

Just whether we can achieve the two-fold objective of assisting the parents and building up the country schools by merely raising boarding allowances, or in some other way, is a matter for very close examination at present.

I also appreciate the situation where we have junior high schools scattered over fairly wide areas, and at fairly long distances from senior high schools. I also appreciate that many country parents are satisfied with the first three years of secondary education which their children receive.

Therefore, we are looking to the possibility of upgrading the standard of education which is given in a country junior high school, even in the first three years. Perhaps this might have to take the form of travelling science rooms under the direction of an expert science teacher. This is one possible facility. However, no decisions have been arrived at, but I merely mention this to give an indication of the matters which the department is closely examining at the present time.

I appreciate the remarks made by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn on a senior high school. This matter will be examined to see if we can do something about the accommodation at the school and at the hostel. The hostel at Merredin was the first country high school hostel established by the hostel authority. It has since been extended, but apparently it needs some further extension or duplication.

The member for Albany mentioned the building in Albany which the department was obliged to hire in order to give instruction in welding and the motor trades. The honourable member was a little unfair when he said that the cost of the two demountables was being wasted because they would be used only for a couple of years. Of course, demountables are not wasted. At the worst, all that is wasted is the cost of erecting a demountable and removing it when it is no longer required for the purpose. When this occurs, it is shifted to some other place where it is needed.

I admit that a fairly high rental is being paid. I think the honourable member mentioned a figure of \$45 a week. One could say, "Rather than spend \$45 a week and renovate the building, we will defer instruction until the technical school is built in two years' time."

The honourable member did not suggest this, and I am not suggesting it either, because I feel that we have a responsibility to provide these courses to students in Albany as quickly as possible, even if we have to use a makeshift building until such time as the technical school is finished. However, the demountables would not be suitable for this purpose. I

have made some inquiries on this point and I am informed they would be entirely unsuitable for the purpose required.

Mr. McIver: Did the Minister say that the hostel at Merredin was the first to be constructed?

Mr. LEWIS: Yes, that is so. It was the first constructed by the Country High School Hostels Authority and I believe it was opened in 1962.

I shall conclude my remarks with those few comments, because the hour is getting late. I repeat that I wanted to make them to set the record straight on some misunderstandings which have arisen on matters connected with my portfolio.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

House adjourned at 10.14 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 2nd September, 1970

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

QUESTIONS (31): ON NOTICE BRIDGE

1.

Bridgetown-Boyup Brook Road

Mr. KITNEY, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What was the total cost of renewing the bridge and approaches thereto at the junction of the Bridgetown-Boyup Brook Road, one mile east of Donnybrook?
- (2) Is his department satisfied that this has now satisfactorily overcome what has always been considered a dangerous section of these roads?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) \$26,959 including the channellisation of the intersection.
- (2) Yes.

2.

EDUCATION

Preschool Training

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What formula is used as a basis for determining Government grants to the Kindergarten Association of W.A. (Inc.)?
- (2) Does cost of—
 - (a) maintenance to property and equipment; or
 - (b) increase in staff wage or salary rates,
 influence allocation?

(3) Is there any proposal to alter the existing formula?

(4) If so, in what respect?

Mr. COURT (for Sir David Brand) replied:

- (1) A formula recommended by the Royal Commission on Kindergarten Education in 1953 and adjusted each year in accordance with the salary payable to a kindergarten teacher.
- (2) Rising costs are automatically allowed for by the formula.
- (3) and (4) The existing formula is being reviewed.

3. AIR TRANSPORT

T.A.A.: Intrastate Services

Mr. BICKERTON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Will he acquaint the House with the latest proposals by Trans-Australia Airlines to operate air services in Western Australia?
- (2) If proposals have been submitted do they have the support of the Government?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) No proposals have been received by the Minister or the Road and Air Transport Commission from Trans-Australia Airlines to operate air services in Western Australia.
- (2) Answered by (1).

4. EDUCATION

Pilbara: Additional School Buildings

Mr. BICKERTON, to the Minister for Education:

Will he supply details of additional school buildings to be erected in the Pilbara area in the next 12 months?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Under agreements with mining companies the following buildings are under construction or to be erected in the 1970-71 financial year:—

Mt. Newman—six classrooms, home science, science and manual arts centres are nearing completion.

Karratha—a new primary school is anticipated to be ready for occupation by February, 1971.

Tom Price—seven classrooms, home science, science and manual arts centres.

Paraburdoo—an administrative block and three to four classrooms will be ready in February, 1971, and extensions will occur progressively as the need arises.

In addition, the upgrading of facilities at the high school to be established at Port Hedland in 1971 is under consideration.

5. NORTH WEST COASTAL HIGHWAY Bituminising

Mr. BICKERTON, to the Minister for Works:

Will he supply details of proposals, including timetables, for the bituminising of the North West Coastal Highway?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Main Roads Department plans to complete the bituminising (black top) of North West Coastal Highway in 1974.

I would interpolate here to say that this will be another magnificent achievement by this department.

Their present planning indicates a tentative timetable as follows:—

1970-71	22 miles
1971-72	107 miles
1972-73	77 miles
1973-74	98 miles

304 miles

6. EDUCATION

Teachers: Zone Allowance

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware—

(a) of the injustice imposed on teachers who may teach in taxation zones "A" or "B" for a period of up to ten months of an academic year without concession;

(b) that such a period could embrace two summer periods of uncongenial climatic conditions, additional to isolation and higher cost of living?

(2) As this could be a deterrent to teacher recruitment, will he make immediate representations on a Federal basis to achieve preferably—

(a) a full year's taxation concession for any part of the year worked; or

(b) pro rata entitlement for number of months worked,

in zone "A" or "B"?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(2) Representations were made in 1966 to the Federal Treasurer, who replied that his Government was

keeping the relevant section of the Income Tax Act under review and the question of overcoming the anomalies in the present residential qualifications was receiving further study.

In subsequent correspondence the Federal Treasurer stated that the matter had been carefully considered but it was found impossible to amend the law in this direction. However, he undertook to arrange for the possibility of an amendment to be noted for further consideration when zone allowance provisions are again examined.

7. GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Acceptance of Cheques

Mr. T. D. EVANS, to the Premier:

Will he list the various Government departments and offices that—

(a) will; and

(b) will not,

accept payment by cheque for fees and duties payable?

Mr. COURT (for Sir David Brand) replied:

Inquiries indicate that cheques are accepted for payment of fees and duties.

8. TOWN PLANNING

Parking Areas Adjacent to Public Services

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

(1) Does the Town Planning Board provide for the compulsory provision of parking areas where hospitals, post offices, police stations, and public services of a like nature are to be constructed?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) No.

(2) Because these matters come within the jurisdiction of the local authority for the district concerned.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Septic Tank Disposal Site: Marmion

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Are negotiations pending to create a septic tank disposal site of approximately 400 acres on reserve No. 8018 in Marmion?

(2) Does the Shire of Perth seek this area for this purpose?

(3) Is this area within the boundary of the Shire of Wanneroo?

(4) If so, what is the attitude of the Shire of Wanneroo in this matter and has it suggested an alternative site?

(5) If so, where is it?

(6) Can the Shire of Wanneroo be forced to accept this proposal?

(7) If so, by whom?

(8) Have the residents of the Marmion district any rights in this matter?

(9) If so, what are they?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) No. The area was examined but the proposal is not to proceed.

(2) No.

(3) Yes.

(4) The council of the Shire of Wanneroo suggested alternative sites.

(5) Within the district of the Shire of Wanneroo.

(6) to (9) The Health Act defines powers in respect of sanitary sites.

10. *This question was postponed.*

11.

SEWERAGE

Metropolitan Area

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What areas, or percentages thereof, in the metropolitan area are served by—

(a) deep sewerage;

(b) septic systems;

(c) other?

(2) What is the ratio of deep sewered connections to other types?

(3) What is the average number of new deep sewerage connections over the past two years?

(4) In what areas is deep sewerage being currently installed?

(5) If a map is available showing the sewered and unsewered areas in the metropolitan area, will he lay it on the Table of the House?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) (a) and (5) It is difficult to describe areas or part areas provided with deep sewerage. However, I request permission to table a map which shows sewered and unsewered areas as at the 30th June, 1969.

A plan is being prepared to show the position as at the 30th June, 1970, and this will be made available to the member when completed.

- (1) (b) and (c) Septic systems and others are not the responsibility of the Metropolitan Water Board and no information is available.
- (2) This information is not available.
- (3) The average increase in sewerage assessments over the past two years is approximately 3,500.
- (4) Minor extensions are being provided practically wherever sewer facilities are available.

Major reticulation works are being carried out in—

Belmont
Bentley
South Perth
Attadale
Armadale-Kelmscott
Lynwood-Ferndale
Rockingham
Collier
Scarborough
Morley
Bayswater
Eden Hill
Orella
Hamersley
Gosnells-Thornlie
Melville
Kewdale
Willetton.

Work is about to start at Whitford.

Sewerage treatment works are being installed or amplified at—

Beenyup
Eden Hill
Kelmscott
Westfield
Lynwood
Kwinana
Rockingham.

Small package plants are also being provided in temporary positions elsewhere in the metropolitan area.

The northern main sewer is being constructed from the Beenyup treatment works southwards to Mt. Yokine.

The southern main sewer is in the course of construction between Bateman and Woodman Point treatment works.

The map was tabled.

12. ON-COURSE BETTING

Minors

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does he know any legal impediment to the admittance of persons under the age of 21 years to any race or trotting meeting in Western Australia where betting is being conducted?
- (2) If "Yes" what is it, and what steps are taken for its enforcement?
- (3) If "No" what restrictions, if any, are imposed by—
 - (a) race clubs;
 - (b) trotting clubs,
 on the admittance of persons under the age of 21 years?
- (4) On admittance, have all persons the right to wager—
 - (a) by totalisator; or
 - (b) by bookmaker?
- (5) If "No" what procedures are taken to enforce the disqualification?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) (a) Nil.
(b) A domestic rule of the W.A.T.A. committee prohibits persons under the age of 16 years from being admitted to metropolitan trotting meetings.
- (4) No persons under the age of 21 years are allowed to wager—
 - (a) by totalisator; or
 - (b) by bookmaker.
- (5) At race meetings notices are placed on totalisator buildings and in a prominent position near the betting rings stating that no person under the age of 21 years can approach within 20 feet of any totalisator building or betting ring. The W.A.T.C. detective and his staff police this prohibition. Additionally, totalisator employees and bookmakers and their clerks are prohibited from allowing any person under 21 years from placing a wager or collecting on a winning ticket.

At trotting meetings this is policed by Totalisator Agency Board employees, bookmakers and their clerks, W.A.T.A. security officer and special constables engaged for this purpose each meeting.

13. LOTTERIES

Minors

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is there any legal obstacle to minors purchasing lottery tickets?

in lotteries conducted under the provisions of the Lotteries (Control) Act?

- (2) If "Yes" what is the statutory provision concerned?
- (3) In the event of a minor winning a lottery prize, is there any legal obstacle to his collection of the prize money prior to attaining the age of 21 years?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

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

14. STATE FORESTS

Bauxite Mining: Replanting

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Forests:

Further to his reply to question 15 of the 18th August, 1970, when does he expect that the Forests Department authorities will be in a position to make a reliable prognosis as to the future development of commercial forests on areas in the Jarrahdale region upon which bauxite has been mined?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Bovell) replied:

It is not expected that a reliable prognostication on the growth of plantings in the Jarrahdale area can be made under 10-15 years.

15. EDUCATION

Teacher Housing: Boyanup

Mr. KITNEY, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has his department received a request from the Boyanup Parents and Citizens' Association to provide a new staff house at Boyanup?
- (2) If "Yes" what consideration has been given to the request?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Government Employees' Housing Authority has been requested to have the house inspected to determine whether the quarters should be replaced.

16. MILLSTREAM DAM

Supply to Boyup Brook

Mr. KITNEY, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the Bridgetown-Greenbushes Shire Council objected to the proposal to provide a water supply for Boyup Brook from the Millstream Dam?

- (2) If "Yes" is the objection likely to delay the project, scheduled for completion by December, 1970?
- (3) Is the department satisfied that the Millstream Dam is capable of supplying sufficient water for both towns for the foreseeable future?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No. On the 27th February, 1970, the Bridgetown Shire Council wrote to the Public Works Department stating that it appreciated the need for an alternative supply of water to Boyup Brook but wanted the assurance that the Bridgetown supply would not be adversely affected.
- (2) The scheme is proceeding to schedule.
- (3) Yes.

17. SUMMONSES AND WRITS

Number Issued

Mr. KITNEY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Can he advise the number of summonses and writs issued from Western Australian courts for each quarter beginning the 1st July, 1966 to the 30th June, 1970?

Mr. COURT replied:

Period Ended	No.
30th September, 1966	23,704
31st December, 1966	21,152
31st March, 1967	22,412
30th June, 1967	28,207
30th September, 1967	25,281
31st December, 1967	22,126
31st March, 1968	25,115
30th June, 1968	29,243
30th September, 1968	26,837
31st December, 1968	24,919
31st March, 1969	25,049
30th June, 1969	31,121
30th September, 1969	28,157
31st December, 1969	22,489
31st March, 1970	23,031
30th June, 1970	28,832

407,475

18. BUILDING BLOCKS

Green Head Subdivision

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What price was paid for each lot in the Green Head subdivision which was offered for auction at Coorow Shire Hall on Saturday, the 19th July, 1969?
- (2) When is it anticipated another auction will be held to dispose of a further subdivision already surveyed in this particular area?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Bovell) replied:

- (1) The information is contained in the following schedule—

Schedule of lots at Green Head sold at auction on the 19th July, 1969.

Lot No.	Price Realised	Lot No.	Price Realised
	\$		\$
1	600	136	450
2	500	137	450
3	450	138	475
4	450	139	475
5	500	140	450
6	500	141	450
7	475	142	425
8	525	143	450
9	600	144	450
10	450	145	475
11	360	146	450
12	870	147	625
13	800	148	500
14	700	149	525
15	600	150	550
16	500	151	450
17	650	152	450
18	600	153	400
19	600	154	425
20	500	155	400
130	475	156	400
131	650	157	450
132	625	179	950
133	900	180	1,100
134	1,000	181	800
135	725	182	900
		183	1,200

- (2) Dependent upon finalisation of the shire's town planning scheme for Green Head, it is estimated that a further auction sale would be possible next summer.

19. FIRE BRIGADES BOARD

Extension of Facilities

Mr. BURKE, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What use does the Fire Brigades Board intend for land acquired in Hay Street, Perth?
- (2) When is any proposed development likely to be commenced?
- (3) What is the total expenditure anticipated?
- (4) When is it anticipated that work will commence on providing facilities for the Fire Brigades Board—
 - (a) in Havelock Street, West Perth;
 - (b) in Bulwer Street, Perth, and what is the total expenditure envisaged in relation to each?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (4) These lands were acquired to permit future fire defence expansion to meet growing needs. Detailed planning and scheduling are not yet to be undertaken and will in any case be subject to availability of finance.

20. This question was postponed until Tuesday, the 8th September.

21. This question was postponed.

22. NATIVE GRAPE PICKERS

Housing: Swan Area

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) Has any consideration been given to building homes for native grape pickers in the Swan area?
- (2) What number of homes, if any, have been built to date, and what homes will be built in the current year?
- (3) What is the approximate number of native grape pickers in the Swan area?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Native Welfare Department houses for Aborigines in the area are as follows:—
 - Midland Junction—2 occupied.
 - South Guildford—1 occupied, 1 under construction.
 - Middle Swan—1 occupied, 1 90 per cent. complete.
 - Koongamia—3 occupied.
 - Midvale—1 under construction.
 - Bellevue—1 tenders about to be called.
- (3) None at present, but up to 100 men, women, and children usually spend three to four weeks in the area each year for currant and sultana picking.

23. RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Midland Workshops: "Pass-outs"

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is it an offence to knock-off work at Midland railway workshops without a pass-out?
- (2) Were a number of employees who wished to attend a budget protest meeting refused pass-outs on Tuesday, the 25th August?
- (3) What was the reason for refusing these pass-outs?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Pass-outs are granted only for reasons such as sickness, technical school attendance and urgent private business. Attendance at a budget protest meeting was not an acceptable reason for allowing employees to cease work.

24. BUSH FIRES BOARD

Administration and Operating Costs

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Are any statistics available relative to the number of fires in country districts throughout the State; if so, where are they available?
- (2) Is the Bush Fires Board operated under separate administration from that controlling metropolitan and country fire brigade districts?
- (3) What percentage of the cost of the board is paid by local government, Treasury, and insurance companies?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Bovell) replied:

- (1) Yes, at the office of the Bush Fires Board.
- (2) Yes, under the provisions of the Bush Fires Act.
- (3) The whole cost of the board is paid by the Treasury.

25. FIRE BRIGADES BOARD

Operating Costs

Mr. BRADY, to the Chief Secretary: What percentage of the cost of controlling the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board is met by local government authorities, the Treasury, and insurance companies?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

State Government, 16 per cent.
Local authorities (whose districts or portion thereof are constituted fire districts), 20 per cent.
Insurance companies, 64 per cent.

26. EDUCATION

Teachers' Salaries: Determination

Mr. CASH, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Can he state by whom teachers' salaries are determined in each of the Australian States, other than Western Australia?
- (2) What method of determination is used in Western Australia?
- (3) Has the Western Australian State School Teachers' Union ever requested, in recent years, that the method of determining teachers' salaries in Western Australia be changed to the system used in any other State?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) New South Wales—Public Service Board.
Victoria—Teachers' Tribunal.
Queensland—The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission of Queensland.

South Australia—Teachers' Salaries Board.

Tasmania—Public Service Tribunal.

- (2) Salaries determined by the Minister for Education.
- (3) No.

27. POTATOES

Shortage

Mr. JAMIESON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

With respect to the present shortage of potatoes—

- (1) Did the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board underestimate the State requirements last season?
- (2) What were the estimated requirements and the estimated crop licensed for production last season?
- (3) What was the actual crop tonnage?
- (4) Is action to be taken to prevent a recurrence of this season's short supply; if so, what action?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The estimated requirement from the 1969-1970 late crop was 34,000 tons, including 24,500 tons for the local market. The area of crop licensed to produce this requirement was 3,804 acres.
- (3) The estimated yield of ware potatoes from the 1969-1970 late crop is now 27,000 tons which, due directly or indirectly to drought conditions, is 7,000 tons less than anticipated.
- (4) The Western Australian Potato Marketing Board sets a target acreage for each crop to yield 25 to 30 per cent. surplus above local requirements.
For 21 years this basis has been adequate to offset abnormal conditions.

28. HOUSING

Withers Development: Bunbury

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Have tenders closed for the second group of houses in the new Withers development, Bunbury?
- (2) If so, what are the details of the contracts, name, price, completion dates, etc?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) No. The closing date is the 21st September, 1970.
- (2) Answered by (1).

29. EDUCATION

Meckering School

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will he advise if plans for the new Meckering school have been completed?
- (2) If "No" when is it anticipated they will be finalised?
- (3) If "Yes" will he table a copy of the plans?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) See (1).
- (3) Plans are available for perusal at the Education Department.

30. *This question was postponed.*

31. FARMERS

South-West Land Division

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the total number of—
 - (a) wheat properties;
 - (b) wheat and sheep properties;
 - (c) sheep properties,
 in the South-West Land Division of Western Australia?
- (2) What was the total number of wheat quotas issued to farmers this year?
- (3) Using the results of the survey conducted by the independent wheat quota committee, or any other basis of calculation, how many property owners with wheat quotas is it estimated by the Government are suffering financial embarrassment?
- (4) Excluding holders of wheat quotas, how many of the remainder of the total of property owners given in answer to (1) is it estimated are suffering financial embarrassment?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

- (1) (a), (b) and (c) The latest data available from the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics show for 1968-69—

In the Perth, South-West, Northern, Central and Southern Statistical Divisions (which approximate the South-West

Land Division but include West-onia, and exclude Yilgarn, Ravensthorpe, Dundas and Esperance)—

Wheat for Grain—

8,347 holdings harvested more than 20 acres. (About 600 of these had less than 100 acres.) About 90 per cent. would also carry sheep.

Sheep—

12,544 holdings carried sheep. About 8,000 of these also produced wheat.

No specific figures for wheat only, wheat and sheep, and sheep only properties are available.

- (2) 9,539 wheat quotas for the 1969-70 season had been issued to farmers by the 30th June, 1970. Final figures for 1970-71 will not be known until early October.

- (3) From the Independent Wheat Quota Committee survey of 1,550 new land wheat farmers it was estimated that 514 (39.6 per cent.) had serious financial problems and a further 425 (27.4 per cent.) were having some difficulty with immediate commitments.

A random survey of 348 established wheat and sheep farmers showed 18.6 per cent. with serious financial problems and another 25.9 per cent. with some immediate financial problems.

- (4) No figures are available.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Acceptance of Cheques

Mr. T. D. EVANS, to the Premier:

Would he inquire to ascertain whether the answer given to question 7 on today's notice paper embraces the Titles Office and later notify me of his findings?

Mr. COURT (for Sir David Brand) replied:

In answer to the member for Kalgoorlie, I assume the Premier's Department would have made these inquiries when that department sent the answer to me to give on behalf of the Premier. However, I shall certainly have a specific inquiry made and I shall advise the honourable member tomorrow.

FARMERS

Plight: Grievance

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren) [4.51 p.m.]: The most urgent issue in Western Australia today is the plight of those farmers who

face the immediate prospect of being forced off their farms. Many need aid, and they need it badly. At this stage their situation is desperate and, if they do not get aid now, a number of farmers will simply have to leave the industry. If aid is given in two months' time it will be of no use. It will be too late then because the farmers will have gone.

In addition to newspaper reports in my possession, I have 47 letters and case histories of farmers which show their circumstances to be very parlous indeed. This number is probably several hundred short of the total involved in the State, because the Minister indicated today, when answering the final question on the notice paper, that 514 farmers are suffering serious difficulties—and the Minister was referring only to new land farmers.

I would like to give two illustrations. I shall have to content myself with this number owing to the time I have available. Both the illustrations I have selected relate to farmers who migrated from England about two years ago.

The first has paid out \$47,000 and still has a debt of \$88,000. He is overdue on a second instalment of \$7,200. The second bought in for \$69,000 and still owes \$67,000. He is overdue on a payment of \$12,000.

They both have one thing in common; namely, the previous owner, through a solicitor, has demanded payment of the instalment or else he will invoke the terms of the agreement, which means selling them up. Selling up anybody at this stage, with land values as they are, is verging on the unthinkable, but this is the prospect which these men face. They have absolutely no chance of regaining equity or walking out with anything at all, even though they have parted with a life's savings. Neither can obtain overdraft finance. They cannot get a bank to undertake this. In addition, neither can obtain drought relief, because the previous owners will not allow the first mortgage to go to the Rural and Industries Bank. This is the position they are in. Both obviously face ruin.

These men are not alone. If something is not done now there will be many others sharing the same fate.

In June, I wrote to the Trustee of the Rural Relief Fund and he told me that the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act and the Rural Relief Fund Act are still current Statutes, but the necessary machinery to implement the Statutes has not been revived. In other words, the legislation has not been brought down.

I regret that the Minister for Agriculture and the Premier are both absent tonight, because I was looking to them to answer and to give an indication of the Government's intention in this matter; that is, whether the legislation would be brought down.

Mr. Lewis: Did the honourable member bring the cases to which he referred to the notice of the Minister?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: I have only 10 minutes in which to speak and I shall willingly discuss this matter with the Minister later if he will refrain from interjecting now.

Mr. Lewis: I merely wanted to know whether you brought this matter to the notice of the Minister.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: I brought it to the notice of the appropriate authority. Page 42 of the Auditor-General's Report shows a balance of \$27,884 in the Assistance to Distressed Farmers' Account. Page 62 of the same report shows a balance of \$430,244 in the Rural Relief Fund. These figures were confirmed in an answer given to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. Surely the presence of these accounts indicates at least one direction from which some assistance can be given to farmers who so desperately need it.

Had the Minister for Agriculture been present, doubtless he would have referred in his reply to the amount of drought assistance that has been given. The figure of \$1,300,000 was mentioned in an interjection and it was also the figure used by the member for Mt. Marshall. However, this amount is simply not enough.

Time does not permit a close examination of the multiplicity of causes that brought about this crisis. We are concerned with the results—results which are becoming more painfully evident all the time. The Government undoubtedly has a responsibility, both moral and real, to these farmers. Firstly, large acres of land were thrown open. Secondly, extensive advertising to induce farmers to settle in Western Australia was undertaken outside the State. Thirdly, finance for development was made readily available. The whole climate to entice farmers to settle on light land was created by this Government. Consequently, I say that the Government has a very real obligation to accept some responsibility. The Government is culpable, at least to some degree.

If the Government does not act now it will be too late and considerable human suffering together with disruption of the State's economy must result. I had hoped that the Minister would give some indication of whether any financial assistance would be made available to farmers in the situation I have indicated. Secondly, I would like to know whether there will be some form of moratorium on debts to give some breathing space, at least, to allow the situation to be analysed. Also, I wish to know whether there will be some orderly rehabilitation plan or whether the economic culling will be allowed to take its course with the inevitable results which must ensue. In short, I want to know what the Government has in mind, if any thing.

A report in today's paper indicates that wheat quotas for new land farmers will rise. The article points out that 350 farmers did not plant this year. If they did not plant, what has happened to them? We cannot ascertain the number of farmers who have left their land, but a good percentage of the 350 mentioned will leave.

The situation is even worse than I have shown. Those members who come from country areas, and particularly areas where there are new land farmers, will be able to bear testimony to that statement. Some have done so already in the debate on the Address-in-Reply which has just been concluded.

POTATO MARKETING BOARD

Policy: Grievance

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [4.58 p.m.]: I have a grievance, and I am sorry the Minister for Agriculture is not in the House. Perhaps I am partly to blame for his absence, because I granted him a pair to enable him to be away for this part of the sitting. It is to his ears that I would have liked to direct my grievance.

Mr. Speaker, where have all the potatoes gone? What has happened to the potato growers? I suggest they have gone to the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board's "delicensed graveyard." At this point of time, I certainly recommend to the Government that it should immediately institute an independent inquiry into the administration and management of the Board.

Mr. Davies: Hear, hear!

MR. I. W. MANNING: What has happened with potato growing? We have gone suddenly from an abundance of potatoes—when potatoes were being sent away from Western Australia by the shipload and trainload—to a period of famine in potatoes.

The Western Australian Potato Marketing Board has claimed as its great virtue and justified its existence by a pronouncement that the consumers of Western Australia were assured of a constant supply of good, reasonably-priced potatoes. Possibly the greatest achievement the board could claim is the number of delicensed growers it has succeeded in nudging out of the industry.

For a long time I have been endeavouring to get the message across that the board's policy is unsound, that there are inequities in the system, and that the board is backed by very poor public relations. Events are proving that there is a measure of mismanagement in its activities, and in my view the board is urgently in need of a good shake-up.

MR. JAMIESON: The Treasury is \$100 better off today because somebody tried to grow potatoes.

MR. I. W. MANNING: Western Australians are currently consuming about 107 lb. of potatoes per head per annum, which amounts to a total of 44,000 tons. Consumption is increasing by a fairly steady 1,000 tons per annum, and this is in line with the present rate of population increase. Generally, from that point of view, it is quite a satisfactory situation.

Until recently the annual surplus amounted to approximately 30 per cent. of the crop, or in the vicinity of 16,000 tons of potatoes annually. We suddenly learn now that there must have been a drought in the potato-growing districts. Some growers did not plant, some growers did not plant the full area that they were licensed to plant, and, according to the newspaper reports, some of the crops were eaten by moths. Now the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board has gone into business as potato importers, although I do not know where in its charter of activities it has the authority to do so.

We were looking to the board for the establishment of many new markets for potatoes throughout the Asian areas, and there has been some attempt to grow potatoes in Western Australia for that market. There has been some controversy at times as to who may and who may not grow potatoes for export markets. There is no mention of export markets at the moment, whereas last year there was a good deal of activity in the export of potatoes.

MR. JAMIESON: We must have exported some that we needed this year.

MR. I. W. MANNING: Western Australia is a large State—one-third of the Commonwealth—and the potato-growing districts extend from Northampton to Albany. With some encouragement to growers and some application of past experience by the board, it should be possible to have new potatoes available for the consumers in Western Australia for almost 365 days of the year.

In many respects the system is wrong. Continuity of supply will be accomplished only when licenses are issued on a quantity basis, rather than on the acreage system as at present. In terms of quantity, a grower at Harvey who is licensed for 100 tons of potatoes, by planting three furrows apart and wide-spacing the seed, would require 10 acres of land to supply his licensed quantity. A grower at Pemberton who is also licensed for 100 tons, by planting two furrows apart and close-planting the seed, could produce that quantity on five acres of land. The present inequity of the acreage system shows that a grower at Harvey is paid for 100 tons of potatoes, and a grower at Pemberton is paid for 200 tons of potatoes. What is more, the growers in the upper south-west, through the pool system, are contributing to the freight costs of the growers in the lower south-west.

A grower's license should be in the form of a firm contract between the board and the grower, with one agreeing to purchase at a predetermined price and the other agreeing to supply a given quantity of the required quality.

A former manager of the board, Mr. Gus Hard, was concerned about variations in tonnages harvested, which were brought about by conditions and planting techniques. He endeavoured to introduce a different method of measuring potato crops but his suggestions were not acceptable to the growers. However, his suggestions highlighted the fact that over the years the board has not really been happy with the system it has adopted. Only surplus potatoes should be taken into the pool and disposed of by export, which would give protection against price variations to growers who forwarded only their quota quantities.

Potato licenses should be issued to provide for a pattern of continuous harvesting from one district to another in the quantities required to meet the needs of the State. The present system of licensing is a real blind date; there is no telling what will turn up and there is certainly very little orderliness. There is also a very interesting variation in the pattern of licenses over the three seasonal crops now grown. In the early crop 1,200 acres are planted; in the mid-season crop 800 acres are planted; and in the late crop 3,600 acres are planted. To a degree, this highlights the anticipated tonnage per acre and suggests that a shortage can readily be encountered when a grower short-plants or digs a light crop.

The other glaring anomaly in the potato industry is that there is no provision in the Act for the right of appeal against decisions of the board. There is, and there has long been, an urgent need for some authority to hear appeals by people who are aggrieved by decisions of the board.

Mr. H. D. Evans: The board has requested that this be done.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: There are instances of first-class potato growers, with long and satisfactory records of potato-growing, being delicensed for life by the board. One man by the name of Papalia even went to gaol in an endeavour to highlight an injustice that had been done him by the board. A right of appeal to a court or some other judicial authority would bring some measure of justice to a number of growers.

In my view, a deplorable situation exists in potato marketing in Western Australia, and it warrants an inquiry. The Government has promised to bring in amendments—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

HISTORIC WRECKS

Preservation: Grievance

MR. HARMAN (Maylands) [5.08 p.m.]: My grievance concerns the attitude of the Government towards the safety and preservation of our historic wrecks. These treasure houses of history are virtually at our front door. Their existence has been known of for some years. Apart from the enormous value of the bullion, they contain relics and other objects which indicate, and could indicate in the future, a tremendous amount of historic and technical information.

What is being done about these wrecks? In 1964 the present Government introduced legislation to protect the wrecks. Subsequently the Government appointed staff to concentrate on this particular aspect. Arrangements were made for surveys to be carried out, during the course of which some 2,000-odd objects were salvaged. Officers were sent around the world to learn techniques for the subsequent conservation and preservation of those objects. Assistance in the surveys was obtained on occasions from the Royal Australian Navy.

The Government has been able to establish a conservation laboratory. In the six years the State Government has expended \$108,000 on this aspect. One might say that the action of the Government is sufficient. Well, is it? If we analyse the expenditure we find that it works out at something like \$18,000 a year during the six years, or something like 5 per cent. of the total expenditure of the Museum. Compare that expenditure of \$18,000 a year—or \$108,000 in total—with the amount paid by the Museum for some vintage cars; namely, \$180,000 with payments of \$15,000 per annum for the next 10 years.

To me this does not make sense, because I think far greater value will be obtained from the proper salvage and preservation of, and research on, historic wrecks than will be obtained from the purchase of some 22 alleged vintage cars. I notice one of the cars is a 1937 Rolls Royce, and plenty of those cars are still running around on the streets. However, that is the priority the Government places on this matter.

Once again, on the question of finance, the former senior curator of the Western Australian Museum's division of human studies, Dr. Colin Jack-Hinton, was reported in the Press on the 15th June, 1970, as saying—

There had never been enough money available to make a proper job of excavating historic wrecks off W.A., Dr. Colin Jack-Hinton, former senior curator of the W.A. Museum's division of human studies, said in Perth last night.

The only answer to the problem of looting, apart from hoping that skin-divers would be responsible enough to stay away, was to get on with excavating the wrecks.

The second point I wish to analyse is the fact that the legislation has not been effective, because since 1964 many cases of looting and blasting of the wrecks have occurred. These have been reported to the Museum from time to time and have been investigated by both the Museum and the police. We have heard that fishermen are laying cray pots over the reefs where the wrecks are located. I believe that coins and ballast bricks were being sold in the public bar of the Yanchep Inn as recently as February, 1969, and I understand this was reported to the police.

I understand that in Geraldton one enterprising person has made a barbecue out of ballast bricks obtained from one of the historic wrecks. I also believe that coins and other objects are popping up in many places along our coast. I presume all this is being investigated by the Museum; however, since 1964 not one prosecution has been launched.

Mr. Lewis: Do you also believe that court action has been taken?

Mr. HARMAN: Not one prosecution has been taken under this legislation so far. Another point is that the blasting which is taking place hastens, and causes further erosion of the wreck. For that very reason alone it is necessary that quick action be taken to hasten the excavation and salvage of the wrecks.

My third point is that it takes a considerable amount of time to treat the items which have been salvaged. It is necessary to employ special preservation techniques because when the salt on the salvaged items dries out it expands and the material cracks. I understand there is a backlog of items requiring attention, and it seems to me that the Government is not anxious to carry out any further salvage because it would place a strain on the system operating at the moment. This suggests to me that the Government should say to itself, "The present programme is inadequate; it has failed. Therefore we must do something else."

I suggest the State should approach the Commonwealth Government, other universities, and the Netherlands Government in an endeavour to involve as many people as possible to undertake the task which is obviously beyond the present State Government. After all, the information obtained from these historic wrecks is of value not only to Western Australia but to the whole of Australia and, indeed, to many other parts of the world. So I think it is quite reasonable that the Government should admit its failure. I think the Government should consider setting up an authority to deal exclusively with historic wrecks, rather than the wrecks being under the control of a division within the Museum.

If this suggestion is followed I think it will be obvious that the salvage and excavation of historic wrecks will be undertaken much more quickly. Whilst those operations are proceeding it would be necessary to close off the reefs to fishermen and to establish improved supervision by stationing persons near the wrecks. That would solve the problem of looting and blasting until such time as the salvage of the wrecks is organised.

The wrecks are most important and this matter has been raised on many occasions in the Press recently. I understand the Premier had plans delivered to him on the 16th June this year but so far we have had no further announcement. I am hoping the Government will consider the matter in the correct light because it is important to take appropriate action as soon as possible rather than allow another season to pass without any real attempt to salvage the wrecks before the looters, blasters, and plunderers have their way. Who knows but that in another two or three years there may be nothing left to salvage?

TOWN PLANNING

Implementation of Schemes: Grievance

MR. DUNN (Darling Range) [5.18 p.m.] : I wish to bring before the House a grievance in connection with town planning, the implementation of town planning schemes, and the great surge of enthusiasm being shown by many shire councils in an endeavour to get everything done for nothing. First of all let me refer to the town planning scheme for the development of the metropolitan region. None of us disagrees with the fact that we need a planning scheme and none of us disagrees that the implementation of the scheme will be difficult in some respects.

However, I think careful consideration should be given to the effects of town planning on some sections of the community. The first thing that happens under the present system of town planning is that an interim development order is issued and under that order many people owning land which could not be developed are obliged to hold onto it. They are unable to do anything with it because of the conditions applied by the Town Planning Board, and they are unable to sell it because nobody would want to buy it under those conditions.

However, at the same time, those landowners have to pay rates and taxes which increase year by year until they reach an absolutely ridiculous state; and we have the situation where people who have been on their land, in some instances, for 40 and 50 years are now faced with the problem of having to pay exorbitant land tax, vermin tax, and metropolitan region improvement tax bills. Their position is parlous.

I am not unmindful of the fact that several people virtually had to give their land away either to meet pressing commitments or to permit them to continue the way of life to which they were accustomed. At the moment, approximately 1,600 acres in the foothills of the Darling Range have been submitted by the Kalamunda Shire Council for rezoning. That tract of land is currently zoned as rural, but eventually it will be rezoned as urban. This can only be done if tremendous capital costs are met to provide the necessary services. I have been told that in order to get this project off the ground, expenditure approximating \$1,000,000 will have to be made to bring water to the area from the Kelm-scott region.

Any developer who is obliged to comply with the conditions laid down has to meet this expense which, of course, will be added to the cost of the blocks. In addition, the Kalamunda Shire insists that the conditions it has made must be observed. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will read them, because I think they should be recorded in *Hansard* for future reference. The conditions that have been imposed by the Kalamunda Shire read as follows:—

- (a) 100 link road reserves will be required for residential streets. Minor or short cul-de-sacs may be considered for a minimum of 90 links.
- (b) Major distribution roads within the area — 150 links.
- (c) Roads:
Residential roads will be 24 ft. sealed pavements between raised concrete kerbing.
Final sealing to be in hot bituminous concrete, which will be laid after development and services are completed.
- (d) Paths:
4 ft. slabs will be provided on one side of the road in residential streets and in all footways and other pedestrian ways.
In major distributor roads, slab paths will be provided on each side. Vehicle crossing places will be constructed to each residence.
- (e) All street furniture to be installed, including signs, seats, shelters, trees, etc.
- (f) Comprehensive stormwater drainage will be installed for all roads, parking areas, etc.
- (g) Where necessary, comprehensive piped land drainage is to be constructed.
- (h) Comprehensive sewerage reticulation and treatment to be provided at terms required by the local authority. In certain circumstances a special agreement will be drawn regarding the timing of the requirement.

- (i) Public Open Space shall be provided, as shown on the Outline Development Plan and detailed submissions. Public Open Space to vest in the Council in fee simple. Public Open Space will be developed with earthworks, reticulation and landscaping and grass planted. Council assume control of the Reserves when grass is ready for first cutting.
- (j) All residential lots to be developed by the erection of houses within a reasonable time related to market trends of the day. Any titles to lots sold shall have a restrictive covenant to ensure development within the same period.
- (k) Shopping and Community Support Facilities. To be provided within two years of approval of final development plans. Parking areas established, landscaped and reticulated.

One developer has carried out an exercise on the development of this area and, if these conditions were complied with, it would cost \$2,300 per block to bring about that type of development.

It would appear to me that such action is far beyond the intention of any legislation that has been passed by this House and placed on the Statute book because, in my opinion, conditions such as these are extremely stringent. I therefore record a grievance in regard to this matter in the hope that a realistic approach will be made to the problem. Steps should be taken to prevent over-zealous councils and councillors from going completely berserk and forcing developers into a situation which, obviously, will drive the price of land up to a ridiculous level.

If the cost of bringing water to this area from Kelm-scott is taken into consideration, one will find that it may average \$700 a block. This amount, added to the figure of \$2,300 to provide the various services, will bring the cost of each block to nearly \$3,000, without taking into account the cost of the block itself. On these facts we are reaching a stage where no reason is being shown by local authorities, because people are being subjected to restrictions that are completely unwarranted. Further, the position will soon be reached when a local authority will be collecting its rates but will have nothing to spend them on.

Circumstances such as those I have outlined have the effect that blocks become over-priced, the result being that they are not brought onto the market. This situation will continue unless the Government accepts some responsibility for the provision of public services, and the local authorities accept their share of

responsibility for the provision of other services to maintain normal living standards as we know them today.

Resolved: That grievances be noted.

ROAD AND AIR TRANSPORT COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Acting Minister for Transport), and read a first time.

EMPLOYMENT BROKERS

Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion

MR. BURKE (Perth) [5.28 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into and report upon all aspects of the activities of private employment brokers in Western Australia.

This motion relates to the Employment Brokers Act, 1909-1918. If I were to suggest that it could be considered a Rip van Winkle type of Act, in that it has not been amended for 52 years, I could be excused for thinking that members would come to the conclusion that this is sufficient ground for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the activities of employment brokers. However, I have proceeded with my motion in view of the fact that complaints have been brought to my notice which confirm my opinion that amendments are required, and that a Select Committee would present the best method of forming a basis for amendments to the Employment Brokers Act.

The Commonwealth Employment Service had its beginning under the provisions of the Commonwealth Re-establishment and Employment Act, 1945, and the I.L.O. Employment Service Convention (No. 88). The applicable sections of the Commonwealth Act and those of the convention are as follows:—

Division 5, Section 48 of the Re-establishment and Employment Act lays down, *inter alia*:

The functions of the Commonwealth Employment Service shall be to provide services and facilities in relation to employment for the benefit of persons seeking to become employed, to change employment or to engage labour . . .

Article 1 of the I.L.O. Employment Service Convention (88) charges that:

Each member of the International Labour Organisation for which this Convention is in force shall maintain or ensure the maintenance of a free public employment service.

Article 3 charges that:

The system shall comprise a network of local and, where appropriate, regional offices, sufficient in number to serve each geographical area of the country and conveniently located for employers and workers.

Article 10 charges that:

The Employment Service . . . shall . . . take all possible measures to encourage full use of employment service facilities by employers and workers on a voluntary basis.

The Commonwealth Employment Service in Western Australia has 15 district offices from Port Hedland in the north to Esperance in the south. They provide a free service to both employers and employees, and they place in excess of 1,000 persons per week in all categories of employment. It has been estimated that the cost per placement is less than \$10.

The total estimate of the Department of Labour and National Service for the whole of Australia for 1970-71 is \$11,000,000, which is less than \$1 per capita of population. This expenditure of taxpayers' money provides for the ordinary type of employer-employee transaction. There is a section for youth employment, and career counselling. Last year in excess of 10,000 young people took advantage of the counselling service, and their future employment and careers were discussed. Provision is also made for very good assessment and guidance in these matters.

The department arranges visits to industrial establishments and makes provision for talks and discussions to be held with parents and citizens' organisations and service groups. A country apprenticeship scheme is provided which subsidises both employers and apprentices in the country areas. This helps to keep young people in the country and promotes decentralisation.

The department also has a partially handicapped persons' section which provides for the rehabilitation and placement of such people in industry; people who not too many years ago were considered unemployable. By means of an Aboriginal training and placement scheme the department helps to encourage the employment of Aborigines; those who might be moving to the city from outlying areas, for whom it provides assistance while adjusting them for work in the city.

Overseas inquiries and the placement of more highly qualified personnel are handled by the higher appointments office which provides a service for employers who might be seeking a professional or executive type of employee.

In the last week or so the department announced the introduction of a women's employment training scheme to help those women who for domestic or other reasons have been unable in their immediate post-school years to secure training for the more specialised type of employment. It is possible that such women now have their families off their hands and they want to get back into the work force. They will now be able to receive training for better types of employment.

The department keeps in close contact with the major employers in an endeavour to ascertain prospective labour demands and, in the case of the bigger developers—such as construction firms—to get some indication of trends that might exist in the employment field.

The Commonwealth Employment Service officers play a major part in the promotion and administration of productivity groups, the purpose of which is to increase and improve productivity in industry. There are over 300 of these productivity groups established in Western Australia today.

The Minister for Labour and National Service made the following statement in regard to the role that is played by his department in Australia:—

The Commonwealth Employment Service has, from its inception some 24 years ago, engaged in the full range of services and activities expected of a national employment service. It has, throughout Australia, provided facilities to assist all persons without exception seeking full-time, part-time, seasonal, vacation, permanent and temporary employment, over the whole range of professions and occupations, to obtain jobs and to assist employers who seek its assistance to obtain the staff they need. To meet the responsibilities with which the Government is charged nationally and internationally, the policy of the C.E.S. is, and must be, that the labour market is one and indivisible. It would be improper for it to neglect to provide employment services throughout metropolitan and country areas for any sector of the community, whatever the nature of the industry, worker, employer, or occupational category.

It is my contention that the Commonwealth Employment Service provides a complete service and that private employment brokers impose an unnecessary charge on the community by interfering with the work of the Commonwealth Employment Service. It must be appreciated that the department compiles the statistics necessary for economic planning, immigration policy, and training programmes for the needs of commerce and industry.

By their individual operations private employment brokers interfere with the compilation of the statistical records and they must cause mistakes to be made in planning. I submit private employment brokers must justify their continued existence. There is increasing use being made of a computer matching service in the United States and Japan. In France there is a requirement that all vacancies be notified to a single clearing house for purposes of statistical records and planning to ensure a more economic use of labour resources.

If private employment brokers are to be allowed to continue their operations—and I am not opposed to them, even though I may have given that impression—then, with the foreshadowed use of computer matching in Australia, they will have to co-operate more with the Commonwealth service in each State.

In moving for the appointment of a Select Committee, I feel that an opportunity will be given to all brokers to justify their continued existence. We do not know a great deal about them or their operations. We do know, however, there are a great number of them and that their numbers are increasing. Surely members will agree that the best method of securing information about these brokers is to have a Select Committee inquire into their activities while giving them the opportunity to state what they feel should be required of them in the work they are doing.

I submit that by this means we would glean the necessary information on which we could base good legislation. We must appreciate that the Act with which we are dealing has not been touched since 1918.

I would now like to refer to a couple of questions which were asked by the member for Maylands of the Minister for Labour. One was asked earlier this year, and the other was asked on the 14th August, 1969. The latter refers specifically to the great increase in the number of employment brokers in Western Australia in the last five years. In 1965 there were 31 employment brokers in Western Australia; in 1966 there were 44; in 1967 there were 52 such brokers, and in 1968 the number had risen to 60. The latest figures show that there are 81 employment brokers in the metropolitan area and three in the country, and that five applications are pending.

Let us compare these figures with those of the other States. In New South Wales—which has a population in excess of four times our population—there are 131 employment brokers; while South Australia had 20 in 1965, 28 in 1966, 27 in 1967, and 28 in 1968.

I could not get any figures for Tasmania, Victoria, or Queensland. In a reply received from the Queensland Minister for

Justice, it was indicated that he had written to the Stock Exchange in that State but learnt that it had no such brokers registered.

In reply to a question asked of the Minister for Labour on the 9th April, 1970, the Minister indicated that he was aware of the call for amendments to the Act, and said that the amendments suggested by the Employment Agents Association of Western Australia and others were under consideration. When I take into account the number of brokers there are in Western Australia, and the phenomenal increase in the number in the last five years, my reaction is that there must have been some good reason for the increase, because expenditure is involved in the setting up of an office or agency. I suggest there must be a good reason for such an alarming increase in the number. If appointed, a Select Committee could look into this aspect and also the continuity of the brokers in business.

Looking through the list of brokers registered with the Department of Labour, I did not see any who had been registered prior to 1958. A great number of the agencies have changed hands in the last two or three years. As was suggested to me, this indicates there are many fly-by-nights involved in this particular occupation.

I suggest one of the aspects which could be inquired into by a Select Committee is the service rendered by these agents and the charges which they make. I suggest the Select Committee could also look into the question of the standard of premises, and the qualifications of the licensees, and their employees. I think it is necessary that a person who is charged with the responsibility of selecting people for or of placing people in employment should have some understanding of the duties of the vacancies and of the qualifications required of the applicants. I suggest also that the character of the licensees should be studied more closely.

At the present time no right of objection to the granting of an application for a license as an employment broker exists, although some reference is made in the application to police records. I think these factors—the character and the qualifications of the applicant, and the facilities, etc.—should be made reasonably stringent in the interests of the *bona fide* employment brokers, if after inquiry by a Select Committee it is considered that employment brokers should be permitted to continue in business.

As I mentioned earlier, the primary reason for reform is that the Act has not been amended since 1918. In the past few years many complaints have been brought to my notice, to the notice of other members of Parliament, and to the notice of organisations

with which I have contact. Complaints have been received from individuals in relation to service and charges. With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I wish to refer to certain letters which contain such complaints. I will try to limit my references to the salient points. Complaints have been received in relation to charges which employment brokers make, and also to the fact that brokers sometimes misjudge the requirements for a particular vacancy. Sometimes an applicant is referred to a vacancy, only to be told by the employer that he does not have the required qualifications.

Another complaint is that too often after applicants for employment have paid their fees for permanent positions, they find that the vacancies which they have been sent to fill turn out to be temporary positions. From information to hand, the incidence of this type of complaint is fairly high.

We have also received complaints from employers in relation to the charges that are imposed by the brokers and to the suitability of the referrals. All this is costly not only to the employee but also to the employer; because if an employer depends on an agency to refer applicants for a particular job he loses time and production while he is waiting for the position to be filled. If the referral is not suitable the employer loses further time and production, and as a consequence he loses profit.

In reference to the complaints that have been received from employers, I do not intend to mention the names of the agencies involved, because to do so would be unfair. If a Select Committee is appointed all the agents will be given an opportunity to present a case in justification of their continued existence. Such a Select Committee would comprise members of all parties. My whole aim in seeking the appointment of a Select Committee is to bring into force reasonable legislation for the purpose of protecting the interests of both the employer and the employee.

In the first letter mention is made of the referral of a young lady to a firm in Perth. Her referral was followed up by the document containing the charge for the service—50 per cent. of which was charged against the employer, and the other 50 per cent. against the employee. However, in a letter attached to the statement of charges this particular secretarial agency stated that should employment by either party be terminated within the 14-day probationary period the service fee would be refunded, less a cancellation fee of \$4.25 which was chargeable both to the employer and the employee. I do not know whether the Act contains any provision for such a service charge to be imposed.

I have other correspondence before me between an employer and one of the leading agencies in Perth. This agency sent an account of its fee, and it amounted to 150 per cent. of the first week's wages, 75 per cent. of which was charged against the employer and 75 per cent. against the employee. In the letter from the employer to the agency he stated—

Please note that the position is not Receptioniste-typist, but dental attendant-receptioniste with typing preferred.

He goes on to say—

Why is your fee 50% higher than that of the others?

In a reply on behalf of the agency, the director said—

Firstly we are not an Employment Agency but Personnel Consultants and the largest of our type with offices in all States of Australia.

He goes on—

It is not only because we offer better service but a complete personnel service in the form of Male and Female Permanent selection, male and female temporary appointments, complete business training and secretarial services, that we enjoy the position as one of the leading personnel Consultants in Australia today.

Because it provides all the other services—although this employer was not asking for them—the firm feels that charge of 150 per cent. of the first week's wages is warranted. It is my contention that such agencies cannot justify what is, in my opinion, an exorbitant charge. The employer wrote back and said—

Thanks for your smug reply.

He said that other employment agencies in the past had provided him with suitable staff at a charge of 50 per cent., and that he disagreed with the contention of the manager of this employment agency that it would cost him more than 150 per cent. of the employee's wages to advertise.

I received a call from a professional man in Perth who made use of the services of this particular agency, as he had in the past, and a young lady was referred to him. He engaged her and then received a request from the employment agency for a sum equivalent to 150 per cent. of the first week's wages.

He went on to say that the reason for this was that an amendment had been made to the Act and now the charge was made to the employer only. The charge made by the agency was based on no legitimate grounds at all. However, the situation may become clearer when I refer to a recent license granted by the Licensing Court.

The license referred to was granted to a person named Urwin who stipulated he intended to charge only the employer. A Crown Law Department opinion was sought which indicated that it was O.K. for him to go ahead and do this. However, reference to the speech made by Mr. Mullany, the member for Menzies, who was responsible for the 1918 amendments, counters this opinion. At page 1098 of Vol. 2 of the 1917-18 *Parliamentary Debates* Mr. Mullany is reported to have said the following:—

The main object of the Bill is to bring into this State legislation which will provide, as has already been provided in the Eastern States, that both the employer and the employee shall pay something towards the services which are rendered, and to do something to bring the person who is seeking employment into contact with the person who is seeking for someone to fill a certain position.

He goes on a little further down—

The practice in the majority of cases is that the person who is seeking employment and who is successful in securing employment through a broker's office has to pay all the fees and the employer pays nothing.

So the last amendment, although made 52 years ago, had the specific purpose of legislating for any payment levied for services rendered by employment brokers to be sought equally from employer and employee. Section 15 of the Act reads, in part—

No payment or remuneration for or in respect of any hiring shall be charged by an employment broker to the servant which is not equally charged to the employer.

It is my contention that the interpretation of the Crown Law Department is suspect. I am pleased with the interpretation and I am also pleased that the Licensing Court has seen fit to allow a broker to charge only the employer. I do not believe the employee should be charged. However in my opinion legislation is necessary to cover the point to ensure the situation will not be challenged, and also to ensure that brokers charge the employer only.

I would next like to make reference to an article which appeared in the *Daily News* on the 13th September, 1968, in which the secretary of the Trades and Labor Council (Mr. Coleman) suggested that shady practices and misrepresentation had accompanied the mushroom growth of private employment agencies in Western Australia. He suggested that many of these employment brokers cater

for newcomers who are unaware of conditions in Western Australia. Mr. Coleman said that types of misrepresentation included the following:—

Calling jobs permanent when they were temporary.

Advertising abroad that certain overseas union tickets were valid and Western Australian trade tests were easy, when neither statement was true.

Indicating that the applicant had some guarantee of continuity of employment, when all he had was an arrangement with the employment agency having no validity under the Master and Servant Act.

Failure to indicate that an advertised bonus towards fares was a matter entirely at the discretion of the employer.

He also made reference to the exorbitant charges made by an agency to a building worker. He was charged something like \$56, representing 75 per cent. of the 150 per cent. charged by this particular agency.

The Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council received certain letters from employment brokers in response to his statements made on television and in the Press. In a letter from one of the reputable and old-established brokers, the writer took Mr. Coleman to task for a start. However, the letter went on to say—

However, I myself, uphold in part the principles of the statement you made; and would welcome a thorough general and intensive investigation by the appropriate authorities into the activities of a few who give many a bad name. Unfortunately, the Employment Brokers Act, in its existing form, legally allows the apparent exorbitant fees charged to the person cited.

He went on to say that he would be pleased to discuss the matter at any time.

I have another letter from the principal of a secretarial agency and in it she indicates she is very interested in developments, particularly as she believes some agencies are against having the fee to applicants discontinued or made optional.

Other letters received made reference to the fact that agencies are charging employees, but not employers, with a view to securing all vacancies for particular employers.

The Employment Agents Association, affiliated with the Chamber of Commerce, has, on the Minister's admission, made representations for amendments to the Act; and I am sure that association would be in complete agreement with the suggestion that a Select Committee be appointed to which the association and its members could make representations with a view to giving members of Parliament a better

basis for legislation for the control and better management of the operations of employment brokers.

Miss Lyal, of the Chamber of Commerce, raised questions concerning the fees charged. She said that members of her association were tending to charge employers only and to charge them 100 per cent. However, she indicated in conversation that this could possibly become subject to challenge. She also raised the question of special consideration for special types of employment such as modelling, part-time nursing, and musical entertainment.

The Employment Agents Association of W.A. would like the book work to be streamlined. At present agents are required to keep no less than four dossiers and it is inclined to the opinion that two dossiers would be sufficient. I have read the constitution of W.A. and although only 30 of the 85 employment agencies belong to the organisation, I feel the opinion of the association would weigh heavily with a Select Committee inquiring into a matter such as this. The opinion of the association would be of great assistance because it would represent the majority of the old-established employment brokers. As I have said, the association could be of great assistance in the formation of a basic policy on which to legislate for the control of employment brokers.

I am in possession of correspondence from various unions and I will refer to certain employment agencies which have come under the scrutiny of those unions. An advertisement appeared in the New Zealand Press on the 23rd October, 1968, and was inserted by the Auckland based West Australian Information Services. I think questions were asked in Parliament regarding this particular organisation, and I am not sure whether it is still operating. However, the organisation was offering jobs to plasterers.

I received a letter from the Operative Plasterers and Plaster Workers' Federation of Australia, dated November, 1968. The letter referred to an advertisement in which \$200 was being offered for a five-day week, with guarantees, to New Zealand plasterers. However, such jobs did not exist. Another letter I received referred to an employment agency which offered a job to a plasterer. It could only be concluded that the employment broker noticed the job in the paper that morning because when the plasterer went out to secure the position he found a queue waiting to be interviewed. The employment agency charged a registration fee, and I do not know if the worker has, as yet, received a refund.

Another letter refers to a charge of \$56.25 to an applicant for what was stated to be a permanent position. However, the

position turned out to be temporary, as is the case with most positions in the building industry. The initial charge was \$56.25 but it was subsequently revealed that this was incorrect, and I will quote from the correspondence as follows:—

We regret our error in this instance, but as quoted our fee is 2% of the gross salary which of course should be \$78.00.

So the agency sent another bill for the balance of \$21.75. That charge was for a temporary position in the building industry.

The Boilermakers and Blacksmiths' Society of Australia also referred to positions advertised on behalf of the West Australian Information Services in New Zealand. The society referred to certain rates of pay which the union in Western Australia knew were not available. The members of the union in Western Australia would have filled the positions themselves had they been available.

At least two tradesmen and one labourer paid their fares to Western Australia on the strength of the advice received from the West Australian Information Services. A letter I have refers to the arrangements, and to the fact that a car would be supplied and fares would be refunded. Of course, when those men arrived here nothing materialised although they had paid their fees before their departure.

I think I should also refer to musicians. The secretary of the Musicians' Union is somewhat concerned because some musicians are not receiving their correct award rate. The agents deduct their charge from the musician's fee. The musicians receive the award rate from the employer, but the agent takes his percentage, which varies between each engagement. The Musicians' Union is anxious to have this matter looked into. The Employment Brokers Act requires a section to deal with this type of engagement. I refer, again, to models, part-time nurses, musicians, part-time domestic workers, and so on.

I will now refer to the process of securing an employment broker's license, which is cumbersome and involves three separate Government departments. The clerk of petty sessions for the magisterial district in which the premises are situated is responsible for the acceptance of applications for the grant of transfer of licenses and for the maintenance of a register of employment brokers' licenses. The stipendiary magistrate for the magisterial district deals with all transfers of licenses. The Chief Inspector of Factories, Department of Labour, reports on all applications for new licenses, inspects the premises and checks that the relevant books of record are maintained by the licensee. The Licensing Court hears all

applications for new licenses and for the renewal of existing licenses which are only in force until the 31st December in each year.

Section 13 of the Act provides for a transferred license to expire on the first day of the month following the next quarterly licensing meeting to be held after the expiration of twenty-one days from the date of the transfer. This involves the licensee in the payment of additional lodging and issuing fees and advertisement costs. This could be looked at in the interests of the brokers themselves.

The Act could be administered properly by the Department of Labour under the Factories and Shops Act. A Select Committee would determine standards and criteria to be met by prospective licensees. In this way we would have a basis by which inspectors, appointed under the Factories and Shops Act, could judge the operations and the standards of licensed brokers.

In conclusion, I want to say that it is quite apparent that there is a need for some reform in this area. We have looked at the question of qualifications. On the question of referrals alone, there is loss of time and money to both the employer and the employee. Other aspects should be looked at; namely, premises kept by brokers, the procedure of securing a license, and the policing of licenses.

Complaints have been received from individuals, employers, and brokers. In addition the Brokers' Association and the unions have complained. The real difficulty lies in our limited knowledge of the operations of employment brokers. We know they have increased in number at a phenomenal rate in recent times. If we are to provide for the security of *bona fide* employment brokers, it is my contention that we should investigate the activities of all employment brokers and give those who feel they can substantiate a reason for their existence the right to continue. The basis for sound up-to-date legislation would emanate from an inquiry.

I also suggest that a Select Committee would take cognisance of the need for legislation for particular areas of employment. I have indicated in the theme of my speech that private employment brokers must be able to justify their existence if we are to allow them to continue in business in view of the fact that the taxpayer has to meet the cost of running the Commonwealth Employment Service. I believe there is substantial ground for members to support my motion and I ask them to do so.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. O'Neill (Minister for Labour).

House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.