he can afford. I will quote some figures regarding a block of land. This transaction commenced in July, 1965, and it concerns the purchase of a block of land at River-ton for \$2,500. That was a very cheap price by today's standards for a quarter-acre block of land.

The fellow concerned was in two minds about buying the block because he did not have the \$2,500. However, the agent pointed out that it was very easy to get a loan, particularly on land. There was no trouble in obtaining the loan and he purchased the block on the "never never" plan. So with a deposit of \$20 he was able to obtain finance for the block of land costing \$2,500.

He did not have it for very long before agents started to write to him asking if he would like to sell. In the meantime he had arranged a mortgage for the balance of the money—\$2,480—which was still outstanding. He obtained the mortgage from one of the big finance companies in St. George's Terrace, over a seven-year period, at an interest rate of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. flat. That works out at 12.84 per cent. reducible.

As I mentioned earlier, he did not have the land for long before agents started to pester him. As he had already been in two minds about buying the land in the first place he decided he would get rid of

it. In February, 1967—less than 19 months after he had purchased the land—he received an offer of \$3,270. This figure would have given him a profit of \$770 after holding the block for less than 19 months. However, the actual profit he received from the transaction was \$24.

One might wonder where the rest of the money went to. The mortgage for \$2,480 he discharged at a cost of \$2,244. He had already paid monthly instalments of \$730. So he discharged his mortgage of \$2,480 for \$2,974. This meant that he paid something like \$500 interest on the loan over a period of 18 months.

On top of that the Government received \$44 in stamp duty when the land was originally purchased. There were also other costs such as water rates, land rates, land tax, and so on. Also, there were solicitor's fees for drawing up the mortgage, and for discharging the mortgage, amounting to something like \$45. There was also commission of \$138 for the land agent who sold the block. So, out of his paper profit of \$770 he actually made a profit of \$24, and with that he also had a lot of worry.

So this gets back to the original question: What does the low income man do to purchase a block of land? He goes to the finance companies and pays a tremendous amount of interest over a period. These days he can raise the money for land without any trouble. So the people who make the profit are the finance companies. The Government also makes its little corner, and the solicitors and the estate agents who sell the land on his behalf also make a profit. Most of the people, of course, just cannot afford to operate under those conditions.

As I have said, it is time the Government took some action and we on this side of the House deplore the lack of action on the part of the Government. I will read to the House the seven recommendations contained in the McCarrey report, in case members of the Government have not read it. These recommendations are put forward to ease the present position, and are as follows:—

- (1) Release of land.
- (2) The Urban Land Commission.
- (3) Land tax surcharge on unimproved land.
- (4) The Betterment Levy.
- (5) Frequency of valuation of unimproved land.
- (6) Examination of subdivision procedures.
- (7) Review of land-tax exemptions.

As I said at the beginning, we all know what the problem is, but we do not know what the Government intends to do in regard to it. The Government has done very little. It announced that a corridor of urban land and deferred urban land was suddenly to be made available. This

announcement started all kinds of turmoil. I do not know whether it was a snap decision, or whether it was made without proper consideration, but the decision only increased speculation. It caused heartburn to a number of people who suddenly found they were going to be next door to urban land.

Mr. Brand: We heard a lot from the member for Balcatta about this very area. This is the land he advocated we should release.

Mr. DAVIES: I am not criticising the Government over this release; but it is the only one thing it has done to try to overcome the position.

Mr. Brand: We have done a lot more than that.

Mr. DAVIES: The Government has done nothing else in regard to the recommendations contained in the McCarrey report and the recommendations contained in the last annual report of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority.

Mr. Brand: Yes we have.

Mr. DAVIES: We on this side of the House have been able to show the Government the way. I do not criticise the release of the land; what I was criticising is the manner in which it was released and the speculation which has already occurred.

Mr. Brand: It was released in the normal way.

Mr. DAVIES: Although the manner in which the release is to be made is not exactly known, I am sure there have been a great many queries.

Mr. Brand: Your leader criticised the release, so where is your consistency?

Mr. DAVIES: I repeat: I am not criticising.

Mr. Craig: That would be the day.

Mr. DAVIES: On many occasions we have been able to show the Government the way. I give it credit for being able to pick up a policy point very quickly.

I notice the Government will introduce legislation to spend money on housing from the superannuation fund. I remind the Government that idea was advocated by this side of the House during the last session of Parliament. If the Premier likes, I will give a long list of proposals which have been advocated by this side of the House and adopted by the Government.

Mr. Brand: You will tell me that the action on superannuation came from that side of the House.

Mr. DAVIES: I give the Government credit for picking up a point of policy very quickly. This is the first time I have made the request this session; but if members want to interject I do not mind as long as they speak up so that I can hear them. I

do not like finding interjections which have slipped into *Hansard* because the *Hansard* reporters have heard them and I have not. I like to hear so that I have the opportunity to answer.

Mr. Brand: That is an old gag.

Mr. DAVIES: I return to the point that the amendment says two things; firstly, that we regret the continuous rise in the cost of land. I am sure no one can deny there is a continuous rise in the cost of land. Secondly, we regret that effective measures to halt the rise have not been taken by the Government. If members of the Government are able to stand up and tell us what effective measures have been taken, and if they convince me I will vote against the amendment. However, at this moment I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [9.51 p.m.]: After what I said last night, I have no alternative but to support the leader of our party in the amendment which he has moved to the Address-in-Reply.

Mr. Brand: I am disappointed!

Mr. BRADY: I only skimmed through a number of matters which I referred to last night, because I did not want to take up a lot of time and I do not want to take up a lot of time tonight. I consider an Opposition party should not only criticise but also put up some constructive criticism—

Mr. Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRADY: —and show the Government what can be done. That is exactly what I intend to do this evening in supporting the amendment moved to the Address-in-Reply.

Mr. Rushton: You will be the first one who has.

Mr. BRADY: I will not be the last; I can assure the honourable member of that. We have very competent and efficient men on this side of the House even if the honourable member on the other side of the House does not recognise this fact.

Mr. Brand: Yes we do.

Mr. BRADY: I think members are very badly advised if they continue to interject on some of the new members; but, as far as I am concerned, members can interject all night.

The Minister for Housing has said there is no crisis in Western Australia in regard to the provision of houses; yet, the Premier goes to Canberra and says there is a crisis. Personally I would be more or less guided by the Premier. He is a fairly reasonable sort of chap and seems to keep his feet on the ground in regard to most things.

Mr. Brand: Thank you.

Mr. BRADY: I think he knows what is a crisis. What I deplore is that the Government has not handled the matter on a crisis basis and done something about it. On the question of housing, as distinct from land, to my amazement the Government seems to be passing the buck. A classic example is one letter from the State Housing Commission when it advised one of my constituents that he might be well advised to look up some of the church organisations and said they were providing single unit accommodation for people. It is coming to a pretty pass when a Government department has to pass the buck on to a church or charitable organisation.

Mr. O'Neil: We always try to be helpful in our advice.

Mr. BRADY: It is not very helpful to the people concerned who are paying their rates and taxes. They were pioneers in the State and they look in vain for some semblance of comfort in their old age. In my electorate I have seen half a dozen people pass to the grave deploring the fact that they could not obtain a flat in the Eastern suburbs.

The SPEAKER: Order! I must remind the honourable member the amendment has nothing to do with housing. It deals with the rise in the price of land.

Mr. BRADY: Mr. Speaker, you are quite right. It is because of the lack of available land on which people can build that there is a crisis in housing. However, I will tie my remarks to the fact that there is a requirement on the Government to do something for the community.

Today I went downstairs to the newspaper room and I could have picked up half a dozen cases similar to the one I am about to mention. However, this deals with my own area and states that four residential lots on high positions cost \$3,800 per block. That is the amount a young couple needs in order to start off in trying to provide some stability for the future as far as setting up a home is concerned.

The member for Bayswater pointed out earlier this evening that, in 1930, a young couple could buy an average block of land with 18 weeks' wages. Approximately £80—that is, \$160—was the average price of a block of land in the metropolitan area. A three-card trick has been played on the working community in Western Australia; because it takes 65 weeks to buy the same sort of land today. As far as the working men and women in the community are concerned a confidence trick has been played on them. How they have tolerated it for so long without doing something drastic, I do not know.

Mr. O'Neil: What do you assess is a reasonable price for a fully serviced building block today?

Mr. BRADY: Leaving out absurd profits, and having regard to land which has changed hands in the last fortnight, I would say a reasonable price would be half of \$2,500; that is, approximately \$1,200. I have arrived at that figure by the actions of a syndicate which, I think, was guided by a church organisation. It sold land in the Morley Park area within the last three weeks on the basis of \$2,500 per block. Within a quarter of a mile of that area subdivided land was being sold on the open market by auction at \$5,000 per block.

It is obvious the whole matter has got out of hand. As I said, I do not want to speak at length; however, I will make a few suggestions as to what the Government might do in regard to the provision of land. Instead of going to the outblocks, such as Hamersley, where all the services in the world have to be provided and roads made, I suggest the Government release some rural land for urban purposes around Morley Park, Eden Hill, Caversham, and other areas close by where every service is available. These services include good bitumen roads, electricity, water supplies, and three excellent high schools; that is, the Governor Stirling High School, the Cyril Jackson High School, and the Eden Hill High School, which are all close by. The Government should release that land instead of asking people to take up land nine or 10 miles further out.

I would say another requirement which the Government should meet is the speeding up of town planning and metropolitan region planning activities, even if it means doubling the staff. These departments should handle subdivisions more expeditiously, as well as their general activities. It takes anything from six to nine months to have the simplest subdivision approved. When a state of crisis exists something urgent must be done.

As I have said, I would suggest two ways of overcoming this. Firstly, the staff of the Town Planning Department could be doubled so that the release of land could be expedited; and, secondly, country town planning should be taken out of the hands of the department altogether and placed under the administration of an entirely new department. If this were done the lag that is continuing to build up throughout the length and breadth of the State would be stemmed.

Western Australia is a State which comprises one-third of the Commonwealth. There is 1,000,000 square miles of land which is being administered by a staff of 17 in the Town Planning Department, and this is creating a bottleneck. Everyone is complaining about it: private individuals, real estate agents, developers, banks, and everyone else interested in trying to assist the Government in its desire to alleviate the housing situation. Planning is being stymied, however, because of bottlenecks

in this or that department. Therefore, we must do something drastic to solve the problem and get something done.

In addition, authorities such as the Health Department and building authorities should take steps to ease the restraints they place on the release of land. Take for example my own electorate. Two years ago, the Health Department, apparently in conjunction with the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board and other departments, such as the Town Planning Department, overnight put a blanket over 2,000 acres of land on the fringe of Midland, including areas such as Helena Vale, Boya, and others. By doing this, those departments completely immobilised any action that could have taken place in regard to the subdivision of this land. This area, if subdivided into quarter-acre blocks, has a potential of 8,000 residential lots.

When we are faced with an emergency, and when young people are desperately trying to buy land on which to erect a home so that they can settle down and raise their families, the Government should take drastic steps to lift the blanket restrictions placed on areas such as the one I have mentioned in my electorate.

Mr. Rushton: Where would you dispose of the effluent from those areas?

Mr. BRADY: I understand that if some of these subdivisions are granted, private interests are prepared to make arrangements for the disposal of the effluent.

Only last year a man approached me and said that for two years he had been trying to obtain the subdivision of an area he owned in North Midland. He quoted the restrictions that had been imposed by the departments I have just mentioned. As a result, I wrote to all of them, but strangely enough not one replied, if I remember correctly. However, they communicated with the agent of this owner and I understand the subdivision has now been approved.

About five or six years ago another area at Middle Swan, which is only about a quarter of a mile from the one I have just cited, was zoned as rural land. Today it has been rezoned and subdivided into residential blocks. Several houses have been erected on the blocks and they are selling at prices ranging from \$11,500 to \$12,500 each. Therefore, apparently some subdivider has been successful in twisting the arm of someone in authority, because overnight this rural land has been rezoned and subdivided into residential lots.

I would like to see more of that being done, particularly in the eastern suburbs, anywhere between Caversham and Bayswater, because there are thousands of acres of land in that area reserved for rural or recreational purpose which would be ideal for residential purposes; and, what is more, all the necessary services

are readily available. Instead of people going half way to Bunbury or half way to Yanchep to purchase a block for residential purposes, the Government should enable them to buy a block of land in the areas I have referred to, where all facilities are readily available, including good bitumen roads, water supplies, high schools, and so on.

The Government should be getting on with the job of making more land available by having a close look at the position relating to the restrictions that are placed on areas close to the metropolis where people are most anxious to live in view of the reasonable facilities that are available.

I do not want to delay the House unduly by debating this question. Other members have, quite correctly, stated that the McCarey report is a credit to every member of that committee, who put forward six or seven recommendations, every one of which is full of merit. If the Government would only take steps to implement those recommendations, probably in 18 months or two years the housing situation would ease considerably. If the Government does not take such a step a great deal of damage will result to the State in many respects. I have no desire to see immigrants writing to their relatives in the old country complaining of the adverse housing conditions in this State, or of complaints being circulated in other countries by those who are dissatisfied with the conditions that exist at the present time. However, that is another story.

I want to point to the high profit taking that is being enjoyed by several investors in land. I have here an extract from a brochure issued by a well-known estate agent in the eastern suburbs. In this brochure it is stated that 18 shares are available in a syndicate. The cost of a share is \$2,200; stamp duty \$33; rates and taxes over a two-year period \$30, and cost of development \$700. The profit on that outlay is \$2,537 and so the total selling price is \$5,500. Therefore the profit on the outlay over two years represents 85.6 per cent. This is an example of a syndicate being formed by only one agent, but it is duplicated all over the State by many subdividers, and the formation of such syndicates is being advertised in the Press.

If a person, by purchasing the share on terms, becomes a member of the syndicate I have just cited, he pays an initial deposit of \$850; 24 payments at \$23.51, making a total of \$566; rates and taxes over a two-year period \$30; stamp duty \$33; registration of mortgage \$25; and interest on development \$42, making a grand total of \$1,546. In arriving at the selling price, the pay-out figure to the finance company is \$1,700, leaving a balance of \$3,800 and a profit of \$2,254, which represents a profit on outlay over two years of 114.58 per cent. This syndicate is being formed for the purchase of deferred urban land.

I have already cited the case of a church organisation which, within the last fortnight, has, after making a subdivision, been selling blocks of land at \$2,500, and yet within a quarter of a mile of this tract of land blocks were being auctioned by private developers at \$5,000 each. The Government, therefore, should clamp down on this excessive profit taking, because it means that young couples in this State have no future whatsoever in regard to purchasing a block of land.

The average member of Parliament has great regard for the welfare of young people and therefore we should make every endeavour to see that they are suitably housed. Only the other day I heard of a young married couple who were being evicted from their home; and, in addition, the young husband has been struck another blow because his wife has had to enter hospital and he is now faced with hospital and medical expenses amounting to \$500. What chance has he of ever being able to pay for a house out of the average working man's wage of \$37 a week?

Accordingly, I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment to the Address-in-Reply moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Like him I regret that prices have been allowed to continue to spiral in Western Australia, and I also regret that no effective action has been taken by the Government to suppress this ever-mounting difficulty in the State.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing).

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Council Personnel

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees elected by that House.

House adjourned at 10.12 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 1st August, 1968

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

QUESTIONS (10): ON NOTICE

"GIVE WAY" AND "STOP" SIGNS

Basis for Determining Installation

1. The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What is the basis for determining whether or not traffic signs ("Give Way" and "Stop" signs) are installed at intersections in the metropolitan area?

- (2) Which department or departments confer in the considerations?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) "Stop" or "Give Way" signs are installed on the basis of warrants recommended by the conference of state traffic control engineers. These warrants take account of factors such as sight distance, safe approach speeds, and accident history, and these aspects are investigated by the Main Roads Department before installation of these signs is recommended.
- (2) This conference has representation from the following departments:—

Traffic Commission, Victoria
Main Roads Department,
Queensland
Department of Motor Transport, New South Wales
National Capital Development Commission
Main Roads Department,
Western Australia
Transport Department, Tasmania
Road Traffic Board, South Australia.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

Perth-Kalgoorlie Service:

Type and Timetable

2. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

When the passenger train service commences on the standard gauge railway line from Perth to Kalgoorlie and return—

- (a) what type of service is contemplated;
- (b) what will the timetable be departing from—
(i) Perth; and
(ii) Kalgoorlie;
- (c) will there be any alternative service?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) a diesel-rail car service will be provided.
- (b) (i) and (ii) These timetables have not yet been resolved.
- (c) Limited overnight sleeping berth accommodation will be available on interstate passenger services.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Reimbursement while on National Service

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

Will the Government give consideration to following the example of the New South Wales Government and making good any loss of