

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I was not trying to influence anyone. I merely asked you a question. Obviously I should not because you get angry.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Only if the Minister says things unfairly.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is your opinion.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: I understood you to say that those items you read out were exempted from the tax—whatever it was.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is right. It had nothing to do with the weight of vehicles.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I asked whether the weight was the same or different.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The weight in Victoria is four tons and in South Australia it is eight tons.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: We are not at cross purposes then.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, that is better. I have a telegram from the Gascoyne which indicates very clearly that the Shire of Carnarvon anticipates a serious effect on its budget by the loss of revenue under this Bill. It anticipates under some headings a loss of £7,500 and a total in excess of £12,000. This telegram which was sent to Mr. Norton outlines how very seriously this Bill, if passed, is going to affect it.

I do not wish to pursue lines which were taken by my colleagues. Suffice to say that on three grounds I oppose this Bill very deliberately. If I were asked whether I would be prepared to sacrifice the matching money, my answer would be, "Yes, definitely," because if we extend that further, what is going to be the effect in the unfair incidence of matching money as supplied by other States because we are tied through the Grants Commission to two standard States? I realise very fully that this State would be asked to bear a burden because of the unfairness of the matching money incidence. However I will have much more to say in Committee on the Bill and I oppose the second reading.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. R. Jones.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Returned

Bill returned from the Assembly without amendment.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council.

House adjourned at 5.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 4th November, 1965

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced; and, on motion by Mr. Craig (Minister for Traffic), read a first time.

QUESTIONS (22): ON NOTICE

GRAPE GROWING AT MT. BARKER

Committee of Inquiry: Report, and Adoption of Recommendations

1. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:
 - (1) Has the report of the committee set up to inquire into the establishment of a grape growing industry in Mt. Barker area been received?
 - (2) Was the report favourable?
 - (3) If the answer to (2) is "Yes," does the Government intend to adopt its recommendations?
 - (4) Is it proposed to establish experimental planting?
 - (5) (a) What area will be planted;
(b) what varieties will be used;
(c) where will the planting be made;

- (d) when will planting take place;
- (e) when can first production be expected?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The report recommended that experimental sites should be established in the Mt. Barker region to test the area's ability to produce table wines of distinctive quality.
- (3) Yes, with respect to (2) above.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) (a) 5 acres.
(b) Rhine Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon.
(c) Forest Hill, west of Mt. Barker.
(d) 1966.
(e) Possibly in 1970.

STAMP ACT

Reprinting: Incorporation of 1965 Amendments and Decimal Currency

2. Mr. EVANS asked the Premier:
 - (1) Is it intended to have the Stamp Act reprinted so as to incorporate the proposed amendments at present before the House and with the second schedule rates quoted in decimal currency, to be available on or as soon as possible after C-day?
 - (2) If not, will he give consideration or further consideration to this matter?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Answered by (1).

SWAN RIVER CONSERVATION BOARD

Members and Interests Represented

3. Mr. HART asked the Minister for Works:

Who are the personnel of the Swan River Conservation Board and what varied and allied interests do the various members represent?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Mr. R. J. Bond—Chairman.
Messrs. C. S. Paterson and J. J. Higgins (awaiting Ex. Co. approval)—Perth City Council.
Messrs. W. P. Calton, E. Wicks, G. L. Lithgo, E. S. Harrison—Local Government Association.
Mr. W. R. Courtney—W. A. Aquatic Council.
Mr. N. G. Humphries—W.A. Chamber of Manufactures.
Mr. R. O. Bestman—National Fitness Council.

Mr. T. A. Cleave—Lands and Surveys Department.
 Mr. R. M. Hillman—Metropolitan Water Supply Board.
 Mr. V. L. Steffanoni—Town Planning Board.
 Mr. N. J. Henry—Public Works Department.
 Mr. A. M. Fuller—Harbour and Light Department.
 Mr. C. E. Flower—Public Health Department.
 Dr. L. W. Samuel—Government Chemical Laboratories.

SWORN VALUATORS

Authority for Appointment, and Number in Kalgoorlie and Boulder

4. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is there any statutory provision authorising the appointment of persons as sworn valuers for the purpose of setting a value on property other than land?
- (2) If so, what is that provision?
- (3) If there is no such provision, by what means is the Commissioner of Probate Duties satisfied as to the value of property other than land coming within his purview?
- (4) How many sworn valuers appointed pursuant to section 14 of the Transfer of Land Act, 1893, are in Kalgoorlie and Boulder?

Procedure for Appointment

- (5) What is the procedure to be followed by a person desiring to be appointed a sworn valuator under the said Transfer of Land Act?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) So far as I am aware, the only statutory provision relating to the appointment of valuers, apart from that contained in section 14 of the Transfer of Land Act, is that in proviso 1 (b) of subsection (4) of section 74 of the Stamp Act. Valuers appointed under this provision may value property other than land, but their activities are strictly limited to the purposes of the Stamp Act and have nothing to do with valuations for the purpose of assessing probate duty.
- (2) See answer to (1).
- (3) Generally, the Commissioner of Probate Duties does not require valuations of personal property. In a minority of cases he is offered valuations made by members of the Commonwealth Institute of Valuers and, with particular regard to valuations of shares, by professional public accountants. As a rule it is a matter of the

commissioner testing the stated value against such information as can be gleaned from bank statements, income tax returns, stock journals and appropriate personal inquiry.

- (4) According to the records of the Titles Office, there are presently three sworn valuers in Kalgoorlie and two in Boulder.
- (5) Applications must be made to the Registrar of Titles. An application must be supported by—
 - (i) three testimonials from prominent citizens testifying as to the applicant's character and integrity and his ability as a valuer;
 - (ii) a completed questionnaire and declaration as to method of operation and experience;
 - (iii) three specimen valuations and reports—
 - (a) one of a residence;
 - (b) one of an investment property, shop, etc.; and
 - (c) one of vacant land.

If the applicant is mainly engaged in rural valuations, then a report and valuation of a farming, dairying, or grazing property may be forwarded in lieu of that for an investment property.

These documents are then sent off to the Commonwealth Institute of Valuers which then assesses the knowledge, experience and ability of the applicant, and makes a recommendation to the registrar accordingly.

If the application is accepted, the applicant is appointed by Order-in-Council and takes the statutory oath in due course.

SICK LEAVE

Grant for War-caused Disabilities

5. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Has the Department of Labour been approached by any trade union or association of employees with a request that up to an additional ten days' sick leave per year be granted to wages employees who are absent from employment because of war-caused disabilities?
- (2) If so, has any such request been refused?
- (3) If so, what is the reason for refusing the request made on behalf of such employees when the Government has already granted the concession to public servants and school teachers?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes. The Printing Industry Employees Union requested the Department of Labour to give consideration to this matter in respect of Government Printing Office employees.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) It was considered that as no other Government wages employees were in receipt of this concession at the time, the overall situation should be examined. This investigation is currently in progress.

RAILWAY LAND AT MERREDIN

Release

6. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What is the position regarding the release of a narrow strip of railway land situated west of Merredin Railway Station and south of the proposed standard gauge rail route and north of the proposed main road alignment?
- (2) Will this land be made available to business interests?
- (3) If so, will it be released under lease or freehold conditions?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Assuming that the honourable member is referring to the area east of the Bruce Rock road level crossing, this land will ultimately be available for leasing, but no firm indication can be given respecting date of availability.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

MERREDIN HIGH SCHOOL

Water Supply for Oval

7. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Education:

What position has been reached in the matter of a suitable water supply for the Merredin High School oval?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Approval has been given for the provision of a water supply but it has not been possible to allocate the necessary finance from this year's loan allocation. It is hoped to provide the funds during the next financial year.

NATIVE RESERVE AT MERREDIN

Facilities: Improvement

8. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) Is he aware that at the Merredin native reserve the following conditions apply:—
 - (a) There is no hot water shower?

(b) No electric light in the reserve?

(c) There are only four toilets to cater for an average of from 80 to 100 natives, and that on occasions the number approximates 150 people at the one time?

- (2) As zero conditions are frequently experienced in Merredin and as many native children are expected to do some home study, and finally as the toilet position is most unhygienic, will he endeavour to rectify this unsatisfactory position?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Action has already been taken as under:—
 - (a) Arrangements were made two weeks ago with the department's mobile unit to proceed to Merredin on the completion of current work at Doodlakine and, among other things, to install two hot water systems. This will be completed within three weeks.
 - (b) In May, 1965, the State Housing Commission was asked to call tenders as soon as possible for the installation of electricity. Payment has already been made to the commission.
 - (c) Provision has been made in the current Estimates for a third ablution laundry toilet block. Tenders are expected to be called shortly.

KEWDALE HIGH SCHOOL

Canteen: Provision

9. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is provision to be made for a canteen at the new Kewdale High School?
- (2) If so, when is it anticipated the canteen will be built and ready for occupation?

Construction: Progress

- (3) Does progress made to date on the new building confirm that the school will be ready to take first and second year students at the commencement of the 1966 school year?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) When school opens.
- (3) Yes.

ROADS IN PILBARA

Vehicle Density

10. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:

What are the approximate motor vehicle density figures for the following roads:—

- (a) Carnarvon-Roebourne;
- (b) Wubin-Meekatharra;
- (c) Meekatharra-Marble Bar?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (a) Carnarvon-Roebourne Road:

- (i) At the Gascoyne Junction turn-off, four miles from Carnarvon the daily average was 41 vehicles to and from Onslow (July, 1964).
- (ii) At the junction with the Onslow entrance road the daily average was 35 vehicles to and from Carnarvon and 30 vehicles to and from Roebourne (July, 1964).
- (iii) At the Pt. Samson turn-off just out of Roebourne the daily average was 26 vehicles to and from Onslow (August, 1964).

- (b) Wubin-Meekatharra Road:

- (i) At Wubin the daily average was 83 vehicles to and from Meekatharra (July, 1965).
- (ii) At Mt. Magnet the daily average was 74 vehicles travelling between Wubin and Meekatharra (July, 1965).
- (iii) At Nannine, 25 miles from Meekatharra, the daily average was 22 vehicles to and from Meekatharra (November, 1964).

- (c) Meekatharra-Marble Bar Road:

- (i) At the Wiluna turn-off in Meekatharra the daily average was 45 vehicles to and from Marble Bar (November, 1964).
- (ii) At the Peak Hill turn-off 41 miles from Meekatharra the daily average was 37 vehicles to and from Meekatharra and 24 vehicles to and from Marble Bar (July, 1965).
- (iii) At the entrance to Marble Bar the daily average was 54 vehicles to and from Meekatharra (September, 1964).

All the daily averages given are from the 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. period as the figures were extracted from manual traffic counts which are conducted only during daylight hours.

ROEBOURNE SCHOOL

Additional Classrooms

11. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Reverting to a question asked earlier concerning new classrooms at Roebourne, is he aware that present enrolment figures indicate that by the time the allotment is made in 1966-67 for one classroom, two classrooms will in fact be required?
- (2) In view of the foregoing, will provision be made in 1966-67 for two classrooms?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Present enrolment is 197 primary and 20 post-primary pupils. The headmaster's estimate for February, 1966, is 199 primary and 39 post-primary. Under the regulations the existing six classrooms are sufficient for this number.
- (2) No.

12. *This question was postponed.*

SWIMMING CLASSES

Kent Street Pool: Use by Victoria Park School Children

13. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will the privately-owned Kent Street swimming pool be available this summer for school children in the Victoria Park district to receive swimming instruction through the Education Department?
- (2) If not, where is it anticipated such classes will be conducted?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2) The proprietor of the privately-owned Kent Street swimming pool states that he is making every effort to make it available for the beginning of ordinary swimming classes and also later for vacation swimming. If it is not ready, ordinary classes will be transferred to Como and vacation swimming classes to centres of the parents' choice.

WATER SUPPLIES AT ALBANY:
SOUTH COAST AREA*Petition against Extension*

14. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) As a petition was lodged by residents and landowners in the South Coast area, Little Grove, Albany, on the 14th September, 1965, protesting against the proposed extension of water service to the area on the ground that they had

their own individual services, can he advise the outcome of the request as received in the form of petition?

- (2) How many signatures were on the petition and how many land-owners and residents would be affected by the decision to extend or not to extend water supply in the Little Grove area, Albany?

Availability for Fire Fighting, and Effect on Insurance Rates

- (3) Is there any fire protection by way of water service in the area referred to?
- (4) If the answer to (3) is "No," would the non-existence of water mains in the area cause a higher insurance premium to be paid for fire insurance on property than if water mains were available for fire fighting?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) A pipeline affecting only petitioners and not other residents has been deleted from the present proposals.
- (2) (a) 7.
(b) Pipelines will be extended to serve 27 houses and 134 building lots of the total of 31 houses and 154 building lots originally designed for.
- (3) No.
- (4) Yes. (Advised by the State Government Insurance Office).

15. *This question was postponed.*

SCHOOL AT WELLINGTON MILLS

Provision

16. Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Education:

Will he advise what is the position with reference to the provisions of the long-promised new school at Wellington Mills?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

A new classroom will be available for the opening of the 1966 school year.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICTS

Redivision

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

- (1) Has he any plans for the redivision of the State into a much more orderly and sensible number of local government bodies?
- (2) Is he aware that such redivision in New South Wales and Tasmania has been recommended by commissions of inquiry?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) No. An examination of the situation may be undertaken.
- (2) No; but inquiries are being instigated.

18. *This question was postponed.*

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Contributory Schemes: Unsatisfied Applications

19. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) How many group applications for connection under contributory scheme arrangements were unsatisfied on the 30th June, 1962, 1963, 1964, and 1965 respectively?
- (2) What were the total numbers of prospective individual consumers involved in these unsatisfied applications on the dates mentioned?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

- (1) For technical reasons applicants are not finally arranged in groups until negotiations commence.
- (2) The number of individual recorded applications which had not been dealt with were as follows:—
To June, 1962—No record kept.
To June, 1963—No record kept.
To June, 1964—956.
To June, 1965—919.

20. *This question was postponed.*

RAILWAY WAGONS: R.C.B. CLASS

Braking Power

21. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Railways:

Adverting to my question 9 of the 3rd November, 1965—

- (a) what is the increase in braking power provided for the R.C.B. wagons operating with increased carrying capacity;
- (b) what will be the braking power of these wagons;
- (c) up to what speeds will trains hauling these wagons operate;
- (d) what is the percentage of braking power to be provided on these trains compared with that available on passenger trains?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (a) 20 per cent.
- (b) Minimum of 18 inches of vacuum under fully loaded conditions.
- (c) Maximum 35 miles per hour.
- (d) A minimum of 90 per cent. of brakes fully operative on R.C.W. bogie wagon block wheat trains, compared with 100 per cent. on passenger trains. The reference to R.C.W. is to the classification of R.C.E. as modified.

MINING ADVISORY COMMITTEE*Duties, Remuneration, and General Cost***22. Mr. MOIR asked the Premier:**

A statement in the Press on the 2nd November and attributed to him states that the Government has formed a committee to advise it on mining matters and that the committee members would be the former Under-Secretary for Mines, the former General Secretary of the Chamber of Mines, and a former Vice-President of the Chamber of Mines. If this statement is correct will he state:

- (a) what duties this committee will perform which would be beyond the scope of personnel of the Mines Department and other officers employed by the Government;
- (b) what will be the extent of the committee members' remuneration;
- (c) other costs to the Government arising from the activities of the committee?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (a) Following the retirement of Mr. A. H. Telfer as Under-Secretary for Mines—a position which he held for 28 years—and in view of the knowledge and experience gained by Mr. Telfer in the mining industry during this period, the Government has decided to retain his services for the time being in an advisory and consultative capacity.

Mr. Telfer will be employed on a full-time basis and will advise the Minister for Mines upon matters directed to him by the Minister to do with present problems and future planning of the mineral industry in Western Australia.

Neither Mr. Telfer's position nor the committee's functions will overlap the normal activities of the Mines Department to which they will be additional and ancillary. It is not intended that the committee will be of a permanent nature.

- (b) This matter was referred to the Public Service Commissioner who has recommended an allowance at the rate of £2,000 a year to be paid to Mr. Telfer and £5 5s. per half-day sitting to the other two members.
- (c) None, except in the event of the committee or one of its members being asked to perform some specific task associated with its activities.

**CLACKLINE-BOLGART AND
BELLEVUE-EAST NORTHAM
RAILWAY DISCONTINUANCE AND
LAND REVESTMENT BILL**

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 2nd November, on the following motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Railways):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [2.30 p.m.]: This Bill proposes to authorise the discontinuance of the operation of the Clackline-Bolgart railway and the Bellevue-East Northam railway. The Bill is necessary because of the construction of the standard gauge railway from Kalgoorlie to Kwinana and the incorporation in it from East Northam to Bellevue of the dual-gauge system. This will mean that the railway, when finally constructed and in operation, will be able to carry not only standard gauge rolling stock, but narrow gauge rolling stock as well. Obviously there is no justification for operating the new standard gauge system in relation to the narrow gauge section of it and at the same time continuing to operate the existing narrow gauge railway system from Clackline to Bellevue.

The Minister in explaining the Bill to us did not go out of his way to provide a great deal of information. Although the information he made available to us was essential, it barely covered the essential features of the whole situation. He told us in justification of the proposal to discontinue the operation of the Clackline-Bellevue narrow-gauge system that a saving of £500,000 per annum would be effected in operating expenses. In addition he told us that an estimate had been made to the effect that approximately £1,500,000 would have to be spent within a reasonable period of time to rehabilitate the permanent way of the Clackline-Bellevue narrow-gauge system in the event of that system remaining in operation for any number of years.

The estimated saving in operating expenses under the new system as compared with the present one is understandable because some of the grades, particularly one of them, on the existing narrow-gauge line from Clackline to Bellevue are quite severe. This naturally reduces very considerably the weight of load which can be carried over that particular section. As against that, the grades on the new dual-gauge system down the Avon Valley from East Northam are much better and consequently the operating expenses would naturally be lower on the proposed new line than on the existing one.

In connection with the estimated £1,500,000 to rehabilitate the existing line in the event of its being kept in operation, I think we can say that this type of

expenditure is one which is coming up from period to period. Therefore I think it is not a legitimate argument to claim this as a reason why the existing line should be discontinued by approval of Parliament.

The essence of the whole situation is that we as a State cannot afford to have both lines. I think no matter how prosperous the State might have been at this stage, it still could not have afforded to continue the two lines in operation, mainly because they are very close together over quite a long mileage of their respective distances. Although Governments in this State in years gone by have constructed railway lines fairly close together, I think those days are gone, mainly because of the very great development of road motor transport. There might have been justification 40 or 50 years ago to build two railway lines running parallel with only a distance in between of 20 miles or whatever it might have been. There would, of course, be no possible justification for any such policy in the future.

So in my view the essence of this situation now before us is not so much even a saving in operating expenses or an estimate as to what might be required in the way of millions of pounds of money to rehabilitate the permanent way of the Clackline-Bellevue railway, but that essentially there is no justification for the continuation of both lines. One has to go and obviously the one to go is the existing line between Clackline and Bellevue.

The Minister, and to some extent the Premier, have tried to break down, as it were, the financial burdens which will occur and which will remain more or less permanent over the years in relation to the discontinuance of the railway line between Clackline and Bellevue. There is no doubt there will be a continuing and a fairly solid financial liability still remaining upon the Railways Department or the Treasury or both, which means there will be a continuing and solid financial liability upon the taxpayers of this State and upon the taxpayers of the Commonwealth of Australia to the extent that Commonwealth moneys have to be made available to Western Australia from year to year to assist the State Government over the years to get somewhere near balancing the annual budget.

However, that, too, is not an essential consideration in relation to making a decision on this Bill now before us. I think Parliament has no choice in relation to this Bill.

Mr. Brand: No. Parliament decided on the other course.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes. I quite agree. The choice is not as to whether we will continue to operate this railway and the other railway. That is not a practical choice at all. The situation is that the new railway line has been constructed and will, I

think, early next year, come into operation; and consequently there will be no remaining justification to continue the Clackline-Bellevue railway in operation.

What I have said in that regard goes more or less for the Clackline-Bolgart railway, as it is described in the Bill. There has been very little traffic out of Clackline on the Clackline-Toodyay-Bolgart railway for many years, I think. The necessity for it, irrespective of how great or small that necessity might have been originally, has disappeared; and so, quite logically, there is every justification for legislation to provide for the discontinuance of a railway service on that line.

Mr. Lewis: Some of the State's good wheat comes over that line.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes, it does; but there will be an easier service available for it once the dual standard railway gauge system comes into operation. It will not only be a better service but a shorter one in terms of miles from the sidings from which the wheat is loaded down to the port of Fremantle.

I was naturally very interested in what the Minister had to tell us about the transport of iron ore from Koolyanobbing to Wundowie to service the needs of the charcoal iron industry at the last-mentioned centre. The Minister told us the iron ore would, for a time, continue to be transported from Koolyanobbing to Wundowie by rail, and that the section of railway between East Northam and Wundowie would be utilised specifically, and only, for the transport of iron ore. In other words, it would become, I think he said, a tramway as against a railway system.

The railway trains operating between East Northam and Wundowie during that period, he said, would be trains that would cart only iron ore and would not transport goods of any other description. It would be a specialised service to meet the needs of the Wundowie charcoal iron industry until a later stage, when even that section of the line would cease to be operated.

The proposal for that later date is that the iron ore will be transported by standard gauge railway from Koolyanobbing to East Northam. The ore will then be transported mechanically from the railway to huge trucks and taken by road from East Northam to Wundowie, a distance of some 22 to 23 miles.

In the interests of the greatest possible measure of road safety, I want to make a special plea to the authorities who will be concerned with this road cartage of iron ore from East Northam to Wundowie. I make that plea on behalf of all the other people who will be using vehicles of one kind or another on the roadway between Northam and Wundowie.

In this regard, I point out that the section of roadway between, say, the Northam military camp and the Clackline township is a very dangerous one. Those

members of this House who have travelled over that road will know it is very winding indeed, with downhill and uphill features as well. Consequently the degree of danger on that road is fairly high at any time. There have, unfortunately, in the last 12 months, been fatal accidents on that section of roadway—in fact, in one head-on collision between two cars three people were killed; and there have been other serious accidents on it. It seems to me this situation will be made worse when these huge motor trucks start to operate for the cartage of iron ore from East Northam to Wundowie.

I have not any clear-cut or reliable information as to the length of these proposed iron ore trucks, or their width, or the maximum speed at which they will be permitted to travel.

Mr. Craig: The speed is governed by the regulations, of course.

Mr. HAWKE: Maybe the Minister could tell us the maximum speed.

Mr. Craig: It would be about 30 to 35 miles an hour, I would say.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister does not appear to be too sure.

Mr. Craig: It is governed by the regulations. It is either 30 or 35 miles per hour.

Mr. HAWKE: I heard the Minister say that. I want him to tell us, if he can—and I will not blame him if he is not in a position to do so—

Mr. Craig: That is very kind of you.

Mr. HAWKE: —the maximum speed that will be allowed.

Mr. Craig: I repeat myself: it is about 30 miles an hour. It is not 60.

Mr. HAWKE: I did not suggest 60, or 50, or 40 miles an hour. I was trying to find out, if I could, the exact maximum speed at which these heavily-laden trucks will be permitted to travel. Even if the maximum speed is 30 or 35 miles an hour, the operation of the trucks on the roadway between Northam and Clackline will establish a danger of considerable magnitude.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is right.

Mr. HAWKE: They would be fairly dangerous even on a straight section of road; and on the Northam-Clackline section, with all these dangerous curves and the ups and downs, they will, of course, be ever so much more dangerous.

This section of roadway, too, carries a considerable amount of very heavy road traffic, because the heavy road trucks which bring interstate freight to Western Australia travel over it. It is a busy road also in connection with all other types of motor vehicles. So I would emphasise again the concern and fear, if I might put it that way, which I entertain at this stage in relation to the proposal to put these huge motor trucks fully loaded with

iron ore—and to operate them day and night, I have no doubt, and on Sundays, Saturdays, and holidays—on the road between Northam and Wundowie.

The Minister also gave us some information about the efforts which are being made to organise an adequate road service to meet the needs of those people who are now served by the railway between Clackline and westwards towards Midland Junction. He gave us some figures regarding the total amount of freight which now is put on the railways operated for this area, or some of this area; and clearly from those figures the problem is not a big one. I have no doubt it could be organised in such a way as to enable the goods which are offering to be transported efficiently and, I hope, at a reasonable cost.

The Minister could not tell us at this stage whether this road transport service would be operated by the Railways Department itself or would be given over to private contractors. I certainly hope a final decision will be made reasonably soon to enable the people in the district concerned to know, as early as practicable, the type of service they are to be given as a result of the railway service being taken away from them.

I was also interested in what the Minister had to say on the railway level crossings which now exist between the Northam railway station—as it is known officially—and the East Northam railway station. There are several railway crossings between the two stations. Under the new standard gauge set-up the railway service which now operates between the Northam station and the East Northam station will cease to operate. The original idea in this connection was that the level crossings between the two points mentioned would be closed once the new railway system came into operation, with the exception of the one at Charles Street. The level crossing at Charles Street was to be left open in order that railway facilities might continue to be made available to the Northam flourmill.

According to the information the Minister gave in his second reading speech the other day, it would now appear that all the level crossings between Northam railway station right up to, but not the Chidlow Street railway crossing will remain open. The Minister told us this would be done in order to enable the oil depots between Northam railway station and the East Northam railway station still to have a service. I think the Minister will recall the original idea in regard to the oil depots was that they would have to find other locations away from the existing railway line which is to be closed between Northam and East Northam, and consequently the level crossings which it is now proposed to keep open were to be closed, and the land which carries the

existing railway between Charles Street, or Gardiner Street, Northam, and Chidlow Street, Northam, was to be offered either to the business people for additional accommodation for their needs, or made available to the Northam Town Council for local needs as might be thought best by that authority.

Evidently there has been some second thinking on this matter, and the oil companies, presumably, are now to be allowed to remain where they are and to be given a rail service as and when they need it. It seems to me the oil companies are getting far more consideration than was given to a service station proprietor who had a service station established and operating at the corner of York Road and Chidlow Street, Northam. With the deviation of the main road, made necessary by this standard gauge railway, and the closing of the Chidlow Street railway crossing, this man's business was absolutely doomed.

He tried to obtain some consideration, compensation, or assistance for his loss from the Railways Department, and also from the Main Roads Department, but he was completely wiped off and he received no compensation or consideration whatsoever. He has had to re-establish himself on a new site on the west side of the railway line and to construct completely new premises from the ground up to house his garage and his service station activities.

I would like to have the latest available information from the Minister on the question of the level crossings between Charles Street and Chidlow Street, and, in particular, I would like to know whether this proposed new arrangement is to be permanent and the narrow gauge railway line between Northam and East Northam is to be left in position for as far ahead as can be seen in order that these oil depots can be serviced with rail facilities and, of course, can be allowed to remain where they are instead of having to shift away to new locations in Northam.

I should make it clear, probably, that the land upon which these oil depots are located is, as far as I know, owned by the companies concerned. From memory, I am not absolutely clear whether that is so, but I think it is. I should think these oil depots would require a train once a month. I am not sure as to the frequency with which they require rail service to bring in additional quantities of oil or, perhaps, to take out their empty oil drums. It does seem to me to be a pity these level crossings are to remain and the railway line along the route to which I have referred is, presumably, to be retained for railway purposes for years ahead, instead of, as had been hoped, the land—and it is quite a fair area between Northam and East Northam—being made available to enable businessmen to extend their premises, or perhaps their parking areas.

This could have become quite an asset to the businessmen concerned, and of some assistance to the town as well.

I know at one stage the oil companies were co-operating with the idea that they should move out to other locations, but the thinking on the question suddenly took a complete swing around, and the oil companies finally decided to squat. They are thoroughly entitled, legally, to remain where they are, because they own the land on which their depots are located. Nevertheless, I would be pleased to have the latest information, and as much of it as there is available, from the Minister.

As I said earlier, the essential feature of the approach of Parliament to this legislation is that there is no alternative. One of the two railways has to go out of existence. Obviously, it cannot be the new one, and therefore it has to be the existing one. It is with regret, therefore that I cannot oppose the Bill.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [2.59 p.m.]: As the member representing the railway workshops district in this State I feel I should have something to say on the Bill, particularly as I opposed the closing of the Bellevue-Mundaring line at quite some length on several occasions.

I am inclined to agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the immediate economics of the railways in Western Australia are such that it is probably desirable that this line be closed down, although I am one who could be convinced that with the right approach there are factors which should be brought into consideration which could, in the future, make it possible for this line to remain.

I have taken out a rough estimate of the cost of putting down the dual railway from Northam via Avon to Bellevue. The cost works out at about £115,000 per mile. That is a lot of money. If the Minister made some research he would find that in the early days the eastern goldfields line, which we are now discussing, was probably put down for about £15,000 per mile.

So now we find that the new dual gauge system is to cost in the vicinity of six to seven times as much as the original railway which was put down in the early part of the century. Even though the Minister said it would cost £1,500,000 to keep the existing line rehabilitated, I think if he offsets that against the original cost, it would take many decades before the cost would come anywhere near what the standard gauge railway is to cost.

Mr. Court: What about operating costs?

Mr. BRADY: I did not want to get drawn into the question of operating costs, but these operating costs over the standard gauge railway are allegedly going to save over £600,000 a year. In fact I did see in one of the pamphlets that was issued that the saving would be £1,000,000

a year. As a consequence, the loss that has been taking place will be reduced by £1,000,000 a year; but that was when the cost of this railway was to be over the £41,500,000 mark. We know, however, that in recent times it has been said that this railway will cost £55,000,000, an increase of over 25 per cent.

If we are to make the great strides in progress which we are led to believe we will make, I cannot see why this line cannot be left for light travelling, and for a multiplicity of other aspects that could be taken into consideration. I wish the Minister well in what he has set out to do, for the sake of the State and its economy. But I would like to point out that in the immediate vicinity of these two railways—the standard gauge railway and the existing eastern railway—there are about 750,000 to 1,000,000 acres of land, and this within 60 miles of the port of Fremantle.

We are told we are going to make enormous progress in the next decade or two, and I hope that will be ultimately proved correct. But I ask the Government, and the Minister in charge of this particular activity, what is being done to encourage the people to utilise this 1,000,000 acres to the fullest extent. There are 750,000 acres between the standard gauge line and the eastern line, to say nothing of what is on the northern side of the line.

If this area is to be ultimately developed as it should be, and having regard to the great expansion to which we are looking forward with our primary and secondary industries, particularly as it concerns export, I should have hoped that the Minister would come to us and say, "Here are approximately the economics of our agricultural and primary industries in the next five or 10 years; and such are the economics that there is no justification for the second line remaining." But we have not had that from the Minister.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, we have a minimum of information. We know that the various areas east of the metropolitan area are all expanding in agricultural, pastoral, and grazing activities. Even the little places we see along the existing line, like National Park, Hovea, Parkerville, Stoneville, Mt. Helena, Chidlow, Gidgegannup, Wexcombe, and many others, are all expanding tremendously. In the vicinity of Wexcombe, which is in my electorate, subdivision after subdivision has been cut up. The Railways Department should be out to encourage this traffic to support the railways.

When speaking in this House in the past the Minister has told us what is going to happen to Midland; how we are going to have a fast service from Midland to Perth in connection with the metropolitan services. The Minister mentioned the viewpoint that in America they are doing this,

that in America they are doing that; that in places like Cleveland trains are running at a terrific speed and bringing in hundreds of thousands of people. He told us about the kiss and ride system. If we are to have the expansion that we are led to believe will take place in Western Australia in the next decade or two, some of these things could happen here, and in my opinion all this traffic—whether it be goods traffic, passenger traffic, or stock traffic—should be handled by the railways.

If anyone looks at the annual balance sheet of the railways he will see that the passenger services are dropping off considerably. He will also see that the stock being handled on the railways is falling away dramatically. It is not just a normal fall-away but a dramatic loss. What is the Railways Department doing to retrieve that traffic and transport? I think it is doing nothing in this direction. I think the department is driving the people away from the railways. It is creating these terrible monsters that are looming up in the outer metropolitan fringes, and in the hills districts. During the weekends we have the roads reaching saturation point from Friday night until 10 o'clock on Monday morning. In my opinion a lot of this traffic should be handled by the railways.

Instead of 10 or 15 buses running into the Governor Stirling High School—and this is in my electorate—from the country districts, these children should be brought in by the railways. All the hills children—those from Bullsbrook, Mundaring, and Chidlow—should be brought in by the railways. I saw a 10-coach railway train pull up in Midland last Thursday evening with the best part of 1,000 children who had been to a sports meeting in Perth. I will have something more to say about that later.

I am trying to get members to realise that the roads are not going to handle the foreseeable traffic in the future. If they are able to handle it, this will be done at an enormous road cost. We have heard members in this House complain over the last week of the cost of the roadways and the equalisation of cost system or the pound for pound basis. They do not like the imposition of these taxes. Well, if the railways were properly run there would be no necessity to spend the money on the roads as is being spent at the moment. But I am afraid the economics of the railways are going to be so unfortunate that we will have to close portion of the railway system.

I feel we have already closed down too much of the railway system over the last 16 years. In that time we have closed down approximately 2,000 miles. I think that is too much. We hear that the Government is in favour of decentralisation, but I do not think the Government is helping decentralisation by taking away

the railway transport system from areas already established between here and Northam.

Anybody who looks at a road map will see there are 10 roads running between the Great Eastern Highway over the eastern railway to the Toodyay Road; and there could be equally the same number of roads running over to the standard gauge railway through the Avon in the future.

As I said before, over 1,000,000 acres of land could be in process of development in Western Australia for the benefit of this State in the future; so I hope the Minister, even though he has brought this Bill forward, will ask his officers to consider the future planning of Western Australia as related to the economics of closing down this railway. Do the activities of agriculture in the future justify our keeping these railways open? Do the pastoral and grazing pursuits justify these railway services? I think they do.

We cannot indefinitely have hundreds of vehicles carting stock into abattoirs as they are doing now. We have big commercial vehicles running to Northam over the Northam road; and now we are going to have the ore trucks. We already have the school buses; we have the commercial vehicles; and we have thousands of private cars. As I said before, at Midland Junction, one can go out on a Friday evening and when the traffic is held up beside the post office, the cars are banked back for half a mile. That is happening in 1965.

I think the Railways Department should run a fast service into the hills for tourists and commuters, just as is being done outside of Cleveland, and other big cities of Australia and throughout Europe; and I envisage that ultimately we could have a fast service running from Perth via Northam, Toodyay, or Clackline and back to Midland Junction via the standard gauge railway—a round trip of 113 miles being covered in two hours. If we were forward-looking like the Japanese and the Americans on railways we would be looking to having such systems operating in ten years' time.

What are we going to do if these lines are pulled up and the tracks are sold to private enterprise or leased as is being done in the Darling Range and Mundaring systems at the present time? To me, it seems ridiculous to wind up railways on this basis. As I said before, the real estate people with initiative and enterprise are now obtaining subdivisions 15 miles away from Perth; and surely the people living in those places will not have to come to Perth in private motorcars or by road buses when there is a railway alongside.

So even though the Minister feels the economics of the railways justify this closure—and it may be that his fears are

well founded—we must try to do something in Western Australia to see this 1,000,000 acres of land between the two railways is utilised to its utmost capacity so as to obtain the benefits of overseas markets in South-East Asia and other countries. This cannot be done effectively unless we have the standard gauge line and the eastern districts line.

There are two or three rivers running through this area; and there are also eight or nine brooks. Therefore it is reasonably well watered. It is within reasonable distance of electric light and of all facilities that go to build up big towns. So I hope the Minister for Railways will give this matter more thought.

There is another angle which is unfortunate for the people in the townships such as Hovea, National Park, Swan View, Stoneville, Mt. Helena, and Chidlow. The people concerned went to these areas some years ago and paid high prices for their land; and the taking away of this railway from the goods traffic point of view and the passenger traffic point of view is going to reduce the value of their land. It also seems to me that an extra tax will be imposed upon them as a result of the matching money from the Commonwealth. They will be taxed on the tonnages carried to and from the hills district. So it looks as though they are going to get it in the neck both ways.

Surely the reasonable approach would have been to let posterity look after this and let these people, in the next decade or two have the railway service. If the Minister rushes in prematurely to pull up the lines in order to utilise the rails and the minimum amount of material that would be available—and I emphasise the word "minimum"—it could be, with the progress expected in connection with the standard gauge railway line, he will be whipping the cat he did not leave this line down to carry light traffic from the hills.

When discussing railways, it is invariably mentioned in this House that the standard gauge railway has been adopted because there is a rise of only one in 200 and the economics are so tempting and inviting that it could not be turned down as against the one in 80 rise on the eastern railway. Has it ever occurred to anybody that if one goes up very slowly one comes down very fast—so fast that some of the railwaymen have been concerned?

During the war a railway train came down so fast that about £400,000 worth of debris was lying on the side of the line at Swan View. This was not drawn to the attention of the public as it was not considered to be in the interests of defence to do so. However, these trains could run down at a terrific speed; and the economics of running the line when a minimum of power is required must be considered.

I know there is some sniggering in the Chamber by some members who consider they have knowledge about railways, but I will proceed to mention another aspect. When the standard gauge line was mooted in the House, one of the main factors instanced as a reason for its being built was the fact that B.H.P. would be able to bring down its iron ore from Koolyanobbing. No doubt the economics of that appealed to the Minister.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) I hope the honourable member is going to relate this to the closure.

Mr. BRADY: That is the very thing I am getting to. It might be over the heads of some of the members in this Chamber, and I can appreciate your remark, Mr. Speaker.

The second matter of importance—of such importance that it was mentioned by the Minister—is that of defence. I think the defence angle may have some appeal to you, Mr. Speaker, because we know that polaris missiles can be discharged by submarines up to 60 miles from the coast. If a missile were to land on the standard railway, the whole of the service would be disabled. What is the alternative, if we are seriously considering defence? This is a serious matter. Or was it just a joke on the part of the Minister when he introduced the standard gauge legislation? I say to members that if the standard gauge line is bombed by polaris missiles or by aeroplane—both are possible in the year 1965—what is the alternative railway route? There is no alternative if the eastern district line is removed.

Just touching, in a small way, on the defence angle, I would say that some consideration should be given to leaving the line, not only from the defence angle, but for the other reasons I have mentioned. I am one who wants to be optimistic along with the Minister, and I will go all the way with him in his desire to improve economics. However, I would remind the Minister that the Government has some obligation to see that we, as members of Parliament, are given all the angles in regard to what could possibly be developed in the eastern district in the next decade or so.

Are the 1,000,000 acres alongside the port to be used to the best advantage, or are they going to be developed piecemeal? If the Minister wants the railway to become an economic proposition, which he feels it ultimately will become, let us have a maximum of development, and information supplied to members. Then we will not have the sniggering going on in the Chamber from those who are not so well endowed with brains.

As I said before, I am not happy about seeing the line closed. An amount of £130,000,000 is going to be spent on railways in Western Australia, which has to

be paid for from loan moneys and from other sources. It is true that the figure has been written down from £142,000,000 because certain railway capital charges were written-off about 15 years ago. One of the first things we should be doing is to see that the economics justify this huge expenditure, and that the railways are used to the best advantage. If a railway was put down in 1895 or 1900, or 1910, for £15,000 or £20,000 a mile, as against £115,000 a mile which is the present rate, then I think the economics are such that we should reclaim some of the land for the best economic working of the railways in the State.

I do not oppose the measure entirely because I have not sufficient knowledge of the overall position. I feel we have reached the stage with railway spending when we have to do something. Before we pull up the line and disintegrate the railway, something should be done about putting into operation a major Government plan to encourage agriculture, pastoral, grazing, fruit-growing, and other enterprises in the area.

Let me finish my remarks by referring to a question which was asked by a member in this House from the Albany-Mt. Barker area. He asked whether the Government was considering vine growing in the southern parts of the State. I give full marks to that honourable member for raising the matter, and he is entitled to have it considered. In the area with which I am concerned, there are over 1,000,000 acres of land, not necessarily in Government hands—a lot of it is in private hands—and if this Government is as forward-looking and as enterprising as we are led to believe, that land should be opened up so that the cost of the line can be reduced to a minimum as compared with the maximum.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways) [3.26 p.m.]: I thank the two honourable members for their contribution and I think I had better comment on the tirade of the member for Swan while it is fresh in our minds.

Mr. Brady: It was not necessarily a tirade.

Mr. COURT: I was staggered that one who lived so close to the railway system should have such a poor knowledge of railway economics and such a poor concept of the standard gauge railway and the dual gauge railway coming down the Avon Valley.

Mr. Brady: I will give the Minister an effective answer during the Loan Estimates.

Mr. COURT: Of course, the honourable member is on very thin ice when he talks about railway closures.

Mr. Brady: A Minister whose estimates on the standard gauge are up 25 per cent. should be the last to talk about "thin ice".

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order, order!

Mr. COURT: The honourable member was a Minister in the Government which commenced the machinery for the closure of the greatest number of miles ever attempted in this State's history.

Mr. Brady: Your Government closed over 100 miles itself. Don't talk about our Government!

Mr. COURT: I am reminding the honourable member that he supported the motion without protest when it was brought forward by his Government.

Mr. Brady: The Minister is talking rot again.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order, order!

Mr. COURT: I am just telling the honourable gentleman that he was a Minister in the Government which supported, and very strongly supported, the proposal for the closing of a large number of lines.

Mr. Graham: That is not true, of course.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. COURT: I can remember hours of discussion by the honourable member and his Government—in fact, I supported the motion.

Mr. Graham: It was to suspend operations, not to close them.

Mr. COURT: A motion for suspension was brought in by the Labor Government, and the honourable member talks about this sort of thing! I can remember when he unsuccessfully tried on three occasions to have the Koongamia-hills line reopened by a Labor Government.

Mr. Brady: It was never closed.

Mr. COURT: Let us deal with some of the points raised by the honourable member. He talked about the cost of bringing the dual gauge, heavier gauge line down the Avon Valley and compared it with the cost of putting in the original line. If we relate money values, the present cost is not excessive. He said that the original line was put in at £20,000 a mile, which I doubt. I have not got the figure, but I doubt whether as much as the figure quoted was spent. If a little more money had been spent on better grades and curves, there would have been more economic operation for the whole of the time the line has existed. If the honourable member compares the value of the pound, and compares the parliamentary salaries of those days with the parliamentary salaries of these days he will get some relativity in this matter.

The honourable member talked about some millions of acres being available for development in this area. Of course, he knows that if they were developed, it would not make any contribution to the

railway system, because most of the development would be in an area where the people would not patronise the railways with their produce. The honourable member knows this as well as anybody else. At the present time we generate 10 tons a day of rail freight traffic in this area: only 10 tons a day from the hundreds of thousands of tons which are carried through the area on the railway!

Mr. Brady: You know why that is, don't you? You are allowing the road transport system to run 50 miles from Perth.

Mr. Craig: The distance is only 40 miles.

Mr. COURT: As the Minister for Police has just reminded me, the distance is 40 miles: it is 50 miles for superphosphate.

The honourable member knows that there is no traffic to be generated in this particular area and it will always be a through area. For instance, when the Avon Valley route is completed it will still only be a through area to move the great volume of traffic generated on the other side of Northam to the coast. Therefore it is quite silly to talk about a million acres being developed and generating traffic for the railways.

The honourable member also talked about the Cleveland system. The Cleveland system, as I have already explained to him in this House previously, has a mileage of approximately the same length as that from Midland Junction to Fremantle; and if one thinks of Cleveland being where Perth is there would be a rapid transit system equivalent to that operating about 12 miles east from Cleveland and about 12 miles west from Cleveland. It is a wonderful service and we will have this form of service next year. It will give the type of service the honourable member is talking about for the people in the hills and in the Swan Valley. If he remains calm for a while he will realise that we will give him an excellent service.

He also referred to the question of the retention of the existing line up through the Darling Ranges. He mentioned the grades, but they are much worse than he said they were. He said they were 1 in 80, but they are worse than that: they are about 1 in 60. But that is not the only problem.

Mr. Brady: About that.

Mr. COURT: That is so, but that is not the worst feature. There are also the many "S" bends, and I was staggered to hear him say that it was hard to pull a train up the hill because of the bad grades but it was compensated by the fact that the trains came down the hills so much faster. On the contrary, coming downhill care is needed and the brakes have to be applied, particularly when the bends are as bad as they are on this line. I shall not discuss the defence aspect raised by the honourable member. If this particular

section of line goes out of business I do not think it will make much difference being so close to the coast and the city.

I shall not comment any further on the utterances of the honourable member because he knows that the railways today are being run much more efficiently and with much more commercial success than they were six years ago.

Mr. Brady: You wait and see what I have to say on the Loan Estimates today.

Mr. COURT: I will be very anxious to hear because the honourable member must know that the railways today are being run much better than they were six or seven years ago and very many improvements have been made.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the fact that the decision on this Bill is one about which we really have no option because, in fact, we made a decision on it when we accepted the standard gauge proposals. At that time the full implications were explained to the House and these included the fact that in due course the line from Northam through Chidlow to Bellevue would be closed. We could not justify its remaining open on economic grounds, and also there was the capital cost of rehabilitating it as distinct from its normal maintenance. It was obvious that if we continued to operate it we would have to upgrade the line as distinct from just maintaining it. Therefore the estimate of £1,500,000 is an expenditure that could not be justified to continue the line as a permanent route from Northam via Chidlow to Perth.

I agree with the honourable member that we could not afford the two lines, and there would be no justification for having two lines because in point of fact the line will be coming down via the Avon Valley and it will be a means of transit from Northam to Perth, or from Northam to the coast for the great volume of traffic which will generate into Northam from a series of places. Northam and Merredin will be focal points in the operation of our system. Northam, particularly, will be a focal point in the system.

The Leader of the Opposition asked for some information regarding transport of Wundowie ore. I want to assure him that the question of transporting this ore by road from Northam to Wundowie is a matter that will be handled with great care. About 80,000 tons a year will go on the road in the early stages and we can expect that to build up to 100,000 tons a year when the rebuilt and relined No. 1 blast furnace is in operation. In round figures, that is 2,000 tons a week, and this is to be transported on that road. It is not a great quantity but it is something extra that will be carried on the road which we would have liked to avoid.

I do not think the honourable member needs to be fearful about the type of vehicles to be used, because they will have

to conform with traffic requirements both as to speed and dimensions. We have not yet gone firm on the method of handling this ore to achieve the greatest economic advantages as well as speed of operation, so far as Wundowie is concerned; but one of the alternatives that is being considered is the provision of a number of specially constructed containers which will in effect be the bodies of railway wagons coming from Koolyanobbing by standard gauge to Northam. There they will be lifted off bodily by a crane and placed on to motor wagons and taken out to the Wundowie works.

Another alternative that is being examined, although it is not looking so hopeful at the moment, is the possibility of bringing the Wundowie ore by standard gauge halfway down the Avon Valley line and then taking it direct to Wundowie. We have been trying to find a cross-country route from the standard gauge line in the Avon Valley through to Wundowie, thereby taking that much traffic off the main Northam road, but up to date this is not proving as easy or as practicable as was thought. However, I have given instructions to persevere with the idea because, quite apart from any other consideration, even if the distances were the same, and there were no saving in that regard, at least it would take the traffic off the main roads and thereby make a contribution to road safety.

The honourable member can be assured that that aspect will be studied and as soon as the study has been completed I will let him, as the local member, know the results. The replacement road service to which he referred is being studied. This, of course, rests with the Transport Board, and it alone will make the final decision in the matter as to whether it will be operated by the railway road services, or by contractors; but I have been assured that a service will be installed which will be as good as, if not better, so far as convenience is concerned, than the present railway system.

I want to refer to the crossings in Northam in some detail. The honourable member referred to the fact that originally all the crossings were to be closed. This is not so.

Mr. Hawke: Not all. I did not say that.

Mr. COURT: The original position was that sidings were to service the oil depots, and when I visited the area with Mr. Wayne it rather appalled me to think that, having decided on this new method of connecting the Great Southern to the standard gauge and the dual gauge, and thereby avoiding the necessity for going through the town, we could not find ways and means of closing the sidings. For those reasons we conferred with the local council; and, in fact, I had some experts brought in to study the economics of having an oil pipeline to service the oil company installations from the point where

the line would go off into the flourmills. I thought this might be one of the best means of overcoming the problem and still giving an adequate service to the oil depots. However, this proved to be completely uneconomic and we had to abandon the idea.

Then we suggested to the council that we might explore ways and means of getting the oil depots to re-establish themselves somewhere else on the basis that in the long run I felt they would be better off and, secondly, the sale of their land and the redevelopment of the railway land should make a substantial contribution to any cost involved.

However, the railways would need to be satisfied that any railway reserve land it relinquishes will be applied for purposes of redevelopment of a congested part of the town where there is a traffic and a parking problem. It strikes me as being a chance in a lifetime to greatly improve that area of the town. As a result it was arranged that the town council would have its town planner put forward a proposition.

Although it was not the Government's responsibility, it undertook to confer with the oil companies to determine whether they could be induced, in conjunction with the town council and the railways, to go out of the town and establish new depots at this stage, for which purpose alternative sites were suggested. At the present moment this legislation on the revised railway system will mean that crossings will be eliminated after the cessation of services at Grey Street, Hawes Street, and Peel Terrace. The crossings that are under discussion are located at Gairdner Street and Gordon Street. I have not assumed that we will not succeed.

This is not our responsibility, but I feel we have some moral obligation to co-operate with the town council to try to find a way for releasing these crossings; or, putting it in another way, of releasing the railway land and making it possible for these crossings to be eliminated and for the land to be incorporated in a redevelopment scheme.

I think the Leader of the Opposition will agree that it would serve no useful purpose to implement these proposals unless the town council at the same time undertook a town planning scheme in this particular area, and so enabled the Town of Northam to derive the maximum benefit from such released land; because if we succeed it will not only release the railway reserve, but also land which is owned by the oil companies.

The Leader of the Opposition was correct in suggesting that this land on which the depots are established is, in fact, land belonging to the oil companies. It is not railway leased land; if it were leased land there would be no trouble, because we could terminate the lease in due course.

Our objective is to get rid of the crossings so that the railway service ends at the siding that is to go into the flour mill, and which for good reason it has been decided to retain at this stage. Later on, if it proves to be redundant and the service can be handled by some other means, the matter will be reconsidered. For the moment I would prefer to see the siding into the flourmill retained. I have covered all the points which were raised by the Leader of the Opposition, and I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Railways) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.7 p.m.

Clauses 2 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Power to use portion of railway for limited traffic—

Mr. COURT: I have an amendment on the notice paper as a result of a memorandum submitted to me by the draftsman who checked the Bill after it had been printed. Normally in the Railways Act and in similar Acts where commission is defined it is well understood what it means; but in this case there is no actual definitions clause and therefore it is felt desirable to add the complete description. I therefore move an amendment—

Page 3, line 17—Add after the word "the" the words "Western Australian Government Railways."

Mr. HAWKE: I have not had time to look at the point, but I have no doubt it is legally correct. However, the use of the word "Commission," appears to be a trifle strange, in view of the fact that in these days we have no railways commission. We have a commissioner.

Mr. Court: The title of "Commission" is retained in the Railways Act.

Mr. HAWKE: Thank you.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

First to fourth schedules put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), read a first time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 2nd November, on the following motion by Mr. Naider (Minister for Agriculture):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [4.14 p.m.]: As the title suggests, this Bill is the third amending Bill to the Local Government Act to be introduced this session. Two have been introduced by the Government and the third by the member for Balcatta. I first of all want to say that I am not opposing any of the clauses, so the Minister can sit back.

Mr. Hawke: That is your generous disposition.

Mr. TOMS: I am always of a generous disposition. The Bill has only six clauses, Clauses 2, 5, and 6 deal mainly with parking stations and have been found necessary to a degree because of the recent move here to permit the Fremantle City Council to install parking meters. The whole of section 231 dealing with parking provisions has been repealed and reenacted in a much broader form—broader inasmuch as there are many more definitions in it—and it will elucidate several points which might otherwise have appeared complicated.

The second amendment is to section 232. When the Minister delivered his second reading speech he was a little briefer than the Minister in another place; but I have taken the opportunity of reading the speech made by the Minister in the Legislative Council. If the Minister has his notes with him he will see there is an error in the figures in the second paragraph dealing with the powers of councils to make by-laws regarding petrol stations and bowzers. This error is even recorded in *Hansard* at page 1694. The paragraph to which I refer states—

The next amendment contained in clause 3 of this Bill, concerns section 232 of the Act.

Further down we find this statement—

This amendment has been found necessary as a result of a judgment in the Supreme Court, which declared *ultra vires* a draft model by-law made under the provisions of section 231.

Section 231 is the section we have just amended dealing with parking, and has nothing to do with petrol bowzers. I think there is a mistake there, and I have already drawn the attention of the Chief *Hansard* Reporter to it so that the bound volume of *Hansard* may be correct; and the same mistake occurred in another place.

I believe many shire councils will welcome this provision because, as has been stated, the by-law has been upset by a

ruling of the Supreme Court. I believe every member will agree with me when I say that the haphazard handing out, as it were, of service station sites, and the development in certain areas of this particular industry, has created a real problem. The majority of local authorities are anxious to control this problem and under the proposed amendment it will be possible for them to do so.

This provision also gives the Minister certain powers, inasmuch as sites will have to be approved by him. This is very good. The Town Planning Department decided at one time whether a site for a service station came within the town planning scheme. As was pointed out in another place by the Minister, with the multiplicity of service station sites in various areas it has been necessary for the individuals running the service stations to work 70 and 80 hours per week; and at one time, with the open-go method, it was nothing for them to work 120 hours a week in order to compete with the fellow next door, even though they might not sell five gallons of petrol a night. The local authorities will accept this provision, and I have no qualms about their acceptance of it.

The next amendment deals with watercourses. This has been found necessary, as have many other amendments that have come before us from time to time, as a result of the experience of local authorities. Apparently the Swan-Guildford Shire has had the experience of not being able to enter on private properties to clear blockages in drains. This amendment will empower local authorities to do just that; it will also give them the right to control watercourses. This is a necessary provision, because we could have the spectacle of natural watercourse being changed, or blocked off, and flooding taking place. The local authorities will be able to deal with these matters if the landowners concerned are not prepared to do so.

As I said when I rose to speak, the amendments are very good and are felt by the Local Government Association, and other organisations, to be necessary. I believe they will be welcomed.

Possibly members will get sick of my repeating this, but I want to say that with the amalgamation of both Acts dealing with local government various things are found out only as a result of experience. Because of that there is a necessity to amend the legislation from time to time. The only regrettable feature about this is that the various shire clerks keep on pasting these amendments over the sections in the original Act, so that it looks as if the original Act has been totally amended. I do not know how long it will be before it will be necessary to have a reprint so

that the local authorities can have a complete Act to work on and not one that has a whole lot of small amendments attached to it.

It will take years, no doubt, to sort out the whole problem; but, despite the fact that the Act is such a big one, I believe it has worked satisfactorily and has only had to be amended when circumstances have arisen which have shown the impracticability of certain sections.

I am prepared to support the second reading of the Bill and I do not think I will have any amendments to move in Committee. I am quite agreeable to all the provisions in the Bill.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [4.23 p.m.]: Since Fremantle was, I understand, to some extent responsible for this measure—or certain portions of it—it behoves the member for that district to say a few words. As has been pointed out, the Bill consists of six clauses, some of which affect Fremantle, and some of which do not. These amendments have become necessary because of requests from different local authorities.

Clause 2 relates to parking at Fremantle. The honourable member who has just resumed his seat mentioned that section 231 had been amended to give councils power to make by-laws relating to metered parking. Members will be aware that metered parking is coming into existence in the Fremantle area, and the Bill will make it easier for the local authority to police the meters and to impose parking fines in like manner to those imposed by the City of Perth. There are slight variations in the definitions relating to the road traffic code.

Clause 3 amends section 232, which covers the installation and control of petrol pumps. Reference was made by the previous speaker to this matter. The local authorities will be able to control the indiscriminate establishment of petrol pumps. They will confine petrol pumps to areas zoned to their own satisfaction. It would appear that the local authorities are sick of having petrol pumps inflicted on them and having them sprout out of the ground like mushrooms in all sorts of localities. As a consequence of the amendment, the local authorities will be empowered to refuse a license for a petrol pump unless the application meets with their satisfaction.

Mr. Toms: Apparently the oil companies are happy about the position now; they have sufficient service stations.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is quite possible, but it would appear that in the Fremantle area there is an overabundance of petrol stations. They seem to be competing in all respects other than in relation to price. It is a significant fact that one pays the

same price for a gallon of petrol irrespective of the service station that one goes to. So the assertion that competition is good for trade is a lot of nonsense as it applies to the sale of petrols and oils.

Clause 4 seeks to amend section 300 so as to give councils the care, control, and management of watercourses. This provision has very little, if any, application to Fremantle, unless the water that flows under the traffic and the railway bridges in Fremantle could be said to be a watercourse within the ambit of this Act.

Mr. J. Hegney: Not many people would block that up surely?

Mr. FLETCHER: No. Occasionally there may be obstructions, but they merely affect river craft. I do not think it is necessary for the local authority to be given power to shift them. We have a capable and efficient port authority which looks after that aspect. This provision has no effect in the Fremantle area, but it might have in the hills and in the Guildford-Midland area.

The final page of the Bill provides, in effect, that the Commissioner of Police and a council can individually or jointly control traffic and parking facilities; they can institute proceedings against a transgressor if he offends against the regulations associated therewith.

In short, having circulated the Bill among the various local authorities in my area—having in mind particularly the Fremantle City Council, and the East Fremantle Council—and having also circulated the Minister's speech amongst the same local authorities, and having made a copy available to the traffic inspector at Fremantle, and having heard no comment on the measure, I can only assume it meets with the satisfaction of the local authorities mentioned. As a consequence I support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [4.29 p.m.]: I thank members for their support of the legislation. As was said by the member for Bayswater, this is not a controversial measure; it has been recommended by the local authority, and every consideration was given to it prior to its being presented to the Minister for Local Government.

As the honourable member said, we will be getting recommended amendments from time to time, and it will be the responsibility of this House to discuss them and pass or negative them as it sees fit.

I would like to take this opportunity of saying how we appreciate the work done by local authorities. I am certain every member of this House and every right-thinking citizen also realises and

appreciates the work they are performing on behalf of members of the community. We are extremely happy, therefore, to note their interest in the Bill, and where in the future any suggestion can be put forward to improve their lot by way of amendment to this legislation, we will be happy to support such proposal.

I thank the member for Bayswater for bringing to my notice the mistake that was made in my notes and which has been printed in *Hansard*. I now have a note from the Chief Hansard Reporter stating that this will be corrected in the bound volume.

Mr. Toms: The error is in the Minister's speech towards the bottom of the page to which I referred.

Mr. NALDER: Yes, I have noted that you made the comment it was at the bottom of page 1694. As I have said, that mistake will be rectified in the bound volumes of the *Parliamentary Debates*, and I thank the honourable member for his diligence in drawing my attention to it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and passed.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Council's Amendment

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Craig (Minister for Traffic) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment made by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 6.

Page 4, lines 33 and 34—Delete the passage "by reason of any physical disability."

Mr. CRAIG: The amendment proposed by the Legislative Council is acceptable, and I recommend that the Committee agree to it. It refers to clause 6 in which power is to be given to the Commissioner of Police to issue a driver's license subject to certain conditions or limitations being placed upon the person issued with the license because he is suffering from a physical disability rendering him ineligible to hold an unconditional license.

The Council considered that the words "by reason of any physical disability" would restrict the powers of the commissioner unnecessarily because it was felt that he should be permitted to issue licenses to people in other circumstances such as to a man who was suffering hardship after losing his license as a result of a bad traffic record. In a case such as this, if the commissioner considered it desirable, he could reissue a restricted license to the person concerned to enable him merely to travel backwards and forwards to his place of employment. As the amendment is acceptable, I move—

That the amendment made by the Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Report

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [4.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The primary purpose of this Bill is to provide for the licensing of fish processors, including freezer boats, but excluding retailers of fish and such eating establishments as could perhaps be regarded as engaging in some aspects of fish processing. Ancillary to this main aspect, the Bill creates a special account at the Treasury into which licensing fees will be paid, such fund to be used solely on fisheries research, exploration, development, and extension.

The Bill contains two other amendments. It constitutes the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna a body corporate. It also confers power on the Minister to restrict the use of nets composed wholly or partly of synthetic fibres. These latter two matters will be dealt with first.

The Lands Department will vest reserves only in bodies corporate. The Fauna Protection Advisory Committee is a body corporate, and a number of reserves for fauna protection—and some for flora protection also—have been vested in the committee; but in cases in which the purpose of reserves cannot be related to fauna protection alone—that is, when they are multi-purpose reserves; e.g., Houtman, Abrolhos—or when the purpose is concerned with fisheries, the Lands Department is disinclined to vest them in the committee, even if one of the purposes is fauna conservation. However, it is willing to vest them in the Minister, provided he is a body corporate "with perpetual succession."

Also property cannot be held by the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna in his official capacity, and it has been necessary for agreements for the purchase of boats, etc., to be signed by the Minister for Works who is a body corporate. The new move will obviate this kind of action.

With regard to nets being composed wholly or partly of synthetic fibres it is pointed out that until recently all fishing nets were constructed of natural fibres—cotton, linen, hemp, etc. However, in recent years synthetics—nylon, kuralon, etc.—have largely taken over. There are two kinds of synthetic materials used for netting—multifilament and monofilament. Multifilament yarn is composed of twisted, braided, or plaited fibres, while monofilament comprises a single strand of synthetic material.

Generally speaking, nets of synthetic fibre are more efficient and more durable than those made from natural fibres, but this very advantage constitutes their most serious defect. All members are probably aware that most nets have affixed at the top a series of floats, and, at the bottom, a series of weights. When any net breaks loose, it does—for a time—continue to catch fish. If it catches enough fish, their weight will carry it to the bottom of the ocean. A natural fibre net will invariably rot, become harmless, and incapable of catching any more fish. A synthetic fibre net, however, will not rot but when the fish it has caught decompose, such nets have been known to re-float and repeat the cycle all over again.

The obvious way to avoid this problem is to ensure that the materials attaching the netting to the cork line, lead line, floats, and weights, are of natural fibre. In these circumstances, if the net is lost the natural fibre will rot, allowing the net to fall to the bottom and cease fishing. At present power does not exist in the Act to enforce this remedy and the new provision rectifies the position.

The main purpose of this Bill deals with the licensing of processors. The necessity to do this has been the subject of discussion over a number of years. A proposal along these lines was placed before a representative gathering of processors earlier this year, and it met with their approval. The matter has also been outlined to groups of fishermen, and general agreement along the lines of the proposals in this Bill has been received.

The proposed charges for license fees are admittedly high, but I am sure members will agree it is a fair mark of the concern felt by those engaged in this industry that support for the measure was so readily forthcoming. The Bill provides that the funds so raised are to be ploughed back into the industry.

The amount of the license fee is to be fixed by Order-in-Council at a rate not exceeding 1 per cent. of the cash value

of the gross purchases, or the catch, or both, during the financial year next preceding the calendar year for which the license is taken out. Not all processors handle only fish purchased by them. For example, freezer boats would, in some cases, purchase no fish at all and, in their case, the gross value of their catch would be the basis. Again, some persons engaged in processing also own boats. This explains the need to ensure that the gross value of fish processed, from whatever source, should form the basis.

It is expected that, at least at the outset, the rate fixed will not exceed three-quarter per cent. This should bring in some £45,000 per year.

Provision is made for the refusal of licenses and for their cancellation in the event of non-compliance with prescribed conditions and restrictions. As a safeguard against any possible misuse of this power, there is a provision for an appeal to a Court of Petty Sessions against the refusal of a license or the renewal of a license, or against any decision of the Minister or the Director of Fisheries and Fauna under the licensing provisions of this Bill.

It is as well for members to bear in mind that the unexpected closing, or cancellation of a license, of a processing plant could bring great hardship to fishermen. There has been some discussion on the need to cancel licenses of processors for various infringements. It must be remembered, however, that in the flush of the season it requires all the processors to handle the catch. If one were suddenly closed, there is no doubt that a considerable wastage of fish would ensue.

The moneys received by way of license fees will not be paid into General Revenue. The new fund, to be known as the "Fisheries Research and Development Fund" will be opened in the Treasury. All license fees will be paid into this fund. Expenditure of the fund can be made only on the authority of the Minister and only for scientific, technical, and economic research in fisheries, investigation, and development, and the provision of extension services. Moneys standing to the credit of the fund cannot, under any circumstances, be used for policing or enforcement activities. These points sum up the provisions in the Bill, and I commend it to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Kelly.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Amendments

Amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Craig (Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendments made by the Council are as follows:—

No. 1.

Clause 15, page 9, line 28—
Delete the word "fifty" and substitute the words "one hundred".

No. 2.

Clause 17, page 9, line 40—
Delete the word "fifty" and substitute the words "one hundred".

No. 3.

Clause 18, page 10, line 42—
Delete the word "fifty" and substitute the words "one hundred".

Mr. CRAIG: These amendments affect three clauses in the Bill, and deal with penalties. When the member for Swan spoke to the Bill at the second reading stage he expressed the view that the penalty was not sufficiently high to protect the public. Originally the amount was £20 and the Bill proposed to increase it to £50. I agreed to obtain information from the department and to have the necessary amendment made in another place, if the department's views were in accord with those of the honourable member. That has been done, and the amount of penalty is now amended and increased to £100. I move—

That the amendments made by the Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

Report

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 2nd November, on the following motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [4.50 p.m.]: To a large extent this Bill to amend the Stamp Act is one more proper for consideration in Committee. However, I wish to say a few words in connection with it, because taking the proposals in the Bill altogether, it appears to me the total increased charges which the passage of this measure through Parliament will impose upon the people of the State in a full financial year will approximate £750,000. Therefore, beyond any shadow of a doubt, the Bill proposes very severely to increase taxation upon the people of Western Australia.

My concern in connection with this aspect is heightened, of course, by the Bill which we had before us in this House earlier in the week. That particular

measure, dealing as it did with betting investments through the Totalisator Agency Board, proposed to reduce the current rate of taxation, quite substantially, upon those people in the community who invest amounts of £1 or more on horse races, either in the form of gallops, or in the form of trotting.

It is surely a very contradictory attitude for the Government to adopt, to bring in a Bill one day to reduce substantially the rate of tax on these more or less privileged people to whom I have referred, and then, two days later, to bring in the Bill now before us, the net result of which in regard to increased taxation will amount to at least £750,000 in a full financial year.

The main increases proposed in this Bill have to do with stamp duty. Increases in stamp duties are proposed in more than one direction. For instance, at present the stamp duty on bills of exchange, including cheques, is threepence per document. This stamp duty tax is to be doubled under the provisions of this Bill. The stamp duty on conveyance or transfer of property is 12s. 6d. under the existing law. Under the proposed new law it is to be 12s. 6d. for every £50 or part thereof; but where the amount involved exceeds £500, the new rate of tax is to go up from 12s. 6d. to 15s.

According to the figures given to us by the Treasurer, the increased amount of stamp duty which will come into the Treasury this year under this particular proposal will approximate £76,000, and in a full financial year £130,000.

Another proposed increase in connection with stamp duty has to do with the registration of new motor vehicles, and with the transfer of secondhand motor vehicles. At the present time the amount of stamp duty per £100 or part thereof is 10s. Under the new proposal it will be 15s. The Treasurer expects to receive, under the new proposal, an additional £90,000 this year, and in a full financial year an additional £175,000.

It seems to me Treasurers, both Federal and State, have developed the idea that owners of motor vehicles are capable of absorbing endless punishment in the way of increased charges. This has been the experience now for quite a long time. There must be a large number of motor vehicle owners who are feeling the pinch to a very substantial extent. There could indeed be some who have had to give up running motor vehicles because the costs involved in their running have together reached such a high point as to be outside the financial resources of the people concerned.

I know it can be said, and it has been said on occasions, that any person owning and operating a motor vehicle should be able to absorb increased license fees; increased driving license fees; increased

stamp duty fees; increased this and increased that, because anyone who cannot afford all these increased charges as they occur from time to time should not own a motor vehicle. In other words, if a person can own a motor vehicle he can afford to pay all these increased charges.

That would apply, we know, to quite a number of owners of motor vehicles. On the other hand it would not apply to a considerable number of people these days who do own these vehicles, and who do operate them either to a greater or lesser extent. The Treasurer, and the Government, have made a few concessions in this Bill. By that I mean they are grabbing a tremendous amount of additional taxation from the various sections of the community, and then they are throwing back a bit of concession here and a bit of concession there.

Put another way, they are grabbing the whole loaf of bread from the sections who will have to pay this increased taxation, and then they are picking out a few crumbs from the whole loaf and throwing those crumbs to a few groups of people. Even in regard to the few crumbs—if I might use the term without using it offensively—the Treasurer told us that one of the reasons is that the cost of operating the tax upon these people is almost as much as the taxation which is received.

The impositions of stamp duty, or whatever it might be, are very small and the administration activity necessary in connection with the imposition and collection of these small charges is so great as to make the continued imposition of the small imposts uneconomic from the point of view of the particular Government department concerned.

Summed up, it is obvious this Bill is, to a very great extent, a measure to substantially increase taxation on the people. As I have said, the Treasurer has estimated the Government will, during the balance of this financial year and from the time these new charges are imposed, receive some £413,000. It is obvious most of these proposed new charges will operate for a period of only half of this financial year; so if we take the Treasurer's figure of £413,000 as being reasonably accurate—and it would be—then it is clear in a full financial year the total amount which these new taxes would bring in would be close to £1,000,000.

Even in these days, when there is talk of millions in all directions, an increase in taxation of £1,000,000 in a full financial year is a heavy increase to put upon the people of the State. If this were the only increase in taxation and in charges upon the people of the State which is to be put upon them during this financial year, it might be possible to swallow the proposal with a struggle. However, when we recollect there have already been substantial increased charges put upon the

people and the industries of the State, this new and additional charge of £1,000,000 in a full financial year is extremely difficult to accept.

We know railway freights and fares have gone up; and I imagine the increased revenue in a full financial year from that impost would be over £1,000,000. The freight and fares on the State steamships have gone up; and there could easily be £250,000 or £500,000 extra in that. Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust fares have gone up, and other charges have gone up. Consequently it would seem the people of the State and the industries of the State are to be taxed additionally as a result of the measures introduced by the Government this financial year to the extent of anywhere between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000.

I have already said there are some proposals in this Bill which hand out crumbs of concession—crumbs of comfort—in certain directions. Therefore it is not practicable to oppose the Bill at the second reading. Some of the provisions in the Bill can be fully supported and supported with some enthusiasm if one forgets the bad features of the Bill. Therefore I support the second reading and intend to oppose certain of the provisions in the Bill during the Committee stage.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [5.5 p.m.]: I took the bother to read through one or two of the speeches made by the Leader of the Opposition when he was Treasurer, and by other Treasurers, when dealing with problems such as we are dealing with now; and I must say I was impressed with the sameness of the speeches the Leader of the Opposition made when introducing taxation measures. By the way, I do not say this to his discredit in any way. Nevertheless, he did not say any more than necessary in order to give a rough outline of the increase. He, together with other Treasurers—Sir Ross McLarty before me, and down the line—gave the same reasons for the increased taxes which have to be made from time to time.

As pointed out during the Budget speech, this is the first time our Budget has exceeded £100,000,000. It is not so long ago that it was only £30,000,000 and £40,000,000. So the figures which are quoted indicate the lump sums which we are taking this year from the taxpayer; and they are all relative to the size of the Budget, the general standard of living, and the level of wages.

As far as this particular Stamp Act amending Bill is concerned, advantage was taken to tidy up the Act, which was in need of some general revision. The Government has not claimed any credit for the crumbs, to which the Leader of the Opposition referred. It was simply a matter of tidying up the Act and making the

administration easier and the general administration of the Act more acceptable to the public, by not requiring them to send in forms which were not necessary in order to pay minor amounts which, in fact, did not amount in all, in certain cases, to £1,000 for the year. The Under-Treasurer and his office staff took the opportunity to tidy up the Act also in this regard.

Bearing in mind C-day, when we convert to decimal currency, we have also taken advantage to make certain amendments in order that conversion may be as simple as we can make it; as, of course, there will be many problems to face in the changeover.

This Bill is one for Committee and I propose to deal with such matters as were raised by the Leader of the Opposition at that stage. However, there is one point I must emphasise. It is true the motorist carries an increasing burden of taxation, but it is also true that every day the motorcar—and it is increasing in numbers very rapidly—is making such an impact on the whole of our economy that difficulties are being created in respect of the demand for better hospitals, more services of all kinds, greater traffic control, and wider roads. This causes a tremendous increased demand on the funds available to the Government; and if we are desirous of using powerful cars and driving them at great speeds along the highway—and it is true we use the motorcar on every possible occasion—we must be prepared to pay for the necessary control and discipline, and to meet the increasing costs demanded by road safety.

It is up to every Government and every authority to provide wider roads better crossings, and better supervision in the interests of saving life, because there are people who still disregard the fact that a motorcar can be a lethal weapon and can be a very dangerous machine simply because of the speed at which it normally travels. In another speech he made today, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned the dangers of vehicles; and this is something we all know. So long as there is an increasing demand for the motorcar, the motorbike, and vehicular road transport, there will be an increasing public demand on the Government provide the services to which I have referred—and this costs a lot of money.

The increase in wages paid to the various sections of people in Government employ amounted to well over £2,000,000 for the year. The Leader of the Opposition said there is an increase of £1,000,000, but we must have regard for the fact that £500,000 extra was needed to meet the increased salaries paid this year to school teachers. This is rather a large sum. Last night the member for Beeloo said it is good to see the money going

round—and so it is—but where does the money come from to pay the school teachers their extra salaries except from the people themselves? It has always been this way. These are the arguments the Leader of the Opposition put up when he was on this side of the House in defence of the very action we have taken. No Government wishes to increase taxation unless it has to, as nothing could be more unpopular.

Mr. Kelly: I wonder if the Treasurer could get hold of some of the £53,000,000 the motor firms recently declared as their profits for the year?

Mr. BRAND: It would seem to me that out of that profit there must be a large sum of income tax and taxes of all kinds contributed through the process; and presumably a lot of people share in these profits as shareholders. But that is beside the point. A share of that profit tax has come to us through the Federal taxing authority; and no doubt quite an amount of it will be found in the £12,019,000 given to this State this year and last year by way of a special grant to help balance our Budget.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Brand (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 15 put and passed.

Clause 16: Second schedule amended—

Mr. HAWKE: Paragraph (c) of this clause proposes to raise the present rate of stamp duty in connection with motor vehicle transfers from 10s. to 15s., in accordance with the system used in the Act for calculating the duty payable on a new car as registered, or a secondhand car which is transferred.

The Treasurer told us increased tax upon motorcar owners is justified because motorcars in operation cause a lot of occurrences which together impose considerable expenditure burdens upon the Government. He instanced particularly road accidents brought about by motor vehicles and carelessness, or reckless use of them, and the resultant heavy cost to the Government in connection with hospitals and other services which have to be rendered to those people who are injured in such happenings.

It is true that State Governments all over Australia have to meet this type of expenditure. However, it is also true the State Governments and the Commonwealth Government receive tremendous revenues from the owners and users of motor vehicles. We have only to mention the petrol tax as an instance. In addition to the petrol tax several other charges are imposed periodically upon the

motor vehicle owner. I think he is probably carrying more than a fair share of the taxation burden.

The Treasurer, in replying to the second reading debate, told us all Treasurers, from time to time, go after additional revenue because they have to meet new and increasing demands. He said that most Treasurers, when introducing legislation to impose increased charges of one kind or another, made short rough explanations of what is involved. I can never remember making a short rough explanation of any taxation measure I brought to Parliament when we were in government.

Nevertheless, on thinking over the description applied a few moments ago by the Treasurer to the way such proposals are introduced to Parliament, I can almost agree with the way some of them have been introduced over more recent years. I want to also remind the Treasurer—and I do not altogether enjoy bringing this forward because this is probably not the appropriate time or the most appropriate place to bring it forward—that early in the year 1959 the Treasurer, who was at that time Leader of the Opposition in Western Australia, declared with great forthrightness that taxation, at that stage, had reached the breaking point.

Mr. Kelly: I wonder how he will get out of that one.

Mr. HAWKE: If we were cruel enough we could, at this stage, compare the various levels of State taxation and State charges that were imposed on the people at the time the present Treasurer made that infamous declaration, and the levels they are at today and at which they will be when this additional taxation comes into operation.

Mr. Kelly: It is amazing how many people swallowed it at the time.

Mr. HAWKE: However, as we are in Committee and dealing with only one paragraph of one clause, I resist the temptation to spread myself, as it were, in connection with the declaration which the Treasurer made at that time and which he has totally undermined by his own activities in taxation gathering in Western Australia.

I propose to move for the deletion of this paragraph and I am moved to do it because of the taxation Bill which the Treasurer introduced in this House the other day. Under the provisions of that Bill, a particular rate of tax is to be reduced by 40 per cent. when that Bill becomes law and when the new currency system comes into operation in February of next year. If it is good enough for the Treasurer and his parliamentary colleagues, including the Ministers of the Government, to bring down a proposal here one day to reduce taxation on people who are engaged in a non-essential activity

such as betting through the T.A.B. agencies, then it is a fair proposition to say that this Bill to increase taxation in many directions goes too far.

The two proposals—the one of two or three days ago, reducing taxation on a non-essential activity by 40 per cent., and this particular proposal to increase taxation by 50 per cent.—do not square at all. They do not make sense and they certainly are not, when compared one with the other, at all equitable. The Treasurer could, in the Bill which he had here the other day, have raised a fair amount more taxation from that particular source; from the gambling source. However, he chose to reduce taxation by 40 per cent. in that Bill on all those who invest £1 or more on race horses.

Therefore it seems to me there is no justification on the part of the Government to come here and ask us to increase by 50 per cent. the rate of stamp duty on the registration of new motor vehicles and on the transfer of secondhand motor vehicles. I move an amendment—

Page 12, lines 35 to 42—Delete paragraph (c).

Mr. BRAND: Of course, I am opposing the move made by the Leader of the Opposition. He has given as one of the reasons, apart from his opposition to increased taxation, the fact that the Government did not take advantage of retaining the existing level of taxes in the betting investment tax.

I would like to point out that we did not reduce the total income in that case; as a matter of fact, I think it was explained that for every eight bets there are seven bets of £1 or under. This, in decimal currency, would bring in 22.5c. With the system which we propose, of a flat rate of 3c for all bets, the eight bets would bring in 24c; and had we done what we might have been inclined to do, and retained the 6d., or the 5c for bets of £1 or over, it would have brought in 26c for eight bets.

There has been a great deal of pressure and many requests for the investment tax to be abolished, but as it was bringing in £250,000 at the time this pressure was brought to bear, before the elections, I flatly refused. Whatever inconvenience this tax might cause, we certainly could not afford to abolish it. Nevertheless, in the situation as we found it at the time a decision had to be made in regard to the currency conversion on the 14th February, and it was decided to introduce a flat rate of 3c for all bets. There will be no reduction to the Treasury; in fact, there will be some slight increase, and might I say that the impact on the individual bettor is such that I think he could have 24 bets for the cost of a shilling. It will not really have a very great impact even on the small bettor.

The Leader of the Opposition made reference to the fact that we on this side, and I in particular, had said that taxes had reached breaking point in 1959.

Mr. Graham: We are coming around the second time, now.

Mr. BRAND: The Leader of the Opposition has said that it has reached breaking point now. I recall similar statements being made by the Leader of the Opposition at a previous election when he referred to the finances of the McLarty-Watts Government as being in a grim state. This appears to be his way of being critical of the financial situation in just the same way as I expressed myself on the situation which we claimed existed when he was Treasurer.

I would like to apologise to the Leader of the Opposition if I used the word "rough." I do not think I used it; I think I said it was brief. However, I could not agree to such a sharp reduction in the Budget as his amendment would bring about. I realise that this increase from 10s. to 15s. is quite substantial, but the motorist in Victoria has for a number of years paid 20s. The motorist in New South Wales was paying 10s., but, as a result of an election promise by Mr. Askin, that figure has been, or is about to be reduced by 2s. to make it 8s. However, we are in line with the general standard States; and I would remind members, as I mentioned when I introduced the Bill, that we considered the possibility of a reduction but could not agree to it, and we found it necessary to impose the taxation which is provided for in the measure. The ever-increasing commitments of government, and the increasing demand for more and more services preclude the possibility of accepting the amendment. I oppose it.

Mr. HAWKE: The attempt by the Treasurer to justify what his Government did in connection with the betting investment tax Bill the other day was completely unconvincing. He talked about seven out of every eight tickets doing this or that and he went on to tell us that if the present rate of tax on each bet of £1 and over had been left at the figure at which it now is the total return would have been more than will be received when the measure is passed. That would have been a good thing. Why have the Treasurer and his colleagues been so solicitous in connection with their taxation proposals for the person who indulges in betting activities, and particularly that section of them that bets in amounts of £1 and over?

The Treasurer told us he and his colleagues did not want to increase the total amount of money coming into a very needy Treasury under that tax. Yet he comes along with this Bill which proposes to increase taxation on people engaged in

essential industries. The proposal does not make sense; the two situations are completely contradictory.

The Treasurer stressed the need to obtain more revenue to meet increasing expenditure which is unavoidable. I go a fair distance along the road with him in that regard. However, I emphasise again the contradictory attitude and policy of the Government in regard to different sections of the community. Those who indulge in gambling activities—and the larger ones, too—receive a reduction of 40 per cent. in their current rate of taxation; and against that, as is set out in the Bill, the owners of motorcars which are registered for the first time, and those who sell secondhand motor vehicles, are to have their rate of stamp duty taxation increased by 50 per cent.

The Government cannot blow hot and cold on increased taxation measures. If there is a need for increased taxation—and I do not deny there is a need for some increased taxation, obviously—the Government has to be consistent in its policy. It cannot go ahead and increase railway freights, fares and freights and fares on State ships, and fares on metropolitan transport buses; in that situation it cannot increase the stamp duty on motor vehicles, cheques, property transfer documents, and so on, and, at the same time, reduce taxation on people who bet on race horses which, by no stretch of imagination, is an essential activity within the community, but which, perhaps, could be more fairly described as a wasteful activity.

So as much in protest against the policy of the Government as it relates to this legislation as for any other reason, I support my move to have this paragraph deleted from clause 16.

Mr. BRAND: I just want to point out that in seven out of eight bets which are of the class—

Mr. Hawke: That are under £1.

Mr. BRAND: —where 3d. has been paid, the tax is to be increased to 3c. In other words, there is a slight increase in tax imposed on seven out of eight gamblers. In reviewing this taxation it was decided that this was fair enough seeing that the Treasury, overall, increased its income.

If the Leader of the Opposition is so keen, I will endeavour to have his amendment made in another place. I am never opposed to any reasonable suggestion by the Leader of the Opposition. The Clerk of the House is looking at me as if to say that he does not think my suggestion is altogether in order, but nevertheless I regret very much that I could not take advantage of the attitude of the Opposition, because let me say that I have no love or consideration in any way for gambling.

It seemed to me that this provision was reasonably fair in view of the fact that seven out of eight people who had a

weekly bet were to pay a slight increase in tax. The fact that 6d. tax was paid by the bettor who made bets of over £1 indicated to me that there was an anomalous situation inasmuch as the scale did not continue; but it has to be borne in mind that this could be administratively difficult—not to the T.A.B. or anyone else—and this situation was argued when the Bill was before us previously. So I decided the imposition of a flat rate of 3c investment tax was fairer, seeing that the Treasury, overall, was to gain more income from the change.

Mr. HAWKE: The Treasurer's latest explanation has put him further into deep water, and has made ever so much contradictory and deserving of condemnation the taxation policy of the Government. He now tells us—as we knew before—the Government is to increase the betting tax on the small punters while, at the same time, reducing it by 40 per cent. on the big punters.

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

Ayes—15

Mr. Bickerton
Mr. Brady
Mr. Davies
Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Graham
Mr. Hall
Mr. Hawke
Mr. W. Hegney

Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Kelly
Mr. Moir
Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Toms
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Norton

(Teller)

Noes—22

Mr. Brand
Mr. Court
Mr. Craig
Mr. Crommelin
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Durack
Mr. Elliott
Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Grayden
Mr. Guthrie
Dr. Henn

Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Lewis
Mr. Marshall
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Nimmo
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Runciman
Mr. Rushton
Mr. Williams
Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs**Ayes**

Mr. May
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. Curran
Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Evans

Noes

Mr. Bovell
Mr. Hart
Mr. Burt
Mr. Nalder
Mr. Cornell

Majority against—7.

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1965-66**In Committee of Supply**

Resumed from the 3rd November, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

Vote: Legislative Council, £20,039—

MR. ELLIOTT (Canning) [5.45 p.m.]: In the discussion of these Estimates mention has been made that a figure in excess of £100,000,000 is required. I feel this only reflects the progress of the State in general. One aspect that has pleased me to a large extent is to see the increase in the allocation that has been made to the Fisheries Department. While discussing this matter I would like, as a journalist, to pay a tribute to that department for issuing a pamphlet entitled, "Maintaining The Catch." I think this was circulated to all members, and I feel it is a happy departure from other departmental publications that I have seen.

The pamphlet in question is extremely well written and presented, and it sets out to make as widely known as possible departmental knowledge of the crayfish. In doing so it makes the point that one of the big problems facing the conservation of the crayfish industry is the lack of knowledge of the crayfish. Because of these problems I wish to speak of an allied matter, and I am sure the member for Albany will be happy to find he has a kindred spirit interested in this subject.

I know that members have heard the member for Albany mention the marron. I am convinced that this particular crustacean is well worthy of investigation by the department. I am happy to say I have had discussions with both the Minister and his departmental officers and they agree that there is every chance of developing an industry in this direction; even though it will possibly not become anything like the size of the crayfish industry. Where the department admits it lacks knowledge of the crayfish, this lack of knowledge is accentuated in the case of the marron. As an example of that, the only recorded data in relation to marron which has been in the possession of the department in this State was written some 15 to 18 years ago.

The member for Albany has mentioned that a constituent of his is experimenting with marron. I too have a constituent who has some ideas on this subject. He has not actually gone ahead with his experiments but he plans to do so. Unlike the gentleman at Albany, the gentleman in my electorate has ideas of attempting to breed marron and observe them in a pond type of construction; whereas the gentleman from Albany is using running water and watercourses.

I feel that it is well worth while keeping an eye on these experiments, and I am certain that the gentlemen concerned will receive the utmost co-operation from the Fisheries Department. It would also be as well if the Minister for Industrial Development watched this matter carefully, because if it is successful it could be a great advantage to Western Australia.

One of the things known about marron is that they are the third largest fresh water crustacean in the world. There have been known catches of up to 4 lb. weight. The growth rate of the marron is similar to that of the crayfish. At first glance the reproduction rate of the marron does not appear quite so spectacular as that of the crayfish. Those of us who have read the pamphlet, "Maintaining The Catch," will know that the crayfish produces something like 30,000 eggs at each spawning, though the mortality rate of the crayfish is extremely high. It is estimated by the department that only some 30 of those 30,000 eggs survive.

The marron—and this is fairly reliably established—dependent upon the size and age of the fish, produces up to 700 fry each year. The difference between the marron and the crayfish, however, lies in the fact that the mortality rate of the marron is not nearly as high as that of the crayfish. With careful husbandry, and if the experimental attempts prove successful, the mortality rate of the marron could become very small indeed. We may even reach a production figure which would be eight or 10 times that of crayfish.

Mr. Jamieson: The mortality rate goes up if you put trout fry in.

Mr. ELLIOTT: The member for Beeloo has now introduced an age-old argument as to whether the trout eat the marron, or the marron eat the trout. I am sure trout fry will not be included in marron farms.

Mr. Jamieson: I only go to catch them.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I will not ask the member for Beeloo when he goes to catch them. One question that has been under discussion is the salt content with which marron are able to cope. I recently asked a question in the House concerning the salt content in the Canning River and the reply to that indicated that at times there has been as much as 100 grains to the gallon. The marron have continued to increase. They can obviously survive this salt content. This does show that marron are tolerant to salt, and the experiments made by many farmers have indicated this to be so.

I do hope that both the gentleman from Albany and the gentleman in my electorate will go ahead with their experiments in this direction. I understand that inquiries have been received in regard to marron from as far afield as France. If the growing of marron proves really successful it will be necessary to bring down legislation to enable them to be marketed. I feel sure, however, that when the time comes the Government of the day—no matter what its political colour—will readily enact the necessary legislation, because, like the member for Albany, I feel that this is a potential industry worthy of consideration.

There are one or two other matters I would like to mention, one of which is most topical at the moment. I refer to the sale of fireworks. I daresay it is a somewhat peculiar tribute to democracy that this Parliament, and others, should continue to allow the celebration of the anniversary of an attempt to destroy Parliament. It has been said—and I can go along with this to some extent—that the sale of fireworks and the risks involved in their use are the parents' responsibility. Broadly speaking this might be true.

I feel, however, that this does not in any way mean that Governments should not assist parents with this responsibility wherever possible. I do not suggest for one moment that the sale of fireworks should be banned, but I do feel consideration should be given to restricting the period of time during which fireworks should be allowed to be sold. When fireworks are on sale for weeks and weeks, as they are in this State, and when older children have a few shillings pocket-money—and I am now talking about those in the 12 to 14-year group—they will naturally continue to buy these fireworks. Very naturally they also prove a great attraction to the smaller children who, after all, cannot be watched every moment of the day. No matter how careful a parent might be there is always the chance of serious injury.

In this connection I would draw the attention of members to a letter which was written to the editor in this evening's issue of the *Daily News*. It appears to be an authentic and genuine letter and sets the case out very well. I would strongly urge that consideration be given to restricting the time for the sale of fireworks to only a few days. I feel sure the public will appreciate such a move. The patronage of organised fireworks displays—and these are often held in the city—is indicative of the fact that parents themselves would welcome any assistance to control what can only be described as a menace.

I would like to mention one other matter; that is, naturalisation ceremonies. The other night I listened with interest to the remarks of the Minister for Immigration when he spoke of the success he has had and the enjoyment he has derived from addressing naturalisation ceremonies. Having had the pleasure of knowing the Minister for years I did not doubt what he said was absolutely true.

I think the Minister for Immigration and the State as a whole would enjoy even more success if one innovation were introduced into naturalisation ceremonies. It was my pleasant duty to be present at several of these functions in recent weeks. I found it nothing short of peculiar when I saw naturalisation certificates handed out and additional printed information given by the Commonwealth, in addition to which the new citizens were each presented with a Bible and given advice by

the shire council in which they resided, but nothing was forthcoming from the State Government. To me this is a strange attitude for the State Government to adopt, because among Australian-born citizens there already exists a great deal of confusion in respect of the State Government and the Federal Government. I hate to hazard a guess on just how difficult the naturalised citizens might find the position.

In my view the Premier's Department, or some other Government department charged with this responsibility, should give consideration to the compilation and printing of a pamphlet or booklet—written in simple language, and using short, terse paragraphs which could be readily understood by those who do not have a good grasp of the English language—to indicate to them what are their privileges in deciding to choose Western Australia as the State in which to live; and what are their responsibilities as Western Australians.

Mr. Toms: Would you not agree that the Government should subsidise the local authorities for the cost of the ceremonies?

Mr. ELLIOTT: That is another subject which the honourable member might like to pursue.

Mr. Rowberry: Is not the member of Parliament present given some opportunity to address the gathering?

Mr. ELLIOTT: Yes. I did so, when present at several of these ceremonies in my electorate. Whether or not the member for Warren is claiming to be such a spell-binder when he makes a speech, that he thinks those present remember his words for ever more, I do not know. I certainly do not lay claim to be able to do that. I put forward the suggestion that the State Government should prepare some pamphlet or booklet to be handed out to new Western Australian citizens, together with what is handed out by the Commonwealth Government and the local authorities.

Finally I wish to refer to one other matter. I am perturbed by some aspects of the activities of the Town Planning Department, and I refer to one particular instance. This concerns a property which is privately owned and which is under an order of eventual resumption. In these cases what happens is that the property owners are notified that their properties will at some later stage be required for some form of public work or for roads. An eventual resumption order is then placed upon such properties. In theory it might not be so difficult to dispose of such properties, but in practice it is. In effect, in many cases the owners virtually lose all rights and privileges of their own land.

In one instance a lady owns some 10 acres of land, in respect of which an eventual resumption order is placed. The purpose of the resumption is to use the land as public open space. On this land she has to pay £40 a year in rates. Initially she asked if she could make improvements to the land, but permission was refused. Then she asked if the resumption could be put into effect so that payment could be made to her. Firstly she was told that funds were not available to enable this to be done; and, secondly, that there was nothing to stop her from selling the land. In theory it might be possible to sell it, but in practice it is not, because try as she may she cannot sell the property, for the very good reason that nobody will buy it as it is under an order for eventual resumption. Therefore she cannot do anything with the land. She cannot sell it, and all she can do is to continue paying the rates.

Mr. Toms: What age is she?

Mr. ELLIOTT: I would think she is in her 60s. The point is this: I do not doubt that funds are not available, but that situation should not be permitted to continue. I do not know the solution to the problem at this stage, but some attempt should be made to solve it. The position should be looked into very closely. In these times governments attempt to achieve the objective of being impartial, and when they have the opportunity of being impartial they do it at a cost; and the cost of being impartial is to be impersonal. Whilst this Government is taking giant strides in the development of the city and the State, it should always guard against losing the personal or the common touch, for by losing the personal touch many people suffer hardship and inconvenience.

When I last spoke in this House I drew attention to the extension of water supplies to newly subdivided housing areas. I put forward the proposition that subdividers should be responsible for such extensions, and I am happy to say that the proposal is now receiving very careful consideration. I hope that similar consideration will be given to the problem of properties which are under eventual resumption orders.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [6.1 p.m.]: The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure which have been brought before the House can do little to make the ordinary working man rejoice, because he, as much as anyone else, is to be heavily taxed; and this comes on top of the impost resulting from the last Federal Budget. This makes it very difficult indeed for him to enjoy his affluence; in fact, it is becoming quite expensive to be affluent in these times.

Little can be said at this stage, because the Bill which seeks to amend the Stamp Act has passed through this House. This

measure contains the necessary amendments referred to by the Treasurer in his Budget speech. Because of this it is a little difficult to argue now against any of those provisions. I think we are entitled to protest and to point out that possibly there are other sections of the community which are better able to bear some of the increased taxes which the Treasurer regards as necessary.

I was in the gallery this evening when I heard the Treasurer say that every Government has to increase taxation from time to time. We should look into the way in which money raised by the taxes is being spent, and ascertain whether it is being spent in the best possible direction. The Treasurer should realise he has to say "No" to some sections of the community, because possibly other sections will suffer if assistance is given.

I cannot speak with any great experience in matters of this kind. I only wish I had the time to analyse some of the figures which have been placed before us. A private member of Parliament has very many normal and less important duties to perform on behalf of his electors; some of these might be regarded as being trivial, but nevertheless they are very real and important to the persons concerned. Of course, members generally are only too happy to be able to assist them. That being the position, members are not given very much time to study deeply the legislation that is introduced.

Here I make an appeal to the Government, and add my voice to those who have spoken on this matter, that consideration should be given to spreading the work of Parliament over two sessions each year. I consider that our prime function is to legislate, and to try to do the best for the community. The present method of conducting Parliament does not provide the private member with the necessary time for giving his fullest attention to the very important business of legislating.

Mr. Brand: If there were two sessions how would that assist in the particular point you are making?

Mr. DAVIES: I was about to go on to that. Speaking for myself, I find by the end of the parliamentary session I have a great backlog of general queries which I have had to push aside until I had more time to give them attention. I might add that I attend to the important ones. However, by the end of the session I find I am fairly tired, bad-tempered, and less able to attend to my parliamentary duties, with the result that there is a backlog of work which, quite often, could be more equitably spread out. I feel if we had two sessions it would not only help members to be better members, but would enable them to provide a better service to their electors. I say this as a result of my experience of over four

years in Parliament; and I think if most of the members in this Chamber were questioned about this, they would say the same.

This is the time of the year which is usually referred to by members as the "silly season" when it is necessary to attend three or four fetes or a flower show on a Saturday, and end-of-the-year functions organised by various public bodies.

Mr. Brand: If we had two sessions, we would still have a session about this time of the year.

Mr. DAVIES: No, not necessarily at this time of the year; although I imagine there would be one after June as that would possibly be the earliest time the Treasury could get its figures to Parliament. Even so, I feel a lot of the legislation we are now squeezing in between Estimate debates could be handled more realistically and given more attention if we did not have these matters hanging over our heads all the time. I have previously said that it looks as though State Parliaments will be done away with altogether, but that will not be for quite a while and we still have an important function to perform.

Whilst we are increasing our activities; whilst there are so many new facets of legislation coming before us; and whilst so many new problems have to be faced, I think it would be much better if these things were spread out over the year as we would be better politicians; better legislation would be brought down; and we would give a greater service to the people of the State.

Commenting briefly on the increases proposed in the Budget I would say what has been said many times by many people and in the Press; that the poor old motorist has really been hit to leg. Two years ago the Government discovered a new tax; that is, the transfer fee. That was something that had never before been heard of in this State; and it has proved so successful and popular from the point of view of the Government that it has now been increased by 50 per cent. I do not know why we have to go on hitting the motorist.

I do not know to what extent the Government looks around when it needs extra revenue to see if it can be more fairly spread.

Mr. Brand: Have you any ideas?

Mr. DAVIES: You are anticipating me all the evening, Mr. Treasurer. I must be perfectly honest and say I have not many great ideas. The only tax additional to those we now have that comes to my mind is a tourist tax, which is used extensively overseas, as the Treasurer will know. I think in some parts of America one is charged a few shillings for using airport facilities. I do not know whether a State Government could impose this tax or whether it would be a Commonwealth tax; and I do not know whether I will get into

trouble for suggesting it to the Treasurer. However, I found on my travels that this was a source of revenue.

Mr. Brand: It would have to be a big tax in our case, because we have not the turnover as yet.

Mr. DAVIES: I should imagine, with the activities of the Treasurer, this turnover will soon be established.

Mr. Brand: Thank you very much!

Mr. DAVIES: We know that tourism is a growing factor in this State; and tourists are coming here by the thousands and will continue to do so. Thinking it over as quickly as possible, that is the only extra source of taxation I can think of; but I am sure the agents of the Treasurer will quickly pick up from contacts in other States anything that can be of assistance to them.

I was sorry to see the duty on cheques had been doubled. I feel that something of a confidence trick has been put over by the banks, whether Commonwealth, private enterprise, or State. When I first opened a cheque account, if one had £50 in it, no fee was charged for keeping it. If the amount were less than £50—which it was when I first opened an account—a fee of something like 10s. per year had to be paid.

At that time the popular thing to do; the nice thing to do; the correct thing to do, was to operate a cheque account; and by all forms of advertising the banks told us we just could not live if we did not operate a cheque account and that we could pay all our bills by this very convenient method.

Mr. Brand: That is the point—convenience.

Mr. DAVIES: The banks, having conned me and the population into opening cheque accounts, then started to charge keeping fees for everybody and subsequently followed this up by a further increase in these fees.

Mr. Rushton: Keeping fees have been charged for a long while.

Mr. DAVIES: I can remember when I first opened my cheque account in 1946 or 1947; and it was some years after that before I paid a keeping fee, provided the balance was over £50. The duty on cheques has been doubled to 6d.; and because postage, which is now 5d., will probably become five cents before long, and taking into account the cost of stationery and time, before long it will cost something like a couple of shillings to pay a bill by cheque. Therefore, when people wake up to this, they will not be so anxious to be smart by operating a cheque account.

So far as I can see the banks are the only ones being smart; and as far as the public is concerned this impost will result in their paying more.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. DAVIES: Continuing with the discussion of the proposed taxing measures the Government's Budget has forecast this year, I wish to draw attention to the fact that most of the measures introduced hit the working man as much as they hit anyone else in actual amounts, but because of the lower income the working man receives, the increases are much harder for him than they are for those in the higher income brackets.

I said before that we are supposed to be enjoying a great deal of affluence, but I am sure most members will have read with a considerable amount of interest—and, I hope, with a great deal of alarm—the articles which appeared in the *Daily News* recently in which it is pointed out there is a considerable amount of poverty in the community. The *Daily News* is a little late because this matter has been brought to the forefront by the Eastern States newspapers for some considerable time now. It is a matter at which we must look with a great deal of alarm.

One newspaper described it as the razor's edge of poverty. It pointed out that the line between existence within one's means and existing by getting into debt is a very fine line indeed. As I move amongst my electors I find this is so. People only have to get over-committed in hire-purchase payments and then suffer a little illness and they are behind in their payments and are in trouble. Families are unable to maintain the same standards of other families in the community several members of which are working, particularly if two of them are the husband and wife. Those families existing on just the husband's pay find it difficult to keep up with the Joneses, and we find all these small imposts gradually mount up until the family gets into real trouble, particularly with hire-purchase payments.

The hire-purchase companies then try to do the right thing, or appear to do the right thing by rewriting the agreement which means that the repayments can be made over a longer period as their are smaller. However, additional interest charges are involved so that once having got into financial difficulties many of these people get a lot further in before they are able to get out.

It is because of these added tax imposts which the people do not expect but which the Government introduces from time to time that these families find it very difficult to live. I thought a quotation by Mr. John Stubbs, who is writing a book on poverty in Australia, is well worth reading to the Committee. He says—

What is poverty?

"It is a nagging fear of insecurity. It is the bitterness of paying half of the pay packet week after week for two poor rooms in Fitzroy or Redfern

in which to shelter the family. It is having to buy all clothing at the opportunity shop or jumble.

"It is the nagging pain of a tooth-ache or illness that can be relieved only by a long and costly journey for free treatment at a public or dental hospital.

"It is the razor's edge on which the family budget is balanced. One slight extravagance, one hire-purchase commitment too many—mistakes of judgment or indulgences which the wealthier can make with no serious consequences—and the structure comes tumbling down.

"Which is to be paid for first—H.P. on the fridge, the rent to avoid a notice to quit, or the food for tomorrow?

"This poverty is the prospect of year after year without holidays for parents or children. It is being unable to buy presents for your own children at Christmas and the hope that Apex won't forget to bring their parcel.

"It is saying 'no' when a child wants to go with others to the baths or pictures. It is a dull deficient diet. For those with ambitions it is wondering whether the high cost of free education—the fares, books and extras—can be afforded".

He goes on to point out there are considerable numbers of people in difficulties such as these, and this brings me back to my point that we do very little to help this kind of person. There are many ways we could assist pensioners. I know of no extension of allowances or services that have been provided to pensioners in recent years by the Government. Indeed, in answer to a question the member for Balcatta asked the other day he was told that concession fares for pensioners have, in fact, been increased. Surely to goodness there is no need to increase them even if it is only by a penny or twopence! It is all those small amounts which add up, and are a worry, particularly to the pensioner.

The housing situation for pensioners is, of course, chronic. I just indicated privately to the Minister for Housing that I did not intend to say anything about his department. I do not blame him for the situation, because he has not held the portfolio for very long. However, having been a private member for a number of years, he will realise only too well the acute need for additional accommodation for pensioners, and particularly for single pensioners. I find case after case of widows and other aged folk living in a room for which they pay £3 to £4 a week. They have no facilities or very few, and often they have to pay additional money for the use of a radiator or an electric

kettle in their rooms. Time and time again I am asked what I can do for them, but I can do nothing because the State Housing Commission has nothing to offer them.

So, although the community is continuing to grow more affluent, the more unfortunate sections of the community continue to become less prosperous; and this is, I am afraid, because of many of the things we do in Parliament and the fact that the Government does not seem to show very much concern.

The Government could help these people in many ways; but, as I have said, it does not seem to be really concerned with helping them but only with filching an extra penny or twopence from them as is the case with the bus fares to which I have just referred.

Talking of economy generally, I wonder how much this State is dependent on the Eastern States. We know that previous recessions in the Eastern States have very quickly been felt in Western Australia. I fear that the state of the economy at the present time, and the present trends which are indicated by the Press, reveal that things are not quite as prosperous as we could expect them to be.

Last month the Press revealed that 22 of the 35 basic commodities showed a lower production for the month of September this year than for September last year. It is pointed out that these are danger signs which must be watched very closely. As I said, State Governments are often very limited and remedial action can generally only be taken by the Commonwealth Government. So we are more or less at the mercy of the Commonwealth Government as far as recessions go.

I hope we will not see a recession. No-one in this Parliament or in the State wants to see things worsen in any way. I know that the Government claims responsibility for all the prosperity, but I can assure it that members on this side of the House are only too anxious to see the State prosper. We will not see the State exploited, and if we feel that this is happening we will certainly have something to say about it. In fact, we have already said what we think of some of the agreements which have been entered into.

One of the easiest things to do today is to call anyone who criticises a "knocker" and claim that he is unpatriotic; that he has no hope and aspirations for the welfare of the State. Very often much that is brought forward by the so-called "knockers" turns out to be very real and something which, if tackled within sufficient time, could have been remedied.

We note with some concern that Western Australia is still a low-wage State. Some excellent articles appeared in the evening Press some time ago from the

secretary of the Trades and Labor Council pointing out that there had been a great increase in the value of production in Western Australia compared with that of other States. I think we had the second highest increase. The total value of production in this State showed the highest increase in Australia and the value of production per person engaged was also the highest increase in Australia. Yet Western Australia still remains a low-wage State.

I think that if industry is going to come here, the workers are entitled to a fair and just share of the profits which they are making. We realise that the companies do not come here because they love the State; they come here to make a profit for their shareholders. I do not think anyone could argue with that. That is what the management is charged with. However, a more realistic approach has to be adopted with regard to the wages paid in this State.

I understand that the *Daily News* article by Mr. Coleman, the secretary of the Trades and Labor Council, caused quite a row in employer circles. An article subsequently appeared in the same paper purporting to come from the Employers Federation wherein it was stated that if the metal trades employees in Perth are not earning enough money, their injury is self-inflicted. It was said that the workers could earn more money by working more overtime. This is logical, of course, but it claimed that overtime bans existed and therefore workers were prevented from earning as much as they would like to earn.

Of course, this is absolute nonsense and I am pleased to have the opportunity to say so. There is no overtime ban in Western Australia other than the Australia-wide 12-hour limit on overtime which is imposed by the Boilermakers' Union. That is the only ban on overtime in Western Australia. So the statement from the Employers Federation that overtime was banned by some unions is nonsense.

For some time, at varying periods, there was an overtime ban in excess of four hours per week. This operated in some of the metal trades, but it has not been applied for some time now and, as I say, the only ban is by the boilermakers and that is Australia-wide. That ban is on overtime in excess of 12 hours a week.

Surely to earn a decent wage no worker is expected to work 12 hours' overtime a week! I think it becomes farcical when one has to work overtime to earn enough on which to live decently.

Mr. Graham: A lot of workers have to do that, or send their wives to work. I am contemplating that myself under the present circumstances.

Mr. DAVIES: That is what is happening: they have to work overtime or send their wives out to work. It shows that some adjustment is needed to the wage structure in Western Australia.

The 12-hour ban imposed by the Boilermakers' Union is only on regular overtime. If a specific case comes up, or there is a breakdown or some similar occurrence where overtime is required to be worked, it can be worked. The 12-hour Australia-wide overtime ban has been accepted by the Arbitration Courts. The courts do not think it is reasonable that anyone should be asked to work more than 12 hours overtime on a regular basis.

Getting back to the fact that we are a low-wage State, I think the employers in Western Australia have to realise that there is competition for labour, and they have to be prepared to pay for it. From my inquiries, made throughout the metal trades unions, I find that applications are made for employment in this State from persons in the Eastern States. The first thing they want to know is the amount of the wage. Once they learn the wage, the applicants are never heard from again. No-one is going to come here because we have a salubrious climate or because we have a Liberal-Country Party coalition Government; they are coming here for money. Until the employers wake up to the fact that they have to meet the Australian average, and until they are prepared to pay that average, they are just not going to get the labour.

It does not matter how much screaming the employers do, they won't be able to get labour from the other States, or from overseas. Overseas workers are aware of the conditions with regard to payment in this State. I believe the Boilermakers' Union has had more men leave the union than it has had join the union this year. Those men have returned overseas or gone to the Eastern States. I am told that this is happening in many other unions too.

We have the employers screaming about a shortage of labour and the Government telling us that we have no source available. No-one will admit that the real reason for the shortage is that employers are not prepared to pay the price for the labour. I think they can afford to pay the Australian standard. There is ample evidence of record profits by the major companies in Australia. I am not going to mention G.M.H. again, but we have only to look at a few of the company results listed in the *Weekend News* of the 28th August, 1965. Time and time again, both here and in the Eastern States, we see headlines referring to profits. To quote some comments from the list mentioned, 74.7 per cent. rise, new record dividend up from 10 per cent. to 15 per cent; 26 per cent. lift; dividend lifted to 11 per cent; recovery trend continues; record—dividend lifted 10 per cent. These comments relate to latest results.

And so it goes on, company after company making record profits and at the same time complaining about the shortage of labour but not prepared to meet the Australian average wage. That is entirely their own fault, and until they wake up to this fact they are not going to get employees; and I certainly would not blame any worker for not coming here. As I said, they come here for money; they need money; they are entitled to it; and until such time as we pay it we will not entice them here.

Mr. Jamieson: They would pay it if the Employers Federation would let them.

Mr. DAVIES: I believe the Employers Federation is a little alarmed that many companies, particularly overseas ones, are negotiating privately with the unions and are offering over-award payments similar to those paid in the Eastern States. And these are the companies that are going to get the labour. Referring back to the article from the Employers Federation, and the statement that there were overtime bans in Western Australia, had the person who wrote the article done a little homework, and looked at the employment figures issued by the Department of Labour and National Service he would have known that there is as much overtime being worked in Western Australia as there is in any other State in the Commonwealth; in fact, in some cases, there is more.

Quoting from the employment position for mid-September, which is the latest information to hand, appendix 4 of the departmental report deals with factory overtime and short time. Of the factories surveyed the figures show that the percentage working overtime in Western Australia was 65.9. That is not quite as high as the percentage in other States but when we look at the number of employees covered by the survey who are working overtime we find that Western Australia has the second highest percentage of any State in the Commonwealth. Then when we look at the average hours of overtime worked by each person working overtime we find that of those surveyed Western Australians were working 8.7 hours overtime, which was the second highest, Queensland workers being the highest—they were working 8.9 hours overtime.

When we look at the average hours of overtime for each employee covered by the survey—and I take it this means whether the factories surveyed were working overtime or not—Western Australians were working 3.4 hours overtime, which once again was the second highest average, Queensland again having the highest average of 3.9. Those figures are set out in a bulletin issued by the Department of Labour and National Service and from time to time those figures are quoted as gospel in this Chamber. I have not the slightest reason to doubt them, and they give the lie

to the statement by the Employers Federation that unions have placed a ban on overtime in this State. That is just not so.

Mr. O'Neil: They did not say all the unions.

Mr. DAVIES: The Employers Federation referred to the metal trades unions, and I have dealt with them. I have said that only the boilermakers have an overtime ban, and the figures I have read show that the overtime worked in Western Australia in point of fact is second only to that worked in Queensland.

Mr. O'Neil: Does the shortage of labour necessitate more overtime?

Mr. DAVIES: We could have a long argument on the article issued by the Employers Federation, but I was trying to point out that overtime is not the sole reason why this is a low-wage State. We are still a primary producing State and that has a lot to do with it. However, the figures cannot be denied and we have made a fairly rapid advance in regard to production per head of population and the general increase in production. Yet, to some extent, we have still not shared in the average wage which is paid in the Eastern States.

Mr. O'Neil: I wonder how current the figures quoted by Mr. Coleman in his article were.

Mr. DAVIES: These figures are up to the June quarter, 1965, and they show that the Australian average between 1954 and 1965 had increased by 62 per cent. whereas the total Western Australian increase was only 59 per cent.

Mr. Fletcher: No wonder tradesmen are joining the Police Force or becoming tally clerks!

Mr. DAVIES: It is a peculiar fact that many of the white-collar workers have had much greater increases in wages than the tradesmen. However, that is another question; and having pointed out the fact that the overtime position is not quite what it has been made out to be by the Employers Federation I shall pass on to another subject before my time runs out.

One other question associated with the shortage of labour is the position of apprentices. The unions have fallen over backwards to try to do something to train more apprentices. They realise the place from where they get their solid members—it is the apprentices who come up through the ranks and then go out as tradesmen; and, naturally, the unions as much as anybody else want to see more apprentices trained. I am told that in October, 1960, the metal trades unions and the Department of Labour and National Service agreed not to count fifth-year apprentices as apprentices for the purposes of the employee training ratio.

Members will understand, of course, that there is one apprentice to every two tradesman or part thereof, and an apprentice is counted as an apprentice until he finishes his time. However, in 1960 it was decided that when assessing whether a shop could have an additional apprentice, any apprentice in his fifth-year would not be counted as an apprentice for the purpose of that assessment. This meant, of course, that there could be an immediate 20 per cent. increase in the number of apprentices being trained. While I am pleased to say the Government has kept up its ratio the private employers have not done so. They have paid scant attention to training sufficient apprentices; they want other people to do all the training and then they want to take the trained tradesmen away from the people who have done the training.

Had they built up the strength of apprentices in their various workshops, under this new formula which was agreed to in 1960, there would probably have been—assuming there are 5,000 apprentices training today—an extra 1,000 tradesmen available now, because it is five years since the scheme was first started. But no; as I said, the private employers paid scant attention to the training of apprentices and now they are trying to get the Government to do something for them. This is typical of private enterprise, of course: while things are going all right they do not want any interference from the Government, but as soon as things go wrong they come running to ask the Government to do something to help them.

I am pleased to see the Minister for Electricity is in his seat, because of what I am about to say. I was also pleased to hear the member for Balcatta this week bring very forcibly to the attention of the Chamber the attitude of the general manager and some of the staff of the State Electricity Commission. The member for Balcatta mentioned that I had brought this matter forward previously, as indeed I had. However, I am afraid I have not got the honourable member's capacity for presentation and possibly not as much notice was taken of what I said at that time.

What has been amazing has been the number of members who have said to both the member for Balcatta and me, privately in the corridors, that they have had exactly the same experience. They were members not only from this side of the Chamber but also from the other side, and the members concerned know to whom I am referring and they know what they said to us. I do not intend to point out the individuals concerned. But those members have had exactly the same experience with this gentleman.

I hope something will be done to remedy this situation; but I wonder whether it will be because, as mentioned by the member for Balcatta, I led a deputation to the Minister for Electricity earlier this year, and I felt it was a complete waste of time. In fact, at the conclusion of the deputation I had to say to him that I was disappointed over his attitude because I thought that he was a member of what was supposed to be a private enterprise Government that encouraged initiative, and in the case I had presented to him I thought some initiative had been shown and was worthy of being encouraged. Instead, he almost leapt over his desk at me when I said this.

Mr. Jamieson: The Minister or the general manager?

Mr. DAVIES: No, it was not the general manager; it was the Minister this time. He said I did not have any right to say what I had said to him in his office. He went on to say that there were other places to make such statements—implying that one of the other places was Parliament House—and thereupon I apologised and made the promise I would bring it up in the House; and, true to my word, I am bringing it up now. I could not raise the matter before, because the Minister was overseas, and I want him to know I was completely shocked at what he said and at the manner in which I was treated, which left much to be desired.

It is preposterous to say that you cannot discuss party policy in a Minister's office. How many times have deputations from trade unions been told—especially by the previous Minister for Labour—"We will do this or that because it is party policy." Is such a right exclusive to a Minister? Cannot a private member express himself in such a way? Not according to the Minister for Electricity.

Mr. Nalder: You tell the House the whole of the story!

Mr. DAVIES: I have told the House the whole of the story.

Mr. Nalder: I will get up and tell the House the whole of the story, and not just half the story.

Mr. Graham: We will await it with interest.

Mr. DAVIES: I was disappointed with the attitude that had been adopted, and I say the Minister allowed the general manager of the Electricity Commission to take complete charge.

Mr. Nalder: You did not tell the House that I obliged you, because of your forgetfulness, by allowing you to reintroduce the deputation the second time.

Mr. Moir: Why don't you get up and make a speech yourself?

Mr. Nalder: I intend to, and I will tell the whole story.

Mr. DAVIES: Does what the Minister has said make any difference to what happened when I introduced the deputation to him?

Mr. Nalder: It is a miserable way to bring it up.

Mr. DAVIES: I promised the Minister I would bring it up, which I am now doing, and I think I am entitled to do so.

Mr. Nalder: You are quite entitled to do so.

Mr. DAVIES: Well, all right! What is the Minister getting so upset about? I only hope that some good will come from what has been said tonight particularly because of the other instances that have been mentioned to us by members on the Government side of the House. I know that members of Parliament—and, what is more important, members of the public—are being treated in a way similar to that mentioned in the case raised by the member for Balcatta in the House the other evening. This is not right. What has the Minister done about it? I suppose, since the member for Balcatta presented his case in the House two nights ago the Minister has taken no action on the matter. I do not think he is game to take any action. So the position will continue, no doubt, unless the Minister is forceful enough to put the general manager of the State Electricity Commission on the mat.

Mr. Moir: That'll be the day!

Mr. DAVIES: Well, if the Minister does not take such action the position will become worse for the members of the public. I would not take anything to him again myself, having suffered such indignity at his hands on that occasion; I would not represent anything to him whatsoever. That is the only Government department I would not go to again, and it is the only Government department where I would not be well received; and this is not good enough. I hope we will see this public servant brought into line, because he is just as much a public servant as we are, and members of the public are entitled to courtesy from him which they are certainly not getting at present.

Mr. Graham: The Minister may have paid some courtesy to the member for Victoria Park by listening to him.

Mr. Nalder: I was listening.

Mr. Graham: You have been nattering to the Premier for the last five minutes.

Mr. Nalder: I was listening to him at the same time.

Mr. Graham: I hope to hear from you immediately on what endeavours you have made to take some action.

Mr. Nalder: I will let you know.

Mr. Graham: The sooner the better!

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): Order!

Mr. DAVIES: One matter which has caused me and many other people some concern is the position relating to technical education in this State. I am sure every member of the Liberal Party and the Country Party will recall that in his policy speech the Premier promised an immediate top-level inquiry into the present and future needs of higher education at university, and sub-university level. He qualified this promise by saying that it would be made immediately the contents of the Martin report on tertiary education were known.

The public is entitled to believe the statements which are made in policy speeches. I know that members of the Labor Party are always sincere in trying to implement what is put in the policy of our party. We always know that the type of policy that is put up to the people is that which can be implemented. This promise was to become effective as long ago as the 20th February, the date of the election; and those who are interested in this matter are entitled to express some concern that no action has been taken to constitute this committee of inquiry as yet. I mention that the Premier qualified his statement by saying that the committee would be established as soon as the report on tertiary education became public.

That report was made public about the middle of March last, or it may have been towards the end of March. From memory, I think *The West Australian* published an article on the contents of the Martin report on the 26th March, so between March and the present date fully seven months have elapsed and no action has been taken. In August last a question was asked in the House on what the Government intended to do about implementing the terms of this report; and the Premier, or it might have been the Minister for Education on this occasion—I will not blame the Premier for everything—

Mr. Brand: It was the Premier.

Mr. DAVIES: The Premier has taken the blame like a Spartan. The Premier advised that this matter was being attended to. Now, almost two months later, I had the temerity to ask a question yesterday as to what progress had been made with the report, and once again I was told that the Government is about to set up this inquiry, the details of which will be released at the same time a public statement is issued on this decision.

Seeing that the matter has not been made public the latter part of the reply to my question is a fair reply, and I cannot argue with it, but I think we are entitled to express some alarm and regret that the immediate appointment of this committee, as promised, has not taken place after a good seven months from when the Martin report was published in March. I am wondering what has caused the delay. Unfortunately, I have not had time to

read the whole of the Martin report; in fact, I have only had time to glance through it. Here again, I will take the opportunity of saying that if two sessions of Parliament were held each year and such a report were tabled during the first session, members of Parliament might be able to digest its contents by the time the next session was held.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. DAVIES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I see the position, the Martin report recommended certain money for the use of the institute of technology here and the Government is able to get its hands on some of that money now. But that is only for the immediate future, and not for the purpose of distant planning. In point of fact the Martin report requests that we let the Commonwealth know what we want for the future—for three to five years ahead.

Is it not time that we got cracking on this? I understand from some people who have a greater knowledge of tertiary and technical education than I possess, that the other States have already got their committees going and are able to make their recommendations to the Commonwealth; yet we have not got off the ground in this connection.

Mr. Brand: What States have their committees going?

Mr. DAVIES: I am told that Victoria and New South Wales are supposed to have their committees going, and are in a position to make some recommendation to the Commonwealth Government. Goodness knows we need money from the Commonwealth for educational purposes, and we will not get it unless we put up some sort of case! But, as I have said, we have not yet got off the ground.

Mr. Brand: You can be assured that we will not miss out at all. There is time in this regard. You have just mentioned three or five years.

Mr. DAVIES: We have already lost eight months.

Mr. Brand: We have not lost anything.

Mr. DAVIES: We have done nothing about the matter. Dr. Williams, the Director of Technical Education in this State is the only technical man on the Wark Committee which has been appointed. He is the only technical man and is representing the whole of Australia.

Mr. Brand: The Wark Committee has been over here and has discussed matters with the Treasury and other departments.

Mr. DAVIES: We must get this committee appointed as soon as possible. There is a great deal of concern about the vast expansion expected, and this is so because of the concern that is expressed in the Martin report as to what should be done for technical education in this State.

As I understand the position, they want to see whether they can integrate Muresk, the School of Mines, the technical institute, and the trades school with a view to getting something organised. I think it would be a good idea if technical education were divorced from the general education position, and if it received some autonomy.

Mr. Brand: You can give your evidence to the committee and save yourself a bit of time.

Mr. DAVIES: But no committee has been appointed. I would be only too pleased to submit my recommendations if a committee were appointed; but as yet it has not been appointed. I express not only my own point of view, but the point of view of some of the people in the Education Department who are greatly concerned, and who should know; and they feel nothing is being done.

Mr. Brand: As far as this committee is concerned there is nothing lost.

Mr. DAVIES: I cannot go to these people and say, "The Premier feels everything is going along smoothly." They want to give evidence, and make recommendations, and know where they are going. They want to know whether they are to stay on the tertiary side or whether they must move to some other side.

The entire technical institute is in a state of flux, spread out as it is between Collier and St. George's Terrace. All these things are causing real concern. Most of the teachers are dedicated to tertiary and technical education and here is a chance for us to start presenting to the Commonwealth a strong case of what is needed in this State in the years ahead, and we have already lost eight months.

I hope that before very long we will see an announcement in the paper that the committee has been appointed; that it will be widely representative of the various sections of the community; that it will have some of the people actually concerned with teaching on it; and that it will indeed be functioning very well before the end of the year.

Everyone is screaming education these days, and if we are to improve the general standard of living, we must spend more and more on education. It is never too early to start planning for the future; and I am disappointed to see that the committee whose immediate appointment was promised back in February has not yet been appointed.

MR. DUNN (Darling Range) [8.16 p.m.]: I desire to address the Chamber this evening on two subjects, the first of which is road safety, and the second is associated with some of the problems of town planning. Before proceeding with the general purpose of my remarks in regard to road safety, I want to preface

them by mentioning something which appears to be lacking once people get behind the wheel of a motorcar. I refer, of course, to the simple matter of traffic courtesy.

For some reason or another it would appear that people who are normally quite happy to observe the courtesies of everyday life and who, even in emergencies, are prepared to accept those courtesies and act by them, seem to be beset by some devil which takes command of them once they get into a motorcar; and instead of using that motorcar as a means of convenience they drive it round the roads more in the form of a lethal weapon rather than as something which should be a help to them and to others.

I want to make this point early in my remarks, because I cannot help but feel that until we have developed a code of courtesy, and until we have reached the stage where we can teach everybody road courtesy, and where road courtesy is practised by everybody, all our efforts both in this Chamber and outside will be of little avail; they will not help to reduce the alarming fatality rate which is increasingly expressing itself on the roads today.

Somehow or another we must evolve a system which does away with what is popularly known in Australian parlance as the Jack system. I hope that every member in this Chamber will at the end of my address—if not at this point of time—feel it is his duty to regard this particular problem with every possible seriousness, and with every ability he has to cope with it.

To instance how serious is the situation, I obtained some figures from the National Safety Council. If we pause to consider them, I am sure we will realise very deeply that we are faced with a serious national problem. The figures of road deaths in Western Australia for 1960 to 1965 are as follows:—

	Road Deaths
1960	199
1961	172
1962	177
1963	198
1964	222
1965	215

Of course, the figure for 1965 is not finalised.

A contemplation of those figures is sufficient to make us realise that we are not faced with a simple problem, but one which is serious in the extreme. Although the road fatalities in 1963 amounted to 198, the injuries sustained amounted to 5,399, involving 12,640 accidents. In 1964 the fatalities were 222, while the injuries totalled 5,450, involving 14,345 accidents.

As a comparison, the figures for Australia in the year 1963-64 were absolutely astonishing, and they create a feeling of hopelessness in one's mind. The fatalities in Australia in 1963 totalled 2,598, and the injuries totalled 67,880. In 1964 the road fatalities rose to 2,966, and the injuries rose to 74,258. If we ponder at these figures I am sure we will all be very concerned.

Mr. Bickerton: Have you any idea how the figures compare in relation to population?

Mr. DUNN: I can give some figures which will supply the honourable member with the required information. The road fatalities in Australia during the present century were more than double the deaths which resulted from the Boer War, the two World Wars, and the Korean campaign combined. For the information of members, the casualties sustained by the armed forces since the beginning of this century totalled 555,078; but the road fatalities during the same period totalled 1,351,071. From that we can see that the road fatalities during this century amounted to a little more than one-tenth of the present population of Australia.

Surely these figures must cause deep concern to every man, woman, and child throughout the length and breadth of this country. In my view steps should be taken to alleviate the serious position. In considering the road fatalities, let us not forget the number of people who have been maimed and those who are limbless as a result of accidents on our roads. We should not forget all those who are going around without arms or legs or who have disfigured faces, and also the poor creatures who are termed "human vegetables," the brains of the latter having been injured to the extent that they are incapable of thinking.

I should refer to the crowding of our hospitals. One of the most alarming experiences is to visit the casualty ward at the Royal Perth Hospital on a Friday or Saturday night, and see the activity which goes on to clear the ward in readiness for the influx of road victims. All that a close examination of the problem reveals is that ultimately the position will become worse, rather than better.

It would indeed, be puerile to suggest that the Government is not fully conscious of this problem, or that it is not continually endeavouring to do everything possible to improve the situation. I would like to think that every member of this Chamber, irrespective of his political leanings, accepts this problem as his personal responsibility, and will do everything possible to help the Government and those who are charged with overcoming this grave problem.

I propose to make a few suggestions, and in so doing I would not like anyone to think that I am putting them forward

as mine. These are suggestions which have come forward through discussing the problem with other people from time to time. I would not like members to think that in making these suggestions I regard them as directions to the Government. It is quite possible the Government is already handling these or similar suggestions.

Mr. Craig: We are always ready to listen to suggestions.

Mr. DUNN: From my inquiries I feel confident that the Government and the Police Force are doing all they can to cope with the situation, but this does not mean we cannot go a step further or that we will get anywhere without having to make some sacrifice.

I feel the sacrifice will have to come in the form of the allocation of additional funds to overcome the problem, if the suggestions are to be implemented. Each child, from the time it is born, should be taught road courtesy and how to protect its own life as well as the lives of others. Of necessity this teaching will have to be undertaken by the parents. In some cases there will be a dead period, unless the children of today are so taught that they will be in the position later on to teach the children of tomorrow.

Since this suggestion is bound up mainly with teaching children, as a natural corollary it must eventually fall on the Education Department to become the instrument by which the final teaching is completed. In this regard it is not too much to ask that driving should be included in the curriculum of every school. It should be a compulsory subject—one which is required to be passed through examination.

Mr. Craig: It is in the curriculum of high schools.

Mr. DUNN: I understand it is in a modified way. I was about to deal with that point. Already there are 260 safety clubs in the primary schools, with a membership of 80,000. Whilst that is to a certain extent, handling part of the teaching problem, I feel the final answer is going to come when we have teachers; when we have equipment; and when we have facilities to teach the children, certainly at high school standard, their full responsibility in relation to others in regard to the handling of a motor vehicle. I do not think this is something we can cast away lightly; we have to take it in both hands; we have to really make a positive effort to handle it. I feel it must be done through the schools and this, of course, is going to require considerable sums of money; it is going to require considerable help from unions and those who are associated with people who are responsible for teaching; it is not going to be easy, and the answer will not come up overnight.

I would suggest that at least some sort of committee be formed or, if necessary, some arrangement made with the National Road Safety Council to come forward with a positive plan which, if not possible of implementation immediately, then at least one that could be implemented over a period of time, starting with certain selected schools and certain selected high schools. I understand from the National Road Safety Council that in America they do operate along these lines and are experiencing considerable success. I only hope that we can eventually get down to something similar which will provide, if not a total answer, at least an answer which will considerably reduce the figures which I gave to the Committee to-night, and give the children of tomorrow a better chance.

One of the most alarming features in connection with road accidents is that there is a feeling—and I would regard myself as being just as guilty as anybody else—that "it could never happen to me". However, when one looks at the astronomical figures, one has to accept the fact that it can happen to one or anybody in one's family. Consequently, we have to accept our responsibilities in this matter; we have to be sure that whatever we do in this Chamber we make it clear to ourselves that everything possible is being done to handle this tragic loss of life; loss of joy of living; and reduce the terrible accidents and the number of malformed beings crowding our hospitals as a result of accidents which should never have happened.

I would like to suggest that the Government was quite right—and I support it fully—in making the recent changes in the Traffic Act; and I sincerely hope these changes will have the desired effect. However, I would like to suggest to the Minister for Police that some consideration be given to compel those who breach the Traffic Act—and I refer particularly to the younger people—to attend a course at the National Road Safety Council centre at Mt. Lawley. I would like to see magistrates have the power to do this.

Of course, such a scheme may be a further burden on our finances; but whichever way one looks at this, we are not going to get out of it without making more funds available and I hope it will not be long before we can commence some positive project which will start the generations now coming forward off on the right foot and give them a full and complete understanding of their responsibilities on the road both to themselves and to others.

Finally, in so far as this traffic problem is concerned, one often wonders how much merit there would be in making anybody who has a driver's license feel he has thoroughly deserved it; that he has not received it so much as a right, but as a

privilege, because he has conformed with and has shown every indication he is prepared to conform with all the rules of the road and is prepared to observe road courtesy. It would not be a bad idea if we developed a slogan to be used in connection with road courtesy; but there would be others far more expert than I who could suggest a suitable slogan.

We have to start thinking positively in terms of road courtesy because, as I explained earlier in my address, it is quite clear that many people who are prepared to observe the normal courtesies of life seem to go berserk once they are behind the wheel of a car.

Mr. Craig: There is already a slogan. It is "Courtesy Starts With You." I do not mean the honourable member.

Mr. DUNN: Perhaps when it is promulgated more fully I might be able to accept it. I thank the Minister for his interjection; I was glad to hear it.

I now propose to address the Committee in regard to town planning problems in my electorate. I am either fortunate or unfortunate enough to have many problems associated with town planning; and this, of course, is not very strange, because I am in an electorate which is growing. Since the State is growing, it seems fairly natural it would move out my way, or out the way of the Darling Range electorate.

I want to say at the outset I am very much in favour of town planning and the Government gets my full support in what it is doing in this regard; but I want to bring to the notice of the Committee that if anyone imagines the problems associated with town planning will be solved overnight then his thinking is just silly. I am quite sure and feel confident those responsible for administering the Town Planning Act are doing the best they humanly can, but I cannot help but feel a few remarks on the problems they face would be of assistance.

I wonder how many of us realise just how many departments are involved in any project associated with town planning. It is very hard to realise that a simple subdivision can call in the experts from almost every Government department; and this, of course, slows up the process of the handling of a subdivisional proposal; and, in many cases, those who are waiting become frustrated. Rather than investigate the situation fully, they become critical of those responsible. I must confess that on more than one occasion I have been guilty of such practice.

It is all very well, however, to have a town planning scheme, but it is another matter to implement it. On many occasions people are inconvenienced and this is necessary, and not uncommon. It is common under the Public Works Act, and

in regard to road closures and suchlike. However, I suggest that every effort should be made by those responsible in the Town Planning Department to ensure that their public relations are developed to the highest degree, because as sure as we are here tonight, the problems are going to increase with the fuller implementation of the Stephenson plan. They will not diminish; and, as they increase, more stress and strain will be placed upon those responsible for dealing with these matters.

It seems to me that it is highly desirable that someone should be made available to assist the public and parliamentary representatives in regard to subdivisions and similar problems.

Mr. Bickerton: You want an ombudsman.

Mr. DUNN: I would not suggest an ombudsman because I feel that this is a department which could work much the same as the State Housing Commission. I do not think that any one of us would say in so far as dealings with the State Housing Commission are concerned that the specialised officers are not of great assistance.

Mr. Fletcher: Hear, hear!

Mr. W. Hegney: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graham: Where, where?

Mr. Bickerton: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUNN: The time is approaching when this policy could be implemented in the Town Planning Department.

Mr. W. Hegney: It is a socialist institution.

Mr. Fletcher: I am giving you a good hearing. This is the first interjection I have made on you and I cannot say that of others.

Mr. DUNN: Possibly I am making it a bit hard for you to interject.

Mr. Brady: We have just been told that the policy is that courtesy starts with you. He is extending that courtesy.

Mr. DUNN: Thanks for the interlude!

Mr. Bickerton: I hope you have not lost your place.

Mr. DUNN: No. I want to say that the problems of town planning affect many people and I would like at this time to become a little parochial. Although I have been endeavouring for some time to have the light and water extended to people within 11 miles of this building I have, as yet, been unsuccessful.

Mr. Hawke: What a Government!

Mr. DUNN: This problem is accentuated by the fact that the Town Planning Department requires that the area concerned be zoned as rural, and up until recently there was a five-acre minimum

subdivision. Of late this has been increased to 10 acres. Consequently it is absolutely impossible for any department to arrive at an economic proposition which will permit it to extend the services. Therefore we find ourselves in the situation that an area has been declared rural and it cannot be subdivided into a sufficient number of blocks to warrant the extension of services. Consequently those poor unfortunates are still living under the conditions which faced our forebears when they first came to the country. These folk have no scheme water or electricity.

Mr Graham: You supported legislation the other week which declared your whole electorate to be rural.

Mr. DUNN: I did?

Mr. Graham: Yes.

Mr. DUNN: What legislation was that?

Mr. Graham: The electoral districts Bill. It is recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr. DUNN: That is so, and I hope they do not change it.

Mr. Graham: You cannot have it both ways.

Mr. DUNN: I would not be the first one who wanted to have it both ways.

Mr. Graham: Is it rural or not?

Mr. DUNN: For the sake of personal convenience it is rural; and for the sake of those who want electric light it is still rural. However, this does not detract from the fact that they are still looking for support for the extension of these services.

I want to decry immediately the story that they did not have these services when they went there and why should they expect to have them now. If we apply that to these people, why not apply it to every other part of the State—to the south-west and throughout the length and breadth of the rural areas which are costing the Government somewhere in the vicinity of £2,500,000 a year to extend the water supply? I understand that the S.E.C. lost something like £600,000 in extending power to the south-west.

I am expressing my feelings on this matter because somewhere along the line a decision must be made. We cannot continue to allow these people to be completely forgotten. Therefore I hope either that they will be permitted to subdivide their land into a number of blocks in order that the extension of the services might be economic or that the departments concerned will see their way clear to spend some of their profits on these poor unfortunate people.

I would also like to suggest that in connection with any zoning scheme which involves resumption of land, those from whom the land is to be resumed be advised personally of what is going on. At the moment the only advice is per medium of

an advertisement in the paper. The reason I am raising this matter is that I know of people who went to Great Britain. On their return they found that an advertisement had been inserted in the Press concerning a scheme which involved their property, but their chance of lodging an objection was lost because they had known nothing about it. I suggest that people should be advised direct of their position under a zoning scheme so that they will have a chance to lodge an objection if they so desire.

I would also suggest that each shire involved in any scheme should make available a map or maps of the whole area in such a form that it can be clearly understood without the aid of a magnifying glass. Every shire should also make available an officer who is capable of explaining clearly to the people their rights and responsibilities under a proposed zoning scheme. I know of people who have been grossly misled by members of a shire council.

Finally I would like to suggest that very serious thought be given to the appointment of a liaison officer to the Town Planning Department and the appointment of a public relations officer.

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [8.50 p.m.] : The previous speaker, in his last few words, mentioned a liaison officer. I think that a liaison officer is badly needed to do something for the public when they have to deal with some of our Government departments.

My remarks this evening will be confined to a particular case where I consider a rank injustice is being done. This case is no orphan, because I have six or seven instances where very grievous injustice is being done to particular people, but I have not the time at my disposal to deal with them here just now. I will have that opportunity later on.

The particular case I am referring to arose out of the provisions of the Mine Workers' Relief Act which was passed by Parliament in 1932 and established a fund to make payments to ex-mineworkers who have certain qualifications in regard to the deterioration of health. An amendment to the Act last year provides an age condition as well. The small payments made from this fund are available only after all entitlements to workers' compensation have been availed of by the worker concerned.

The Mine Workers' Relief Fund is unique inasmuch as it is contributed to by the Government, which subscribes one-third; the employers, who subscribe one-third; and the employees, who subscribe the other third. It is compulsory for every employee in the industry to make a subscription. There is a board which manages this fund; two of the members

are elected by the employers; two are elected by the employees; and the chairman is a Government member. That board decides when money shall be made available to people who become beneficiaries.

Last year, the member for Balcatta brought to my notice the case of a gentleman living in his area—one of his constituents—who had been treated very badly in our opinion in regard to payments from this fund. The member for Balcatta referred the case to me as I am a goldfields member and could be expected to know something about such cases, and being a former Minister for Mines, I was in charge of the department concerned.

The particular worker with whose case I am dealing had evidently exhausted the amount of workers' compensation to which he was entitled, and then made application to become a beneficiary of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. He was accepted and paid benefits, and his wife was paid benefits. Subsequently the man's wife died and, of course, the payments on her behalf ceased. At some future time the man remarried. He informed the board that he had remarried and naturally enough expected the dependant's money for his wife to be resumed.

This was not done, and he was informed that he was not entitled to any payments from the fund on behalf of the second wife. When we look at the Act we find that the definition of "dependants" is a very wide one. It is one of the widest I have seen. It is contained in section 5 of the Act and reads as follows:—

"Dependants" includes wife, widow until she remarries, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, step-father, step-mother; and also those persons being under the age of 16 years who bear to the mine worker the following relationships, namely, son (whether legitimate or illegitimate), daughter (whether legitimate or illegitimate), grandson, grand-daughter, step-son, step-daughter, brother, sister, half-brother, or half-sister.

I think the House will agree that that is one of the widest definitions of "dependant" contained in any of our Acts. Certainly I do not know of any which would contain as wide a definition. Of course, that definition is complete proof that Parliament, at the time of passing of this Act, intended that a dependant—no matter who the dependant was—was to come under the provisions of this Act for payment.

The member for Balcatta had carried out some inquiries of his own before he mentioned the matter to me, and he has handed to me a letter which was written to him on the 19th November, 1964, by

the acting superintendent of the Mine Workers' Relief Board. The letter reads as follows:—

Mr. H. E. Graham, M.L.A.
Parliament House,
Perth.

Re: Kris Yaksich

Flat 400E, May Drive, Nollamara

In response to your telephone call of 13th November, the following information has been obtained regarding benefits paid by the Mine Workers' Relief Board to the abovenamed person.

Mr. Yaksich received the Fund benefit in respect of his wife until her death on 5th July, 1952.

It appears that Yaksich at age 70 returned to Yugoslavia in July 1959 and remarried there. A claim for an allowance in respect to his second wife was subsequently declined by the Mine Workers' Relief Board on the grounds that she was not dependant as at date of Yaksich's notification under the Act or within 12 months preceding such date. This decision is in accordance with Regulation 48 (1) under the Mine Workers' Relief Act which reads as follows:—

"No benefits shall be payable in respect of the dependants of a mine worker unless at the date when the mine worker was prohibited or last notified, and also within the 12 months immediately preceding such date the said dependants were in fact wholly or in part dependent upon the earnings of the said prohibited or notified mine worker."

Yours faithfully,

That letter was signed by the Acting Superintendent, Mine Workers' Relief Board. On the 18th November, I asked a question which appeared on page 2721 of last year's *Hansard*. It is as follows:—

Is a dependant's allowance payable to a beneficiary under the Mine Workers' Relief Act who is—

- (a) a single man and marries;
- (b) a widower who remarries while receiving such benefits?

The Minister representing the Minister for Mines replied "No" to both questions. So we have the extraordinary situation that if a man who is single and receiving benefits from this fund—which he partly paid for, be it noted—married after receiving benefits—after becoming a beneficiary—he would not be entitled to benefits for his wife. Of course, if he had married before making the application, and made the application on the day after he married, he would probably have been paid. We have that farcical situation.

On the 24th November, I asked a further question of the Minister representing the Minister for Mines, as follows:—

- (1) Referring to question No. 10 on the 18th November and his answer thereto, how does he reconcile this with the clearly expressed definition of "dependants" in section 5 of the Mine Workers' Relief Act?
- (2) Does he consider that regulation 48 (1) of the Mine Workers' Relief Act, which abrogates the decision of Parliament in the definition of "dependants" is beyond the scope of section 62 of the Act which confers the power to make regulations?
- (3) (a) If so, will he indicate what action is proposed?
(b) If not, will he explain why?

At the time the Minister was not able to give an answer but he stated that a legal opinion was being obtained. Subsequently, on the 25th November, the Minister informed the House that a legal opinion had been obtained. He repeated the questions I had asked, and then went on to say—

The information supplied by the Crown Law Department in reply to the question is as follows:—

- (1) to (3) Section 49 (1) of the Mine Workers' Relief Act provides that the benefits to "dependants" as defined in the Act will be as prescribed "in Scale 1 of the Second Schedule of the Regulation". That scale—

- (a) differentiates between different classes of "dependants" as defined (e.g., a widow receives more than a child);

I should imagine that with any scheme a widow would be entitled to receive for her maintenance more than a child would receive. The Social Services Act recognises that, as do the scales of payments in all other schemes. So why the Crown Law Department made that profound statement, I do not know. The Crown Law opinion continues—

- (b) provides that there should be no entitlement to benefit in certain circumstances (proviso 3);
- (c) provides that a dependant who is entitled to benefit may become disentitled in certain circumstances (proviso 5); and
- (d) prescribes an overall limit in respect of all the dependants of any one mine worker (proviso 1).

It thus seems that Parliament did not contemplate that all "dependants" should be entitled to benefits either equally or in all circumstances.

It is considered that regulation 48 (1) does not abrogate the decision of Parliament in the definition of "dependants" but follows the pattern of which Parliament approved in Scale 1. The regulation has been duly promulgated and has not been disallowed or altered as provided by law. It is considered that it should be treated as valid and binding unless and until it is successfully challenged or is revoked or varied pursuant to law.

The last few lines of that opinion given by the Crown Law Department are typical of it. It does not matter what action is taken in regard to the law, the onus is thrown on the aggrieved person. This was the case of a man of over 70 years of age, on a pension, and getting a few pounds from a fund to supplement him. The only redress he had was to take action against the Government, which has all the force of the Crown Law behind it. I feel hostile about this attitude because it is one which is adopted with other people in similar situations, and I will give lengthy details later on, when we reach the Estimates of one particular department, of cases that have occurred. It is about time the Government had a look at this attitude.

The Crown Law Department should serve the people of the State and should not range itself against them. People who are suffering injustices should be entitled to the protection of the Crown Law Department, and in this case the person concerned has not got the wherewithal to fight the Government; he does not even have sufficient resources to obtain a legal opinion. So he went to see his member, the member for Balcatta.

The Minister's reply to the questions I asked was extraordinary when one looks at the definitions because they state that a dependant includes a wife, or a widow until she remarries. And, after all, a wife is a wife and there is no proviso to the definition.

After looking at the reply I received the member for Balcatta took the matter to the Australian Workers Union. That union spends thousands of pounds annually on behalf of its members, fighting this type of case. Some of the cases are taken to the High Court of Australia for a decision and that is one of the quarrels I have. At times Crown Law advice is given on behalf of employers, but if a worker is affected he has to go to see the organisation of which he is a member and at times these bodies spend thousands of pounds to get justice for their members.

In the case I am discussing the person concerned, although he had been a member of the A.W.U., had not been a member for some years, and these organisations

have to look very closely at cases when it comes to spending money on them, particularly when an individual is no longer a member of the organisation. If it decides to take up a case on his behalf it is spending the money of members of the union on a person who is not a member of it.

However, in this instance the A.W.U. approached an eminent lawyer in this city, placed the facts before him, and asked for an opinion. The lawyer concerned was Mr. Dunphy, of Dwyer, Durack and Dunphy. The opinion he gave was a rather lengthy one but I propose to read it so that it will be on record. It is dated the 19th July, 1965, and is addressed to the Secretary of the Australian Workers Union, Perth. It reads as follows:—

re: Mine Workers Relief Act—
R. Yaksich

I greatly regret to note that this matter has been extremely neglected and no opinion has been given thereon. This fault is due entirely to my illness early in the year, as the result of which I was hospitalised for some time, and the matter has escaped my notice, following my return, and has remained in obscurity until now, when I have just discovered it.

As is usual, when legal questions are laid before the House—

I would like members to take particular notice of these remarks. The opinion continues—

—for enquiry and advice, an extremely confused situation appears to develop from the answers of the Minister for Mines to the enquiries of Mr. Moir, M.L.A.,—

That is not an isolated instance. I think some very confusing situations arise from answers given by the Crown Law Department.

Mr. Tonkin: You can say that again!

Mr. O'Connor: And there are some confused questions.

Mr. MOIR: To continue—

—and it has been necessary for me to obtain the *Government Gazette* of the 11th March, 1964, in which the regulations under the Mine Workers Relief Act are published, and to consider these in conjunction with a consideration of section 5 of the Mine Workers Relief Act. The total result of these considerations leads me to believe that the attitude of the Mine Workers Relief Board is not correct, though I come to this conclusion on the always difficult conclusion that regulation 48 (i) is *ultra vires* the Act.

If we consider section 5 of the Mine Workers Relief Act, we find that "dependents" includes the wife of a

mine worker, as well as a number of other nominated persons and I would therefore commence my opinion by saying that a mine worker who acquires a wife subsequently to commencing a period of prohibition because of mining disease, is entitled to request that additional pension be paid to his wife as from the date of marriage.

It seems to me to be elementary that a "wife" is a "wife" whenever she attains to the legal status of matrimony and, as soon as she does this, she becomes a "dependent", and therefore entitled to a contribution under the Act itself. If this view were incorrect, it could only be so if section 5 included a provision that "wife" must be such as at the date of commencement of prohibition. Simpliciter, if my argument is wrong, what is the position of a child, born to a miner, who was married before prohibition, but at a date subsequent to prohibition? It could not possibly be said that such a child could not receive the allowance.

Where is the difference between Mr. Yaksich's first wife, and his second, for the purpose of entitlement to allowance? The second Mrs. Yaksich is no less Mrs. Yaksich than the first, and the first Mrs. Yaksich did not base her claim upon the date of her husband's prohibition, but upon her legal status, and this applies equally to the second Mrs. Yaksich. In this regard, I am not impressed by any question of naturalisation, because the Act itself does not specify this as a requisite.

Turning, however, to regulation 48 (1) of the regulations published under the Act, we find that the following appears:—

"No benefits shall be payable in respect of the dependents of a mine worker unless, at the date when the mine worker was prohibited or last notified, and also within twelve months immediately preceding such date, the said dependents were in fact wholly or in part dependent upon the earnings of the said prohibited or notified mine worker."

It cannot be read into the regulation or statute, that Parliament when it passed the Act, or approved the regulations "intended" phraseology used in the Act or the regulations to bear any particular meaning or subtle interpretation. It is a cardinal rule that words found in a statute must be taken as they are and in their normal and usual context, and the views of the Crown Law Department, as read to the House, obviously

are based upon a desire to tie into the words of the regulation a meaning or intention which, in my view, is not good law.

Mr. Graham: Parliament granted the assistance to the wife and the Government, by regulation, seeks to take it away.

Mr. MOIR: That is so. The letter continues—

I believe, that regulation 48 (1) must be read and interpreted as it appears, and without reference to what Parliament intended. As it appears, it is in contradistinction to an ability created by the parent statute, and I believe that it therefore cuts across the meaning of the word "dependents" as appearing in section 5, and substitutes something different from what was contained in the Act itself. If I am right, and I think I am, then the regulation is *ultra vires* the Act, and is, ineffective, so that the first part of my opinion is the only part which bears legally upon the situation.

Section 62 of the Mine Workers Relief Act gives power to the Governor in Council to make regulations which prescribes all matters and things required to be prescribed or which it may be necessary or convenient to prescribe for carrying out and giving effect to this Act. It therefore follows, of course, that if the Governor in Council makes a regulation, which is deemed to be necessary to carry out and give effect to the Act, but which instead varies, or purports to vary, specific provisions in the Act, then the regulation is bad or *ultra vires*, and cannot be sustained.

I beg to return Mr. Graham's letter, and the extract from *Hansard*.

Yours faithfully,

Sgd. (JOHN DUNPHY).

Mr. Graham: I would say that that is a very good opinion.

Mr. MOIR: It is a very clear opinion indeed. The extraordinary feature about the matter is brought to light when one reads the regulation itself. That regulation reads as follows:—

48. (1) No benefits shall be payable in respect of the dependents of a mine worker unless at the date when the mine worker was prohibited or last notified, and also within the twelve months immediately preceding such date, the said dependents were in fact wholly or in part dependent upon the earnings of the said prohibited or notified mine worker.

Clearly, that cuts right across the section in the Act naming the dependants. It simply states that, among all the other dependants, it includes a wife. It is a tortuous method of reasoning. It says

that a wife is not a wife unless she was a wife within a certain time of becoming a beneficiary. This is the part of the regulation that really staggers one, because in paragraph (2) of regulation 48, the following appears:—

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subregulation (1) of this regulation benefits are payable in respect of a child born of a marriage contracted by a mine worker whether contracted before or after the date upon which he was prohibited or notified.

That would really take some beating! It acknowledges that a child born at any time shall be a dependant, but the mother of that child is not a dependant. As far as the fund is concerned she can starve, because no payments will be made to her, but graciously, the magnificent sum of 10s. per week will be paid to the child. That is some regulation!

Someone might ask: "Why has not the member for Balcatta or the member for Boulder-Eyre challenged the regulation in the House?" We could have done so but that would not have brought justice to these people. All we would have determined by doing that was that the Government had the numbers in this House to defeat whatever proposition we raised. It would not have determined a point of law. The second alternative would be to go to law. Quite obviously, however, Mr. Yaksich cannot go to law because he does not have the wherewithal to do so. The third alternative would be for someone else to take the case to court, but it is a very expensive matter to go before the courts.

Some people naively believe that it does not cost a person anything to go to law if that person is successful in the action that is brought before the court. But such is not the case, as members on this side of the House know only too well. Some-time ago, when the members of the Opposition had occasion to take the Government to court to force it to obey the law, notwithstanding that the decision was in our favour, it cost those on this side of the House a great deal of money to make the Government obey the law, and the same applies in this case.

I have no doubt that the case would be won; that whoever takes it to court on behalf of Mr. Yaksich will win it. But it will cost a great deal of money, and no person should be placed in such a position. Surely, when it is set down in clear-cut terms in any enactment what the entitlements of people are, such people should be entitled to the benefits set out.

Clearly, somewhere along the line, someone brought down a regulation, but I do not know when it was brought down. I have been connected with this legislation for over 25 years and I do not know the reason for its being brought down, and, I do not know when it was brought down. Nevertheless, it exists, and not only does it

deprive this man who has remarried of any benefit for his wife to supplement the miserably small pension he receives, but the provisions of the regulation would apply with the same effect to a single man. It is a scandalous state of affairs when under this regulation a single man is actually told that if he marries he will not receive any allowance for his wife under this legislation.

The regulation is made so wide in its application that he cannot even marry 12 months before he makes a claim on the fund. If he marries within that time, or within 12 months preceding that date, the position remains as it is. It is even made retrospective. Have members ever heard such nonsense? The tragic part about all this is that it has such a dreadful impact on the person it happens to hit.

I would venture to say that there are probably not more than half a dozen people affected. As a matter of fact, this is the first case I have heard of. I did not know this regulation existed. I bring this matter forward in the hope that it will be placed before the Minister for Mines by the Minister who represents him in this Chamber. If the Premier is that Minister I would be glad if he would mention it to the Minister for Mines.

I think it is deplorable that it should be left to an institution or an organisation to take action at law. Questions were asked in this House, and a legal opinion was given. I omitted to read out the correspondence, but the union concerned took the matter along to the Minister for Mines and laid it before him. The Minister's reply is contained in the documents I have here before me, and he refused to rectify the position.

I appeal to the Premier to mention this matter to the Minister for Mines, and ask him, as a matter of simple justice, to reconsider his decision and take another look at it. The sum involved is only £2 a week. Is it any wonder when things like this happen that the mineworkers on the goldfields become disgruntled when they discover that this sort of thing exists? I think they have every right to be disgruntled in a matter of this kind. I think I have covered the case pretty thoroughly, and I trust the Minister will take another look at the position, so that it will not be necessary for an organisation or an institution to go to law to obtain elementary justice for this elector of the member for Balcatta.

Mr. Tonkin: It sounds like a case for the ombudsman.

Vote put and passed.

This concluded the general debate.

Other Votes and Items dealt with as follows:—

Votes: Legislative Assembly, £26,544; Joint House Committee £45,644; Joint Printing Committee, £35,238; Joint Library Committee, £2,209; Premier's Department,

£111,035; Treasury, £179,350; Governor's Establishment, £29,786; Executive Council £5; London Agency, £80,693; Public Service Commissioner, £71,630; Government Motor Car Service, £12,869—put and passed.

Vote: Audit, £117,290—

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.24 p.m.]: Could the Treasurer give any indication as to when the Auditor-General's report will be available to Parliament this session? We have already gone past the date when it became available last session, and there has been no indication yet when it is coming forward. This is a most valuable document, for the Opposition anyhow, and there should be ample time for it to be read before the House rises. I should be grateful, therefore, if the Premier could indicate when it is likely to be presented, so that we will know where we stand in the matter.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [9.25 p.m.]: Offhand I cannot give an answer, but I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that we should have the report here as quickly as possible. I acknowledge the need for having it here.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Compassionate Allowances £313; Government Stores, £210,889; Taxation, £211,500; Superannuation Board, £23,350; Government Printer, £757,837—put and passed.

Vote: Miscellaneous Services, £7,794,519—

Item No. 2: Australian Association for Better Hearing, £250—

Mr. GRAHAM: I would like the Premier to give a few particulars as to what this association is, and what functions it performs. The grant is only a small one of £250, and I cannot imagine the scope of its functions. If it is rendering any useful service it would not get very far on that amount.

Mr. BRAND: I recall this association having written to me on a number of occasions asking for some aid to help it with its aims and objectives. This organisation strives to produce improved techniques in hearing aids. The item provides that an annual grant to the Australian Association for Better Hearing be made. The association is badly placed to raise sufficient funds to meet operating costs, as most of its members are aged and otherwise handicapped. The main objectives of the association are the preservation and improvement of hearing, the prevention of defects, and the provision of assistance to those with impaired hearing. It conducts lip reading classes and serves as an information centre on all problems of impaired hearing. It has attracted a grant from the Government because of its good work.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Agriculture, £1,547,965—

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) (9.31 p.m.): I wish to outline some of the activities of the Department of Agriculture, and in so doing I shall furnish some figures which I feel sure will be of interest not only to the members of this House, but also to the people of this State.

It is interesting to note the development that has taken place over the years, and I shall give figures relating to the amount of land that has been made available, the clearing which has been undertaken, and so on. In the post-war years the agricultural production was as follows:—

	Land Cleared Acres
1947-48	15,100,000
1963-64	28,300,000
1964-65	29,600,000

The figures of the acreage under crop were as follows:—

	Acres
1947-48	3,900,000
1963-64	6,700,000
1964-65	7,300,000

The areas under pasture were as follows:—

	Acres
1947-48	2,500,000
1963-64	9,500,000
1964-65	10,400,000

The figures for sheep and lambs were as follows:—

1947-48	10,400,000
1963-64	21,200,000
1964-65	23,200,000

The figure for 1964-65 was an all-time record for Western Australia.

I now turn to the figures for wool production for the same period. They are as follows:—

	lb.
1947-48	88,900,000
1963-64	207,200,000
1964-65	198,200,000

Last year was a bad year, because we experienced a very dry summer and autumn. I suggest this setback will be overtaken, and we can anticipate quite a large increase in production this year.

Turning to the cattle numbers, the figures were as follows:—

1947-48	815,000
1963-64	1,298,000
1964-65	1,258,000

The reason for the decrease in 1964-65 was that the north experienced a run of dry years, and this had an influence on the number of cattle which were available for slaughtering. Furthermore, in the agricultural areas, where previously many wheat farmers and graziers depended entirely on the raising of sheep for wool and meat, they switched over to the raising of cattle; but last year a number of them went back to sheep raising, and that is the reason for the slight fall in the number of cattle for the 1964-65 year. It is expected that the

cattle population will be increased, when the figures for the coming year are available.

Agricultural expansion continues. Last year a record of 1,300,000 acres were cleared, 900,000 new acres of land were sown to improved pasture, and 600,000 new acres were put under crop. The sheep numbers rose by 2,000,000—almost equal to 20 per cent. of the sheep population of 1947-48.

Dairy production was also a record, with a production to the 30th June estimated at 62,200,000 gallons, or 4.8 per cent. greater than the previous record production of 1960-61. The tremendous post-war expansion in the rural industries has been built on a foundation of technical knowledge accumulated by the Department of Agriculture. The State and Australia are today reaping the reward of these achievements.

Increased areas, coupled with excellent seasonal conditions, should give a record wheat crop estimated to be in the vicinity of 100,000,000 bushels of wheat for this year. This is 37,000,000 bushels more than the 1964-65 production. We have received reports which suggest this could be reduced through the incidence of root rot, dieback, take-all, and septoria. This is a combination of root diseases that tackle the wheat just prior to the grain filling out. Reports have been received from various parts of the State, and to a degree the estimated harvest will be reduced. At this stage it is very difficult to estimate what the reduction is likely to be.

I received a telephone call today from a mixed farming district, and was told that it was suggested by a branch meeting of the Farmers' Union held last evening that the reduction could be up to 40 per cent. of the estimated yield. However, we are hoping it will be not as great as that. We must accept the situation, and expect some reduction in the wheat harvest.

Mr. Graham: Is any protective action possible on an economic level?

MR. NALDER: No. Most of the scientists can give good reasons why, under certain conditions, these diseases will break out. In view of the conditions under which the farmers grow their crops this State will never be completely free of the diseases. If the conditions are dry when the land is worked, they will assist the fungus to grow. If the conditions are wet when the land is worked, then that tends to prevent outbreaks.

So we will find it does not matter how good the season is, under certain circumstances some of the farmers are forced—because they do not want to be caught with the season too wet—to go ahead and work the land in conditions that are not ideal. This is the sort of thing that brings up septoria, dieback, and take-all.

It is a risk farmers will take and have to take. It is a situation that has been aggravated by the conditions this year.

Mr. Graham: The treatment of the soil is not effective?

Mr. NALDER: No; the department has not been able to suggest a treatment that might be able to overcome this disability.

The increased sheep numbers made possible by improved pastures will give a record wool clip. Both these factors are vitally important to Australia, at a time when a great part of the country is in the grip of drought, and difficulty could be experienced in holding important export markets.

It is also encouraging to find the dairy-ing industry making excellent progress. The record production of 1964-65 is likely to be followed by an even better year in 1965-66. This industry is unique in that it is not physically expanding. The increases have been achieved while the number of cows milked has remained static. Much of the credit for this position must go to the improved techniques developed and recommended by the Department of Agriculture. Improved pasture management, better milking-shed design, herd recording, artificial breeding, and mastitis control have all contributed to greater efficiency and production.

The Kimberley regions where the cattle industry is looking anxiously for the 1965-66 cyclone season to relieve the drought and near drought conditions which have prevailed during the past two years is one of the few areas of the State where conditions are not good.

Even this shadow is lightened by the very encouraging result at the Ord River. In the second year of cotton growing the 23 farmers produced an estimated £1,000,000 worth of cotton. The average yield of 2,016 lb. of seed cotton per acre was 51 per cent. greater than the 1964 yield and yields reached 2,844 lb. per acre. In addition, 70 per cent. of the cotton produced was premium grade.

This is a very satisfying result. I found in recent meetings with cotton growers in other countries of the world that a premium of about 65 per cent. or 67 per cent. was accepted as being a very good percentage of premium grade cotton. The fact that we were able to obtain 70 per cent. premium grade cotton within two years of growing in Western Australia, is something to be commended; and we must congratulate all those associated with this good percentage.

This is an area made possible by the technological achievements of agricultural scientists. With more experience, better insect control, and farmers planning larger areas, 1966 will be an exciting year on the Ord.

I will now refer to beef production. An accelerating rise in beef production with a total of 64,000 tons was recorded during 1964; this compared with 56,000 tons in 1963. Beef production has more than doubled since 1948. The increase was the more remarkable since it coincided with a fall in turn-off for Kimberley cattle, due to drought conditions, from over 74,000 in 1963 to 56,000 in 1964. In 1965, 57,000 tons of beef and veal have been produced. This reduction from 1964 figures is due partly to drought in northern areas, but another reason that has been adduced suggests that a number of breeding cattle have been retained on farms to allow farmers to step up the number of cattle.

Mr. Rhatigan: A lot have been slaughtered in latter years while in calf.

Mr. NALDER: I agree that that has happened, but our officers have been advising people to keep the younger breeding stock so they can replenish the numbers that will no doubt be needed for future breeding in the areas.

I would like to mention the situation in the poultry industry and, at this stage, make special reference to broiler production. Poultry meat production has increased tremendously in the past four years. In this State in 1961-62, which was the first year that this industry really got going in this State, they produced 1,500,000 birds. In 1962-63 the figure was somewhat similar to the previous year, but in 1963-64 it rose to 2,034,000, an increase of 35.6 per cent. Last year this figure increased to 2,953,930, an increase of 45.2 per cent.

The return to farmers per lb. of live-weight has dropped from 2s. 10d. in 1961-62 to 2s. 4½d. in 1964-65. This reduction per bird has forced producers into running larger numbers of birds in order to maintain income. The rate of increase in production during the next two years will probably be less than that recently experienced. I have been informed that one of the firms operating in this State intends to increase its production by a very big number.

Mr. Graham: I think one of the principal factors in the increase in poultry meat has been the high prices of beef and lamb.

Mr. NALDER: That is the position; and it not only applies to Australia, but to other countries in the world. This is very much so in America and in Great Britain. The increase in poultry production has been brought about by the fact that other meats have risen considerably in price.

Mr. Graham: Perhaps also because of the disappearance of the rabbit.

Mr. NALDER: I do not think that has had the same effect, but I do not want to argue on that.

Mr. Graham: We did have one once before, I recall.

Mr. Brand: Not the same rabbit.

Mr. NALDER: We have not had the figures to indicate what influence that is likely to have. However, it is still a valuable industry and I feel it will contribute still greater to the economics of this State.

I would now like to refer to extension activities. The department's extension service is based on 23 district offices located at major country centres. There is an increasing demand for these services as farmers become aware of the technical advances that can be achieved.

Farmer interest in scientific development is shown by the large attendances at field days. I think I mentioned this several times in previous years; and it is a very satisfactory situation. Interest is being maintained in our field days and this is very encouraging not only to the Government, but also to the officers who are assisting in conducting the field days.

This year 74 farmers' field days and 10 research station field days were organised in the cereal and sheep areas alone during September and October. At Badgingarra Research Station 520 people attended to see the progress being made in the area.

The interest of the farmers in the eastern wheatbelt in pasture improvement is indicated by the attendance of over 300 at the pasture field day held at Merredin. Other notable attendances were—Wongan Hills, 430; Avondale, 300; Esperance Downs, 350; and Newdegate, 300. Thirty-one farmers' field days organised in September in the cereal and sheep areas had a total attendance of 1,543.

I would like to mention the situation as far as plant breeding is concerned. The programme is being carried out by the department and is being expanded both in the field and at South Perth. This year, 9,500 wheat cross breds, 2,300 oat cross breds, 3,600 barley cross breds, and 1,000 linseed cross breds are undergoing selection at departmental research stations. High yielding semi dwarf Mexican wheats have been introduced and crossed with higher quality Australian wheats. Also the genetic material for the production of hybrid wheats and barley has been introduced from the U.S.A.; and while there are practical problems in the growing of hybrid wheats and large increases in yield are required for them to be grown economically their place in the future breeding programme is being looked at.

I would like to mention here an interesting feature that the director and I noticed when travelling through America. We visited some of the wheat breeding field stations and found that the old Australian variety of federation, which was probably the only wheat grown back in the 1910s, is being used by the breeders in America.

Mr. Brand: It was a hard wheat, wasn't it?

Mr. NALDER: Yes. It was one of the stalwart varieties in the early days but it was interesting to find that the breeders there are holding this variety as a back-stop for future breeding of important varieties of wheat.

Mr. Kelly: Is it subject to rust there in America?

Mr. NALDER: Not in the areas we visited.

Mr. Brady: Any comeback wheat?

Mr. NALDER: You are not mixing it with sheep?

Mr. Brady: No. It is a wheat breed.

Mr. NALDER: Quite right. At South Perth the department is building a small phytotron with assistance from the Grain Pool of W.A. and wheat research funds. The unit will also incorporate controlled growth cabinets which will be used to assess the response of parent varieties to a wide range of environmental conditions. The information gained will greatly assist in the selection of parent material for crosses. The cost of this facility is estimated at £27,500.

The major short-term use for the facility will be to shorten the time needed to get cross bred material through to commercial production. A large number of generations can be grown in one year under such conditions and small amounts of seed can be accumulated rapidly.

At the same time the field testing of varieties has been expanded to test the reaction of available varieties to climate and soil varieties and the effects of these factors on quality. In 1966 some 120 variety trials will be planted.

Also large amounts of material are being introduced from other States and overseas and over 1,200 varieties of wheat, oats, barley, and linseed have been introduced and tested during the last five years.

In all breeding work quality must be maintained or improved and the cereal laboratory examined 7,500 samples of cereal, grain, and flour during the last year.

As the terms of trade move against rural products there is a greater need for greater efficiency and increased production per acre. Modifications of existing rotations are being investigated as one approach to measuring returns. The build-up of fertility in many areas, coupled with the availability of fertiliser nitrogen has made changes possible. The department is examining the place of repetitive cropping between periods of pasture ley. This work was commenced in 1961 and some remarkable results have been obtained. In one experiment, for instance, at Wongan Hills Research Station a total yield of 144 bushels of wheat has been taken over four years without added fertiliser nitrogen and including the 1963 rust year.

In other areas the practice does not appear satisfactory and at Mingenew a total of only 43.4 bushels was obtained over four years. More of this rotation work will be undertaken in the future to place the farmer in a better position to make maximum use of his available resources.

Trace elements have played a major role in light land development in the wheatbelt. Recently extensive areas of molybdenum deficiency, previously thought to occur only on pastures in the medium and higher rainfall areas, have been found in the wheatbelt. An area extending from north of Geraldton to Lake Grace is affected, an estimated 5,000,000 acres.

Wheat yields have been improved by four to six bushels per acre. In some cases molybdenum application has made the difference between success and failure of legumes sown on affected soils. This important finding can fortunately be readily adopted by farmers and to aid in its adoption we have recently arranged with the fertiliser manufacturers to prepare a suitable trace mixture for these areas. These will be made available through the normal channels during the coming season.

With regard to soil testing, in the meantime work in other areas of plant nutrition is continuing. A recently appointed graduate is for instance examining the place of soil testing in estimating fertiliser requirements in W.A. Recent developments have made such soil testing appear more practical, but it will require careful examination over a period of years before any real assessment of its place in agriculture in this State can be made.

Regarding soil conservation, the wet winters of 1963 and 1964 caused serious erosion in the wheatbelt and greatly increased the demand for the services of the soil conservation staff. More technicians have been employed to assist the professional staff and in 1964-65, 50 per cent. more contour surveying was done than in the previous year. Further expansion of staff is planned, including the appointment of a research officer whose salary will be paid from wheat industry research funds.

In connection with salt land, the widespread testing and the development of commercial seed supplies of the outstanding saltland grass *Puccinellia* represents a major advance in treatment of salt-affected lands, especially in wetter districts. This grass will grow on a high proportion of salt-affected land in the agricultural areas, but is particularly suited to waterlogged salty land for which no suitable plant was previously available. This development, together with the availability of other salt tolerant plants such as blue bush, salt bushes, and *Paspalum vaginatum* means that productive plants can now be established on most salt-affected areas.

In recent years the importance of higher stocking rates and of production per acre has been demonstrated by a large number of trials and experiments carried out throughout the State agricultural areas.

Much of this work has, however, been done with wethers and departmental work is now being concentrated on ewes. Work at the Avondale Research Station for instance has shown that between 2 and 2½ ewes per acre can be run successfully and produce good quality lambs. Based on this work, it seems that 50 lb. of lamb and 30 lb. of wool per acre is a reasonable production target for the area. Similar results are being obtained at Coorow in a trial on a farmer's property.

The main problem limiting adoption of higher stocking rates is the present sheep shortage, but it is confidently forecast that the State will have 40,000,000 sheep by 1975. The shortage of sheep has resulted in departmental work being directed towards breeding problems.

Breeding problems first appeared on subterranean clover pastures in the 1940s. A great deal of work is at present being undertaken on this problem. One of the more interesting experiments at the Avondale Research Station has shown that even on apparently balanced pastures lambing percentages can decline by 18 per cent. for each year the ewes spend on the pasture even though there is no obvious symptoms of the disease except this infertility.

The contribution of the ram to flock fertility is also under study. In an experiment at Wongan Hills Research Station where the mating pattern of the rams is being automatically recorded, using small radio transmitters, some very interesting results have been obtained. It is obvious that the percentage of rams in the flock affects semen quality, and the fertility of the ram. The 1965 experiments have in fact shown that it could be economic to use up to four per cent. rams.

I want to refer to the publicity we have had in the lupin area, one which has caused quite a deal of concern over the years. I would like to make the following report: An intensive investigation of lupinosis has been undertaken over recent years because of the importance of this problem particularly in the West Midland area. Recent work has shown a close relationship between the incidence of the disease and rainfall patterns during the summer months. It now appears reasonably certain that the toxicity is caused by fungal infection of the dry lupins associated with high humidity following summer rain. The amount of rain required and other climatic factors contributing to the problem as well as the chemistry and fungal aspects will be further investigated during the coming summer.

Bovine mastitis survey: A full year's activity in co-operation with other branches of the department has involved visits to over 100 herds and a great deal of valuable data has been accumulated. When this has been examined statistically it will be possible to formulate a systematic approach to extension which will be of benefit to the dairying industry.

Peri-natal Lamb Mortality Survey: This survey has entered its third and final year. By examining a significant number of those lambs involved in peri-natal mortalities it has been possible to demonstrate the nutritional bias of this mis-mothering-starvation complex. The problem has been imperfectly understood in the past and a better understanding of its nature may very well lead to important improvements in lamb survival.

Considerable progress has been made in revegetating of extensive areas of denuded and eroded country in the catchment area of the Ord River as a means of reducing siltation of the proposed dam.

Some 1,100 square miles of country has been fenced, cleared of stock and subjected to remedial treatment, including contour furrowing and reseeded. Despite adverse seasons marked improvement can be seen in all areas so far treated.

Plans and negotiations for the establishment of a research station near Fitzroy Crossing are well advanced. Problems associated with both the cattle and sheep industries are to be investigated. A wide range of soil types will be included within the area so that findings will have application over most of the West Kimberley area. Development of the station will proceed in stages as finance becomes available over a five-year period.

An agricultural adviser has been appointed to Derby and takes up residence in early August. Detailed investigations are being carried out in this area into ways and means of establishing more productive pastures on the red sandy (Pindan) country. Problems of spinifex management and pasture regeneration are receiving attention.

In the Port Hedland area there are encouraging signs that the pastoral industry in this area is on the improve, due to a combination of vermin control and improved management techniques. At Abydos Pastoral Research Station detailed investigations are being carried out into various aspects of sheep breeding and nutrition. Findings from the research centre are finding acceptance amongst the stations generally and the services of the local extension officer are readily sought.

During 1964-65, 128,598 cattle in 1,704 herds were subjected to the tuberculin test. There were 379 reactors, and the overall incidence was 0.29 per cent. It

has now become apparent that the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in the South-West Land Division has been reduced to below one per cent. The dairy herds, both whole-milk and butterfat, have been under regular test for a number of years. These herds are retested biennially, and from the results of the test applied over the past two years, it is clear that the overall incidence is now below 0.5 per cent.

A representative cross-section of the beef herds has been tested during the past year and the results would indicate that the incidence of tuberculosis is of much the same order as in the dairy herds. It is inevitable that some isolated pockets of infection will be disclosed as the testing of the different herds proceeds, but no increase in the overall incidence of the disease need be anticipated.

The incidence of tuberculosis in pastoral cattle would also appear to be low. During the current season records have been kept of all lesions of tuberculosis both local and generalised found in Kimberley cattle slaughtered at Northern Meat Works, and only 0.27 per cent. of these have shown evidence of the disease. Only seven carcasses were condemned for T.B. from a total of 6,616 Kimberley cattle slaughtered at metropolitan abattoirs during 1964-1965.

Contagious Bovine Pleuro-Pneumonia: The campaign which began in 1964 for the eradication of bovine pleuro pneumonia from the Kimberley division was continued throughout the cattle season in 1965, and continued to receive the full support of pastoralists. It forms part of a national campaign for the eventual eradication of the disease from the Commonwealth and is based upon the vaccination of calves at the time of breeding. The work in Western Australia is financed from the National Pleuro-Pneumonia Fund which is subscribed by the mainland States.

Vaccination programmes have been retarded in some areas by adverse seasonal conditions which precluded the mustering of breeders which were in a weakened condition and the inoculation of their calves, but progress has generally been very satisfactory. From the Wyndham Meat Works cases of pleuro-pneumonia were reported in cattle from only two properties in the East Kimberley district and the West Kimberley district again remained apparently free of the disease. As a precaution against the reintroduction of the infection with cattle from East Kimberley, regulations were promulgated under the Stock Diseases Act restricting the movement of cattle from east to west.

Under this legislation the movement of cattle from the Shires of Wyndham and Hall's Creek which embraces the East Kimberley district to other parts of the Kimberley division is subject to the permission of an inspector and to vaccination before

movement unless exempted by the chief inspector. Cattle transported by road train direct to a meatworks or to a port for export are exempted from vaccination unless this is required by the importer, but where they are travelled on the hoof to loading points in West Kimberley, vaccination before movement is required.

I would like to mention the position of the footrot problem in Western Australia. The footrot situation appears to be very satisfactory and has never been more favourable than at the present time. At the 30th June, 1965, there were only three flocks under quarantine restriction. Two of these had been found to be affected by the disease but the third was affected by "scald", and while this condition responded to foot bath treatment, quarantine has been maintained as a precautionary measure. Both of the affected flocks were included in the 1965 summer eradication programme and are probably now free of the disease. Fourteen flocks were free of the disease and were released from quarantine. Only two new infections have been reported since January, 1964, and from this it might be thought that the total eradication of footrot from the State is now in sight. However, having regard to the insidious nature of the infection, it is rather doubtful whether this desirable result will ultimately be achieved.

I should like to pay a tribute to the veterinary section of the department for the work it has done in this regard, and I think members generally will agree that it is a very happy situation to have reduced this great problem which is associated with the sheep-breeding industry to such a degree.

The department provides many services to the farmer. Among the most important of these is that of fleece measurement. The department's fleece measurement laboratory assesses the clean wool yield of wool samples from rams chosen by studmasters as possible stud sires, and the fleece is weighed. A large percentage of studs are now using this service which, coupled with fleece measurement, should give more rapid improvement in wool clip than has been possible in the past. Since the end of June this year 3,200 samples have been tested.

Another important service is herd recording; and 1,100 purebred and more than 19,000 grade cows were tested in 1964-65. As regards artificial breeding, 15,916 cows were inseminated during the year ended June, 1965. This was a substantial increase on the number in previous years. Results were very satisfactory and the percentage non return on a 30-60 day basis was 73.8 per cent.

Another service given by the department is in regard to shearing schools. A new shearing shed has been built at Fremantle and 120 new shearers will be trained there

this year. In addition, 60 shearers will be trained at special schools run in the country.

The seed certification service now supervises the operation of a large pasture seeds industry. In 1964-65 pasture seeds valued at £1,500,000 were produced and production is expected to increase during 1965-66.

I have some information regarding quick frozen peas which I am sure will be of interest to members. I feel it is an industry that will contribute greatly to the needs of this State and it is one in which a great deal more interest will be taken in the future. The advance in the frozen pea industry is demonstrated by the sharp fall in imports from 20,867 centials, valued at £217,193, for 1963-64, to 5,855 centials, valued at £65,687, in 1964-65.

Mr. Davies: Will the Tasman trade agreement affect this industry?

Mr. NALDER: That thought has been expressed, but at this stage it is not likely that it will affect Western Australia. As I mentioned previously, this is a section of primary production which will be extended in Western Australia, and the department is doing a lot of work with those who are interested in it. Their influence is being extended to other areas to see what results can be achieved and, at the moment, those results are most satisfactory.

As regards onion seed production, 30-lb. of seed of a superior strain of Spearwood brown globe onion were produced by the department and are being distributed to growers. With potatoes, named varieties and unnamed seedlings from worldwide sources are under trial. Included among these are yellow flesh types which are under test for export to the Singapore market.

That concludes my report on the activities of the Department of Agriculture. I think we can be proud of its achievements and we can also be proud of the work that farmers generally are doing throughout the State. It is most heartening to return from an overseas tour to find the primary industry in such a happy position. Our potential, and the fact that we have a large area of Crown land that is still to be brought under the plough, indicates that this State will be a major contributor to the food needs of many parts of the world in years to come. I am sure the State will play an ever-increasing part in the production not only of cereals but also of meat and other products which are so keenly sought after by other countries of the world.

In Great Britain agricultural land is being built on at the rate of 250,000 acres a year, and from that one can readily appreciate what the position will be in the future, and what a demand there will be for food in years to come. That situation applies not only to Great Britain but also

to European countries and this, I think, will be a challenge to us in the future. I am sure we will be called upon to supply a great deal of the food requirements of these countries.

I am sure everybody associated with this industry will play his part to make certain that as soon as possible we will be producing the maximum from the areas of land which are at present being developed.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [10.17 p.m.]: I was hoping that in the course of his introductory remarks the Minister would have given us an indication of the prospects of overseas markets for our primary production. He hardly touched on that aspect and made little reference to the markets that would be available for the produce of this State in the future.

Mr. Bickerton: He was not away long enough.

MR. JAMIESON: That is so; he might not have been able to investigate these matters. One has to be away long enough to see a field of rice reach full maturity! However, to get back to what I started to say, I think this is a question that calls for prompt action on the part of the Government to ensure that this State gets a share of the markets available for primary production. I have been belting this question ever since I have been in this Chamber: it is of no use relying on the Commonwealth Government to sell one's produce. One has to sell it oneself, and we are closer than anybody else to the markets which have to cater for untold millions. With the uplifting of the standards of these people those markets will get bigger and bigger. Therefore it is our own fault if we are not going to those places, to sell the produce which we have available.

I am indebted to one of the delegates of the Australian Labor Party, who was a recent guest of the Governments of Malaysia and Singapore, for some information which I would like to present. This person was none other than the Federal Secretary of the Australian Labor Party, and at a Press conference held when he arrived home he mentioned that in all the places he visited it was a notable feature that one could not buy Australian wines. He said that one could buy French wines, German wines, and other similar expensive produce, but one could not buy Australian wines. We now have a Minister in the Government who represents a wine-growing district, and I do not know whether he has done anything to sell a bottle of wine since he has been there.

Mr. Craig: We cannot produce enough to meet local demand.

MR. JAMIESON: Of course we can! If we are to engage in industrial expansion and, to use the Minister's final words, try to enhance and glorify the plough, we must expand in all production spheres;

and surely one of those in which we can expand rather quickly, if the market is readily available, is the production of wines.

Mr. Craig: The Government is assisting to establish the industry.

MR. JAMIESON: If it were a question of iron ore the Government would be breaking its neck to make arrangements for the construction of a railway and the establishment of a harbour so that it could be exported to countries overseas. If, essentially, we are a primary producing State—which we are likely to be for quite a long while because of the large tracts of land with which nature has endowed us, and with more reliable conditions than those enjoyed in other States—we should be sending out from this State a sales promotion team for the sale of our products, not to Europe or the United States, but to countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia where reside untold millions. Such a team would be engaged solely on the sales promotion of goods produced in this State and not those produced in New South Wales or any other State. If this were done we would really make progress.

I realise that many of our primary products are under the control of various boards, just as wheat is under the control of the Australian Wheat Board, and it is the responsibility of those bodies to establish markets for the products they handle. I am not interested in them; I am interested in what we can produce, and how, if the markets are readily available, we can compete with other countries by selling our products in those markets. Furthermore, nothing builds up friendship with another country better than trading in foodstuffs. If one nation is relying on another for the supply of foodstuffs, it is not likely to bite the hand that feeds it, otherwise it may find itself in trouble.

Mr. Rowberry: It is far better than trading in war materials.

MR. JAMIESON: Yes, I agree, particularly if we were trading in them in numbers greater than we have at our disposal. Although we have not had much experience it is high time we indulged in some liaison with those countries. It is definitely time for us to think bigger than the way we have been thinking. We have been thinking in terms of what will bring capital to this small corner of the Australian continent, and perhaps of the wealth that will be gained from mineral production in the north—which, of course, has nothing to do with the section under the control of the Minister for Agriculture—by diversifying our activities in that far-flung section of the State.

However, if we are to produce the maximum of the products we are capable of producing, besides our standard products of wheat and wool, we will begin to make

real progress, because undoubtedly there is a multiplicity of products that can be grown in this State. To cite an example, the sale of malt from this State over the past few years has been fantastic. Ship-loads of it have been sent as far afield as Japan. I think, with a little more information concerning markets in other countries to our north, we could encourage the production of malt to a stage when it could be double what it is now. There is only one malt-producing firm in this State at present, but I am sure, with a little encouragement and advice on what markets are available, the production of malt could be increased by 100 per cent.

A few years ago all the barley that was used by the malt processing works in this State was imported from the Eastern States, but now the bulk of our barley requirements is grown here. We have had occasion to use barley that was not as suitable as it could be in the production of malt. All these aspects of primary production are crying out for earnest and close attention.

We should start thinking about appointing a Minister with a suitable title to handle this important task. At present we have a Minister for Industrial Development, and I think we should have a Minister for rural industrial development, because I do not think sufficient attention is being paid to this aspect of the wealth that could be produced in this State. Undoubtedly there is plenty of room for expansion and for Western Australia to produce more than it has done in the past.

Mr. Bickerton: You could have an export section.

Mr. JAMIESON: As the member for Pilbara has suggested, we could establish an export section of the Department of Agriculture with the specific responsibility of sending officers out to gain markets for our products. As soon as they were able to obtain information on the market available for any particular product they could advise the department what would be expected by way of an apple crop, for example, to meet the demand in the market they had explored. I feel certain that there would be a large demand for many of the products that can be grown in a temperate climate such as ours from the people who are living in the tropics. As I have said, a sales campaign team could be appointed, and as soon as they gained all the information necessary about the markets available, arrangements could be made to export the products to meet the demand.

In the past we have adopted a haphazard approach to the sales of such commodities overseas. In this House I have called for the Commonwealth Trade Commissioner's report, but no-one seems to know what really happens to produce from

this State. I could go to one Chinese merchant and find that he would pass the responsibility on to another Chinese merchant until finally it would be impossible to obtain a clear picture of the position, and the price at which a certain product was sold; but it is obvious that these people would not be engaged in making transfer transactions without taking their share of the profits, whether it be from the sale of fruit or some other commodity produced in this State.

I repeat that there could be a great demand throughout Indonesia for various types of foodstuffs produced in this State. It is merely a question of making financial arrangements for the payment for them, but that is not an insurmountable problem. Payment by exchange of commodities very often can overcome that difficulty; and, if this cannot be done, it is better to barter with a little friendship and hope to receive payment in kind in the future rather than be faced with hostility and payment with some catastrophe or other problem with which we are sometimes faced.

There is not enough being done in the agricultural field and in the fostering of markets for products already grown in Western Australia. There are untold millions to the north who are crying out for all forms of milk products and other commodities grown by primary producers in this State, and until we force the issue in regard to these markets we are going to be left behind; we are going to find that New Zealand, Tasmania, and other States and countries which have been engaging in sales promotion campaigns in the countries to the north will be gaining the bulk of the market that is available, and gaining it to the detriment of us who live next door to those markets.

Sooner or later I hope my cries will cease to go unheeded and that the Minister or the Premier will finally decide it is more important to send some type of trade mission for primary products to these near markets than to fool around with many of the projects we have been dabbling in during recent years which have cost the State a considerable amount of money.

Progress

Mr. NORTON: I move—

That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion put and negatived.

Committee Resumed

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [10.30 p.m.]: It is very disappointing that the Treasurer should push on so quickly with these Estimates, particularly as the Auditor-General's report has not yet been presented to this Chamber. This report is a very valuable document to have before us when we are dealing with the Estimates, and it should be presented to us before the Estimates are completed. It is probably

not quite so important when we are speaking to the general debate on the Estimates, but when we come to the departmental Estimates, a great deal of information can be obtained from this report which would help considerably in the debate.

I would like to deal with one particular item in relation to the Department of Agriculture; it is one on which the Minister did not touch to any great extent except to refer to the Kimberley area; and then he only made a passing reference.

The matter I refer to is soil erosion. The Minister did say that in the Kimberleys some 11,000 square miles of country had been rejuvenated. It is only a year or so ago that the department sent Mr. David Willcock overseas to study in various countries the question of soil erosion and the growing of pastures in drought and desert areas.

Mr. Willcock returned to this State and made a statement in the Press that the pastoral areas of Western Australia were fast developing into a desert region; that they had all the advance signs of a desert, with the dying trees, and the erosion along the various parts of the catchment areas. But what has happened since Mr. Willcock came back and made that report?

In 1961 he made a very extensive report in respect of the eroded areas on the Gascoyne River and its tributaries. That report, which was tabled here last year, or the year before, was exceptionally alarming; yet we find nothing has been done by the department since to help the pastoralists, or to advise them in any way on soil erosion.

Mr. Willcock pinpoints one area near Gascoyne Junction, which he says is beyond redemption; it is scoured completely into gulleys, and in his opinion cannot be rejuvenated. Many other areas will come into this category if some work is not done on them. We find that in other areas salt is appearing quite rapidly. Apart from this, in some regions it is possible to see native timber and scrub dying out, and not rejuvenating itself.

The Government is very lucky that over the past years we have probably had six of the finest seasons in the memory of the people in the Gascoyne. It is very seldom that we get six successive good years, and it is mainly due to the exceptionally good winter rains that the country has held together as well as it has over the past few years. It will certainly present a pitiful sight should we have a drought in the very near future; and I think we must expect such an occurrence.

If a drought does occur soil erosion will really start in earnest. The man who has done so much for the rejuvenation of pastures in the north-west has now gone on

to a better and higher job. I refer to Mr. Suijdendorp. He is now in charge of things at Kununurra, and he would have a far more congenial job travelling over the north-west in connection with pastures and sheep husbandry. His previous job would not have been so interesting. The north owes Mr. Suijdendorp a tremendous debt for the work he has put into that area.

We find, however, that nobody has been appointed to replace Mr. Suijdendorp. The Gascoyne area has been without an agricultural adviser for years, particularly in connection with the pastoral industry. The pastoralists in that area are willing and anxious to get on with soil conservation work, and the rejuvenation of fodder and scrub, and they need some advice and encouragement in the matter. Some of them have carried out contour furrowing, and checker-board work, but that is mostly in the coastal region. When we get to the range country, however, where there are river catchments, the question of soil erosion is totally different; it is an expert's job, and that is where the services of an agricultural adviser are very badly needed.

The pastoralists are also anxious and keen to hold field days in various parts of their shires. This idea started off quite well, but it has fallen away to some extent because there is no agricultural adviser stationed in the Murchison or Gascoyne areas. Mr. Willcock, who was stationed in the Meekatharra district, has been transferred to Geraldton, and I understand his responsibility now covers the very much larger areas of the Murchison and the Gascoyne, whereas previously he had only the Murchison to look after.

Unless the Government gives these people some definite assistance they will be in serious trouble with their leases before very long. When he spoke the other night, I think the member for South Perth pointed out to the Minister for Lands just what was taking place in some areas on the Murchison, where pastoralists had been chaining all the scrub and mulga on their particular leases. If this sort of thing is allowed to continue we will have a desert area there before we know what is happening.

Today I received from the Department of Agriculture quite a good little volume entitled, "Sheep in the Mulga Zone". It is a handbook put out for the use of pastoralists. It is a loose-leaf volume which can be kept up to date as the various experiments proceed. There must be a tremendous lot of information in this small volume which will be of great use to the pastoralist generally; but I can see nothing at all on soil conservation or on the growing of various pastures.

Little or nothing is known about the growing of various pastures in these drought areas. We still have to find a type of plant that will grow through the drought and which will stand up to climatic conditions. If we are to save this country which has served Western Australia so well in the past it will be necessary to put in a tremendous amount of work. It is up to the Government to see whether it cannot obtain the services of a good agricultural adviser for the district. It appears to me that if we are to keep efficient men who know their job in the north we must give them more incentive to stay there, and a bit more than they are entitled to under the Public Service Act. They should be offered many incentives to induce them to remain working in the north.

The State officers in many cases are working alongside officers of the C.S.I.R.O. who are employed under much better conditions. The State officers tend to become discontented. Over the years since I have been up there I have noticed that quite a number of good officers in the department have left it, because they were not looked after and were not given incentives to remain working in the north.

MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [10.41 p.m.]: I would like to make a few comments on the Agriculture Vote. We have heard the contribution of the member for Beeloo about the failure of this Government and the people of this State to sell our agricultural products. I would like to tell him about some of the steps which have been taken to promote sales overseas and to point out to him the causes which prevent some of our agricultural produce from being sold on the overseas market in the best possible form.

The company with which I am associated often sends its representatives overseas to look for markets for primary produce. Recently it sent a fruit representative on a trip around the world, in the course of which he visited Moscow. On his return he told us he was the first overseas representative to visit Moscow to sell apples to that country. Since his visit, the Commonwealth Government has sent its representative to that city to find out what can be done to promote the sale of produce from Australia.

Many people fail to realise that we make every attempt to sell our primary produce, but it should be realised that some of it is perishable. We come up against a very serious problem in selling perishable food-stuffs on the overseas markets. On account of strikes on the Liverpool wharves a consignment of apples from Mt. Barker this season was held up for five weeks. I imagine the apples would not reach the

market in a very good condition. Therefore, it is not the fault of the producer that our primary produce does not reach the overseas markets in a good condition. Perhaps the member for Beeloo could help the producers by looking into this aspect, and by helping to have the produce delivered to the overseas markets speedily.

The other evening I gave some figures relating to the amount of money which is owed by the farmers of this State to the financial houses. Over the years many wool producers regarded the marketing system as first class, because they were doing well. Shortly wool producers are to receive ballot papers for a referendum on some system of organised wool marketing, and I am hopeful that they will not be lulled into a false sense of security by the rise in wool prices which has taken place. They should cast their minds back to the time when there were violent fluctuations in prices. I hope they will give the wool stabilisation plan a chance to be introduced and prove itself.

I have said previously in this House that the proposed stabilisation plan was not all that I and many others desired it to be, but I believe it is the beginning of a scheme to stabilise wool marketing in Australia. I am hopeful that all members will do all they can in the little time that is still left to persuade the wool producers to give the plan a chance to be implemented, and so bring about stabilisation in wool sales. The Minister for Agriculture made reference to the incidence of foot rot in sheep. As one who has had a lot of experience of this disease, because over the years it has cost me thousands of pounds, I make the suggestion which I have made to his departmental officers—but possibly they could not take any action without ministerial consent—that if there are only two flocks then some means should be found to enable the Government during certain times of the year to purchase those flocks and slaughter the animals. The value of the carcasses and skins would reimburse the cost of purchase to the Government. I am at a loss to know why the producers do not take this step. It is ridiculous they do not, because for a cost of £1,000 the two flocks could be disposed of.

The cost of eradication of the disease which is borne by the Department of Agriculture would be much greater than the loss which the Government might sustain in purchasing the flocks and disposing of the carcasses through the meat trade. I consider it would be a worth-while investment by the Government, in order to overcome the problem for good.

Another aspect of agriculture I wish to mention relates to the Agriculture Protection Board. It appears that the vote for the eradication of vermin and noxious weeds, etc., has been reduced by £25,000,

although the expenditure on the engagement of technical officers has been increased by £200. I have sounded a note of warning previously on the incidence of vermin and noxious weeds, and I do so again on this occasion.

Any suggestion that the rabbit menace in this State at the present time is not as bad as it was in the years following the introduction of myxomatosis which practically cleaned up the rabbits must be discounted. During my time as the chairman of a local authority I had a lot to do with persuading the Agriculture Protection Board to take a more active interest in destroying the vermin in this State.

On one occasion just before I vacated that position I was successful in getting the board to adopt a new approach to the problem. In conjunction with a committee of which I was the chairman the board set up the inspector-operator system. Later on, with its own resources, the board developed the one-shot baiting method. All these eradication methods could and should be able to keep the rabbit population in check, but unfortunately in my own district the rabbits in small pockets of the area have become almost as plentiful as they were during the plague time. Recently I heard that one local authority had refused to appoint an inspector, because it thought there were no rabbits in the district; but I have been given information by the people from that district that there are hundreds of rabbits.

Too many people are being lulled into a false sense of security. I appeal to the Minister not to reduce the expenditure on the eradication of vermin and noxious weeds. The small amount that is now being spent in this direction will do much good for the State in future years.

I congratulate the Minister on the progress that has been made in the field of agriculture in this State; and, as he has done, I pay a very sincere tribute to the officers of the Department of Agriculture for the work they have done.

When it was first suggested in my district that something should be done to try to eradicate foot rot from flocks of sheep in Western Australia, the departmental officers laughed at us, but later on they became imbued with the same spirit; and I would particularly like to pay a tribute to Mr. Toop who played such a major part in that work. Thousands of pounds will be saved by flock owners in Western Australia as a result of removing this scourge.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [10.51 p.m.]: There is only one matter on which I wish to touch, but before I do so I would like to briefly refer to some remarks made

earlier by the member for Beeloo. I understand he virtually said that the Government was not making sufficient effort to sell the produce of the farmers of Western Australia. I am at a loss to understand exactly what he meant because when one looks at the commodities produced in Western Australia one finds there is virtually an unlimited demand for everyone of them. There is no trouble to sell wool; there is no trouble to sell wheat; there is no trouble to sell butter, because there is insufficient for Western Australia's requirements; and there is no trouble to sell dried fruits, apples, crayfish, or anything else produced.

Mr. Moir: Why did they have to dump so many apples last year?

Mr. GRAYDEN: For a very good reason; they were not suitable for export.

Mr. Nalder: All of those dumped were not suitable for export.

Mr. Kelly: They were better than the apples that are now in the shops.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I should say that never in the history of Western Australia have primary producers been faced with less difficulty in regard to the selling of their produce than at the present time.

Mr. Jamieson: There is no reason why we cannot expand sales. Surely we are not going to stop at this level.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I did not realise the member for Beeloo was thinking in terms of the future. In that case, I have no doubt at all that when the time is opportune, the Government will make representations along the lines he has suggested. I repeat what I said previously: We have no trouble at all in selling our produce; on the contrary, we have a great deal of difficulty in many cases in meeting the demand.

The main point upon which I wish to touch refers to a statement I made the other day in respect of chaining land in the pastoral areas adjoining agricultural areas. As a consequence of this, one pastoralist chose to write to *The West Australian* of this morning's date and his letter started off in this vein—

I am appalled by the irresponsible statements made by Mr. Grayden (Liberal—South Perth) during a debate last week in the Legislative Assembly on the Land Act Amendment Bill.

Then he goes on to say—

In 1960 we began some experimental chaining of Bogata scrub country, as did the Agriculture Department on a neighbouring station. As a result of these experiments, chaining operations

were carried out on an increased scale in 1964-65 and about 41,000 acres were treated on this property.

The person who wrote that letter was Mr. L. Broad. I do not know him personally, but I understand he is a most progressive pastoralist and from that point of view I have a great regard for him and his family who have spent a long time in the pastoral industry. However, I think the letter Mr. Broad has written simply confirms the very serious nature of what is happening and to which I referred the other day.

Here we have a pastoralist who has chained 41,000 acres on his property, not with the permission of the Minister for Lands, as is required by the Land Act, because the Minister the other day expressed surprise that any chaining was taking place. The Land Act is very specific on the question of timber on pastoral properties and reads as follows:—

A pastoral lease shall give no right to the soil, or to the timber, except to such timber as may be required for domestic purposes, for the construction of buildings, fences, stockyards, or other improvements on the lands so occupied.

In other words, the Act will not tolerate people from the agricultural areas going on to pastoral properties and cutting down the mulga to obtain their fence posts, but a station lessee is permitted to cut the mulga and use the timber for fence posts, stock yards, and improvements on the station itself. Yet, despite that provision in the Act, this person has actually chained 41,000 acres.

Mr. Norton: What is the erosion going to be like?

Mr. GRAYDEN: This is going on throughout the areas of which I am speaking.

Mr. Moir: What is the Government doing about it?

Mr. Norton: Sitting down.

Mr. GRAYDEN: The Land Act goes further than that. It takes a serious view in regard to the timber on properties and goes on to say—

A pastoral lessee desiring to ring-bark trees upon the demised land shall first obtain permission to do so from the Minister, and in his application shall describe the boundaries and area of the land upon which he proposes to ring-bark and the Minister may, in his discretion, refuse or grant permission for the same after such inquiry and upon such conditions as to him may seem necessary.

Then it goes on—

And any lessee who without such permission ring-barks trees on the demised land, or causes or knowingly permits or suffers the same to be done, shall render his lease liable to forfeiture.

I repeat: Here we have a man who writes to *The West Australian* saying the statements I made were irresponsible.

Mr. Jamieson: He has really put himself in!

Mr. GRAYDEN: He has chained 41,000 acres of the country to which I referred. There is also an Act on the Statute book of Western Australia known as the Soil Conservation Act; and a passing reference to it is made each year in the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture. The latest report I have is for the year ended the 30th June, 1963, and I will quote from that. Under the heading, "Soil Conservation Act" it says—

Under Section 22 of the Soil Conservation Act clearing of land in the eastern and north-eastern wheatbelt areas is still subject to permit. During 1962-63 there were 26 applications for permits to clear 21,288 acres. For the previous year there were 45 applications for 20,124 acres.

So members can see what is happening in the areas to which I am referring. If any person on a farm wants to clear areas of his property, even though it be freehold, he must first apply for permission to do so; and the farmers in those areas are applying, as is indicated in this report, but the pastoralists are virtually going ahead chaining huge areas without attempting to obtain permission of any kind.

The seriousness of this lies in the erosion which could occur under certain circumstances. This chaining has been going on only over the last few years, and seriously over the last two—and they have been two good years in the pastoral areas to which I refer.

Mr. Norton: The best years they have had for a long while.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Let me say this: When they chain this country they do not leave strips to prevent erosion by the wind, they make no provision for firebreaks, or anything like that; they chain the country indiscriminately over huge areas. If this chained country is set alight by lightning during the summer there can be only one result. We had an instance of it last year near Morawa when lightning caused a fire which went to a small extent on this chained country. The ground was burnt absolutely clean of debris of any kind.

There would be square mile after square mile of burnt ground over which the wind would sweep and in which there would be no place for seed to lodge even if seed were present.

If that set of circumstances exists where there is a fire and the following year is a dry one—in other words there is virtually a drought as experienced in the Eastern States in past years—what happens? There is only one possible result and that is these chained areas become wind-eroded and are left naked, as is the land in the vicinity of the Ord River. There 200 miles by 30 miles is eroded.

That is how the land could appear in the areas immediately adjoining the agricultural areas in the northern wheatbelt and in the Eastern Goldfields, if a fire occurs on the chained areas followed by a dry year. Surely that is a serious situation when we take into consideration the fact that hundreds of thousands of acres have been chained in contravention of both the Soil Conservation Act and the Land Act!

The second aspect of this, apart from the erosion, is fire. Throughout Western Australia, except for Exmouth Gulf, I understand, pastoral properties have been exempted from the provisions of the Bush Fires Act. Actually they have not been exempted; local authorities have not policed the Act in respect of those pastoral properties. Consequently in the northern wheatbelt areas farms rigidly complying with the Bush Fires Act are right alongside pastoral stations in regard to which no precautions have been taken. Of course it is unreasonable to expect pastoralists to put firebreaks round holdings of 500,000 acres, but when pastoralists chain 40,000 acres alongside agricultural areas and wheatbelts, should not the provisions of the Bush Fires Act be met?

Mr. Nalder: Don't you think that such pastoralists would put a firebreak around their own property in such circumstances for their own protection? If not they could lose a lot of extra feed.

Mr. GRAYDEN: In reply to the Minister, I would say that in the past they have not.

Mr. Nalder: But in the past there was not the clearing.

Mr. GRAYDEN: But in the last two years this chaining has been undertaken and no firebreaks have been placed around the areas concerned. Local authorities will have to ensure that those properties which have been chained comply with the provisions of the Bush Fires Act.

Mr. Graham: What about preventing the chaining?

Mr. GRAYDEN: Yes. I now wish to refer to a matter which is of major concern and is one which the Minister will appreciate. In Western Australia we have what is known as a grasshopper belt which extends from Ajana in the north to, say, Bullfinch in the south-east. This grasshopper belt covers the light rainfall areas. In 1929 when people walked off their farms in the agricultural areas because of the bad seasons and the approaching depression, the grasshopper menace in Western Australia was at its worst because the farms were virtually deserted and were not being tilled. This enabled grasshoppers to breed in millions.

The Department of Agriculture published a small booklet on this subject and I want to briefly quote from it and then relate its contents to what can happen on these cleared areas. Portion of this brochure reads—

Following the financial depression of 1929, much land which had been normally kept under cultivation was allowed to lie idle. The effect of low prices was accentuated by a succession of drought years and this led to a general decline in agricultural activities in all districts, but more particularly in those areas where the margin of safety was least evident.

In the boom years preceding the depression, agriculture in Western Australia spread at a very rapid rate and extensive clearing took place in all parts of the wheatbelt. Grasshoppers had always been present in these areas in small numbers but forest and scrub country was not favourable to their multiplication and feed was relatively scarce. The clearing of the country exposed vast areas suitable for egg laying and the grass which this land supported provided an ample food supply for the increasing insect population. As long as high prices and good seasons stimulated farming activities, the menace of these potential breeding grounds was not apparent, and reserves, ring-barked areas, roadsides, etc. were the only places where hoppers appeared. When, however, following depression and drought, abandoned farms became numerous, the grasshopper problem became one of paramount importance. The large areas of land left idle in most cases did not revert to bush again and were of such a nature that the longer they were left untouched, the less herbage they supported, thus yearly increasing the breeding grounds available for the pest.

Finally we get down to a little paragraph which reads—

Heavy timber growth and a profusion of ground cover are unfavourable for the breeding of the small

plague grasshopper and consequently the needless clearing and ring-barking of land in the grasshopper belt are to be deprecated. Every effort should be made to cultivate hard bare soil so as to destroy eggs already laid and to render the area unattractive to the next swarm of laying adults.

So we have the Department of Agriculture publishing a booklet pointing out the dangers of clearing land in the grasshopper zone, and also setting aside £30,000 a year to deal with the menace, while at the same time, the pastoralists in the areas immediately adjoining the agricultural areas, and well within the grasshopper belt, are chaining huge areas of land which must become ideal breeding grounds for countless millions of grasshoppers which periodically will storm into the agricultural areas and destroy the crops.

This is an extraordinarily serious situation. To lightly go ahead and permit the pastoralists to chain this land in contravention of the Act and provide these huge ideal areas for breeding, is an act of utmost folly.

The department may not be aware of the fact that this year east of Morawa grasshoppers are present in plague proportions. They are not doing much damage to the wheat crops because this year has been a good one and there is plenty of grass around. However, for every two inches of ground there is a grasshopper, and this applies mile after mile. It would seem they are coming from the chained areas immediately adjoining the wheatbelt areas. Next year could be a very dry year and if so we will be faced with a very serious grasshopper problem in that Morawa-Mullewa area.

Mr. Jamieson: We will have grasshoppers everywhere.

Mr. GRAYDEN: That is the situation; but pastoralists are doing exactly what the Department of Agriculture recommended should not be done; and it is being done in contravention of the Land Act and the Soil Conservation Act. What the outcome is going to be I do not know.

Would it be reasonable to expect a pastoralist to plough 41,000 acres? Of course it would not! On a farm the land can be ploughed, but the chained areas would first have to be root-raked. After it is ploughed would it not become agricultural land? Does it mean that we are going to police the regulations with respect to grasshoppers in the agricultural areas but do nothing in the pastoral areas immediately adjoining?

This is a problem which is looming as a consequence of this wholesale chaining, in many cases, of first-class mulga country. It seems to be a tragedy that this is

going on before the Department of Agriculture and the Lands Department have had time to evaluate the worth of chaining and to take into consideration the problems of erosion, fire, and the grasshopper menace.

Once the departments have had time to evaluate those problems they would no doubt come up with an answer to the question. Those departments might say that a certain amount of chaining will be reasonable, and they might decree that belts of timber be left, and adequate fire-breaks provided.

Mr. Graham: How do you explain the fact that you are so familiar with these problems when the departmental experts and others are not; or are they adopting a policy of "couldn't care less"?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I would not say that. I do not think the department was aware that it was going on. The Minister expressed surprise the other day, and I sincerely hope the department will now take action.

The hour is late and I am sorry I have detained the House so long. I will close on that comment.

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [11.13 p.m.]: The Minister can smile, but I want to protest against the methods being adopted.

Mr. Jamieson: I also protest against the methods being adopted.

Mr. MOIR: The Minister has introduced his Estimates and we have had no opportunity of perusing a copy of his speech. The Minister has been overseas visiting many countries, and we all expected that he would be able to come before this Chamber at an appropriate time, such as when introducing his Estimates, and tell us something about what he had learnt overseas. It could be of benefit to agriculture in this State.

During the time that I listened to him, I heard nothing in that regard. Unfortunately I could not stay to listen to all of his speech because I had been sitting in the Chamber for quite a long time waiting for an opportunity to speak on the Estimates.

The member for South Perth was rather shortsighted in the remarks he used when he opened his speech. He stated that we had nothing to worry about in the disposal of our wheat. I want to point out to him that we would have very much to worry about if it were not for two unusual facts. Those facts are that Russia has been purchasing large quantities of wheat over the last few seasons, and so also has China. If it were not for those two countries

purchasing such a large amount of grain, we would be in very serious trouble in endeavouring to sell our wheat.

We must remember that only a few years ago it was necessary to build a grain silo at Midland, which was soon full because sales of wheat were slow. The Wheat Marketing Board was having difficulty in finding a market.

Mr. Grayden: I did not say that we had nothing to worry about. I said that at the moment we had no trouble with the disposal of our wheat.

Mr. MOIR: That may be. If it were not for the unusual factors I have mentioned we would have a lot of trouble in disposing of our wheat. I agree with the member for Beeloo that we should be looking for further markets, not only for the products we produce now but also for the various types of crops which we are capable of producing but do not produce because there does not seem to be a demand for them.

In the area I represent various crops can be grown. We heard quite a bit during the early stages of the development at Kununurra about growing various oil-producing crops under irrigation. The very plants mentioned then will grow wild in the Esperance area. There is no need for cultivation at all; they could become a weed and a nuisance. Of course there are many other oil-seed producing crops that can be grown there. I understand that the market has not been developed for the sale of those products.

Another matter which I want to discuss and which I consider very important is that I think the Department of Agriculture is not paying enough attention to the elimination of fruit fly.

Mr. Nalder: Not paying enough attention to it?

Mr. MOIR: Yes; that is so.

Mr. Nalder: Be fair now! More has been done for the eradication of fruit fly during the last two years than ever before in Western Australia.

Mr. MOIR: More in the metropolitan area! The Minister can tell us what the department is doing after I have outlined to him what I consider are very serious faults as far as the department is concerned. I come from an area where, for many years, voluntary schemes were carried out for fruit-fly baiting. It was then made possible, by legislation, for people in an area to hold a plebiscite and decide whether to have compulsory fruit-fly baiting schemes.

The voluntary scheme was all right as far as it went, but the weakness was that we could have, say, 20 people living in an

area and 18 of them could agree to go into the voluntary scheme. However, their efforts could be nullified by the two people who would not go into the scheme and who would have fruit-fly on their properties. With the commencement of the compulsory scheme, we got rapid results. I think this year will be the third that it has been in operation in the goldfields, and there has been a marked decrease in the fruit-fly pest in that area.

Also, I think that last year at Norseman the second year of the scheme was completed, and the production of fruit was doubled in that area simply because the fruit fly was practically eliminated. The same thing has occurred in other areas where the scheme has been operating. It operates in various parts of the State and I understand it also operates in your electorate, Mr. Chairman (Mr. W. A. Manning). Everywhere that it has been in operation people are very happy with it although it costs quite a bit.

The scheme has to be paid for by tax, and the fruit-fly committee is composed of local men, who do a wonderful job on a voluntary basis. They do not impose a tax on the people greater than is required to carry out the operations of the spraying outfits and the expenses of the men employed. Quite a number of men are employed during the season.

The amount levied varies according to the number of fruit trees and grapevines that one has. In my case I pay about £2 8s. a year; and some people would find that quite a sum on top of the other taxes that they are called on to pay. However, I think most pay the charge cheerfully because they realise what a lot of good is done with the money collected.

Mr. Rushton: You could not do the same thing yourself at the same cost; it is a very economic service.

Mr. MOIR: I have lived on the goldfields for over 30 years, and we have always had a few fruit trees, but we have always baited them for fruit fly. I would not know what it would cost if one bought the materials and did the job, but it would not matter how little it cost, or how much it cost, that type of scheme is no good at all because when it is left to the individual to do the job himself, one man might do it, his next door neighbour might do it, but the neighbour on the other side might not do it, and so the efforts of the two would be nullified by the neglect of the third person. As I have already said, if there are 20 people in a group, and 18 conscientiously bait their trees, but the other two do not worry about it, the efforts of the 18 are nullified because the fruit fly breeds in the fruit on the unbaited trees and affects the other areas.

All schemes should be on a compulsory basis. I have seen the results of voluntary schemes. With these schemes a man would be paid to go around and spray for fruit fly but it could not be eradicated and the fruit would still be lost. I have noticed that plebiscites have been taken in the metropolitan area on this question. I think from memory one was taken in Bayswater.

Mr. O'Neil: There was one in Applecross; and that scheme has been going for two years.

Mr. MOIR: There was another one taken recently. A referendum was held and it was carried.

Mr. Nalder: It was in Bayswater.

Mr. MOIR: Last year I was one of the speakers who discussed this matter, as did the member for Beeloo. I was surprised he did not mention it when he spoke this evening.

Mr. Jamieson: Wait until we reach item No. 6.

Mr. MOIR: He knows a great deal about fruit-fly infestation in the metropolitan area and I expected him to say something about it. I can only conclude that it slipped his mind. However, it does not matter how many schemes are operating in the metropolitan area: if the officers of the Department of Agriculture are not doing their job by inspecting trees to detect those that are not baited, and which have fruit infested with fly, they are useless. That is exactly what is happening. A little while ago the Minister was rather derisive about my comments in this connection, but I can tell him there are parts of the metropolitan area where fruit fly is in plague form. I refer to loquats particularly. I know of an area where the loquats are hanging on the trees in a rotten mass. They are full of fruit-fly grubs, and the people who own the trees either do not know or do not care, and they have let the fruit remain on the trees.

After a while the fruit drops on the ground, the grubs go through the various cycles and hatch out within a few weeks. I would have thought the Minister would be acquainted with the position. I have on occasions seen fruit for sale in shops and it has been infested with fruit fly. The trouble is that people do not know what is happening with their own fruit. I have visited friends at Esperance. They grow very nice fruit and on one occasion one of these friends of mine said to me, "We have nothing to worry about here because we do not have fruit fly." I said, "That's rather strange; I should imagine you would have it here." He replied, "Anyway, we have not got fruit fly

and if we did it would not affect the grapes." With that, we went out to the grapevine and he picked a bunch of grapes. I broke one open and there were the grubs. Yet that man did not know that fruit fly could infest grapes.

Many people with fruit trees in their backyard have fruit infested with fruit fly, but they and their children are eating that fruit. That is a shocking state of affairs.

Mr. Rushton: Do you know how many inspectors are doing the rounds?

Mr. MOIR: Now that the honourable member has mentioned inspectors, I will tell him what happened on one occasion. Next door to the place where I live when I am in the metropolitan area there is a widow—I imagine she would be a pensioner—and although she has no fruit trees she has a guava tree in the front of her place. This tree has small edible fruit which I believe people use in the making of jam. A few weeks ago a departmental inspector called and informed this lady that she could be prosecuted for not registering the tree because it was classed as a fruit tree. He also told her that in any case she would have to bait the tree because the fruit were a harbour for fruit fly.

Mr. O'Connor: They are one of the worst fruits, are they not?

Mr. MOIR: I do not know. However, all along that street one can see loquat trees and the fruit is badly infested with fruit fly. One can see clouds of fruit fly all around the fruit. But the inspector did not do anything about those trees. He threatened this old lady about her shrub and then got in his car and drove up the street. That is how departmental inspectors are working.

He could have called at every second or third house in that street and he would have found loquats with fruit fly in them; he had only to drive along the back lanes in that area and he would have seen trees with infested fruit. It is obvious that there is a lack of supervision in the metropolitan area. I have seen other parts of the metropolitan area where orange trees have had fruit infested with fruit fly. The flies have been around the fruit in swarms. The people who owned the trees knew that the fruit was no good for eating, but they did nothing about baiting their trees, and evidently no inspectors ever called to worry them. That is what is happening in the metropolitan area; and so it is of no use people in different areas deciding they will have a compulsory scheme if in other areas around them the fruit fly is allowed to breed freely. It is a farcical position.

As I said last year when I spoke on this matter, the Minister should be giving serious consideration to introducing compulsory schemes throughout the metropolitan area. He should not take a referendum on the matter; the Act should be amended to provide for the introduction of compulsory baiting schemes. If people who are allowing their fruit to become infested with fruit fly are not prepared to do anything about it, they should be ordered to destroy the trees, or the departmental officers should have the power to enter their properties, strip the fruit from the trees, and then chop the trees down.

Mr. Norton: That is the law in South Australia.

Mr. MOIR: Yes; that has been the law in South Australia for many years past. The people in that State are not allowed to encourage fruit fly to breed around their trees. If a person owns a tree that is fruiting and he is not prepared to bait it against fruit fly, evidently he has no regard for the tree and so there can be no reason advanced against destroying it.

If members keep their eyes open whilst travelling around the metropolitan area they will see many examples of trees that are infested with fruit fly and which are completely neglected by the owners. Many people are of the opinion that only fruit trees can breed fruit fly, but that is not so. Fruit fly can be found in many types of shrubs such as the one I have already mentioned, in the hips of roses—

Mr. Jamieson: In deadly night shade.

Mr. MOIR: Yes, fruit fly can breed in any tree such as that. Even tomato plants are hosts for fruit fly. Many people think that if any fruit is juicy fruit fly cannot live in it, but that is a fallacy, because it is well known that fruit fly can breed in such fruit.

It is useless for right-thinking citizens in country areas or in various parts of the metropolitan area conscientiously to take measures to combat fruit fly when the Department of Agriculture allows its incidence to go unrestricted in many other parts. Only recently I read in the Press where approximately 20 people who reside in the metropolitan area were fined in the police court for neglecting to bait their trees against fruit fly. But probably thousands could be charged for committing the same breach of the Act. The Minister should not be sceptical about this matter, and if he has any doubts I can, tomorrow, take him to many places in the vicinity of Parliament House and show him many trees that are infested with fruit fly.

Mr. Nalder: I do not say that there is not a fruit-fly problem.

Mr. MOIR: Undoubtedly there are insufficient inspectors to carry out the job properly, because in some areas an agricultural inspector who performs this type of work has never been seen. Many people are offenders against the Act quite innocently, because they do not know what fruit fly is. This is a problem to which the Minister should give some immediate attention, because the damage that is caused to fruit by this pest must amount to thousands of pounds. On occasions I have seen exposed in shops fruit which quite clearly was infested with fruit fly, but the shopkeeper was not aware of it until I drew his attention to it. The fruit fly pierces the fruit and within a day or two there is a grub or maggot inside the fruit, which means that any child or adult could ingest the fruit with the maggot inside quite unsuspectingly. Therefore, I ask the Minister to give special attention to this problem. I made a similar request last year, but apparently nothing has been done and so I appeal again to the Minister to do something about it.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. I. W. Manning.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [11.35 p.m.]: Before moving the adjournment of the House, I remind members of the possibility of sitting on Friday the 19th and Friday the 26th November. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.36 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 9th November, 1965

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