In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 6.4 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 15th September, 1965

CONTENTS

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

POSTPONEMENT OF QUESTIONS

Mr. BRAND (Premier): Mr Speaker, I ask that questions directed to the Minister for Education and the Minister for Agriculture be postponed until after the tea suspension.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Very well.

QUESTIONS (25): ON NOTICE

LOAN FUNDS

Allocations

1. Mr. GUTHRIE asked the Treasurer:

(1) What amounts have been allocated by the Loan Council for each of the financial years—

1961-62,
1962-63,
1963-64,
1964-65,
1965-66,

to—

(a) each of the States of the Commonwealth;

(b) the Commonwealth of Australia?

Interest and Sinking Fund: Payments by W.A.

(2) What amount has the State Government had to provide in each of the financial years—

1961-62,
1962-63,
1963-64,
1964-65,

for interest and sinking fund on loan funds?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) (a) Borrowing programmes for State works and housing purposes:—

	1961-62 £000	1962-63 £000	1963-64 £000	1964-65 £000	1965-66 £000
N.S.W.	79,301	81,704	86,510	92,235	93,825
Victoria	63,602	65,530	69,385	73,977	75,253
Queensland	29,700	30,600	34,400	36,676	37,308
South Australia	34,184	35,220	37,292	39,760	40,446
Western Australia	23,287	23,992	25,403	27,084	27,551
Tasmania	17,426	17,954	19,010	20,268	20,617
Totals	247,500	255,000	272,000	290,000	295,000

(b) Amounts raised by the Commonwealth for Defence purposes including War Service Land Settlement:—

	£
1961-62	385,000
1962-63	8,590,000
1963-64	38,851,000
1964-65	4,412,000
1965-66	Not available

(2)

	£
1961-62	13,624,922
1962-63	14,989,858
1963-64	15,885,649
1964-65	17,334,289

FREMANTLE FISHING BOAT HARBOUR

Constructional Fault, and Effects

2. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Works:

Is he aware that as a consequence of Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour moles not by-passing one another at the harbour entrance—

(a) ground swell and wave turbulence results within the harbour;

(b) the resultant surge and abrupt beach line to deep water would make proposed small craft slipways expensive to install and make slipping of craft difficult to achieve;

(c) owners of upriver slipways in being forced to move to the locality mentioned would be severely disadvantaged economically and otherwise without generous resumption settlement?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(a) Yes. Model studies are about to commence to determine the most satisfactory method of improving conditions, and it is planned to carry out remedial work during the coming summer. There is money on the Estimates for this.

(b) The above work will reduce surge but, in any case, swell interference to slipway operation would be of low frequency and cost of construction would be normal.

(c) The remedial work to be carried out is expected to overcome the disadvantages mentioned.

SUPERPHOSPHATE AND GRAINS: LAKES AREA

Cartage Subsidy: Amount for 1963-64

3. Mr. HART asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) What was the total cost of the cartage subsidy paid by the Transport Board to farmers in the Ravensthorpe - Lake King - Holt Rock area for the year ended the 30th June, 1964, on—

(a) superphosphate;

(b) all grains?

Superphosphate from Metropolitan Area: Availability of Cartage Subsidy

(2) If farmers in the Lake King-Holt Rock area are not able to make arrangements to obtain this season's superphosphate from Esperance, will the cartage subsidy be paid as

before on that superphosphate which has to come from metropolitan works?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

(1) Payments made to date in respect of the 1963-64 season are:—

(a) £8,008 for superphosphate.

(b) £15,129 for grains.

These figures are subject to any subsidy claims which have not yet been received for that season but the amounts so involved would be immaterial.

(2) Yes.

4. *This question was postponed until after the tea suspension.*

RAILWAY CROSSING AT MARKET STREET, GUILDFORD

File: Tabling

5. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Has he perused the file on Market Street railway crossing to determine if the same can be laid on the Table of the House?

Manning during St. Vincent's Hospital Fete

(2) Will he see that a flagman is on duty at the above crossing on Sunday, the 26th September (the day of the annual fete at St. Vincent's Hospital) when it is expected a thousand cars could pass to and from the above fete?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) The protection of this crossing is under consideration by the appropriate authority, the Level Crossing Protection Committee, and no good purpose would be served by laying the papers on the Table of the House.

(2) The provision of a flagman is made only where departmental activities so demand. The crossing exhibits "Stop" signs erected by the appropriate authority and train crews will exercise their usual vigilance.

6 to 8. *These questions were postponed until after the tea suspension.*

FREMANTLE HARBOUR

Dredging of Sand from Entrance

9. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Since the dredge *Sir James Mitchell* has over the years moved millions of cubic yards of sand from the river upstream, what mechanical or other impediment prevents dredging of sand from the harbour entrance?

(2) If rock is encountered under the sand in the harbour entrance, would not a suction dredge be required to shift such sand?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) and (2) The dredge *Sir James Mitchell* has never worked upstream of the old Fremantle Railway bridge.

It is not constructed to dredge limestone rock and is capable of pumping sand through a maximum of 2,000 feet of pipeline only. The dredging in the harbour requires the sand to be pumped through 6,000 to 8,000 feet of pipeline.

OMBUDSMEN

Appointment: Support by International Alliance of Women

10. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has he read the account of a meeting of the International Alliance of Women given by Mrs. Rischbieth and published in *The West Australian*, on Tuesday, the 31st August, 1965?

(2) Did he note that one of the four study items on the alliance's working programme was the appointment of ombudsmen to help towards the establishment of quality of status?

Swedish System: Report

(3) Has he any comment to make on the published statement that "The Alliance headquarters had received a report on the ombudsman system from Sweden, where the system worked effectively. This report would be used by national bodies, including Australia"?

(4) Will he endeavour to obtain a copy of the report referred to and try to induce the Premier to read it?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) I noted the Press comment.

(3) This introduces nothing new to what has been referred to in the Legislative Assembly when this subject has been under discussion.

(4) I will see whether the Joint Library Committee thinks it desirable to obtain a copy for information of members.

As to whether the Premier reads it or not is his own decision.

ABORIGINAL BABY'S DEATH

Magistrate P. V. Smith's Qualifications as Coroner

11. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

(1) What qualifications to act as a coroner has Mr. P. V. Smith, who conducted an inquest at Gnowangerup recently?

(2) Does Mr. Smith still retain the confidence of the Government?

Dr. Winrow: Minister's Statement on Non-prosecution

(3) Is he satisfied that he was correctly reported in an article concerning his decision not to file an indictment against a Dr. Winrow, as published in *The West Australian* newspaper of the 10th September, 1965?

Conflicting Medical Views

(4) If so, why does he accept the opinion of the Commissioner for Public Health and reject the evidence of Dr. R. Godfrey, Medical Superintendent of Princess Margaret Hospital?

(5) Had Dr. Davidson seen the child in question, or questioned those who had?

(6) If so, why was this not disclosed at the inquest?

Gnowangerup Hospital Records

(7) Has the opinion of Dr. Davidson that "The hospital records might not have been complete," *vide* the article in *The West Australian*, been checked for evidence?

(8) If not, why not?

(9) In the absence of evidence, would not this be an unwarranted assumption on the part of Dr. Davidson?

(10) Will the hospital in question be required to keep more complete records in future by the Public Health Department?

(11) Is there any positive evidence, apart from the opinion of Dr. Davidson, that the hospital records were not in fact accurate and complete?

(12) What factors would be present at an autopsy, if the patient did die of dehydration?

(13) Were any of these factors present in this case?

(14) If the hospital records were in fact not complete, why does he reject them in the case of Dr. Godfrey's evidence, *vide* the article published: "He had relied on the accuracy and completeness of hospital records and had made certain assumptions not warranted by the evidence," and accept them in the considerations of Dr. Davidson, *vide* the published article, "The hospital records had shown that the pulse rate and temperature of the child remained normal till the day of death"?

Evidence: Withholding from Inquest

(15) Why was all the evidence which influenced him not to file an indictment in the case not disclosed at the inquest?

(16) Is he aware that a great many people are not satisfied that "justice has appeared to have been done" by his not allowing this case to go to a jury?

Negligence by Medical Practitioners

(17) What in the opinion of his judicial authorities is the difference between gross, culpable, and mere negligence in cases where a medical practitioner may become liable to a charge of manslaughter?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) The coroner is a stipendiary magistrate qualified by examination.

(2) Yes.

(3) Substantially, yes.

(4) The opinion of the Commissioner for Public Health is accepted for many reasons, including the following—

> All witnesses agreed that the baby was suffering from dehydration. The main conflict on this point was the degree of dehydration from which the baby was suffering on admission and subsequently, as the degree would determine the appropriate treatment. The coroner is reported to have said that the main act of carelessness of Dr. Winrow was failing to correctly assess the degree of the baby's dehydration as very severe, and that this was a matter of simple arithmetic and the weights had been available to the doctor. The pamphlet issued to matrons of country hospitals by the Medical Superintendent of the Princess Margaret Hospital sets out four signs of mild (less than 5 per cent.) dehydration, nine signs of moderate to severe (5 per cent. to 10 per cent.) dehydration, and ten signs of very severe (more than 10 per cent.) dehydration.

The evidence given at the inquest was that, on readmission to hospital on the 18th March, the baby had only two or three of the signs of moderate to severe dehydration and virtually none of the signs of very severe dehydration, and that it was not until the day of death that dehydration materially increased.

The other main factor was whether or not, on admission, the baby was suffering from gastro-enteritis (or infective diarrhoea). Both Dr. Winrow and the matron denied that the baby was so suffering and said that, until the final day, the baby's stools were consistent with malnutrition (and resulting dehydration) and not with gastro-enteritis. This evidence is consistent with the treatment prescribed for the baby and, of course, it was not suggested that the treatment prescribed was deliberately wrong. The finding of Dr. Laurie, the Director, Public Health Laboratory Service, supports the evidence of Dr. Winrow and the matron by the following conclusions—"We cannot find any evidence of pneumonia, infective diarrhoea, or congenital syphilis. We cannot comment on the diagnosis of dehydration and neglect since neither leave signs easily detected by us. Our only positive finding is a probable viral infection which could have exacerbated or caused dehydration and helped to cause death."

There is nothing disclosed on the relevant file to suggest that the Medical Superintendent of the Princess Margaret Hospital was aware of the above evidence of Dr. Winrow or the matron or of the report by Dr. Laurie.

(5) Dr. Davidson had not seen the child in question. I am not aware of whom he later questioned.

(6) Dr. Davidson was not called as a witness at the inquest.

(7) and (8) The opinion of Dr. Davidson is that nurses, particularly in country hospitals, do not always note on the charts the fluids that are given to babies. He considered that the quantities of fluids mentioned in the charts show the minimum intakes only. The charts show that the baby gained 2 oz. in weight between the 19th and 21st March, despite the fact that, according to the charts, the total fluid intake had been less than what the child, if normal, would have required.

(9) Dr. Davidson's opinion is not considered unwarranted.

(10) This is not a matter for the Minister for Justice.

(11) The records, by themselves, do not provide answers to some questions. Consideration should be given to them in conjunction with other material.

(12) and (13) I do not know, but it is common ground that the patient was suffering from dehydration. See answer to (4) above as to the relevance of the degree of dehydration.

(14) The hospital records were not rejected, but were considered in relation to other evidence and knowledge (Dr. Laurie's report was not put in as evidence and he was not called to give evidence at the inquest.) Dr. Davidson had therefore much more material before him than had the Medical Superintendent of the Princess Margaret Hospital.

(15) It was only on a review being made of the evidence that new questions arose, and the inquest had then been concluded.

(16) No.

(17) I quote a paragraph from the decision of the Privy Council in Akerele v. The King (1943) Appeal Cases 255 at pp. 262/263:

> How necessary it is to keep this distinction in mind may be illustrated by reference to two cases. In a note to Reg. v. Noakes it is said: "It is impossible to define it (i.e., culpable or criminal negligence), and it is not possible to make the distinction between actionable negligence and criminal negligence intelligible, except by means of illustrations drawn from actual judicial opinions." That was a case in which a customer sent two bottles to a chemist, one for aconite and the other for henbane. The chemist, by mistake, put the aconite into the henbane bottle with the result that the customer took thirty drops of the former and died of it. Erle C. J. left the case to the jury, but "put it strongly to them that they ought not to call upon the prisoner for his defence: the case was not sufficiently strong to warrant them in finding the prisoner guilty on

a charge of felony." So in Reg. v Crick, Pollock C. B., summing up in a case in which the prisoner, who was not a regular practitioner had administered lobelia, a dangerous medicine, which produced death, said: "If the prisoner had been a medical man I should have recommended you to take the most favourable view of his conduct for it would be most fatal to the efficiency of the medical profession if no one could administer medicine without a halter round his neck." The two cases quoted are, of course, only examples, but in their Lordships' view they do rightly stress the care which should be taken before imputing criminal negligence to a professional man acting in the course of his profession.

Conflicting Medical Views

12. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

In regard to the decision not to file an indictment against Dr. Winrow of Gnowangerup for the manslaughter of a baby aboriginal girl, would he tell the House—

(a) why he is prepared to accept Dr. Davidson's statement that "The hospital records while probably accurate as far as they went, may not have been complete" in making his decision when the very statement itself draws a rather vague conclusion that the records may not have been complete;

(b) why the hospital records, upon which evidence was given by Dr. Godfrey in the coroner's hearing and upon which evidence the coroner thought fit to commit Dr. Winrow for trial, should now be presumed to be incomplete;

(c) despite the points made by him in regard to gastro-enteritis, will he state whether the official cause of death is or is not still shown as dehydration;

(d) whether in making his decision he satisfied himself with evidence other than that given by Gnowangerup Hospital staff that the baby's death could not have been avoided by a doctor showing normal skill, care and caution expected of a medical practitioner;

(e) whether the same decision would have been reached by him had the child been white;

Alleged Statements by Country Doctors

(f) whether he will look into alleged statements by other country doctors that they would send ailing aboriginal children to Perth without treatment should Dr. Winrow be sent to trial and ensure that these doctors do not set up a system which could bring repetitions of the Gnowangerup incident through failure to honour their Hippocratic Oath?

Mr. COURT replied:

(a) Dr. Davidson believes that nurses, particularly in country hospitals, do not always note on the charts the fluids that are given to babies and he suspected that in this particular case the fluid intake of the baby may have been greater than the totals recorded on the charts.

Mr. Hawke: Reflecting on the nurses now.

Mr. COURT: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Hawke: Not much!

Mr. COURT: The evidence of the general appearance of the baby from time to time and of the increase in weight between the 19th and 21st March supports Dr. Davidson's view.

(b) The hospital records, by themselves, do not provide answers to some questions and consideration should be given to them in conjunction with other material.

(c) Dehydration was conceded by all witnesses to be a factor causing death, but the main question was the degree of dehydration from which the bay was suffering on readmission to hospital on the 18th March and subsequently. Reference is made to the answer given to question 11 (4).

(d) Before a decision was made not to prosecute in this case all evidence and knowledge was considered (including the report of Dr. Laurie) and also the relevant law as set out in minutes on the file, including the law referred to in the answer to question 11 (17).

(e) Yes.

(f) These matters do not come within the portfolio of the Minister for Justice.

Dr. Winrow: Minister's Statement on Non-prosecution

13. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

(1) Was the statement published in last Friday's *The West Australian* regarding the withdrawal of a charge against Dr. Winrow of Gnowangerup released in fact to the newspaper by the Minister for Justice?

Coroner Smith and Dr. Godfrey: Minister's Reflection

(2) If so, does the Government as such agree with—

(a) the Minister's action;

(b) the serious reflection cast by the Minister in his statement against the coroner concerned (Mr. P. V. Smith) and the Medical Superintendent of the Princess Margaret Hospital (Dr. R. Godfrey)?

Papers: Tabling

(3) Will he place upon the Table of the House all relevant papers?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) In substance, yes.

(2) The Criminal Code places the responsibility for decisions of this kind on the Attorney-General or the Minister for Justice, and the Government, as such, has not considered the matter. The statement made by the Minister was not intended to reflect against the coroner or the Medical Superintendent of the Princess Margaret Hospital.

(3) No.

SEWERAGE AT ALBANY

Streets Affected, and Commencement of Work

14. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it the intention of the Government to declare the area bounded by McKail Street, Minor Road, Albany, as a deep sewerage area?

(2) If so, when is it anticipated that sewerage works would commence in the area and which streets would be affected?

(3) Is it intended to declare Greenshields Street, Wakefield Crescent a deep sewerage area; and, if so, when would work commence in the area and what streets would be affected?

(4) Has the Government made a decision as to the extension of deep sewerage to serve residents in Festing Street and Grey Street West Albany?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) This area is already within the boundary of the Albany sewerage area.

(2) The work will be listed for consideration in the 1966-1967 draft Loan Estimates.

(3) This area is also within the Albany sewerage area, but a commencement of work within the next three years is not at present contemplated.

(4) This area is within the boundary of the Albany sewerage area and the work will be listed for consideration in the 1966-67 draft Loan Estimates.

CONDITIONAL PURCHASE LAND

Releases: Areas and Acreages

15. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Can he advise the anticipated movement relevant to acreage of land to be thrown open for selection as conditional purchase land in the southern agricultural division for the years 1965, 1966, 1967?

(2) In what areas will land be thrown open for selection in each of the above years and what acreage will be released each year?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

(1) and (2) There is no official division known as the southern agricultural division, unless it is in the new State which the member for Albany advocates.

Mr. Sewell: It would be an awful State!

Mr. BOVELL: Planning for the release of Crown land under conditional purchase covers the whole of the South-West Land Division of the State.

Land releases in the Hay and Plantagenet district over the last six years total about half a million acres.

I might add that it is not usual to forecast releases. The Government has made an annual release of 1,000,000 acres for the past six years, and the requirements and the availability of Crown land will be considered in the overall interests of the State and every district will be carefully reviewed.

SCOURING WORKS AT ALBANY

Negotiations for Establishment

16. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Have tentative approaches been made to the Department of Industrial Development as to the possibility of establishing scouring works in Albany?

(2) If so, what are the names of the firms, or the persons representing the firms, who have made the approaches, and how far have negotiations proceeded?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) Apart from inquiries made by the Lower Great Southern Regional Council of Western Australia, in regard to the possibilities of establishing a wool-scouring works and a fellmongery at Albany, no other approach in this direction has been made to the Department of Industrial Development. The department and the Minister continue their efforts to establish the feasibility of such an industry and to attract a prospective firm.

(2) Answered by (1) above.

SUPERPHOSPHATE: CABINET SUBCOMMITTEE

Composition

17. Mr. KELLY asked the Premier:

(1) Which Ministers comprise the Cabinet subcommittee appointed to investigate superphosphate manufacture, etc.?

(2) Who has represented the Minister for Agriculture on this committee during his tour overseas?

(3) What other Country Party Ministers are on the subcommittee?

Report: Availability to Parliament

(4) Will he make a detailed report of the findings of the Cabinet subcommittee available to Parliament as early as possible?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) Deputy Premier and Minister for Agriculture.
Minister for Industrial Development.
Minister for Works.
Minister for Lands.
Minister for Transport.

(2) The Acting Minister for Agriculture.

(3) Cabinet Ministers were appointed to the subcommittee because of their portfolios and not because of any party affiliation. All Cabinet Ministers are involved in final decisions.

(4) The initial report of the departmental committee which studied this subject and which report was submitted to Cabinet by the subcommittee, is being tabled today following the request of the member for Mt. Marshall.

SUPERPHOSPHATE: INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

Composition

18. Mr. KELLY asked the Premier:

(1) When was the interdepartmental superphosphate committee appointed?

(2) Who are the personnel and what departmental positions do they hold?

Terms of Reference

(3) What were the original terms of reference?

(4) What has been added to the scope of the inquiry and at what date were these addendums made?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) December, 1964.

(2) Mr. R. F. Boylen, Economist, Department of Industrial Development (Chairman).
Mr. G. D. Oliver, Officer in Charge, Rural Economics and Marketing, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. R. J. Pascoe, Chief Traffic Manager, Western Australian Government Railways.
Mr. B. W. Copley, Commercial Superintendent, Western Australian Government Railways.
Mr. J. B. Rathbone, Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of Transport.
Mr. P. J. Lanigan, Economic Research Officer, Department of Industrial Development.
Mr. R. J. Ellis, Economic Research Officer, Department of Transport.

(3) To examine the economics of the production of superphosphate in country areas and alternative schemes, such as bulk storage of superphosphate at country centres.

(4) The scope of the inquiry was broadened in August, 1965 to include the following:—

(a) An examination of the future needs of the major farming regions of the State.

(b) The availability of future supplies of raw materials, including trace elements.

(c) Examination of the structure and location of the industry, and competition and marketing in Australia and New Zealand.

(d) Survey of fertiliser transport and its methods of co-ordination throughout the State.

SUPERPHOSPHATE WORKS

Maximum Output

19. Mr. KELLY asked the Premier:

(1) What maximum output are the following superphosphate works designed to produce—

(a) Picton;

(b) Geraldton;

(c) Albany;

(d) Esperance?

Annual Production: Tonnages and Prices

(2) What yearly tonnage has been produced at each of the works in the last three full years of operation?

(3) What was the price per ton at the works in each of the last three years for plain superphosphate?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) and (2) It is difficult to assess the maximum capacity of a superphosphate works that can be achieved in practice because of seasonal factors and peak periods. For instance, it would be possible to achieve a much higher tonnage if delivery was accepted in the "off" season.

Details of the maximum capacity and production of the superphosphate works at Picton, Geraldton, Albany, and Esperance are not known. However, the sales of fertiliser from the Albany works were 127,000 tons in 1962-63, 159,000 tons in 1963-64, and 172,000 tons in 1964-65. Sales from the Esperance works, which was opened in 1964, were 45,000 tons in 1964-65. Total sales of superphosphate in Western Australia were 727,000 tons in 1962-63, 821,000 tons in 1963-64, and 980,000 tons in 1964-65.

(3) The price of plain superphosphate ex-works is uniform from all works in Western Australia.

The price, in new bags, was £12 8s. 6d. per ton in 1962-63, and £8 15s. in 1963-64. In 1964-65 the price was £9 4s. per ton until the 25th May, 1965, when it was increased to £9 9s. per ton. The prices in the last two years have been reduced by the Commonwealth bounty of £3 per ton.

20. *This question was postponed until after the tea suspension.*

WORKERS' COMPENSATION: PNEUMOCONIOSIS CLAIMS

Numbers Not Receiving Payments: Sums Involved

21. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Labour:

Adverting to his reply to question 15 of the 7th September, what would be the sum involved if the 11 applicants mentioned as having a degree of disability due to pneumoconiosis were paid compensation on the disability as assessed on an annual cost basis and a total cost?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

The annual cost would be £7,894. The total cost would be £11,900, with a potential ultimate liability of at least £38,500.

22. *This question was postponed.*

NATIONAL HEALTH SCHEME

Commonwealth Contribution: Application for Increase

23. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Will he approach his Federal counterpart in an endeavour to have the Federal Government increase its contribution to the National Health Scheme to alleviate economic hardship imposed on the public by the recent increase in doctors' fees?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Commonwealth advised the States last month that it does not propose to increase medical benefits as referred to by the honourable member.

24. *This question was postponed until after the tea suspension.*

APPRENTICES

Intake under Old and New Schemes

25. Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Labour:

(1) In respect of carpentry and bricklaying trades, what has been the intake of apprentices over the last five years—

(a) in Government employment;

(b) in private industry?

(2) Since the inception of the three-year apprenticeship scheme, how many apprentices have been indentured in the carpentry and bricklaying trades—

(a) in Government employment;

(b) in private industry?

(3) How many persons are at present receiving free technical training in preparation for apprenticeship under the three-year scheme, and in what trade categories?

(4) During the past five years, what is the total number of registered apprentices in each year in the—

(a) carpentry; and

(b) bricklaying trades?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(1) When registration of apprentices is effected, no distinction is made between those employed by the Government and those in private industry. To obtain the information in the form requested would necessitate an examination of some 7,000 Industrial Commission Registration cards. This question is therefore answered by quoting yearly totals in the trades to which the honourable member refers:

Year (To 30th June)	Carpentry Trades	Bricklaying Trades
1961	146	7
1962	120	10
1963	134	25
1964	163	17
1965	213	25

(2)

Year	Carpentry Trades		Bricklaying Trades	
	Government	Private	Government	Private
1963	12	....	*Nil*	*Nil*
1964	8	8	1	2
1965	Total	31	*Nil*	*Nil*

The apprentices indentured in 1965 will be allocated at the conclusion of the school year.

(3) Thirty-one apprentices in the carpentry and cabinet-making trades are attending technical school on a full-time basis. A bursuary of £80 each per year is payable.

(4)

Year (To 30th June)	Carpentry Trades	Bricklaying Trades
1961	438	36
1962	457	32
1963	501	49
1964	556	54
1965	659	72

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

ABORIGINAL BABY'S DEATH

Dr. Winrow: Minister's Statement on Non-prosecution

1. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

In connection with his answers to question (13) on today's notice paper, I would like to ask whether, as Premier, he agrees with the decision made by his colleague, the Minister for Justice, on the Dr. Winrow case?

Mr. BRAND replied:

The answer I gave to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition set out clearly the Minister's situation in this matter and also the situation of the Government, which has not actually considered the case.

The decision on whether he is going to ask the question of each Minister and whether he agrees with the answers given lies with the Leader of the Opposition, but I have outlined the Government's position in the matter and there is nothing more I can add in this respect.

KEG PARTY NEAR ALBANY

Proceedings against Organisers

2. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

(1) In view of the pending litigation by the Liquor Branch against five men alleged to have organised a keg party in a shearing shed near Albany on the 28th August, 1965, can he advise why the police did not adopt the old curative method of prevention is better than cure, when they had prior notice of the party, and notify the organisers that if they proceeded with the party they, the police, would take action, and thus avoid a degree of discomfiture on the part of many innocent people?

(2) Why was the keg party held near Albany singled out by the police for special attention, when similar keg parties were being held on the same weekend in other country centres and city areas?

(3) Was the action of the police motivated and accentuated by a rape case of a young girl at a keg party held by teenagers?

(4) If the answer to (3) is "Yes" why has it taken the police so long to act to curb such activities, when it has been public knowledge that teenagers were holding such keg parties?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) to (4) The honourable member did inform my office late this afternoon of his intention to address this question to me without notice, but I was absent from the office and did not have the opportunity to inquire into the points which he has raised. I consider this matter to be *sub judice*. However, if he wishes to place the question on the notice paper I will be given time to consider it.

BILLS (5): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Public Works Act Amendment Bill.
   Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and read a first time.
2. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill.
   Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Bovell (Minister for Lands), and read a first time.
3. Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission Bill.
   Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for the North-West), and read a first time.
4. Laporte Industrial Factory Agreement Act Amendment Bill.
   Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and read a first time.
5. Licensing Act Amendment Bill.
   Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition), and read a first time.

HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing), and transmitted to the Council.

JETTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [4.57 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [4.57 p.m.]: I do not intend to speak at any great length at this stage, because I understand the Bill has to run the gamut in another place although I do not gather its passage there will be a tortuous one. I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Minister, before this Bill completes its passage in another place, to examine the point which I raised last night in respect of the form which is used to give the Minister certain powers; so that with the knowledge of the cases to which I referred he will feel completely satisfied that the legislative form used in the Bill is a desirable one. For myself I still dislike that form. Last evening the Minister would not give me an assurance that he would accept an amendment, so I would like an assurance from him that he will consider the point which I have raised.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [4.58 p.m.]: I will, in a general way, have a look at the application of the particular phrase which seems to upset the member for Kalgoorlie, and consider it in its entirety in respect of this and other legislation.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

DOG ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Brand (Premier), and passed.

AUDIT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.59 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

The Minister for Industrial Development has advised me of the comments which have been made by the Leader of the Opposition. The significance of some of his suggestions is being examined; and if necessary, adjustments may be made in another place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Further Report

Further report of Committee adopted.

MARKETING OF ONIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

SUPERPHOSPHATE: PRODUCTION AND USE

Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [5.2 p.m.]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed thoroughly to examine all aspects of superphosphate production, distribution, and use, the feasibility of extension of superphosphate manufacture to selected inland areas, and the future prospect for the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country centres.

A motion similar to this one was introduced in this Chamber in 1964 by the member for Boulder-Eyre, and was debated fairly fully. However, it was finally rejected. On this occasion I have included several new features, and I feel somewhat heartened in bringing the matter forward again because of what occurred in regard to the Bank Holidays Bill. Because of the efforts of the then member for Leederville, success was eventually achieved.

From 1953 to 1958 he introduced the Bill no fewer than six times, and on each occasion the measure passed all stages without any amendment in the Legislative Assembly. Looking back on the records I found that all members of the present Government, who were then in opposition—excluding, of course, the new members—voted against the motion.

It is very interesting to note that seven of the present Ministers were amongst those who at that time signified they were not prepared to admit that the legislation then before the House was worth anything at all. As a matter of fact, those who did speak were rather disparaging in their remarks. As has been the case on many occasions previously in connection with other legislation, on the six occasions this Bill went to another place—

Mr. O'Connor: They did a super job!

Mr. KELLY: —the Council saw fit to throw it out after about only three or four speeches were made.

In 1959 there was a change of Government. The then Labor Party went out of power and the McLarty-Watts Government took over the reins of government of Western Australia. Then in 1961—lo and behold!—up popped the Bank Holidays Bill once again, but on that occasion it was not introduced by the then member for Leederville because by that time he had passed out of this House. It was introduced by the Minister controlling that particular section and he—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Did it very well, I thought.

Mr. KELLY: —produced the flimsiest of excuses for introducing it. It was very amusing to see Government members, including seven Ministers, falling over one another to somersault as quickly as possible to get away from what had been a stigma for six years, and support something which had become necessary under the new regime. After a very short debate, the legislation passed from this Chamber and was considered in another place. There again, *Hansard* reveals that very heavy weather was made by members in an endeavour to persuade themselves that the legislation was necessary. Although the verbiage was the same and the title was the same, on that occasion the Bill was passed without any amendments, instead of being rejected.

It is because of the circumstances surrounding that legislation that I feel justified in looking forward to a reversal of the Government attitude on this motion. It would be quite an easy matter, considering the contortions that took place on the Bill I have just mentioned, for the Government on this occasion to recognise the justification for the appointment of a Select Committee.

The speeches made against the motion in 1964 were not very impressive. As a matter of fact, only four or five Government members spoke and each one more or less apologised for having to vote against it. They were in favour of the appointment of a Select Committee; but, because of the party system or Government policy, they had to vote against it. The Minister, in his reply to the member for Boulder-Eyre, made a very poor attempt to justify his attitude. He gave us in all, with interjections and everything thrown in, about 18 or 18½ minutes of enlightenment. We heard a lot about superphosphate in Western Australia, and its importance; and I do not think any of us would deny that. He told us a lot about the necessity for increased supplies. This also is obvious to anyone. The Government has been boasting about the release of a million acres of land per year, and this must greatly increase the amount of superphosphate required in this State.

The Minister also told us last year a lot of the past history of the tonnage requirements, and this again did not in any way help the case he was presenting to justify his rejection of the motion. He also attempted to justify the then latest price rise of nine shillings, but generally he skirted around the cost factor of additives and the percentage of additives used in mixed superphosphate. Altogether I thought he made out an excellent case for the companies operating as superphosphate manufacturers in Western Australia, but a very poor case in defence of the superphosphate users in the State.

He concluded his speech, which contained nothing of any substance concerning the rejection of the motion, by saying that he had no faith in Select Committees. His memory must have been very short, because I well remember that when his party was in power between, I think, 1947 and 1952, he was very, very irate with that party. He created a lot of unpleasantness between himself and the Minister for Agriculture of the day in connection with war service land settlement, so much so that a motion was introduced calling for a Select Committee to go into the matter. The committee was given wide terms of reference. The man who was responsible for that is the same person who gave as his reason for rejecting the motion that he did not believe in Select Committees.

At that time he had every reason to think that a Select Committee was just what was required to put the matter in order.

After praising all that had been said by the mover of that motion, the then member for Warren—who subsequently became the Agent-General—the member for Katanning concluded his remarks by saying—

> I consider it is a pity an inquiry did not take place earlier so that some of the problems could have been settled and less money wasted. I keenly support the move for an inquiry. I think it will do a lot of good and will help to give ex-servicemen engaged in land settlement a feeling of security. I hope the inquiry will cover every aspect of war service land settlement.

He was a member of that committee when the motion was passed. There is no doubt about the fact that the member for Katanning enjoyed every minute of it, and he was in a different position from that in which we are now because he was endeavouring to prove his own Government wrong—he and another supporter of the then Government who is no longer with us, unfortunately. Between them they were a great help in the appointment of the Select Committee that went thoroughly into the war service land settlement.

When, however, it came to adjusting what had been found wrong by the Select Committee, the Government refused to do anything in connection with the matter, and when it came to its turn to again take office there was very little for it to do. Apparently, it is all right when on one side to advocate something that will bring about a Select Committee and a full examination, but it is an entirely different matter under different circumstances.

On this occasion, of course, we find there is a very wide dissatisfaction by the users of superphosphate concerning the cost. Not only are they dissatisfied with the cost but they are also dissatisfied with the 9s. rise, which took place in 1964. Over a number of years farmers everywhere have complained about rising costs of super; and, of course, every increase is another straw to the camel's back. The increases are becoming more irksome to put up with than ever before.

I think that because of the need for increased use and the restricted avenue of supplies, and the reasonable financial position of most farmers, the superphosphate companies' charges in the past have been accepted, but by no means without protest. Time and time again super prices have risen at the beginning of a season. Farmers are forced into the position, because they have to purchase large quantities of super and they do not want any holdup—more than customary—of accepting increased prices without a great deal of demur. However, in the interim we find a spate of dissatisfaction emanating from all sections of the State. The dissatisfaction has spread from the price factor to the other avenues of manufacture and distribution.

When we were discussing this matter in 1964 a Farmers' Union decision more or less supported—in kind, at any rate—exactly what we in this Chamber were attempting to do. An article appeared in *The Farmers' Weekly* on the 22nd October, 1964, under the heading "Superphosphate". It reads as follows:—

> The general executive of the Farmers' Union intends to press for a Royal Commission into the supply and distribution of fertilisers in Western Australia. This was decided after a report from the Superphosphate Committee in which the recommendation for a Royal Commission had been made, was read at the General Executive's quarterly meeting on October 15.
>
> The committee reported that it had considered the recent price increase on all fertiliser mixtures and the reasons given for the rises. The committee considered there was a definite need to implement a Farmers' Union policy decision that a Royal Commission should be set up to inquire into the superphosphate situation in this State. The importance of superphosphate to Western Australia and the unease which existed among farmers over the marketing and distribution of fertiliser were stressed by speakers.

As I said, that appeared on the 22nd October and the Minister's reply was nine or ten days later. He said there was nothing wrong in the industry and the price of super and all other conditions were acceptable to primary producers. Of course, we from the country know that the situation is different from that. The farmers speak their minds perhaps more freely to men from the district—that would apply to Country Party members too—than they do to representatives of the Press.

That was not the only occasion when comment was made which showed there was very good reason for a Select Committee to be entrusted with the responsibility of investigating the industry. I have here a report of the northern zone council meeting at Geraldton. Geraldton, of course, has a superphosphate works of its own. The zone council meeting was held in Geraldton on Friday, the 25th June, and 28 delegates attended. As far as Coorow was concerned, under "general business" it was moved by Mr. R. Casely that a protest be made on the price rise of urea. That motion was seconded by Mr. Davies, and was carried.

A little further on it was moved by Mr. L. Keeffe that the superphosphate committee investigate the weight of bags of superphosphate as one farmer had reported under-weight bags. That motion was also seconded and carried.

Coming to Mullewa, we find that among the recommendations and the general business items appeared the following statement:—

> Letter regarding bulk superphosphate: Moved Messrs. N. Patton, seconded, Battersby: That we write to the W.A.G.R. stating we are interested in the whole yard set up in Coorow and asking if it would interfere with plans if one bin was left for bulk superphosphate storage.

Of course, that permission was refused, and it was refused again just recently. Those bulk storage depots are essentially for grain and their use has been refused for the storage of superphosphate.

Another motion which was carried also complained of under weight in super bags. There were several motions grouped under "branch motions", which covered all of the 28 delegates, protesting against the price rise of urea. Another motion was that the superphosphate committee investigate the weight of bags and the super contained in those bags being supplied under weight.

At the Farmers' Union general conference on the 25th March, 1965, we find there was a motion which requested that moves be made to have the cost of superphosphate to consumers reduced. That motion was carried at the Farmers' Union conference this month. We also find that there are many other references in *The Farmers' Weekly*. There appeared in *The Farmers' Weekly* of the 21st January, 1965 under the heading "Superphosphate Prices Disturb Union" comments of the wheat executive of the Farmers' Union, stating that the rising trend in prices of superphosphate, particularly those containing minor elements are disturbing the union—not an individual farmer or one section of the farmers, but the union representing all the consumers in Western Australia.

Another article on page 8 of the same issue under the heading, "General Farmers Executive Decision", states that the Farmers' Union presses for a Royal Commission into all ramifications of superphosphate cost, and not only the recent rises. This motion, too, was carried.

On the 11th February, in the same paper, there appeared a full-page election agenda, and this one was a gem. This article contains the policy points and there is a picture of the Premier in one corner and the words "Policy Points" appear in big letters. Item 8 states—

> We will continue our intensive investigation of fertiliser production and distribution—and seek every economic means of further lowering the price to farmers.

What a laugh that is! Further lower the costs. This Government has never been responsible for one single move to get superphosphate prices reduced. Yet that was published in the paper for everybody to see, and I know it was distributed in the Merredin area, where I obtained my copy. "Further lowering the price." What a travesty that is! Never at any time as far as I can see, was it the desire to lower the price.

Mr. Court: Was it not the action of this Government which saved the farmers in the Esperance area £3 10s. to £4 a ton by establishing a super works at Esperance? That was built ahead of time.

Mr. KELLY: I do not think it was because of the action of this Government. I could not believe that.

Mr. Court: It was; and it happens to be a fact.

Mr. KELLY: That is for the people of Western Australia to say.

Mr. Court: It was a magnificent achievement so far as the farmers of Esperance were concerned.

Mr. KELLY: On the subject of Esperance, I received some evasive answers today regarding the tonnages and quantities of super supplied to various places. I will come to that later, but I did notice that the out-turn at Esperance was 46,000 tons for the year. Yet we are told that at Merredin, where there would be a guaranteed consumption of 100,000 tons, we could not possibly have a works because of the economics. I will deal with that particular aspect in sequence.

Mr. Court: We will be very interested.

Mr. KELLY: On the 11th February, on page 16 of *The Farmers' Weekly* an article appears which is headed, "Bagged Superphosphate Price Up." That article states that superphosphate in new bags will cost more from the 1st March, and the increase will be 5d. per bag. That was a joint statement from C.S.B.P. & Farmers Ltd., Cresco Fertilisers (W.A.) Pty. Ltd., Albany Superphosphate Company Pty. Ltd., and Esperance Fertilisers Pty. Ltd. The companies stated that there would be no increase in the price of bulk superphosphate. A spokesman for the companies said the increase had been caused by the sharp increase in world prices for jute sacks.

Yet when we endeavour to find out the reason for these price increases for commodities imported from overseas we are told that the information is confidential and there are various reasons why we cannot be given the low-down about the price factor. Therefore that point emerges from the article I have just read and it makes it quite clear that the whole production of super in Western Australia is very definitely under the control of one company.

Irrespective of the individual companies' methods of buying jute, whether it be at a forward price, or in any other way, and so receiving some price advantage, the same price range for jute sacks is quoted on the same day and at different centres,

which indicates quite clearly that all the companies are under the one control, or are intercontrolled.

I have another article which is headed, "Super not so Super" and members can place their own construction on that heading. When we read the article we find that there is a reason for its being referred to in that way, and I shall quote the article, which was published on the 5th August, 1965. It is as follows:—

> Superphosphate production came in for several criticisms when the Farmers' Union General Executive met in Perth on July 22.

This was last July, and not 12 months ago when we first asked that a Select Committee be appointed. The article continues—

> No less than seven motions from zone councils demanded executive action over complaints which ranged from poor quality merchandise to price problems.

Every time we hear expressions of opinions from farmers—among other things we hear the question of price mentioned—the cost of superphosphate always comes into the calculations and into their summing up of the position. However, as far as this Government is concerned, we find that no mention of the price factor is made in the terms of reference of any of the committees that have been formed, as I will prove as I go along. The article continues—

> One of the major protests endorsed by the executive was over the importation of some unsuitable-type phosphate from North Africa.
>
> Miling Zone Council reported its poor quality had resulted in losses of up to 100 tons through bags that had rotted. One farmer claimed damage involving 1,200 bags.
>
> The zone also claimed that because of breakages to machines through large granulated superphosphate the super firms concerned be advised not to supply this type material unless specifically requested.
>
> An approach will also be made to approach superphosphate companies concerning prevention of damage to bulk stocks of super in open paddocks without adequate protection.
>
> The Northern Zone Council added its voice to the debate by asking for an official protest against the increased price of urea and a committee of investigation into claims of superphosphate being found to be underweight after bagging.
>
> The North Midland Zone received executive approval of its efforts in supporting Eneabba branch attempts to gain Main Roads Department permission to cart super from Geraldton to Eneabba via the Dongara-Eneabba road.
>
> At present the journey involves an extra 40 miles travelling and involves farmers in additional costs, but the M.R.D. has refused permission.

These are all matters that should be investigated, and we should be doing something about providing a satisfactory solution to the problem, not for one district but for the whole of Western Australia; and, of course, I have been mentioning only some of the problems which are facing primary producers in the use of superphosphate. However, they are ample reasons why a Select Committee should be appointed and a searching inquiry made into all aspects of this problem.

There is one further article which I think should be recorded because a very important lesson can be learned from the comments made, and these are from the lips of Mr. Grant McDonald, the President of the Farmers' Union. The article appeared in *The Farmers' Weekly* of the 11th March, 1965, under the heading of "Fertilisers", and reads as follows:—

> This brings me to another aspect of farming in Western Australia which, without any doubt, plays the most important part in all aspects of agricultural production, both in the economic sphere and the ultimate volume of output—this is fertiliser with particular emphasis on superphosphate.
>
> Over the years this commodity has been one of the main subjects dealt with by your executive without achieving worthwhile satisfaction.
>
> Superphosphate is of such major importance to the progress and welfare of Western Australia that I feel confident that all phases including supply from source to end use should be under the control of an authority which could give the best possible advice on all aspects including transport, manufacture, mixtures of minor elements, delivery, etc. The present method of leaving the control to a virtual monopolistic private enterprise organisation—

I think that is worth reading a second time because apparently the comment is not in line with the present Government's ideas.

> The present method of leaving the control to a virtual monopolistic private enterprise organisation which, to my mind, is not prepared to give consideration to the end users of the product, needs completely overhauling.

Of course, that is the position, and it is one which is recognised by the users of superphosphate even if not by people of the calibre of the majority of members here whose knowledge of superphosphate is confined to the controversy that ranges here from time to time and to the fact that it is necessary for growing certain

crops. Those members who come in almost daily contact with the people in the country recognise the difficulties of primary producers. Yet there is no agreement in this Chamber to set up a committee of inquiry thoroughly to investigate the fertiliser industry in Western Australia.

A Select Committee would have a very wide field for investigation. There is, for instance, the cost of phosphatic rock, including the landing charges. I believe it is necessary to have a thorough investigation into this side of superphosphate manufacture. There are also the landed costs and the sources of supply of additives. Again we find that the greatest secrecy surrounds the cost of landing additives in Western Australia, and that is one factor which I believe should receive the full attention of the members of a Select Committee.

I think, too, that a calibration of the world's markets and supplies is being attempted; and we had the spectacle, only a few days ago, of being told that there was a likelihood, because of the diminution in supplies of phosphatic rock—and I think this emanated from the committee that has been operating—we could resign ourselves to the fact that before long there would be an increase in price. Of course, only 48 hours later a Minister by the name of Fairhall burst forth into print and said that new deposits had been discovered either at Christmas Island or Nauru, and although they could not be fully calibrated at present it looked as though the deposits would be quite extensive. So it looks as though there is some difference of opinion on the matter between the committee on the one hand and a responsible Minister of the Commonwealth Government on the other hand.

I think, too, that the method of additive-mixing is one that must receive a lot of attention because I and many other people believe that this is one side of the business on which we fall down rather badly. The matter of transport and distribution generally is something else that has caused a good deal of dissatisfaction over a period of time; and, no matter what we do from year to year, a considerable amount of superphosphate is wasted because of delivery difficulties and the fact that many farmers have to obtain their superphosphate supplies months before they are ready to use it; and by the time they do use it it has reached the stage where the pieces have to be broken up.

The question of copper as an additive must also receive a thorough investigation. We have a number of copper deposits in this State; but they are of low grade, and when overseas copper supplies were short our copper came into its own and the companies utilised it to good effect. However, as soon as the imported commodity was available the manufacturers did not want our low-grade product. They complained that the copper percentage was too low and said they would rather pay extra for the overseas commodity. Of course, extra charges in this connection do not mean a thing to the companies because those costs are passed on to the users of superphosphate.

So, being in that frame of mind, is it any wonder that nine out of 10 users of superphosphate believe that on the question of prices everything is not clear and aboveboard and that very little effort is being made by the companies to utilise Western Australian copper? Of course, we know that upgrading is possible with other minerals, and attempts are being made to upgrade the iron ore which is to be sent to Japan. Certainly in that regard the iron ore will be in much bigger quantities than would be the case with copper required by superphosphate companies; but if it is possible to upgrade iron ore, why do we not look thoroughly into the question of upgrading our local copper so that we can minimise the importation of overseas copper into Western Australia?

I think several members mentioned this factor during the debate in 1964, but I do not know of any great activity that has taken place as a result of it: nor do I hear of the report containing anything by way of advice in the matter of bringing about some upgrading. We should at least be told the economics of upgrading, so that we will know where we are going in the matter of superphosphate with copper mixtures.

There is also the question of the advisability of establishing an inland super manufacturing works. This has been going on for some time, and I will have more to say about it in its right sequence. The same thing applies to bulk depots. It is only now, after a period of years, that we are beginning to realise there is some advantage in the establishment of bulk depots in certain centres.

We should examine the facts in Western Australia concerning super generally. There are, I think, two major companies; and there are four country, or port companies—at Geraldton, Albany, Picton Junction, and Esperance. I understand there are seven altogether, so there must be one more major company. In any case, all these companies are closely interrelated, as is clearly shown by the answer given by the Premier to the question I asked.

When we find that they are all charging exactly the same rates, irrespective of whether it is bulk super, or super in bags, for essentially the same grade, for a number of different points in the State we must realise how close the association is between these major companies. There is no doubt in my mind that these circumstances fully illustrate just how great the octopus is in the matter of manufacturing super. They clearly show that there is purely a monopoly control. If we do not

agree with that, we must at least agree there are perfect grounds for collusion between these companies. If they are not as greatly interested in one another's doings—and all the indications show that they are—they certainly must put their heads together.

We, in this State, irrespective of our political affiliations, have for a long time deplored the amount of collusion that takes place, particularly in tendering. We find this to be the case particularly in relation to large Government tenders. This has been so until recently—and I say recently because I feel the influx of some of the overseas companies has reduced the amount of collusion, and there is a certain amount of disparity these days in regard to this matter. But where we find that a number of applications for contracts carry the same price for which the contractors are prepared to do the work, we must come to the conclusion that there has been collusion. I think this could apply to the superphosphate companies, and the whole matter needs ventilating.

Mr. O'Connor: You are referring to the companies throughout Australia.

Mr. KELLY: I am referring particularly to Western Australia. There are different companies in the various States, and there is a disparity in price in all the States. My main information, and my main treatment of this subject tonight concern conditions in Western Australia. Nothing will shake the feeling I have developed that this great monopoly exists, and I am certain it is these companies which have such a great stranglehold on the super supplies of Western Australia, from which the information stems when answers are given to questions that are asked in this Chamber. There is no doubt that this is the case, except perhaps where the information sought has been refused because of some degree of privacy that may exist.

Quite apart from all this, we must also consider the reasons that the Minister gave last year for refusing to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee. I do not think those reasons were at all convincing; nor, I am sure, does any other member in the Chamber. The reasons he gave were certainly not good enough to convince a trusting type of person like myself. I am sure there are many members opposite who did not swallow the pill given them on that occasion.

The Minister did give us some information—although it was not very helpful—on the question of copper prices. He spoke of import copper and said that the price had risen 10 per cent. To use his own words, the Minister said, "The prices were compiled from unspecified increased handling charges." If anybody can give me a good definition of "unspecified increased handling charges," I shall certainly be very happy. I am sure that even a learned man like the Minister for Education would not be able to give me the meaning of that expression.

The Minister then continued to give us some information regarding urea. He said that the price landed at Fremantle was not available, and gave as his reasons that freight, insurance, and handling charges had all been excluded from the figures he did give. If these things are kept back from the Government, and if the companies cannot justify the rises that have taken place from time to time, what is the earthly use of an interdepartmental committee? It will not get us anywhere, particularly in these circumstances.

If the landed cost is not available to the Government, then it is rather futile to try to understand the position in regard to price rises when they take place. We certainly would have no idea where we were heading. Because we cannot get any published information which would justify the price of super, the manufacturing conditions, and related matters, I feel there is an excellent reason to establish a Select Committee of inquiry.

Another very interesting factor that emerged from questions that were answered was that the import price for urea in 1963-64 was lower than it was in 1961-62. Yet we find that the local prices for super, plus additives, were much higher in 1963-64, although we were told that the prices were very much less in that year. I think the information went on to say that on the 1st August, 1964, the super straight price rose 9s. a ton; and that was produced from 0.63 tons of phosphatic rock, 1.67 tons of sulpher, and 1,250 gallons of water. I believe that amount of water costs about 2s. 6d., so there would not be a great addition to the cost from that source.

We find that copper used in the manufacture of super—imported copper—rose about 10 per cent. There is about 1 per cent. of copper in the finished article. The price of copper rose 36s. 6d. a ton. Mark you, Mr. Speaker, that the price of super straight rose 9s.! The price of super, copper, and zinc rose 51s. 6d. The price of urea rose 120s. a ton; while sulphate of potash, which is used very extensively in many of the mixtures, rose 60s. a ton.

There might have been some justification to say that the rise of 9s. for super was reasonable, and that it could be traced. There is, however, no justification for an anomaly which shows such a rise in cost for super mixtures as has been shown on this occasion.

Let us now turn to the demand for the establishment of superphosphate works in approved inland centres. Early in the latter half of 1964 the Merredin Progress Association and the Merredin Zone Council of the Farmers' Union commenced

exploring the possibilities of the establishment of a superphosphate works in Merredin. Early in September those present had an industrial development seminar which, I take it, would have had the blessing of the Minister for Industrial Development.

These people were treated to a very discouraging address. Those who attended the seminar to discuss these matters had been fully primed as to the move that was afoot at Merredin, and there was plenty of premature condemnation at that gathering as to the possibility of establishing a super works in that centre. This criticism apparently wiped off very lightly the possibility of establishing a super works in Merredin. In order to spur on the interests of those concerned, the farmers and the businessmen got together again, after having expressed great indignation, and reaffirmed their intention to press strongly for the establishment of a super works.

That was in September. As I have advised the House, the Labor caucus visited Merredin on the 16th and 17th October. This was a scheduled gathering at Merredin, which had been arranged 12 months, or more, previously. It was known that members of caucus were going to Merredin at that time. The shire council arranged for them to be met, and tendered them a civic as well as a public reception; and, as always happens when a political party is represented, the president introduced the matter of the establishment of a super works at Merredin.

The importance of decentralisation—its relationship to superphosphate, and what it would mean to the Merredin people—was stressed. There are some very interesting extracts from the Press report of that gathering. I will read only extracts, although the report occupies about three pages altogether. I have no intention of doing more than just make a few comments in regard to certain passages. I do not want to get them out of context, so I will say a few words in between. After welcoming the caucus at Merredin the article went on to say—

> A matter which has been the concern of several organisations in the district for some time met with response at the caucus meeting when it was agreed to strongly support the establishment at Merredin of a large scale superphosphate manufacturing works.

This concern was expressed before the caucus meeting was held; before the public meeting took place; and before the civic reception at the council chambers was held. So it was well known what thoughts were in the Labor mind at that time.

Mr. O'Connor: Did they say who was going to pay the additional cost?

Mr. KELLY: We will come to the cost factor as we progress. Mutual appreciation was expressed and a lot of very nice things were said—as they should have been—and at the Merredin Shire Council, the matter of a superphosphate works was again brought up and the president of the shire had this to say—

> A straightout declaration had been made with regard to the establishment of a superphosphate works in the district. If they became the Government, they would establish this project or assist in it.

Those were the comments of the president of the shire council. This was said at the civic reception—

> Mr. Telfer said the Country Party was planning a meeting at Merredin to present a case for the establishment of a superphosphate works there as a decentralisation project.

We find that this meeting of the Country Party was held on the 24th October, or about a week later than the Labor caucus visit. Of course, the Country Party naturally seized the opportunity to capitalise, but apparently without the concurrence of its Liberal partners, as references to the matter from time to time have clearly shown. So the Country Party did not start off as a party on a very good footing, having sprung the gun, as the saying is. We have to bear in mind that we were then within a very short time of an election and the spurs were being sharpened. Activity was becoming greater and we were honoured by visits to that area by many politicians from all sides of Parliament. The local people were having quite a lot of amusement to think they were getting so much attention.

Mr. J. Hegney: Having a field day!

Mr. KELLY: Yes, exactly; it was more or less on the eve of an election. At this meeting I think there were about nine or 10 Federal and State politicians of all Houses. They all had a little bit of a say as to why Merredin should have a super works. In addition there was also present one of the contestants for a seat in Parliament who was having a little chip in here and there to make sure the public realised his party was behind a super works for Merredin.

The outcome of this meeting was the appointment of a committee; and this committee immediately sought an interview with the Minister for Industrial Development and the Minister for Works. I might say that on both scores a very prompt hearing was given to this deputation at very little notice, and I wish to record my thanks to both of the Ministers for their early interview of the deputation.

On that occasion we were able to put a case to the Minister which we thought was a sound one in connection with the cost of

phosphatic rock from Fremantle to Merredin, which was placed on a basis similar to the price enjoyed by B.H.P. from Koolyanobbing to Fremantle. The committee which went in with a feeling that it had a strong case was quickly disillusioned by the first Minister—the Minister for Industrial Development—as to the likelihood of the deputation bearing any fruit.

Six weeks after the appointment of this committee, we found that the Government appointed a Cabinet subcommittee on the 30th November. So it took quite some time before we were even able to get through to the Government that this was an important issue backed not by one or two people, but by a wide variety of people. Lots of businessmen and farmers and many other people within a radius of 70 or 80 miles of Merredin were prepared to advocate that this should be a venue for the starting of a superphosphate works.

Of course, from the 30th November, there was a lot of activity until after the 20th February when there was an election in the background. However, we do not appear to have heard very much since. The story from that time has been one of local enthusiasm still on the ascendancy, but discouragement upon discouragement from Government sources. I wonder how the Government was able to muster as much cold water as it did to pour on a project which looked like being a business concern from its very inception. Yet it has not been able to fire the imagination of the front bench. Why? Simply because the superphosphate companies are the ones who are dictating the tune.

Mr. Court: Nothing of the sort!

Mr. KELLY: Of course they are! The overall information is coming from that source.

Mr. Court: You are reflecting on those very competent officers who carried out the investigation independent of the Government.

Mr. KELLY: No I'm not!

Mr. Court: Yes you are!

Mr. KELLY: The officers are doing a good enough job; that is agreed. But they have to get their information from companies who will not disclose the costs of production.

Mr. Court: When you have studied their report you will find that they have not relied on the information supplied by local companies.

Mr. O'Connor: The investigations were made not only within the State. They were made outside as well.

Mr. KELLY: I know. But what was the significance of getting information from outside the State in so far as the contentious matter we are dealing with here is concerned?

Mr. O'Connor: To get an indication of the economics of the whole position.

Mr. KELLY: That is the whole trouble, right from the outset. There has been an endeavour by the Government to play down the possibility of having another superphosphate works, irrespective of the demand.

Mr. Court: You don't know how wrong you are. We are trying to find the ways and means of having another works.

Mr. KELLY: You have a strange way of going about it.

Mr. Court: We have a sense of responsibility which you have not.

Mr. KELLY: We have sufficient responsibility to realise the economics of the position. We do know that the Government has wholeheartedly shovelled out assistance in other directions. It does not worry about a small industry costing £1,500,000 which would produce 100,000 tons of superphosphate annually—and that figure would increase very soon. But it will turn handsprings backwards to play with millions.

Mr. Court: What about Esperance? The works there have been open for only 12 months.

Mr. KELLY: I am pleased that works are established at Esperance, Geraldton, Albany, and Picton. If a superphosphate works is not economical at the beginning, it is not very long before it is economical.

Yet the Government is not prepared to take a hand in the matter of erecting a superphosphate works in an inland area. I think this matter should be very thoroughly examined. I might say at this stage that the comments which have appeared in the Press on decisions that have been made have only come after a delay of seven months or more of investigation. Also, those comments have appeared since this motion was placed on the notice paper.

Mr. Court: The information could not be given until the investigation was completed.

Mr. KELLY: I do not think there could have been a more sluggish approach than on this occasion.

Mr. Court: You wait until you have studied the report! The investigators have done a very good job.

Mr. KELLY: While on the subject of the report, I wonder what the significance was of the Premier's attitude this afternoon. Yesterday the member for Mt. Marshall asked some questions without notice. My questions were already on the Table and recorded. The member for Mt. Marshall asked a question of the Minister for Education. This afternoon, the Premier asked that my question to him be postponed Yet the question asked of

the Minister for Agriculture in connection with this report was answered by the Premier ahead of my question.

Mr. Brand: The member for Mt. Marshall asked for information to be laid on the Table of the House. I did not know that you had a question on the notice paper.

Mr. KELLY: Why were the rest of the questions postponed?

Mr. Brand: Because the answers were available for the question asked by the member for Mt. Marshall. I did not have the answers to your question.

Mr. KELLY: It looks very fishy to me that you answered that question ahead of the question on the notice paper.

Mr. Brand: What would the difference have been if the Minister for Agriculture had been here to handle the question himself?

Mr. KELLY: Why did you have to give the answers?

Mr. Brand: Because those answers were handed to me. I did not have the answers to your questions.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! Will the honourable member please address the Chair?

Mr. Hall: They are all getting hungry, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Brand: I answered the question referring to super.

Mr. KELLY: To show how much the Minister for Industrial Development has endeavoured to help this situation I have here an old yellow copy of a paper which dates back to the 27th January of this year. The headlines are quite decent.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. KELLY: Prior to the tea suspension I mentioned that the Minister had received a deputation regarding the establishment of superphosphate works in country areas, and specifically in regard to Merredin. A short time elapsed and the Minister replied at length on the requests the deputation had put to him. One of the concessions which the deputation had sought was along the lines of that to be granted to B.H.P. for the haulage of iron ore from Koolyanobbing when iron ore mining begins at that centre. In reply to the deputation the Minister said that the backloading of bulk commodities, after the transport of the iron ore, would be unlikely.

However, I do not think a great deal of investigation has been made into the matter because, had approval been given to transport phosphatic rock to Merredin on a comparable freight basis to the concession granted to B.H.P., superphosphate could have been manufactured at that centre at a price which would have been very acceptable to primary producers. As a matter of fact, if the freight rate had been low enough, and the conditions requested by the deputation had been agreed to, there is every possibility that superphosphate could have been manufactured and sold in Merredin cheaper than is possible at present with superphosphate from the metropolitan area.

The full reply sent by the Minister has not been published, but there are several references to the Minister's letter in the article I am about to quote. In the letter the Minister stated that concurrently an examination was being made, in conjunction with the railways, into the possibility of a special freight rate for haulage in bulk of phosphatic rock and sulphur. The letter goes on—

> When I received the deputation I explained the reasons why it would not be practicable to relate the freight rate provided in the agreement for the transport of iron ore from Koolyanobbing to Kwinana to the transport of phosphate rock and sulphur from Fremantle to Merredin.

That was correct. The Minister did indicate that he did not think it was possible. However, there are many lay people who believe that the possibility does exist, particularly when it is realised that all successful transport systems throughout the world are calibrated in regard to their ability to handle large quantities of produce, or other goods, by the amount of backloading available. That applies to road, rail, shipping, or any other form of transport. The success of a transport venture is always based not only on the goods transported to a particular place but also on the return freight which is available. Apparently, however, in this case that is not so with the railways as has been instanced by the comments of the Minister. He then proceeds to give some reasons, and they are as follows:—

1. The iron ore will be transported in large and regular annual tonnages of not less than 1,000,000 tons per year.
2. These tonnages will progressively increase and possibly go up to 3,000,000 tons per year.
3. Iron ore, because of its physical and weight characteristics is a good commodity to transport on a large tonnage basis in special type equipment.
4. The agreement provides for full loading of ore wagons and a full complement of ore wagons per train load as well as trains each of large tonnage capacity.
5. The agreement also provides for a quick turn-around of iron ore trains with a fleet of wagons working a complete year-round shuttle service.

> Against this the movement of phosphate rock and sulphur would be of comparatively small annual tonnage and it may be hard to justify special purpose wagons.

I do not know whether one would call 100,000 tons—and probably more in the near future—a small amount; but apparently that is one of the obstacles that the Minister sees, and it is one of the reasons which he uses frequently when he is speaking against the possibility of a superphosphate works being established in Merredin. The Minister went on—

> In any case, neither the tonnage nor the method of receiving the raw material from abroad appears to make it possible to operate a continuous shuttle service.
>
> It may be possible to organise the arrival of ships and their unloading on a basis to fit in with this type of timetable, although I can see great difficulties.
>
> It is out of the question to use the iron ore trucks for back-loading. I think you will agree that it would be impossible to ensure that unloading from ships would be available to the precise time table of type of facilities necessary for the special purpose iron ore wagons.
>
> This therefore brings us to the situation where we have to consider the possibility of providing conventional type wagons of appropriate size and try to work out a time table which, in back-loading and other operating attractions to the W.A. Government Railways to warrant a concession freight rate.

It is remarkable that we in Western Australia cannot accomplish something like that, because it is nothing new. It is not a departure from normal practice or normal procedure with railways or any other form of transport. They can handle whatever is offering.

We are attaching far too much importance to the economics of this proposition, forgetting, perhaps, the greater result that could be obtained from a survey that could be made on the establishment of a superphosphate works in an inland country area. Be that as it may, the Minister has at his disposal a great deal of information and figures on railway matters. Undoubtedly he has been advised by departmental officers who probably have had a lifetime of experience of railway administration. Nevertheless on this matter, I doubt whether their experience would be very extensive because this is a proposal which is entirely new and where the Government is being given an opportunity to handle backloading, and yet it has raised all the arguments it possibly can to refute any possibility that the Railways Department could handle backloading.

So I think a great deal more examination is needed if we are to be convinced that the outlook which is adopted at present is the one to which we must conform for all time. The Minister went on to speak of research, and what is necessary to get down to a basis on which to make an approach to this suggestion for the establishment of a superphosphate works.

The comment made by the Minister to which I am now about to refer is indeed a classic. We have a Cabinet subcommittee which has offered repeated assurances that its investigations have been thorough, continuous, and all-embracing. In addition to being given that assurance constantly, we have also been told that an interdepartmental committee is working around the clock to produce the answer.

A short time ago the Minister accused me of not having a high opinion of the committee. Until this evening I do not think any honourable member in this Chamber was aware of the personnel of that committee. Very little information has been given to the general public, and particularly to that section which is vitally concerned in this matter. In my opinion an excessive degree of secrecy on these matters can bring about misunderstanding. I am surprised the Government does not adopt a more open attitude and let everyone know where it is heading. Very often the attitude at present adopted by the Government could cause its actions to be misinterpreted or castigated, as the case may be. Therefore, as I have said, the Government should take us into its confidence a great deal more in regard to these matters.

The Minister for Railways attempts to throw the onus of producing specific information back into the lap of the Merredin committee, notwithstanding the fact that there is a very competent committee—so we are told—which has been operating for quite some time and that the Government has had this Cabinet subcommittee in operation also. I thought this to be a rather feeble way of throwing the onus back on to the Merredin committee. In this regard, the Minister for Railways, in his letter to Merredin, said—

> I want to make it clear, however, that this does not mean to say that, when the exact nature of a proposal can be stated by your committee, a concession cannot be negotiated.

That is fair enough. But then the Minister goes on to throw the complete onus on to the local committee, notwithstanding the fact that inquiries are being made by a committee composed of top-ranking members of various departments, by saying—

> The type of specific information needed will be—
>
> (a) Time of the year when imports can be expected from abroad.

(b) Frequency and volume of these import shipments.

(c) Method and speed of loading railway trucks at Fremantle.

(d) Method and speed of unloading trucks at Merredin.

Of course, a committee such as the one at Merredin, which is composed mainly of farmers and business people, would not have all this expert knowledge the Minister thinks it should have; and yet, as I said earlier, the onus is being thrown on to these people to ascertain the information which these two Government committees are seeking—one being a Cabinet subcommittee and the other being an interdepartmental committee comprising people in responsible positions. Surely to goodness, if the Minister wanted this information, and if this inquiry is in any way competent and thorough, the source of his information should be either one of those committees; but, instead, he procrastinates, and asks the Merredin committee to enter the picture to provide that information. I feel sure the Minister must have had a lapse if he thought he was going to get away with anything in those circumstances.

It was obvious that he had all the sources at his disposal from which he could obtain the information he sought. He could have obtained it immediately, whereas a country committee would have been battling to obtain the same information over a much longer period. The Minister need not think that I am voicing all the criticism against him, because the criticism has been fairly general.

On the 18th March, 1965, again in *The Farmers' Weekly*, we find this article—

> Minister Attacked on Refusal to Cut Freight Costs.
>
> Delegates criticised the Minister for Railways, Mr. Court, for refusing to grant a reduced rail freight on phosphate rock for the proposed Merredin superphosphate works at the F.U. annual conference last week.
>
> A motion containing the criticism was presented by Mr. H. L. Kelsall (Moora) following the passing of a motion by the Corrigin branch: That this conference supports in principle any move to form a grower-owned superphosphate works at inland centres.
>
> Mr. Kelsall said that farmers wanted decentralisation and the establishment of a super works at Merredin would be a big step in that direction.
>
> B.H.P. had been given the right to cart iron ore to Fremantle at a cheaper rate than was granted to others and a similar reduced freight rate should apply to phosphate rock carried to Merredin.

Following this paragraph there are one or two implications that do not have any bearing on the matter, and then the following appears:—

> Mr. McDonald said that the rates B.H.P. paid were not concessional ones, but economic and profitable.

I think the Minister gave that assurance also when discussing the legislation for the standard gauge railway. The article continues—

> Mr. A. Middleton (Corrigin) in moving the motion asking for conference support of the proposed Merredin super works, said it was a form of decentralisation which should be encouraged.
>
> Benefits
>
> He pointed out the benefits of such a works and compared it with the works in Victoria which were owned by growers and which supplied super cheaper than any other company.

So it can be seen that whilst I may be the mouthpiece in this House for the complaints that are circulating around the State on the manner in which people have been treated, they are also being voiced by other persons. We should regard this matter from a State point of view rather than from a district point of view, or from the point of view held by those in an inland centre. The town of Merredin has been cited because that has been the springboard for making an endeavour to establish an inland superphosphate works.

I said earlier that the activities of this committee, from a layman's point of view, seem to have been kept very secret, because it is seven or eight months since we heard anything of the outlook which the Government acquired in November of last year on the future of superphosphate production in Western Australia. I have been through the daily Press pretty thoroughly, and I find that utterances in regard to super have been conspicuous by their absence, with the possible exception of the various disgruntled sections of organisations and zone councils having continued to discuss this matter at their zone conferences.

On the 10th August of this year there appeared on the notice paper the motion to which I shall ask the House to agree in a few moments. It is a simple motion, and covers most of the requirements of the industry. It contains a dragnet clause which will enable the widest of inquiries to be undertaken. It will not tie a committee down to any narrow path, but will give it a great deal of latitude to inquire thoroughly into this industry from a parliamentary point of view, as distinct from a ministerial, or a departmental point of view.

I think our opinions from this Parliament are equally important and necessary to the superphosphate industry, particularly if we are to get any satisfaction, or if we are to get to the bottom of the difficulties. As I have said, the notice of the introduction of this motion appeared on the notice paper on the 10th August, and within a week the Premier came out in the Press and gave us an outline as to how far this departmental committee had reached in its investigations at that stage. The Premier also indicated that to the committee's responsibilities had been added some of the very things which were contained in my motion, and which were apparently not within the ambit of the committee's investigations up to that time.

So if we have done nothing else, we have certainly broadened the scope of inquiry so far as super generally is concerned. I think it is regrettable that we should have to bolster up our ideas and intensify our investigations because somebody is on our tail. That was the attitude adopted by the Premier and his Cabinet; because I daresay the Premier would not have acted alone.

A little later, on the 14th September, we find a fairly comprehensive coverage of what is being done; and again there is the reiteration of the newly added scope of inquiry, informing us just where the departmental committee was supposed to be heading. But we are getting nowhere in this matter. We are told that this, that, and something else has been advised by the committee, and apparently the Government has accepted that as final, and is prepared to hitch its opinions to that of the committee.

I would say that a totally different type of investigation is needed. With all due respect to the ability of a departmental committee, I think it would be far better to have a committee of members from this House examine the various aspects, take evidence in the places necessary, and obtain the feeling and opinions of the people concerned—those who are paying the piper. We are only pawns in the game. It is the people in the rural industry of Western Australia who are really concerned, and it is they who should be receiving the consideration. I think there is ample room for a Select Committee to go—even if concurrently—into all the ramifications of superphosphate, right from the phosphatic rock stage, as it is found at Nauru or Christmas Island, until it reaches the farmers and is used by them on their properties.

In his advice of the 14th September, 1965, the Premier said that the committee had studied the Merredin proposal to manufacture super, but had reported that such a scheme was not financially sound. Of course, there is evidence that, before even one day's investigation took place, right through the whole matter the Government regarded this as uneconomical; as being financially unsound. It adopted this attitude before there was ever any investigation into the matter at all.

Mr. O'Connor: The report proves the Government was right.

Mr. KELLY: I do not think it does. I have no hesitation in contradicting that line of thought, because the report gives no such indication. The Minister cannot tell me that something that has not been tried can be definitely said to be unsound.

Mr. O'Connor: Economically.

Mr. KELLY: That is a very useful word; it covers a multitude of sins. One of the sins it covers in this instance is the sin that we have come to this hurdle before any investigation was carried out. At the very beginning, before any committee was formed, we were told by the Minister that this matter was uneconomical. Of course we all know that big companies do not want such superphosphate works established, because their creation would diminish the head office capacity of those companies. Apart from this, it would provide a certain amount of decentralisation.

These large companies naturally have a sale for every ton of superphosphate they can manufacture, and accordingly they are not concerned that it is all being supplied from one section. It is cheaper for them to do that.

Mr. Lewis: It is cheaper from the farmer's point of view.

Mr. KELLY: No; it is not.

Mr. Lewis: It is; because the farmer has to pay for the establishment of super works at Albany and Geraldton. He does this through the price he pays for super. Had it all been manufactured in the metropolitan area, he would have got it cheaper.

Mr. KELLY: Of course he would not! At the present time the farmer is paying exactly the same. That is what the Premier told us in his answers.

Mr. Court: All farmers are carrying a share of the extra cost.

Mr. KELLY: I think the State ought to be carrying a much bigger share than it is.

Mr. Lewis: The farmers at Merredin are subsidising the Albany super works.

Mr. KELLY: Is it right that they should subsidise those works?

Mr. Lewis: It is all right if somebody else is paying the capital in.

Mr. KELLY: In Merredin the people were prepared to provide the money; there was to be no charge on the Government at all; they did not even ask for a subsidy. By means of debentures, and contributions generally, the farmers in Merredin were prepared to put in roughly £400

apiece; and that amount would be confined entirely to the 3,000 farmers who would be drawing super at that section.

Mr. Lewis: Regardless of the economics.

Mr. KELLY: There was no thought of asking the Government to finance it. The people concerned would have preferred their own co-operative system, but the Government said that they could not have that because it was uneconomical.

Mr. Court: No-one has tried to stop them.

Mr. KELLY: No; but the Minister has tried to throw every spanner possible into the works. He even sent an industrial seminar to Merredin to explain that there was no merit at all in establishing a super works in that area; none at all.

The Minister might decry the economics before any investigation is made. It is too silly for him to try to overcome the criticism in this regard. He is getting plenty of it, and he will continue to receive criticism from country areas for a long time to come, unless he alters his tune.

Mr. Court: Have you looked at the efforts of Euroa to get the debenture subscribed?

Mr. KELLY: I am not interested in Euroa. I am only interested in Merredin and what the people there are prepared to do.

Mr. Court: Look at the position in Euroa and you will change your views.

Mr. KELLY: I will not change my views. I have as fixed views in this regard as the Minister. The volume of inquiry which he has made has been sufficient to turn his mind against the possibility of establishing an inland superphosphate works in Merredin.

Mr. Court: No.

Mr. KELLY: Next to the importance of wool to the rural industry will come, in the future, superphosphate supplies at proper prices. The associated problems which farmers face in so many different directions should be the keynote for us to establish a more equitable distribution of superphosphate, and at a much more reasonable price. Parliament should take this opportunity, as a separate move from the committees which have been operating in this field, to fully inform itself of all the angles of superphosphate manufacture in Western Australia.

There is no room, and there is no call, for evasiveness. We had enough of that in the calibre of the answers which were supplied to questions asked last year. There is no place for part truths; and we have had these by virtue of the fact that we have been given figures which were incomplete. As a basis of the refusal to discuss the cost factor, the industry in Western Australia, generally, and the rural people, particularly, have been done an injustice.

Mr. Court: You are assuming all this. You are not being fair. You have not studied the true economics of the subject at all.

Mr. KELLY: Perhaps I have not gone into the economics as deeply as the Minister has, but I say the economics are secondary to the advancement of a fast-developing area of Western Australia which has every possibility of expanding tremendously beyond Merredin, if the Minister for Lands will co-operate.

Mr. Court: You have available the cheapest possible superphosphate supplies, but apparently you do not care what the cost is.

Mr. KELLY: I have already pointed out that the people of Merredin and of the surrounding districts within a radius of 70 or 80 miles are prepared to come into this, and to provide the cost of establishing and running a superphosphate works in that centre.

Mr. Court: They are entitled to do that.

Mr. KELLY: If the Minister wants to talk about the economics of it, let him pour that line down the throat of somebody else.

Mr. Court: Nobody is stopping the establishment of the super works. We are helping with research, and we are making available the results.

Mr. KELLY: The Minister has been throwing every spanner possible into the works in an endeavour to cut from under the feet of the people concerned the opportunity to establish a superphosphate works there.

Mr. Bovell: Why is it then that a Liberal-Country Party Government established the superphosphate works at Albany and Esperance?

Mr. KELLY: There is an opportunity here for the Government to make it a hat-trick and establish another at Merredin. There is no excuse for us to condone any longer the present stranglehold of the superphosphate industry. Parliament should be given the opportunity to examine the matter very closely by the appointment of a Select Committee. I commend the motion to the House.

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

BILLS (4): RETURNED

1. Petroleum Products Subsidy Bill.
2. Hairdressers Registration Act Amendment Bill.
3. Police Act Amendment Bill.
4. Land Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

UREA

Imports and Costs

4. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

In answering questions on the 8th September, 1964, regarding urea imports into Western Australia, he quoted tonnages and values covering a three-year period. Could he give the reason why more than 2½ times as much urea was imported from Japan in the 1963-64 season than from Belgium-Luxemburg, when there appeared to be a distinct price advantage in purchasing from the latter country?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

Each purchase of urea is made on the basis of availability and the lowest landed cost in Fremantle offering on international tender at the time of buying.

The freight differential, of approximately £3 per ton, accounts for most of the difference between the f.o.b. prices at the ports of shipment.

6 and 7. *These questions were further postponed.*

CATTLE COMPENSATION FUNDS

Applications for Compensation: Rejection

8. Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) During the years 1963-64 and 1964-65, were any applications for compensation refused by any one of the following three funds:—

(a) Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Fund;

(b) Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Fund?

(c) Milk Act Compensation Fund?

(2) If so, what were the reasons for refusal?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by (1).

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Leave to Attend Funerals

20. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Under what conditions are employees of the Education Department granted leave with pay to attend funerals?

(2) From when did the present policy apply?

(3) Was it promulgated amongst employees?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) Teachers are granted leave with pay to attend the funeral of a member of the teacher's family, a close relative, or in-law.

Time off from duty for a short period (less than half a day) is granted without formal application to enable teachers to attend the funeral of a friend.

(2) This has been the practice over a great many years.

(3) No.

24. *This question was further postponed.*

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 8th September, on the following motion by Mr. Graham:—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Traffic) [8.9 p.m.]: This Bill was introduced by the member for Balcatta, and it seeks to amend the definition of "road" in two sections of the Traffic Act; namely, sections 30 and 30A. These sections deal with the requirement for a driver to report an accident which involves damage to property, and also one in which bodily injury is occasioned.

Under section 4 of the Traffic Act the definition of "road" is—

> Any highway, road or street open to, or used by, the public, and includes every carriageway, footway, reservation and traffic island thereon.

However, there are two other sections in the Traffic Act where this definition is widened. These two sections refer to drunken driving and also dangerous driving, and the definition of "road" is widened by the addition of the words, "or in any place commonly used by the public or to which the public is permitted to have access." These additional words are included in those sections—that is, in the sections dealing with drunken driving and dangerous driving—for a particular reason: because there are many places off the roads where these offences can occur. I refer to drive-in theatres, public parking areas, and the like, and even at agricultural shows.

It is necessary to retain the additional words I have quoted in those two sections. The honourable member, in his Bill, seeks to have these additional words also included in the two sections to which he referred—the sections dealing with the reporting of accidents involving damage and the reporting of accidents involving bodily injury. I think it would be impracticable to do this so far as the reporting of ordinary accidents is concerned. The honourable member said, in reply to my interjection, that this would not be necessary in

the case of minor accidents, such as one car running into the rear of another causing, say, a bent bumper; and he said that something minor should be left to the discretion of the drivers.

However, the Act states quite definitely that if an accident involves damage it must be reported; and we know of instances where someone has been involved in a minor accident and both parties have come to mutual agreement on the spot. One, perhaps, will admit guilt and say, "Forget about the whole thing, I will fix that with my insurance company"; or, "I will send you a cheque for the damage." However, the first thing he does is report the accident to the police, while the other fellow does not do so. Therefore the next thing the other person knows is that he is advised by the police of this particular accident and asked to explain why he did not report it.

So it is necessary for all accidents involving damage to personal property to be reported to the police. The reason for this is that for statistical purposes the police can assess, over a period, the accidents that repeatedly occur at particular spots, and can suggest that some action be taken towards erecting suitable signs, traffic lights, or some other signs that would be a warning to the motorist.

If, following the honourable member's reasoning, every little accident that occurred in a car park or a drive-in theatre had to be reported, then I suggest the recording of them would be impracticable. We know there are many cases where a car, when it is getting into a parking spot at one of these places, rubs against another one. This is just a minor accident; but if the honourable member had his amendment agreed to, it would mean that every minor accident would have to be reported. To what advantage I do not know, because it would not serve any purpose whatsoever. Therefore, to be brief, I have no hesitation at all for the reasons I have stated in opposing this particular part of the Bill introduced by the honourable member.

In regard to the second part of the Bill, dealing with the section of the Act wherein it is required to report cases of bodily injury as a result of an accident, here again to a certain extent I hold the same views. Nevertheless, I feel the House could agree to the suggested amendment. If the Act continued as it is, I do not think it would create any problems at all, because I feel sure if anyone were injured as a result of an accident at a showground, in a drive-in theatre, or in a parking allotment, the first thing he would do after receiving medical attention would be to report the accident to the police. If the other party were known at the time, he could possibly have a charge preferred against him for reckless driving.

This would be possible under a section of the Act which enables such a prosecution to be made, according to the definition of "road" which I explained earlier. Therefore, at this point of time, I will agree to the second reading of this Bill with the proviso that I will oppose the clause referring to section 30 of the Traffic Act, and will support the proposed amendment to section 30A. I support the second reading.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Norton.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Labour) [8.18 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill contains four amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. Tonkin: Only four!

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes, four. The most important of these relates to the provision which gives a worker who has been injured by the personal negligence or wilful act of his employer the option to "either claim compensation under the Act or take proceedings independently of the Act."

A worker is thus put to his election, although if both remedies are available and an action is brought unsuccessfully to recover damages, the court is required to assess compensation or refer the assessment to the Workers' Compensation Board.

Although acceptance of workers' compensation of itself will not amount to the exercise of the option, there are occasions when financial circumstances will encourage an injured worker to accept compensation and forgo an action for damages. On the other hand, notification of the intention to take proceedings for damages independently of the Act technically absolves the employer—or more realistically the insurer—from the requirement to continue compensation payments.

If this were the course normally followed, it is evident that considerable personal hardship would result. In this respect, it is worth noting that the State Government Insurance Office, in cases where the worker has elected to proceed at common law, even after having taken workers' compensation, and where there appears to be an incontrovertible right to substantial damages, has often agreed, on the ground of a worker's financial need, to make weekly payments at workers' compensation rates and to pay hospital and medical expenses to the limit provided for in the Act, it being understood that such payments are not workers' compensation,

but an advanced payment of damages. It is my understanding that the S.G.I.O. is not alone in adopting this policy.

There is another way in which the doctrine may lead to injustice. The basis of the doctrine is that a worker who accepts compensation, knowing he has the right to institute proceedings at common law, is thereafter debarred from taking the latter course.

Usually, it is only by accident that the employer—or, once again, more correctly the insurer—comes to know that the worker had the necessary knowledge of his common law right at the time of accepting compensation. There is reason to suppose that many of those who are permitted to renounce compensation in favour of damages have known all along of the common law right. For instance, it not infrequently happens that the worker renouncing compensation has made his application through a person or agency known to be aware of the fact that the worker has alternative remedies.

Again, it has happened more than once that the worker against whom the doctrine is successfully invoked is put in that predicament by the carelessness or ignorance of an adviser, he being advised that he has a right at common law without being told that if he wishes to preserve that right he must cease forthwith to accept compensation payments.

The amendment under consideration, if agreed to, will have the following effects:—

An injured worker may continue to receive compensation without prejudicing his right to institute proceedings at common law. If he exercises this right, he may continue to receive payments to the limit allowed under the Act. If the worker has not commenced proceedings for recovery of damages within 12 months of the accident, the insurer may call upon him to make a decision within 42 days to do so, or otherwise advise in writing that he has no such intention. If at the expiration of that time no decision has been made, the employer may apply to the Supreme Court for an order that the worker commence such proceedings within such time as that court may direct.

When hearing the application the court may order the worker to proceed in such time as it may direct, adjourn the proceedings on such terms and conditions as it sees fit, or make any other order or give any such directions as it sees fit. The court may extend any period previously determined on application.

Where the worker notifies the employer that he does not intend to institute proceedings for damages, or where he does not proceed within the time stipulated by the court, his right to sue is extinguished without affecting his right to compensation under the Act.

The Bill also contains an amendment to provide that the insurer, in the event of a worker having recovered judgment for damages, does not continue to be liable to make compensation payments as well, and that any payments already made would be deducted from the amount recovered for damages. Similarly, any amount recovered for damages will be deducted from the sum recoverable by the worker by way of compensation.

The stipulation of time limits by court direction is equally advantageous to both insurer and worker, as most members will realise that in determining the degree of liability by court proceedings, a hearing too remote in time from an accident could occasion difficulties, both in regard to the events surrounding the injury and the availability of witnesses.

Three further amendments are proposed. The first schedule of the Act deals with the payments to be made to the dependants of an injured worker who dies as a result of an injury for which he had been receiving compensation. When in 1964 the maximum was increased to £3,500, plus £100 for each child, the minimum should have been increased proportionately. It is therefore proposed to raise this minimum from the present £800 to £1,100 for the surviving widow or mother wholly dependent upon the deceased worker, and from £75 to £100 for each dependent child.

In 1956 the Act was amended to provide that females employed in industries—the pay scale for which made no differentiation as to sex—would receive male rates of compensation. Parliament's intention is clear, but some doubt exists as to whether the Act in fact does just that. The amendment is proposed to clarify the situation.

The final amendment relates to the "journeying" provision agreed to in 1964. During the debate last year, the words "or place of pick up" were added as being synonymous with place of work. These words were added as a result of representations made by Opposition members to cater for wharf workers. It is pointed out that the inclusion of these words is regarded as having had no effect whatever. Since such workers are casually employed, the contract of service commences after the worker has been picked up and terminates prior to his returning home at the conclusion of an allotted task. Consequently, during such journeys between home and place of pickup, the worker has no employer, and a right to claim is empty unless there is someone against whom he can claim.

The problem was overcome in other States by providing that in such cases the worker's last employer shall be liable for any claim, and it is proposed to make the same provision in the Western Australian Act.

Mr. Evans: Before you sit down I think you mentioned in connection with the amendment to the first schedule in clause 4 that the amount is to be increased from £800 to £1,100; but it is only £1,000 in the Bill.

Mr. O'NEIL: I have not seen the Bill as yet.

Mr. Evans: You did, I think, read out £1,100, and it is only £1,000 in the Bill.

Mr. O'NEIL: I did say £1,100. I will have the point checked. In the meantime I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. W. Hegney.

FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Labour) [8.28 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The proposed amendments to the Factories and Shops Act, 1963-1964, are designed to—

(i) Extend the provisions of the Act to factories occupied by or on behalf of the Crown.

(ii) Require that plans of a new building to be used as a factory, alterations to a building already a factory, or an existing building to be adapted to such use, be submitted to the Chief Inspector of Factories before construction work commences.

(iii) Provide for the Minister to make certain exemptions or modifications in fees payable for registration.

(iv) Allow the chief inspector to modify the requirements in regard to records of employees.

(v) Tie the minimum age at which persons may commence work in a factory, shop, or warehouse, to the school leaving requirements in the Education Act, and authorise welfare officers appointed under the Education Act to check on compliance with the relevant provision.

(vi) Correct anomalies in sections 55 and 56 in regard to overtime for women and junior males.

(vii) Add the term "privileged shop" to those classes which can remain open on a public holiday.

The addition of a new section 8A to replace paragraph (e) in subsection (2) of section 5 will make more specific the intention of the Act to cover factories which are operated by the Government or other Crown instrumentalities. It would not be at all satisfactory if undertakings of this nature operated by the Government were not subject fully to the health, welfare, and safety provisions, and fees, which apply to private industry.

At present the Act requires that a plan of the factory, shop, or warehouse shall be submitted only in the case and at the time of an initial registration. This has sometimes led to the situation where alterations have had to be made after the building has been erected in order to make it comply with the requirements of the Act. The proposed amendment requires that where a person proposes to erect or alter or adapt a building for use as a factory, he shall submit a plan and specifications of the work to the chief inspector.

By ensuring that this is done at an early stage, a report can be made as to whether the plan conforms to the requirements of the Act. Any modifications can then be made by the designer while the proposals are in the plan stage. This will save expense to builders and occupiers of factories, and also ensure that minimum standards are embodied in the design of the building at the outset.

A number of occasions have arisen where factories or shops are conducted by charitable organisations and requests have been made for a remission of registration fees. In its present form, the Factories and Shops Act does not make provision for remission of these fees in any form, and the object of this amendment is to give the Minister power to do so, either in whole or in part, if it is considered that the merits of the case warrant it.

Section 33 of the Factories and Shops Act lays down in rigid form the particulars to be maintained at every factory in regard to time worked and wages paid. A record of this nature is essential for the purposes of inspection in such matters as checking numbers of employees and overtime worked by juniors.

With the introduction of centralised accounting and mechanical methods of keeping staff and wage records, some difficulty is being experienced in adhering to the letter of the record requirements as now laid down. The amendment will permit the chief inspector to modify the requirements of this section to an extent which allows of flexibility to keep up with modern accounting methods and yet, at the same time, provide such information as is necessary in the course of inspection of premises. This applies particularly to branches of large firms where the main accounting procedure is centralised at the head office.

The specification of a minimum age at which a child can be employed has, in the past, led to some anomalous positions in regard to junior females. At present a girl could leave school prior to reaching

the age of 15 years and then be engaged in a number of avenues of employment; but if the work is covered by the Factories and Shops Act, she is precluded from doing so.

The definition of "child" in the Act means a person not of school leaving age, and the amendment will tie the minimum age of employment in with the school leaving requirements of the Education Act. Provision is also made for welfare officers appointed under the Education Act to be authorised to check on the employment in factories, shops, and warehouses, of persons not of leaving age.

Section 55 in its present form prohibits the working of overtime by women as well as young persons. While still protecting young persons, the amendment will provide for senior females to work reasonable overtime. The amendment to section 56 also tidies up overtime provisions by providing a cover in regard to spread of hours and overtime payment for males from the age of 16 years, instead of 18 years as it now stands.

Finally, the amendment to section 95 of the Act clarifies the position in regard to privileged shops being permitted to open on public holidays in the same manner as small and exempt shops.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. W. Hegney.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [8.35 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

There are two separate matters dealt with in this Bill. In 1963, the Agricultural Products Act was amended to provide for all bales or packages of wool to be clearly marked, branded, or labelled to indicate the identity of the producer of the wool before being removed from the property. Inspections carried out during 1964, however, indicated that whilst bales and packages received at brokers' stores mostly complied with this requirement of the Act, many of the others, purchased direct from properties by itinerant woolbuyers or taken direct to the merchants' stores at Fremantle, were not identified as required.

It is Crown Law opinion that once wool bales or packages which have not been marked, branded, or labelled in accordance with the Act and regulations, are removed from a property, there is no means of obtaining evidence to enable legal action to be taken against an offender. Therefore, to overcome this difficulty and to make the Act more effective, this proposed amendment will make it an offence for any person to have in his possession, except on the property on which it is produced, any wool packed in a bale or package, unless it is marked, branded, or labelled in such a manner as to clearly and legibly indicate the identity of the producer of the wool.

It is expected that inspections will be made of trucks arriving at wool stores in the Fremantle area, and, if unbranded bales are found, action can be taken against the person who has the bales in his possession. This provision is similar to those already contained in other Acts such as the Plant Diseases Act, and the Factories and Shops Act.

The other amendment to the Agricultural Products Act concerns the Apple Sales Advisory Committee. Originally this committee came into being for one year, by legislation in 1962, at the request of the Western Australian Fruit Growers' Association.

The Apple Sales Advisory Committee was set up to determine the size and quality of specified varieties of apples being sold on the local market. This measure was designed to control the sale of apples so that prices would not approach glut levels due to the sale of inferior fruit at a very low price. At the request of the Western Australian Fruit Growers' Association, the life of this committee was extended by an amendment to the Agricultural Products Act in 1963 for a further two years to the 31st December, 1965.

The Western Australian Fruit Growers' Association has been considering for some time the desirability of some legislation on a permanent basis, but crop variability over the three-year period during which controls have operated has made it clear that quality control by itself is not effective in ensuring satisfactory marketing of the crop.

The 1964-65 apple crop was a record one; and, although record quantities were exported, the balance left over for local marketing was much larger than normal. The existing controls ensured that the purchaser received, on the average, much better fruit than he did before the controls were instituted, but unfortunately many growers received very poor prices for their local market fruit.

Because of the seasonal variations already mentioned, and other factors, the Fruit Growers' Association desires to further assess the situation before submitting proposals of a permanent nature; and, to enable this assessment to be carried out, it is desired to extend the present controls by another year. Provision is therefore made in the Bill to continue the Apple Sales Advisory Committee until the 31st December, 1966.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Kelly.

FRUIT CASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [8.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is complementary to the Agricultural Products Act Amendment Bill, which I have just introduced, and the extension of the activities of the Apple Sales Advisory Committee for a further 12 months, as proposed under the amendment to the Agricultural Products Act, necessitates the amending of the Fruit Cases Act also.

The section of this Act, amended in 1962, when the Apple Sales Advisory Committee was originally set up, and extended for a further two years in 1963, defines a direct buyer of apples and provides for his registration.

This enables information to be obtained of the wholesalers and retailers who buy direct, to ensure that the grades of apples prescribed under the Agricultural Products Act can be effectively checked. This ensures that uniform standards in quality are maintained irrespective of whether fruit is purchased through normal channels or direct from the grower.

In view of the Western Australian Fruit Growers' Association's request that this legislation be continued for another year, until the 31st December, 1966, I am commending this amendment to the Fruit Cases Act.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Rowberry.

SALE OF HUMAN BLOOD ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. BOVELL (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [8.44 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The reason for this amendment is that the Commonwealth Minister for Health has advised that, subsequent to the passing of the Sale of Human Blood Act, 1963, a related matter has come to the attention of his department. Information has been received which indicates that a pharmaceutical company was investigating the possibility of obtaining supplies of human placenta from hospitals in Australia for export to the U.S.A. The proposal involved the purchase of whole human placenta, which would then have been exported by air, in deep-freeze containers, to the company's parent organisation in the U.S.A. where it would be used for the production of immune globulins.

After being contacted by the company, several hospitals, other than teaching hospitals which do supply human placenta to the Royal Red Cross Society's Blood Transfusion Service, indicated a willingness to comply with the request.

Although this company has been dissuaded from proceeding with the proposal, there is a real possibility of other companies entering this field unless some preventive measures are adopted; and it is felt that the general question of purchase and export of human placenta involves two very important considerations.

Firstly, if this were to become a profitable commercial activity, it might be very difficult to maintain sufficient supplies in Australia for our own purposes. The supply of human placenta is already no more than sufficient for our present requirements, and future increases in requirements are expected to absorb future increases in supplies. Secondly, this development would tend to raise the related question of payment of individual blood donors for their services, which would be undesirable.

For these reasons the Commonwealth has requested that we adopt a policy under which hospitals will not sell to commercial firms any human blood, blood derivatives, or human organs (including placenta) from which blood or blood derivatives may be obtained.

Mr. J. Hegney: That's a bit involved, is it not? Or you are making it involved.

Mr. BOVELL: It is involved. As our Act refers to blood only, it appears that an amendment is required to cover the additional items referred to. I would like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service.

Mr. J. Hegney: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOVELL: This organisation has given, and is giving, wonderful service to the public, and I think all citizens of Western Australia owe a debt of gratitude to the voluntary workers concerned.

Mr. J. Hegney: And also the blood donors.

Mr. BOVELL: I think this is an appropriate time—

Mr. J. Hegney: What about the blood donors?

Mr. BOVELL: I did not hear the honourable member.

Mr. J. Hegney: I said, "And also the blood donors."

Mr. BOVELL: Yes, the blood donors, too. I thank the honourable member for Belmont for prompting me, but it is hard for me to hear him. I have heard him say on many occasions that he finds it difficult to hear me, but I think the boot is on the other foot on this occasion. I could not hear what the honourable member

said, but I thank him for his interjection. The blood donors, too, give wonderful service to the community, and I say "Thank you" to them also.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Norton.

House adjourned at 8.48 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 16th September, 1965

CONTENTS

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

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Teaching Facilities: Availability

1. The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON asked the Minister for Mines:

   Further to my question on Wednesday, the 8th September, 1965, regarding specialist teachers for handicapped children—

   (1) What facilities are available for the communication-handicapped children, i.e. cerebral palsied, aphasic, autistic and deaf?

   Teachers: Overseas Training

   (2) As the teacher referred to has 10 months to serve overseas, does the Minister think that only three months' leave with full pay is either reasonable or fair?

   The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

   (1) There are no facilities in this State designed specifically for the education of the autistic or of the aphasic. In children who are communication-handicapped there are nearly always other factors operative and early diagnosis is most difficult.

   Some provision has been made at:

   (a) The Deaf School where the disability appears to be associated with a hearing loss.

   (b) Sir James Mitchell Spastic Centre where cerebral palsy is apparent; or

   (c) Some occupation centres.

   (2) Yes.

HOUSING IN COUNTRY AREAS

Local Authority Finance: Use for Building Programmes

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

   For the express purpose of overcoming housing shortages in country towns, do shire and town councils have authority to—

   (a) borrow money; or

   (b) use their own finance;

   to institute home-building programmes for residents in their districts for rental and purchase similar to other approved housing schemes?

   The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

   (a) Yes.

   (b) No.

   In other words, they can use loan funds, but not revenue, for building houses.

3. and 4. *These questions were postponed.*