

to make representation to our Federal members for the purpose of granting equal rights for non-Aborigines under the Aboriginal grants scheme;

- (3) To the Minister for Local Government to increase the northern margin on plant hire rates to the Main Roads Department;
- (4) To the Minister for Works to implement uniform power costs throughout the State; and
- (5) To the Minister for Lands and Agriculture to make available adequate compensation to stations affected by developing towns. I refer particularly to Boodarie and Pippingara stations in the Port Hedland area.

There are problems and paradoxes evident in many other fields in the northern area of the State, and I refer particularly to such things as water and sewerage, land lease and purchase, tariffs, housing grants, social services, gaols, the judiciary, communications, and export facilities, to name but a few. There are others, but I will leave the matter there for the moment, and conclude my remarks by offering my thanks for the attention shown by members to this my maiden speech. I would also like to congratulate The Hon. Lyla Elliott for the confident way she moved the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. S. J. Dellar.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Assembly Personnel

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

House adjourned at 6.05 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 20th July, 1971

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

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [4.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Norton) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

Question put and passed.

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Toms): I wish to inform the House that I have appointed the member for Canning (Mr. Bateman), the member for Bunbury (Mr. Williams), and the member for Roe (Mr. W. G. Young) to be Deputy Chairmen of Committees during the present session.

DARLING RANGE

Erection of Powerlines: Petition

MR. I. D. THOMPSON (Darling Range) [4.32 p.m.]: I wish to present a petition addressed as follows:—

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned residents, in the State of Western Australia, do herewith pray that Her Majesty's Government of Western Australia will intervene and direct the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and the State Electricity Commission of W.A. to NOT proceed with the proposed erection of high voltage power lines across the foothills of the Darling Range.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

The petition is signed by 5,371 people, and I certify that it is in accordance with the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

HELENA VALLEY AND PIESSE BROOK

Construction of Pylons: Petition

MR. I. D. THOMPSON (Darling Range) [4.33 p.m.]: I have a second petition addressed as follows:—

We, the undersigned wishing to preserve the great natural beauty of the Helena Valley and Piesse Brook, which, if preserved will be of immense value to all present and future citizens of the Metropolitan Area, express the strongest possible objection to the construction of a 5 chain swathe with 140 foot high steel power transmission pylons through these valleys, and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

The petition bears 4,510 signatures, and I certify that the petition is in accordance with the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER: I direct that this petition also be brought to the Table of the House.

QUESTIONS (34): ON NOTICE**1. WHEAT QUOTAS***Entitlement*

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) For what percentage of the year must a new land farmer actually reside on his property to qualify for a full new land wheat quota entitlement?
- (2) If a farmer's son has a property in close proximity to the home property and does not actually reside on his own farm, does he qualify for full quota rights?
- (3) Will all new land farms which do not have residential quarters be automatically classed as farms not receiving the full quota percentage?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Instructions to the Wheat Quota Committee provide that the maximum percentage of base quota available is to apply to all new land farmers, other than applicants whose main source of income is derived from interests other than farming—corporations or companies who have acquired land which qualifies for a new land calculation are specifically excluded from receiving above the minimum percentage of 54 per cent. of the base quota applicable to that land.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.

2. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME*Applications: Processing*

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many applications for financial help under the rural reconstruction scheme have been—
 - (a) received;
 - (b) approved;
 - (c) refused;
 - (d) referred back to the applicant for further particulars?
- (2) What is the average time taken to process each application?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) 458 (to close of business on 15/7/71).
- (b) 18 (to meeting held 12/7/71).
- (c) 49 (to meeting held 12/7/71).
- (d) 7 (to meeting held 12/7/71).
- (2) Four to six weeks.

3.**MINERALS***Royalties*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What royalties from minerals have been received by the Western Australian Government for each of the years ended the 30th June from 1960 to 1971 inclusive?
- (2) What is the estimate of royalties to accrue to the Western Australian Government for each of the next ten years commencing the 1st July, 1971, based on known contracts?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

	\$
(1) 1959/60	145,998
1960/61	164,836
1961/62	240,532
1962/63	250,358
1963/64	243,221
1964/65	291,354
1965/66	478,296
1966/67	2,639,894
1967/68	6,237,594
1968/69	11,000,716
1969/70	15,694,046
1970/71	22,347,195
(2) Estimates of royalties have not been made for the next ten years. Experience shows that sales arrangements are constantly changing so that estimates beyond one year ahead do not give reliable results.	

4. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME*Applications: Review*

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many applications already considered under the rural reconstruction scheme have been rejected?
- (2) Would there be any objection to submitting those rejected to a suitable voluntary committee with a view to finding a solution to the applicants' problems?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 74 have been considered of which—
 - 18 have been approved.
 - 7 deferred for further information or for consultation with creditors.
 - 49 have been rejected.
- (2) Rejected applicants should confer with their own financial advisers. A voluntary committee could not be given any authority to confer or negotiate with creditors or mortgagees, nor to commit public funds.

5. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

Applications: Procedure

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Agriculture:

As the application form provided under the rural reconstruction scheme makes no provision for the farmer who realises he must sell his property, how can he apply for assistance and information with a view to making a sale to an applicant requesting assistance to expand under clause B (i) to (v)?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

The scheme visualises applications to purchase other farms for farm build-up coming from the purchaser rather than the vendor. The would-be vendor therefore should search for a buyer who is willing to apply to the reconstruction authority for help to buy him out.

6. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Uniform Charges

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Electricity:

Does he intend to proceed with the announced plan of the previous Government to make country charges for electricity the same as the metropolitan area?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

It is the Government's intention to introduce uniform charges throughout the State Electricity Commission system.

7. PAYROLL TAX

Exemption of Local Authorities

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Treasurer:

Will he exempt local government authorities from pay roll tax in any contemplated legislation?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

In certain circumstances, yes.

8. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Report of Committee.

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

Has he received a report from the committee appointed to make recommendations into agricultural education at all levels and, if so, will he make it available to the House?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

No, the report has not yet been printed. It will be tabled in the House on completion.

9. EDUCATION

Third Year Drop-out Rate

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the rate of "drop out" at the end of the third year of secondary education compared with the total number completing that year?
- (2) Does he know the comparative rates in the other States, and, if so, would he supply them?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The retention rate from the end of the third year to the fourth year in Government schools is 43 per cent.
- (2) Comparable figures are not available owing to differences in education systems in other States.

10. EDUCATION

Boarding-away-from-home Allowance

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many applications have been made to date for assistance, subject to a means test, towards the cost of boarding away of secondary students?
- (2) How many of these were assisted?
- (3) What was the total cost?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) 172.
- (2) 84.
- (3) \$12,791.

11. KATANNING RAILWAY BARRACKS

Shifting to Quairading

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) When were the railway barracks at Katanning built?
- (2) Is it proposed to shift these barracks from Katanning to Quairading?
- (3) If so, when?
- (4) How much will it cost to—
 - (a) pull down;
 - (b) transport;
 - (c) re-erect to the completed stage, these buildings?
- (5) Is he aware that this move is vehemently opposed by the Quairading Shire Council and other alternatives have been suggested by the Shire Council, the Member for Avon and the Railway Department?

- (6) If the answer to (2) is "Yes" and seeing Council will not approve of the structure, under what section of the Local Government Act does the Railway Department intend to override the Shire Council in the erecting of this building?
- (7) Has he considered—
- converting the existing station master's house situated in the railway yards at Quairading and adjacent to the station, to a barracks and the building in another area of a new station master's house;
 - the shifting of a railway house from another town for the use of the station master; or
 - the building of a new modern barracks?
- (8) If the answer to (7) is "Yes" what were the relative estimates?
- (9) By shifting the barracks from Katanning to Quairading does this make the proposition look financially attractive in spite of costs, as these can be debited to day-to-day costs, whereas a new building would have to come from loan funds?
- (10) Has the possibility of a sale of the Katanning barracks *in situ* ever been explored?
- (11) Will he reconsider the matter in the light of the wishes of the Quairading Shire Council and those of the Member for Avon?
- Mr. BERTRAM replied:
- Facilities were first provided at Katanning in 1914 and have been extended on a number of occasions since.
 - The proposal is to transfer part of the existing facilities, namely six cabins and an amenities building (constructed in 1963), from Katanning and provide a new canopy roof.
 - As soon as practicable.
 - \$260.
 - \$900.
 - \$5,315.
 - Yes, except that the Railway Department has not suggested alternatives, but has given consideration to alternatives—see answer to question (7).
 - Railway buildings are constructed under the authority of section 99 subsection (1) paragraph (h) of the Public Works Act.
 - Yes.
 - No.
 - Yes.
 - \$14,500.
 - Not applicable.
 - Estimated \$25,000.
 - Yes.
 - No.
 - The whole matter has been thoroughly examined and, bearing in mind the cost of alternative measures, any departure from the present proposal cannot be agreed to.
12. **MORATORIUM MARCH**
Participation: Number
Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:
Was an estimate made by the Police Department of the number of people taking part in the so-called "moratorium march" in Perth on the 30th June, 1971, and, if so, what is the estimate?
- Mr. MAY replied:
Yes, the estimated number was between 5,000 and 6,000.
13. **MORATORIUM MARCH**
Participation: Students
Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:
Am I correct to assume that his decision, as reported in the press, to allow students in senior forms to partake in a street demonstration known as the "moratorium march" on the 30th June, 1971, was not taken on the advice of senior public servants in the Education Department?
- Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:
The arrangement made was to give an assurance that students who had their parents' permission to participate in the "moratorium march", and did so, would not be punished.
It was not considered necessary to seek the advice of senior public servants on a matter of this nature.
- Mr. O'Connor: They were punished by their missing a half day at school.
14. **MORATORIUM MARCH**
Participation: Students and Teachers
Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:
 - Has the survey by the Education Department, referred to in his letter to the editor in *The West Australian* of the 7th July, shown how many students and how many teachers were absent from school on the 30th June, 1971, for the

purpose of taking part in public demonstrations known as the "moratorium march"?

- (2) Has this survey shown how many of the participant students produced written permission from their parents?
- (3) If answer(s) to (1) and/or (2) is "Yes" would he inform the House of these particulars?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) A survey of most metropolitan schools indicated that the number of students absent differed very little from other school days. An actual record of absences was not compiled.
29 teachers have submitted applications for leave.
- (2) No. Most principals insisted upon written permission being available on the day of the march. In a number of cases parental permission was given subsequently to the march.
- (3) Answered in (1) and (2).

15. BERNARD KENNETH GOULDHAM

Compensation

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Attorney General:

In view of his past statements on the matter of compensation in the case of Bernard Kenneth Gouldham, can he say how much compensation has been paid by the present Government to Mr. Gouldham?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

This matter is currently under consideration.

16.

ELECTORAL

Districts and Quotas

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Attorney General:

- (1) Has he received a report from the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act 1947-1965?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) What is the quota referred to in paragraph (b) subsection (2) of the said Act—
 - (i) for the metropolitan area;
 - (ii) for the agricultural, mining and pastoral areas?
 - (b) What are the numbers of electoral districts to be allotted to each of the two areas mentioned in (i) and (ii)?
 - (c) Has the Proclamation referred to in subsection (2) section 12 of the said Act been made?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Calculated by the Chief Electoral Officer on the number of electors on the rolls first mentioned in subsection (2) of section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947-1965—
 - (a) (i) Metropolitan area—15,143.
(ii) Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral area—7,302.
 - (b) Metropolitan area—23 electoral districts.
Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral area—24 electoral districts.
 - (c) No.

17.

EDUCATION

Upgrading in Country, Boarding Allowance, and Hostels

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What steps is the Government taking to upgrade the standard of education in country districts?
- (2) When will the living-away-from-home allowance for country children be increased?
- (3) Does the Government plan to build more hostels for the present five year high schools; if so, when, and where?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The Government will progressively upgrade all forms of education. Significant changes will be—
 - Boarding allowances will be increased.
 - Major building extensions are included in the provisional Loan Fund programme.
 - Junior High Schools will be established in 1972 at Meekatharra and Newman.
 - Senior High Schools will be established in 1972 at Carnarvon and Port Hedland.
 - Junior High Schools will receive the same books and materials for the Achievement Certificate as in secondary schools.
 - Nine Commonwealth libraries are planned in country schools during the 1972-74 triennium.
 - Further library issues and grants will be available.
 - Six Commonwealth science laboratories will be built.
- (2) The 1st January, 1972.
- (3) A new hostel will be opened in 1972 at the Port Hedland Senior High School.
The decision to build further hostels in Senior High Schools or extend existing hostels will be dependent upon established needs.

18. **POWER STATION***Establishment at Long Point*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Environmental Protection:

Referring to the recently reported intention of the Government to keep its options open for the siting of a power station on Long Point, Warnbro—

- (1) Will he advise whether or not this is related to the Government's reported imminent discussions with the Mitsubishi group for building of a power plant linked with a petro-chemical industry?
- (2) Will he clarify his Government's intentions for the future use of Long Point, including the State Electricity Commission reserve and Warnbro Sound?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The announcement that the Government intends to keep its options open regarding the Long Point Power Station reservation was not related to the discussions with the Mitsubishi group.
- (2) There are 1890 acres of Crown land at Long Point. Of this area 490 acres have been set aside for Government requirements—State Electricity Commission—as published in the *Government Gazette* of the 23rd May, 1969. The Government has no immediate plans for the development of the power station site or the uncommitted Crown land.

19. **ABATTOIRS***New Establishments and Extensions*

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) (a) What progress has been made in negotiating development of the abattoirs site south of the Kwinana/Mundijong railway and announced by the previous administration on the 9th February, 1971?
- (b) When is finality expected?
- (2) What is the position with the proposed Katanning meatworks and what financial and other assistance has the Government agreed to give?
- (3) Are the extensions at Midland abattoirs proceeding on schedule to be operative by September, 1971?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) and (b)
Representatives of the company interested in the possible development of an abattoir on this site

have advised that the company does not wish to proceed at the present time. No further action is planned on the site until a firm proposal for development is received.

- (2) A proposal for a Government guarantee is currently being examined by the Department of Industrial Development.
- (3) Yes.

20.

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES*Singapore and Djakarta Offices*

Mr. COURT, to the Premier:

When is it planned to open offices for Western Australian Government representatives in Singapore and Djakarta?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

These proposals are being considered but no detailed plan has as yet been evolved.

21.

MORATORIUM MARCH*Participation: Premier*

Mr. COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Did he as patron and leader of the recent "moratorium parade" agree to—
 - (a) North Vietnam and/or Viet Cong flags being carried in the parade; and,
 - (b) chants or other methods of expressing "victory to the Viet Cong" by some of the participants in the parade he was patronising and leading?
- (2) If he did not agree to (1)(a) and (b) has he taken any action to register his protest officially with the moratorium movement officials to what took place and in what form and on what date did he register his protest?
- (3) If he registered an official protest what has been the result of such protest?

SPEAKER'S RULING

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 106, supplemented by item 12, page 353 of May's *Parliamentary Practice*, 17th Edition, I have decided that question 21 on today's notice paper standing in the name of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is not a proper question to ask of the Premier as it does not relate to public affairs for which he is responsible to Parliament.

Under the circumstances, it is not my intention to call this question and it will be struck from the notice paper.

Mr. COURT: Could you, Sir, clarify for the House as to when we can ask questions of this kind; because when I looked at the instructions given to members for the asking of questions I came to the conclusion that this was a proper question to ask, because the Premier became involved in this in an official capacity when he gave permission as Minister for Education for school children to participate in this particular parade?

I know that on the surface it might appear that this is a matter for the Premier's personal decision as distinct from his position as Premier and Minister for Education—particularly if one does not read this in conjunction with that aspect and if one were to accept, as I do not necessarily do, that it was a personal matter. The fact is that the Premier gave permission for the school children to march.

The SPEAKER: I have already quoted Standing Order 106. It is quite definite that the matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this question does not in any way say anything about children having a half holiday. It deals with the question of the Premier being the patron of the moratorium, and his actions in that connection are, I believe, his own personal business. The question is framed in such a manner that I have no hesitation in having it struck off.

Mr. COURT: Mr. Speaker, if this question had been reframed on the basis of relating it to the participation in the march by school children, which was authorised by the Premier in his capacity as Minister for Education, would the question then be permitted?

The SPEAKER: That matter has already been dealt with in a previous question relating to school children.

22.

IRON ORE

Temporary Reserves: Tenure

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many temporary reserves for iron ore were regarded as being in existence in Western Australia on the 25th June, 1971 and the official status of each reserve on that date, in respect of—
 - (a) the official number of each reserve;
 - (b) the name and address of the applicant and occupier;
 - (c) the date of application for the reserve by the occupier;
 - (d) the date of approval of the application;
 - (e) the date on which the occupier's tenure began;
 - (f) the terminating date of tenure;
 - (g) details of any renewals granted;

- (h) details of any application for transfer or assignment received and the decision made on such applications?
- (2) What were the official conditions of occupancy conveyed to each of these temporary reserve holders—
 - (a) in respect of original temporary reserves;
 - (b) in respect of any extensions, renewals, or replacement of temporary reserves?
- (3) Does he consider a temporary reserve to be a saleable property (and if so on what conditions) or only an opportunity to prospect for specified minerals, with rights to negotiate with the Government conditions for development of any payable deposits discovered?
- (4) Would he also table a map (or maps) showing the temporary reserves covered by these questions?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) (a) to (h). Apart from one or two cancellations of reserves no longer required, the number of reserves in existence and the status of such reserves at the 25th June, 1971, is no different from the position obtaining on the 20th February, 1971.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Primarily a temporary reserve is for the purpose of prospecting for specified minerals with rights to negotiate with the Government. However, the rights of occupancy may be transferred for some valuable consideration but the conditions of such transfer are subject to my approval.
- (4) Plans showing temporary reserves for iron ore are tabled herewith.

The plans were tabled.

23.

IRON ORE

Temporary Reserves: Hancock and Wright

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What specific conditions will apply to the new rights of occupancy which the Government has said it will grant to holders of expired rights over iron ore temporary reserves numbered 4326, 5003, 5004, 5006, 4192, 4193, 4266, 4267, 4737, 4881, 4882, 4883, 4884, and 4194?
- (2) (a) Why were these areas given preferred treatment over other iron ore temporary reserves—expired or otherwise?
- (b) Why was it necessary to deal with these areas differently to other areas and thus give them

an apparent advantage over others when the interests of the region would have been best served by a declaration of intention for all areas?

- (3) When will the Government declare its intentions and conditions in respect of remaining iron ore areas other than temporary reserves numbered 4326, 5003, 5004, 5006, 4192, 4193, 4266, 4267, 4737, 4881, 4882, 4883, 4884, and 4194?
- (4) (a) Is it proposed to postpone all development negotiations for the temporary reserves listed in (1) until other allocations and conditions have been decided and the appropriate parties have reasonable opportunity to negotiate development simultaneously?
- (b) If not, why the preferment in the case of areas listed in (1)?
- (5) (a) Has the Government a clear understanding with Hancock and Wright that they have no claims directly or indirectly in areas other than those listed in (1)?
- (b) If not, what is the Government's understanding of the position?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) Specific conditions have yet to be finalised.
- (2) (a) and (b). The areas were not given preferred treatment but were dealt with first because the previous Government had not taken positive action in respect of these areas even though it had been aware for some time of negotiations between interested parties in respect of these particular areas.
- (3) As soon as practicable.
- (4) (a) No.
(b) Answered by 2(a) and (b).
- (5) (a) Yes.
(b) Answered by (a).

24. IRON ORE

Temporary Reserves: Hancock and Wright

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) On what grounds and conditions did the Government promise to transfer or agree to assignments to Hancock and Wright of iron ore temporary reserves numbered 4326, 5003, 5004, 5006, 4192, 4193, 4266, 4267, 4737, 4881, 4882, 4883, 4884, and 4194?
- (2) If these transfers take place, will they be exempt from the policy presumably intended to prevent

or control trading in temporary reserves as announced by the Hon. Premier on the 7th July?

- (3) If they are exempt, why?
- (4) If not, in what way will the policy be applied in respect of these transfers?
- (5) In any case, for what reason has the Government chosen to deal through intermediaries in respect of these reserves, rather than direct with development companies?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) New rights of occupancy would be issued to the previously registered holders with effect from the 1st July, 1971, on new conditions to be stipulated by the Government. Assignment to Hancock and Wright would take place only on the following terms:—
 - (i) Proper application being made to the Minister for Mines by Hancock and Wright.
 - (ii) The consent of the previously registered holders of the rights of occupancy; and
 - (iii) Complete acceptance of the Government's conditions of new rights of occupancy.
- (2) If these transfers take place between the previously registered holders of the new rights of occupancy and Hancock and Wright, they will be subject to conditions acceptable to the Government.
- (3) and (4) Answered by (2).
- (5) The Government has not dealt with intermediaries in respect of these reserves.

25.

IRON ORE

Temporary Reserves: Reimbursement to Original Holders

Mr. COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) In view of the confusion that exists following conflicting statements made by the Government in recent weeks in respect of iron ore temporary reserves, will he clarify if he is correctly reported, and, if so, exactly what the Government means in the statement on page 11 of *The West Australian* on the 8th July under the heading "Rights can be sold—Tonkin"?
- (2) Would a transfer, resulting from which the original applicant and/or his assignee receive substantial private royalties, reimbursement of out-of-pockets, plus a substantial capital sum and a "carried ride" into a share of the equity capital of the ultimate

development, be regarded as "simply for the purpose of enabling the original occupant to make money"?

- (3) What does the Government propose to approve as a fair reward to original applicants and occupiers (and/or their approved assignees) by way of private royalties and/or capital sums, etc., as distinct from profit sharing as *bona fide* capital participants in approved development?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The report in *The West Australian* of the 8th July, 1971 is correct and makes it quite clear that the transfer of occupancy rights to temporary reserves for iron ore may only be transferred subject to conditions of which the Minister for Mines approves.
- (2) No, provided that:—
- (a) the Government expedited and achieved beneficial development of the State's resources;
 - (b) the Government received payment of royalties on ore produced at a rate considered to be adequate according to the economics of the project;
 - (c) that contributions by development companies towards infrastructure costs were at the level required by the Government.
- (3) This matter is at present under consideration.

26. FREE SCHOOL BOOKS

Limitation to Primary Schools

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier:

- (1) As in his policy speech he promised free school books and materials for pupils, would he agree that many electors would have accepted that this would include both primary and secondary students?
- (2) At what place during the campaign was it made clear that this promise was limited to primary schools?
- (3) If these promises were honoured, what would the total cost be in this financial year?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) On a number of occasions during the election campaign it was made clear that it was the Government's intention, in the first instance, to issue free text books only to primary school children. Printed evidence in support of this can

be found in *The Albany Advertiser* of the 15th February, and in the *Political Forum* section of *The Record* of the 11th February. The Opposition Leader was certainly aware of the content of the latter article which he saw fit to reply to the following week.

- (3) Anticipated expenditure for the financial year 1971-72 on free text books for primary pupils of Government and independent schools is \$270,000.

27.

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS

Number Employed

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier: How many public relations officers are now employed by the State Government?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

This information is being sought. However, as an interim answer, the number employed has been reduced since the present Government took office.

For the information of members opposite who seem to doubt the position, many thousands of dollars have already been saved.

Sir David Brand: How?

28. MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Administration of Statutes:

Transfer to Treasurer

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Premier:

- (1) What was the reason for the transfer from the Minister for Education to the Treasurer of the following Acts:—
 - (a) University of Western Australia Act;
 - (b) Western Australian Institute of Technology Act;
 - (c) Western Australian Tertiary Education Commission Act;
 - (d) Youth Service Act?
- (2) Does he not agree that these Acts should correctly be the responsibility of the Minister for Education?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) For the convenience in administration and to effect close liaison with the Treasury on important financial aspects associated with these Acts.

(Note—In so far as the University of Western Australia Act is concerned, this Act has always been administered by the Treasurer.)

29. **IRON ORE***Royalties*

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What amount was received from iron ore royalties in the financial years 1969-70 and 1970-71?
- (2) Does he anticipate an increase in 1971-72, and by what estimated percentage?
- (3) What was the amount of total royalties for all minerals in 1969-70 and 1970-71?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 1969-70 \$13,084,726
1970-71 \$19,026,934
- (2) Yes. 27 per cent.
- (3) 1969-70 \$15,694,046
1970-71 \$22,347,195

30. **BUILDING BLOCKS***Carilla Townsite*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Does he propose to release more building blocks in the Carilla townsite?
- (2) If so, will he ensure that all such blocks are adequately served by made roads and a scheme water supply?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) There are no current proposals for the release of Crown land in Carilla townsite.
- (2) The request will be borne in mind when any future subdivisional proposals are under consideration.

31. **EDUCATION***Gooseberry Hill Primary School*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

Will the Gooseberry Hill primary school be ready for occupation for the start of the 1972 school year?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Yes, subject to any delays which may occur but which are at present unforeseen.

32. **AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD***Forrestfield Premises: Activities*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What activities are to be conducted at the new premises being constructed for the Agriculture Protection Board at Forrestfield?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

The following activities of the Agriculture Protection Board will be located at the Forrestfield centre:

- (a) manufacture of baiting materials for rabbit and wild dog control;
- (b) research laboratories;
- (c) training facilities;
- (d) vehicle storage cleaning and minor adjustments.

A caretaker for the centre will also be located there.

33. **MIDLAND ABATTOIR***Disposal of Effluent*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Does he agree that the odours from the effluent lagoons at the Midland abattoirs are offensive, and a danger to health?
- (2) When does he anticipate an effective system for the disposal of effluent will be installed?
- (3) Is it intended to continue with the present open lagoon system, or will an agitated sludge type package sewerage system be installed?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) The lagoon system is functioning satisfactorily and although there is occasional nuisance from odours there is no danger to public health.
- (2) and (3) The Midland Abattoir Board anticipates receiving a report this week from a firm of engineering consultants who are experts on effluent disposal. The report will include plans and an estimate of costs. Two other firms of consultants are preparing cost estimates. These proposals will be examined by the board and the Public Health Department and a recommendation made to the Government.

34. **WATER SUPPLIES***Helena River Dam*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the catchment area for the new pipehead dam at present being constructed on the Helena River been defined?
- (2) If "Yes" will he say when the area will be gazetted?
- (3) Is he aware that part of the Kalamunda townsite appears to be in the catchment area?
- (4) What restrictions will be placed on those people who now reside, and conduct businesses, in the catchment area?

(5) Is he aware that sewerage from Bartons Mill prison, which is located on the Metropolitan Water Board catchment area, is now disposed of in an area which appears to form part of the new pipehead dam catchment area?

(6) If this is so, does he intend making other arrangements for the disposal of this sewerage?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Action is in hand.

(3) Yes.

(4) The by-laws will be applied with discretion to ensure that the catchment is not polluted. Normal residential or business premises should not be affected.

(5) Yes, although Bartons Mill is not located in the Metropolitan Water Board catchment area.

(6) Yes.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Uniform Charges

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Electricity:

In his answer to question 6 the Minister stated that it was the Government's intention to introduce uniform charges for electricity throughout the State. The reply could be subject to various interpretations, and I would like to ask the Minister whether he intends to reduce country charges to the present rates charged in the Metropolitan area; and, if so, when?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

To answer the second part of the question first, the new system will be implemented as soon as practicable. It is anticipated that the charges will be uniform, according to the present consumption charges in the metropolitan area.

2. IRON ORE

Temporary Reserves: Tenure

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

In answering question 23, parts (2) (a) and (2) (b), the Minister stated that the areas were not given preferential treatment because of certain reasons.

Could the Minister explain why these particular areas referred to were not given preference when, in fact, other areas were subject to very much the same conditions as the areas he referred to?

Mr. MAY replied:

These matters are currently being negotiated with the various companies, and the matters referred to by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are of a confidential nature. I am afraid that at this stage he will have to wait for several weeks for the answer.

Mr. COURT:

With respect, I suggest the Minister has not answered my question. He has not dealt with the question of preference given to certain areas. Certain areas have been given rights but others are to be negotiated over a period of a few weeks. I would like the Minister's reply on why the preference.

Mr. MAY:

I would appreciate it if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would place the question on the notice paper.

3. EDUCATION

Crisis

Mr. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

Does the Minister agree that there is a crisis in education in this State?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

There has been a crisis in education in this State for a number of years, as was shown by the survey of needs, which the previous Minister for Education refused to make public.

The information now having been conveyed to the public, the present Government is doing its best to remove the difficulties and allow the State to emerge from the crisis.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Days and Hours

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier)
[5.11 p.m.]: I move—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 4.30 p.m., and on Thursdays at 11.00 a.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Leader of the Opposition) [5.12 p.m.]: The hours suggested in the motion are very similar to those to which we have been accustomed over the years, with the exception that it has been decided—or it is intended—to sit an hour earlier on the Thursday morning.

Mr. Graham: No; three and a quarter hours earlier.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It is intended that we will sit at 11 a.m. on Thursday morning, whatever number of hours' saving that will represent. I think the suggestion is a good one provided the Government can see its way clear to work under such conditions. However, I must ask one question, and that is: How will questions be treated; and at what time will they have to be received in the House? Will the new sitting time mean that questions will have to be received the day before, because there is a comparatively shorter time in the morning for replies to be obtained. Alternatively, does the Premier intend to take questions during the afternoon?

We have received a letter from the Parliamentary Labor Party suggesting that the Government intends to sit until 10 p.m. during the early part of the session. I am wondering whether the Government has given a great deal of thought to this matter because, for my part, I cannot imagine that the Government will be able to adhere to its proposals all the time.

There is nothing binding on the House, as a whole. This procedure does mean that the Government will decide, out of hand, to adjourn whenever it gets an opportunity at or about 10.00 p.m.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [5.14 p.m.]: I think some further thought should be given to the times suggested, because there will be no opportunity for country members to get away to their electorates on Thursday nights as has been the practice in the past.

Mr. Graham: Who said so?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: There is no suggestion that we should close for business at 6.15 p.m. on Thursday nights. This was the indication I got.

Mr. Davies: Read it again.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It covers the situation. It does appear as though the Premier intends to sit on Thursday nights as well as on the other nights. I think this will be a disadvantage to country members and that it would be better to sit later on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings than to sit on Thursday evenings. However, I am quite willing to listen to what the Premier has to say with respect to his intentions for sitting on Thursday nights.

THE SPEAKER: The usual procedure with respect to questions will be followed on Tuesday and Wednesday; that is, they will be accepted half an hour after the House sits.

I believe there could be a problem for some country members on Thursdays and I will go into the matter of the time. It

may be better to take questions around 2.15 p.m. or 2.30 p.m. on Thursday afternoon, as questions still have to reach the Ministers so that answers may be provided.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [5.16 p.m.]: It is quite reasonable for the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Narrogin to raise the questions which they did. The Government desires to get away from what has been the general experience over many years; namely, to adjourn the House quite early in the evening in the early part of the session and then to expect members to sit until very late hours towards the end of the session. We are making an attempt to get away from that. Experience will show whether it is possible.

We think the attempt is worth while and the object is to sit until 10.00 p.m., which is a reasonable hour, on a day when the House is sitting in the hope that it will be possible to clear the business without sitting for unduly long hours.

It is intended to commence sitting at 11.00 a.m. on Thursday, whereas previously we did not sit until 2.15 p.m. In the early part of the session—and perhaps all the time if the business can be concluded—we shall rise at 6.15 p.m. which has been the practice.

Additional time will be gained on Thursday, and there is the possibility that more business will be conducted in the early part of the session. If this is so, it will enable us to complete business properly without sitting for unduly long hours. At least it is worth a trial and this is the purpose of the hours stated in the motion.

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Precedence on Tuesdays and Thursdays

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [5.18 p.m.]: I move—

That on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Appointment

The following sessional committees were appointed on motion by Mr. J. T. Tonkin (Premier):—

Library.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Fletcher, and Dr. Dadour.

Standing Orders.—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. McIver, Mr. Mensaros, and Mr. W. A. Manning.

House.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Jamieson, Mr. Bickerton, Mr. O'Neill, and Mr. Gayfer.

Printing.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. A. R. Tonkin, and Mr. I. W. Manning.

Public Accounts.—Mr. Bickerton, Mr. Lapham, Mr. Harman, Mr. O'Neill, and Mr. W. A. Manning.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND

Appointment of Trustees

On motion by Mr. J. T. Tonkin (Premier) resolved:

That pursuant to the provisions of the Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1970, the Legislative Assembly hereby appoints the Member for Collie (Mr. Jones) and the Member for East Melville (Mr. O'Neill) to be Trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund as from this day.

SUPPLY BILL

Standing Orders Suspension

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [5.21 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable a Supply Bill to be introduced without notice and passed through all its stages in one sitting, and to enable this business to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-Reply is adopted.

Question put and passed.

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. T. D. Evans (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Treasurer) [5.24 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In moving this motion I would like to explain that it is proposed by this measure to grant supply to Her Majesty for the sum of \$210,000,000 for the services of the State in the year ending the 30th June, 1972.

The Revenue Budget and the Loan Estimates for 1971-72 are now in the course of preparation and these will be presented to the House, with the respective appropriation Bills, later in the session. In the meantime, it is necessary to carry on State services and the Bill now before the House is for the purpose of providing the required funds.

An issue of \$175,000,000 is sought from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and \$30,000,000 from moneys to the credit of

the General Loan Fund. Provision is also made in the Bill for an issue of \$5,000,000 from the Public Account to enable the Treasurer to make such temporary advances as may be necessary.

The proposed issue from the Consolidated Revenue Fund is greater by \$30,000,000 than the provision in the Supply Act of 1970. The amounts to be drawn from the General Loan Fund and the Public Account are the same as were provided last year. The increased issue from the Consolidated Revenue Fund is required to finance higher expenditure on Government services, which is due principally to a sharp rise in the Government's wage bill. Wage movements during the year just concluded have had a most adverse effect on the Government's financial position. Substantial provision was made in the 1970-71 Budget for wage increases expected during the year but, in the event, the cost of award increases exceeded this provision by \$14,240,000.

Also, revenue from some sources failed to reach the estimates. Probate duty fell short of expectations by \$1,500,000, stamp duties on conveyances and transfers were down by \$2,300,000 and mining royalties and rents were below estimate by \$2,300,000. There were some small offsetting increases in other items of revenue. The resultant deficit would have been of unmanageable proportions but for additional financial assistance provided by the Commonwealth Government towards the end of the year.

Special Commonwealth assistance of \$5,000,000 and an upward revision of \$4,000,000 to the financial assistance grant payable to Western Australia under the formula provided welcome assistance and enabled the deficit to be held to \$4,368,000. This is a very substantial sum and the worrying feature is that we move into 1971-72 with current expenditure running ahead of revenue to that extent. Any increase in revenue available to the Government this year will first be required to close that gap and to meet the additional full-year cost of wage increases granted in the course of last year.

The full cost in 1971-72 of wage and salary increases granted during last financial year will amount to \$40,000,000. Such an increase in the cost of running Government services must give rise to concern as it will be obvious that the first effect must be to severely restrict the range and quality of services the Government is able to provide. This problem is not restricted to Western Australia but is common to all States, although in our case the impact appears to have been relatively greater.

The Commonwealth Government has recognised the plight of the States and, at the recent Premiers' Conference, agreed to provide additional assistance in 1971-72 over and above the amount we could expect to obtain from the operation of the

financial assistance grants formula. In aggregate, we will receive an additional \$7,000,000 from this source, but it is already apparent that this will fall far short of the amount that will be needed to enable the present level of Government services to be maintained.

I will have more to say about developments arising from decisions taken at the Premiers' Conference and our prospects for the current financial year when the Budget is introduced later in the session. At that time, I shall table the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for this financial year, with details of proposed outlays and the means by which those outlays are to be financed. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr. Court: In the figure of the deficit, has the Treasurer allowed for retrospective payments for teachers and police?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Yes.

Mr. Court: Then that was absorbed before the Treasurer struck the deficit of \$4,300,000?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Yes.

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Leader of the Opposition) [5.30 p.m.]: Firstly, Mr. Speaker, let me congratulate you on your appointment. I have already done so, of course—in fact all members on this side of the House have expressed their congratulations to you on taking over your very high office.

I think a more appropriate time to express our congratulations to the other members who have been elevated to various positions in the House would be during the Address-in-Reply debate.

In replying to the Bill just explained by the Treasurer, I must point out that for the first time for many, many years, in fact, as long as I can remember—maybe it is the first time in the history of Western Australia—we have a Treasurer separate from the Premier. I would like to offer my congratulations, because I realise that being the Treasurer of the State involves a demanding responsibility; but I do believe, and I say this from the result of my own experience, that it is difficult to carry the office of Premier of the State without having the control of the Treasury.

I realise that in this case the Premier decided to take over a number of responsibilities—I believe far more than he can reasonably manage—such as education, which in itself is almost a full-time job. There were many requests from the Teachers' Union regarding the possibility of one man being appointed to carry the portfolio of education, because the union believed it was a full-time responsibility.

However, the Premier has seen fit, not only to take over this responsibility, but also to take on the new Department of

Environmental Protection, which includes culture, I think, and indeed a number of other responsibilities which would come under the heading of "Education and Environmental Protection."

He has already felt the strain, simply because he has decided to transfer the responsibility for the administration of certain Acts which were introduced into this House last year, to the Treasurer. No doubt, as he explained in his answer to a question today, he believed that this made for better administration; but it must be significant that, with the exception of Queensland, where I believe for political convenience and because it has been traditional over the years, the Premiers carry the portfolio of Treasurer.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It was not so in Tasmania, you know. Mr. Cosgrove was not Treasurer when he was Premier of Tasmania.

SIR DAVID BRAND: That is right; but the point I am making is that, with the exception of Queensland, each State has seen fit, even though a few years ago an attempt was made in South Australia to divide the responsibility of the Treasury and the Premiership, to come back to a realisation that it is better administration to have these two portfolios under the one heading.

I found that, as Premier, there was constant liaison with the Treasury, something which seemed to me to be difficult to achieve if it had to be done through another Minister, the Treasurer; and, if this were so, then it seemed it was better to resolve the problem by accepting the two portfolios myself. They were, of course, a very full job, and even though, under my administration, I carried the portfolio of tourism, it was my intention to pass that on to someone else had we been successful in the election.

The Treasurer from now on will have the responsibility of the University of Western Australia Act, the Western Australian Institute of Technology Act, the Youth Service Act, and another. It would seem to me, after some consideration was given last session, that we should place under the Minister for Education all these Acts associated with education, and indeed, youth. It seems strange that the Premier has now decided that they should be the responsibility of the Treasury. I am sure the Treasury will find that these Acts carry with them some very demanding responsibilities, including the responsibility for tertiary education in this State.

I will be very interested to see how this matter works out; but it does seem to me that the present Minister for Education is the Minister for primary and secondary education and for no other; and here we must see a very confused position within the Cabinet. I realise, too, that

the University of Western Australia Act has been the responsibility of the Treasury over all the years.

Mr. Graham: Any confusion there?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Well, it was the one Act.

Mr. Graham: Still divided.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was, as a matter of fact, a result of the very early days when the Premier set up the University of Western Australia, and I believe he retained that administration because he realised that if the university was to progress it would have to be supported by the Treasury and the Treasurer would have a better opportunity of doing this and seeing that it was supported financially.

I realise that this occurred in the early days of Western Australia. It was then an easier life than we lead; it was less demanding, certainly less demanding on the Premier of the State. Therefore I can understand that things went along very smoothly and progressively, but the time came when it did seem to be appropriate that the Minister for Education should be responsible for all levels of education in the State; and again I do not in any way imply that the Treasurer could not carry this responsibility. I am thinking only of the liaison and of the need of the one man with the one portfolio to deal with all of the educational matters in this State.

As the Treasurer has pointed out, the Supply Bill is simply an advance, an overdraft as it were, to enable the Government to carry on until such time as Parliament has agreed to the budgetary proposals, both in relation to the revenue and for the loan programme. I was naturally very interested to read, just taking last year as an example, what the present Premier had to say when he replied to the Supply Bill, and it was rather significant that he said—

As the Premier said, this is a formal measure which is regularly brought before the Parliament at the opening of the session. It should be noted that substantial amounts are being asked for by the Premier—vastly increased amounts compared with those asked for last year.

As far as I can make out, this is the position right now except that the increase was certainly a far greater amount. The Premier said—

I do not altogether agree with the reasons given by the Premier for the increase in those amounts, because I think that a large part of the increase is due to the extravagance of the Government.

I might just simply say that I believe a part of the extra amount is due to the promises which the Premier made during the election and the need to provide for

some of them over and above those financial responsibilities which would come normally.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Well, you know that cannot be right. You know yourself, because the only promise which has been implemented so far which would cost any money is the same promise that you made; that is, free travel for pensioners.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes, but this is a point I would like to deal with on another subject, perhaps tomorrow.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I'll bet you would!

Sir DAVID BRAND: But the fact remains that money has to be provided and we are not aware what legislation will be introduced during the next few weeks, as soon as the Address-in-Reply is over. The Premier made a number of promises and I presume—I only presume—that in due course he is going to honour some of them.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You are already saying that, because we have done this, it is going to cost us more money. You cannot have it both ways.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I said the Premier is making allowance for the fact that he will take action to deal with other matters; or perhaps I should say the Premier may intend to introduce another Supply Bill. It would not be the first time that two Supply Bills have been introduced in this House.

However, I simply make the point that the extra amount is being asked for in order to meet all the expected financial obligations of the Government up to a certain date. No-one can deny that the added amount, the substantial percentage of it, comes as a result of the increased costs—in the main wages and salaries—and this simply brings me to a point which I wish to refer to at this stage.

I have no intention of making a long speech at this point of time on the Supply Bill, but I do want to bring to the notice of the public that the controversy which developed between the Premier and myself over the cost of election promises was not as clear as it might be. There has been a tendency for Ministers—some Ministers anyhow, to be quite fair to them—to imply that the Treasury was empty when they took over. I want to point out that the Treasury finances, although sudden and sharp increases over the previous month did cause a great deal of concern, were in a very sound position.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: When was that?

Sir DAVID BRAND: That was immediately following your Government's take-over of the Treasury.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Well, why did you write to the Prime Minister some days before and tell him of the big deficit you were then facing?

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right. Let us not forget that you, as Premier said today—and you have certainly published the statement—that you anticipate for the next financial year a deficit of \$35,000,000, but it has come down to \$30,000,000 by this morning. Surely the Premier realises that in the meantime this deficit will be offset by many developments—in the main by a larger amount available to the Premier from the Commonwealth as, perhaps, a larger amount was available this year.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I hope you are right.

Sir DAVID BRAND: So do I. This would be a good thing for all of us. But I am making the point that when I wrote to the Commonwealth Treasurer it was anticipated that we would be facing a deficit, as the Premier is, in spite of all the assistance which he got in the meantime, and as a result of the Premiers' Conference.

Therefore, following the first increase, I announced that it was anticipated that the deficit would be large and the additional costs occasioned by the increased wages would amount to something like \$12,000,000 for the portion of the year which remained, and that as a result of the increased costs in the full year it would be \$20,000,000.

Yet the Leader of the Opposition, as he was then, tried to convey that he was not aware of the difficult situation which faced the Treasury.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: How could I be? You did not tell the Parliament; you did not make it public.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I made it public half a dozen times.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You did not.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I certainly did. I do not have the date here, but I will certainly obtain it tomorrow, if necessary. Any honourable member in this Chamber, if he took any interest at all, could have read that I, as Treasurer of the State, announced—and the Press is always seeking this information—that the increased costs would amount to \$12,000,000 in the part of the year which remained, and they would amount to approximately \$20,000,000 in the full year. I have now been told that the date of that announcement was the 15th December.

If the Leader of the Opposition was too preoccupied or too busy to notice that, then I can understand his not knowing, but the information was published not only in *The West Australian* but also in other newspapers, because this was of vital interest to the community at large; and I might point out that those increases included the one granted by the State tribunal, and then the national increase of 6 per cent. in wages which went right across the board.

There have been many increases since then, and therefore it was reasonable to assume that a large part of the deficit and the additional money that would be required resulted from the increases in salaries and wages. However, we had this Press controversy simply because we were asked to assess the cost of the promises we were making to the people at that stage. I am not finding any fault with the fact that the then Leader of the Opposition did not read that statement, but I deny that I did not make it public. The only reason I did not tell the House was that at that time the House was not sitting.

When I asked the Treasury to assess the cost of our promises I was told there was an undertaking to put aside \$1,000,000 to aid local authorities, and while this was little enough it did seem to me to provide some security in certain circumstances.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: But you forgot to leave the \$1,000,000 there.

Sir DAVID BRAND: We undertook to spend that \$1,000,000. I might say that the \$1,000,000 was there, and had the Premier not come in with a lot of other promises—

Mr. Rushton: Real shockers!

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes, real shockers, as a matter of fact.

Mr. Jamieson: What about your electricity promise? Face up to it!

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right, and we were going to honour it.

Mr. Jamieson: What with, a deficit Budget?

Sir DAVID BRAND: In the same way as the honourable member's Government will be honouring its promises. In the main the deficit Budget has resulted only because of the increases in wages and salaries, and the Treasurer will have to find a very large part of that. There is no other reason.

Mr. Jamieson: The Treasury liked your attitude, didn't it?

Sir DAVID BRAND: Of course it did, but if the honourable member means that the Treasury did not like it, perhaps I can seek some clarification, because the Treasury officers are the same people who are now advising the honourable member's Government. I do not know whether he is implying that the Under-Treasurer, or his deputy, did not like our policy or the decisions we made, but, as a matter of fact, we made no decision about any promises by the coalition Government without first having the advice of the Treasury. The Minister for Works can laugh, but it is a hard, cold fact, and that cannot be said of the promises made by the Leader of the Opposition, as the Premier was at that time.

Mr. Court: If it had not been for the retrospective increases in the salaries of the police and the teachers, which the Treasurer said would be included, we would have had a surplus this year.

Sir DAVID BRAND: That is right, and it is no use denying the fact that had we been returned to office we would have honoured the promise of making available \$1,000,000 to local government.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What about that financial scheme you were going to devise to pay for sinking the railway? You did not leave behind a formula for that.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I forget what the Premier said during the election about that, but he did say, when the report was published, that he would honour the principles contained in the recommendation, and we were only following the recommendations that were made by Mr. Nielsen and those associated with him in regard to raising the necessary money.

When the Premier talks about honouring promises we come to the next point the Premier made in his speech on the Supply Bill last year. The Premier got around to talking about receipt duty once again and the invalid and illegal action of our Government. In fact, the Premier did say, if his party were returned as a Government, he would press the Commonwealth to provide the money which it had undertaken to refund, but which it did not undertake to refund in a direct way. The Premier said he would press the Commonwealth to honour the undertaking to refund the receipt duty tax which the Premier said we had collected during the illegal period. Has the Premier done that?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: After the battle I had to get recognition of \$2,000,000 semi-Government borrowings I came to the conclusion that it would be futile.

Sir DAVID BRAND: As a matter of fact the Premier went on to say that if the Commonwealth did not come good the State would find the necessary money.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That is so, and it is still my intention.

Sir DAVID BRAND: According to the promises the Premier made, he assessed receipts tax refunds at \$500,000 a year. Since he has become Premier, does he agree that almost \$6,000,000 will ultimately be involved? I believe that is a promise the Treasurer will have to honour, because the Commonwealth will not respond to any request, and I do not believe it should in view of the clear understanding between the Commonwealth and the Treasurer of the day; that is, a certain responsibility would be accepted and no more, and any other responsibility regarding refunds would be that of the State Governments.

The Premier spoke a great deal about the illegality of the arrangements because of the situation in Queensland, which

the Premier knows was a different one. Since he has become the Premier of this State—and this applies to the Treasurer also—no point has been raised about the illegality of any agreement because Queensland had some different arrangement. It is well known that the different arrangement in Queensland was clarified and the whole of the group—all the Treasurers together—came to an agreement which was a sound, legal, and valid document.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: The agreement does not make it valid.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It does, because the Premier has not taken any action to query or question it. He has been to Canberra and has had an opportunity to discuss these matters, and if he felt so strongly about them—as he did before the election—he should have taken some action in regard to them.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: To the extent of breaking and entering; is that what you mean?

Mr. O'Neil: The only action he has taken is to shed from himself the responsibility of Treasurer.

Sir DAVID BRAND: In any event, in referring to the promises that were made, I would like to have them recorded in *Hansard* as I go along. The election promises made by the Premier were—

Abolition of road maintenance tax	\$3,500,000
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No doubt we will hear more about that. Continuing—

Farmers' income subsidies ..	\$3,000,000
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The Minister for Agriculture should take notice of that.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: The Leader of the Opposition has a lot of temerity in talking about promises, because he promised to build two bridges over the Swan River six years ago.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes, and when we got the plans we were about to build them.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Six years ago you promised to do that!

Sir DAVID BRAND: We were being advised by the same people who are now advising the Premier.

Mr. Graham: But you did not do anything.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Yes we did. We said that as soon as final plans were produced we would proceed with the construction of a bridge.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You promised two bridges within five years.

Sir DAVID BRAND: As time went on it was found that the plans for the two bridges were not the proper ones and therefore it was foolish to go ahead with the second bridge.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: All you are doing is seeking an excuse.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was sound common sense. We wanted to carry on with the project but we were advised later on not to go on with it. I will now continue to quote the election promises made by the Premier, as follows:—

	\$
Free school books	750,000
Receipt tax refunds	500,000
Uniform S.E.C. charges	500,000
Pensioners' free metropolitan transport	500,000
Students' living-away allowances	300,000
Probate and land tax cuts	250,000
University tuition fee subsidies	100,000
Students' allowances (over 15)	100,000

These promises make a total of \$9,500,000, and I presume that if the costs were taken out, having regard to increased costs, the amount would be substantially greater.

For our part, I have already referred to the \$1,000,000 we were making available to the local authorities over the period of the Parliament. Other promises made were—

	\$
Reduced electricity charges ..	575,000
Pensioners' free travel in metropolitan area and half-fare Kalgoorlie-Perth	530,000
Students' living-away allowances	145,000
Interest subsidy for private school buildings	100,000
Teacher trainees for private schools	60,000
Abolition of timber royalties on private land	50,000

With the \$1,000,000 aid to local authorities, these made a total of \$2,460,000. Therefore, the very fact that the promises total only \$2,460,000 was a clear indication that I, and the Government generally, was conscious of the financial position when we realised we were running into a deficit as a result of the sharp climb in wages, salaries, and other costs.

Mr. Williams: A very responsible and realistic conscience.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I have a very clear conscience in regard to these matters. We could easily have gone out and made greater promises. We could have exploited the position to a greater extent, but I must point out that in this House I introduced a balanced Budget in September or October.

Mr. Jamieson: It was balanced all right! You had your foot on one side of the scales. That is the only way it was balanced.

Sir DAVID BRAND: Nothing of the sort. How childish can the honourable member be! The fact remains that it was a balanced Budget and it was accepted by this House and by responsible people. That

may not include the Minister for Works, but the fact remains that we had also set aside \$4,000,000 in anticipation of some increases in the level of wages and salaries.

The Premier has been fair enough to point this out from time to time, but the point I am making is that we, as a Government, did not take anyone for any ride. We were placing the hard, cold facts before this House.

Had it not been for the unprecedented increases, which took place so suddenly not only in Western Australia but throughout the whole of Australia, our Government, were it in office today, would be introducing a balanced Budget in a few months' time. I am quite sure there would not be any financial problems, were it not for the very sharp increases which did take place.

The criticism that we have of the Labor Party is that it made promises in the light of the information which was being given, week after week, that the finances of this State, along with the finances of the other States, were running into deficit. On that point we could see no way of resolving the problem other than—when the opportunity occurred to do as the present Government is doing—by increasing charges, fees, and no doubt in due course introducing other forms of taxation far beyond what was estimated at the time.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Would the Leader of the Opposition oblige us by giving the dates when he made public, prior to the last election, the then state of the economy?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I will get those dates. There is no effort on my part to conceal the statements.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Was it in *The West Australian*?

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was made to the Press generally. I made it public, because it was a matter in which everyone was vitally interested.

Mr. Court: He also issued a very detailed statement on the matter on the 10th February last.

Mr. Graham: And there was a very detailed statement from the Treasury to the Premier a few days before the last election, but this never saw the light of day.

Mr. Court: He gave the statement to the public.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I remember the occasion when the Premier at one of his many Press conferences, when they were held regularly, had a document which I recognised. I recognised it in the telecast.

Mr. Graham: You did not publish it before the election. There was not a word of it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir DAVID BRAND: I remember seeing that document.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections. Whilst a small number of interjections, for the purpose of eliciting information is quite permissible, I think it would be more in keeping with the dignity of the House if questions were only asked in a debate for that purpose, and not so much for the sake of interjecting.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that I did not hear you when you called for order, because I was very interested in what I was putting forward. I hope you will take the same firm stand right through, as you are now taking, in respect of both sides of the House. I am sure you will do that.

The information which was produced to me by the Treasury officers in the last few days before the change of Government took place was in the form of a minute which simply set out the position of the Treasury at that time. It was an honest statement; and the reasons for the problems mentioned in the minute were those that I have already outlined. The Premier himself has conceded that increases in wages and salaries, and also in the related costs, represented the only or main reason for the Treasury being in the position in which it found itself at the time.

We will not oppose the Supply Bill, because it is a measure which comes before this House regularly. Opportunity is taken to use this device to raise a few points and, maybe, a few grievances, because I understand the original concept of the Supply Bill debate was to enable supply to be held up until members of Parliament were able to air some of the grievances which had accumulated over the previous financial year. I support the measure.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [6.05 p.m.]: I rise to draw the Government's attention to some of the difficulties that still exist in the rural areas; they affect not only farmers, but also some of the rural country towns. At the outset I want to say that I do not envy the Minister for Agriculture, because he has been rushing around from place to place in an effort to appease some of the people who have been disillusioned and disappointed with some of the promises that were made—

Mr. Graham: By the previous Government.

Mr. NALDER: —by the then Leader of the Opposition when he outlined the policy of the Labor Party before the last election. As a matter of fact I listened with a great deal of interest to the broadcast. I think he had almost forgotten the country people whom he had been trying to woo for some time. It was only in the dying portion of his speech that he referred to them.

Mr. Gayfer: He referred to them on page 28 of his policy speech.

Mr. Graham: The farmers of Merredin knew what to do!

Mr. NALDER: Many of them have become very disillusioned. I recall the then Leader of the Opposition saying before the last election—

I pledge my party to face up to all farmers' problems, especially debt problems.

Gracious me, instead of implementing his promises to alleviate the difficulties which the primary producers face, he has been going in the opposite direction. The Government to date has done absolutely no more than the previous Government had done. As a matter of fact it gives us some satisfaction to know that the present Government is continuing with the programmes that had been outlined by the previous Government.

In his policy speech the then Leader of the Opposition said—

We propose to endeavour to institute a form of payment from the Treasury to the farmer to bring his net income to a stated minimum. In this way, farmers with no real alternatives would not be forced to leave their farms or endure income-shrinking poverty.

What has happened since that time? It is quite amusing and quite interesting to read what the Premier said in the political notes in *The West Australian* of the 15th July.

The SPEAKER: I hope you will not read the lot.

Mr. NALDER: I do not intend to read the lot, Mr. Speaker. I will stick to the subject that I mentioned when I first rose to my feet. I will refer to just one part of what the Premier said. The Premier then said—

In some aspects, the Labor Government will continue—perhaps to expand a little, perhaps in some instances to cut back—the work of the previous Government.

I do not know what the Premier actually meant by that; I presume anyone could take into account any activity of the previous Government.

I want to refer to an earlier paragraph in the statement in which the Premier had the following to say:—

As a result of world market trends, our principal rural industries are in serious trouble. This Government has announced its intention, unequivocally, of salvaging what can be salvaged and of seeing that nobody goes unnecessarily to the wall.

Now, what in the wide world does that mean! I imagine an absolute tragedy which might have occurred. I visualise the result of an earthquake or a flood, and the Government trying to salvage a situation that

has absolutely gone down the drain, and is almost beyond any help or assistance. The Government is going to salvage—I repeat: salvage—a situation and see that nobody goes unnecessarily to the wall. Well, this is an amazing situation: To think that the Government might do a little bit more than the previous Government, or cut back a little, to try to salvage a deflated primary industry.

I am sure that many farmers in our agricultural areas will not be happy with that sort of situation—that the present Government is going to try to salvage this industry. The industry has been going through difficult times and the situation, as we see it, is that everything possible must be done in an endeavour to get the farming community out of their present position.

There has been reference to, "Get big or get out." This expression has been manufactured to suit quite a number of statements that have been made. That was not the intention of the previous Government and I will say quite clearly and firmly that not at any stage was such a reference made.

As a matter of fact, it is quite interesting at this stage to note the feelings of the Federal people towards this situation—I refer to the Federal Labor Party. Only recently a conference was held in Hobart.

Mr. Jamieson: Launceston was the city.

Mr. NALDER: Launceston was the city; I was meaning to refer to Tasmania. At that conference the policy of the Labor Party on agriculture was dealt with. It was obvious that the people who were discussing this matter had no knowledge whatever of the situation. That is quite apparent because the Federal spokesman on agriculture, who was not entitled to be present, very strongly criticised what was said.

Mr. Jamieson: He would be entitled to be there.

Mr. NALDER: There was criticism of the comments made by party members on this situation, so it is obvious that those who were endeavouring to formulate a policy on the agricultural position in Australia had little, or very little knowledge at all of the situation. This has been borne out by the criticism by their spokesman in the Federal sphere.

I believe it is greatly to the credit of the previous Government that instead of outlining, at election time, what more it intended to do to assist farmers it announced its intentions earlier. It is a fact that all haste was made to bring about the situation which had been outlined by the Federal Government. The Government continued with the proposals that had been outlined and a committee had been formed to get the scheme, which had been outlined previously, into operation.

The programme, which is still continuing, was to help farmers over the initial stages. A sum of approximately \$2,000 was made available to those farmers who appeared to have little chance of continuing. That policy was outlined by the previous Government and has been carried on by this Government. The idea was to assist those farmers who needed finance to put in a crop this year to allow them an opportunity to sell their properties under reasonable conditions during this period.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. NALDER: Before the tea suspension I was outlining the schemes of the previous Government for providing assistance to farmers who required it. I referred in particular to the scheme to provide carry-on finance to enable farmers to have sufficient money to purchase superphosphate, fuels and the like to allow them to sow crops for the coming season. Assistance was available to enable them to carry on at least for the time being.

The whole problem had been discussed and arrangements made to continue the discussions with the Director of Agriculture and the Under-Treasurer just prior to the elections.

I understand that some farmers have taken advantage of the proposal. I do not know the numbers offhand although I believe that information is available. I further understand that a few more applications are still to be considered.

Last year a considerable amount of criticism was levelled because arrangements had not been made to allow farmers under mortgage to receive drought assistance. I attended many meetings when this matter was discussed. I remember one meeting in particular when a gentleman stood up and waved a telegram he had received from the then Leader of the Opposition (Mr. J. T. Tonkin) stating that if his party became the Government action would be taken to try to overcome the difficulty. However, I have not heard anything further on this subject and I have certainly not heard what the Government intends to do.

It is interesting to note that the farmers who took advantage of the \$2,000 scheme had to sign an agreement whereby the Government has first call on any production from the farm resulting from the loan. I cannot see very much difference in this situation, but it is interesting to comment on the position.

The present Minister has announced that a committee will be formed to advise the Government on future abattoir requirements. This is something which had been discussed previously without a decision being reached, mainly because of the exceedingly large number of people who wanted to be represented on the committee. However, the Minister has made a

decision on this and I believe the approach is quite reasonable. We will be very interested, however, to see what the committee will recommend so far as abattoirs are concerned. I will make some comments about this at a later stage and, consequently, I do not intend to enlarge on the subject at the moment.

I wish to mention another matter which is quite small but it is one on which the Minister has made a decision. The decision does not affect the farmer very much but it certainly affects the back-yard orchardist; namely, the decision to discontinue the payment to register orchards.

A recommendation was made to me last year for the discontinuance of the payment. Doubtless the Government has made the decision at this stage on the recommendation of the officers of the Department of Agriculture because of the problems associated with the cost of obtaining these sums of money for registrations. I would be interested to know the Minister's feeling on this. How will it be possible to find out just where back-yard orchards are located when there is no reference available? Will inspectors of the department travel around to ascertain where fruit fly is prevalent?

I must make one more comment before resuming my seat. It is quite obvious that many farmers right throughout the length and breadth of the South-West Land Division are turning their hands to other types of production. This is quite reasonable and, after all, diversification has been preached on many occasions in the past. Up to now many producers have not found it necessary to diversify but today hundreds and hundreds of farmers are turning to the breeding of pigs. I hope the Minister will seek the advice of his officers to ensure that farmers who are embarking on a diversification programme are given all necessary advice.

Mr. Jamieson: Farmers ought to make sure of water supplies before they start breeding pigs. They should not come to the Minister afterwards.

Mr. O'Connor: Put down a bore!

Mr. Jamieson: The member for Mt. Lawley is finished for the session!

Mr. T. D. Evans: That is a bit sour!

Mr. NALDER: The question of water is probably one of the smallest problems associated with this industry which are well known to those who have had practical experience. Producing breeding animals alone does not solve the problem. The question of disease is extremely important and, in addition, farmers must have a full knowledge of the type of food required to bring to maturity, either on the porker or baconer side, the type of pig required by the local and export trade. I emphasise these points. Many problems indeed can

be encountered by people who are not fully aware of what is involved. If we are to encourage farmers to embark on a breeding programme I think they should be cautioned, at least in the first instance, of the associated problems, otherwise many people will be sorely disillusioned and they will not know why they have made tremendous losses.

Accordingly, I suggest that the Minister for Agriculture should make advice available to farmers who are embarking on a new programme. In the first instance they should know what they are doing and they should know all the associated problems. Housing is one problem which I could mention and I have already touched on the problems of disease and proper feeding. Sound advice must be made available to farmers before they embark on such a programme, especially if they do not have a full knowledge of what is involved. I trust this information will be spread far and wide as quickly as possible so that farmers will not get their fingers burnt.

I intend to make some comment later on about other matters connected with agriculture. Perhaps one final comment on wheat quotas is appropriate. Quite a few people are interested that the Minister has formed another committee to investigate quotas. Some of the men who were on the previous committee will be on the new committee and the same organisations are represented. It will be extremely interesting to see whether the committee can come up with a solution to the problem of quotas. However, this is a question of waiting to see.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.40 p.m.]: Firstly, may I extend my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment. I am sorry I had to be the first to cause you some concern today, but I am sure you appreciated the reason for it. You can blame the Premier for the situation in which we found ourselves. My colleagues and I are quite certain that you will endeavour to fulfil this important position to the absolute maximum of your capacity. It is one that has been filled by men of varying experience, ability, and capacity, and I have no doubt that you, in your own down-to-earth way, will do your best by all of us, bearing in mind that we have a very delicately poised situation.

Might I also take this opportunity to extend congratulations to those who have been appointed to the various offices in this Parliament, such as the Chairman of Committees, the Deputy Chairmen of Committees, and the various whips.

I would be remiss if I did not congratulate the new members. They come to a House which they will find cuts them down to size quicker than any other place I know of. They come in with lots of fire

and ambition, and I hope they never lose it, but it is sometimes difficult to keep the fires kindled when one has to live within a party political system.

As far as the Government is concerned, I extend congratulations to the Premier and his Ministers. Needless to say, we hope they will not be in Government for long, but, under this democratic system we have, we naturally hope their deliberations will be fruitful to this State. They come into office at a time when the tempo of the economy is quite different from what it was in the days when the two senior Ministers in the Government were previously in office. Putting the clock back 12 years, I think it is fair to say things were then much more leisurely in this State than they are today, and I do not think any of us would want the position to be otherwise than it is at the present time.

I was very intrigued by the Government's flattery of the previous Government in the Governor's Speech, when reference was made to the fact that members of the Government had been to Japan "to assure Japanese investors and industrialists there has been no change in government policy in this respect, or in the ebullient business scene of the past several years." I have had three versions of how the word "ebullient" is pronounced, and I had to consult a dictionary to find out what it meant. One could expect this, with five former school teachers in the Cabinet. I find it means a "boiling" or exuberant business scene, and if that does not mean congratulations to the previous Administration I do not know what does. We accept it in the spirit in which we hope it is meant, except that in the course of its deliberations in the few months that it has been in office the Ministry has seen fit, on every possible occasion, to try to debunk the work of its predecessors.

I say, with due respect, that the Government does not do itself or the State any good. This State has had to work very hard to establish a reputation abroad as a good place in which to invest. Having been the Deputy Premier in the previous Labor Administration, the Premier knows how tough it was in those days, when he went abroad and in his local work, to attract investment in Western Australia. Over the years we have managed to build up an atmosphere in which investors feel this is a good place in which to invest, and that it is a good, democratically run community. I believe we all have some responsibility to preserve this atmosphere.

Some of the comments that the Deputy Premier, for instance, made about me do not do him any good, but, more importantly, they do not do the State any good, because some of the places in which he has to negotiate are places where people are very sensitive to the local situation and

stability. It would do us all good to remember that we are hurting our State, not ourselves, when we indulge in these tactics.

Mr. Graham: But you want a license to do what you want.

Mr. COURT: Not at all. I have been watching the Deputy Premier's remarks with considerable interest, and the remarks which he was silly enough to make in Japan—

Mr. Graham: Such as?

Mr. COURT: The Deputy Premier apparently has not been reading in *The West Australian* the reports of what he said in Tokyo. It must be realised that the goodwill that Western Australia has established has been established for the State, not for individuals or for a particular party, and the Deputy Premier would do well to remember it.

In introducing this Bill the Treasurer referred to the fact that he has a deficit this year. By interjection I asked him whether this was after allowing for the retrospective payments to the Police Force and the Education Department. I am not suggesting it was not right to make those payments retrospective, because that was part of the arrangement, but it is important that members of the House should understand that if these amounts had not arisen the Budget would have been more than balanced, if the figures given in the Press are correct. I make this point because there have been suggestions at various stages—corrected at other stages, and then corrected again—that the present Government inherited a financial situation that was not good or was not understood.

I know of no Premier who went to such lengths to advise the public of the financial situation as did the former Premier, who is now the Leader of the Opposition. In fact, during the election campaign—bearing in mind that there was a Premiers' Conference during the campaign period—the then Premier (Sir David Brand) went to extreme limits to advise the people of this State that we were facing an unprecedented wage increase and that there would be budgetary problems. In the light of all this, the then Leader of the Opposition, who is now the Premier, saw fit to make promises that we considered then, and still consider, to be extravagant.

In order to demonstrate that the situation was handed over in good order to the present Government, I come back to the point I made about the budgetary situation; that is, that if it had not been for these retrospective payments the Budget would have been balanced, and slightly more than balanced.

Of all the people I know who in the course of their administration were frugal and careful with the State's finances, the former Premier and Treasurer was, in my opinion, the most outstanding person. He

was advised by people who, fortunately, still advise the present Government—the Under-Treasurer (Mr. Townsing) and his deputy (Mr. McCarrey). As one who sat under the Premier at the time, I know that the financial responsibility of balancing our Budgets was foremost in his administration, and, as our colleagues in the Country Party could vouch, he was very anxious at all times to ensure that we went about our business and ran the State with a sense of responsibility in respect of finance, not assuming that the Commonwealth could always play the fairy godmother.

The present Government has been treated very well by the Federal Government. The Premier has been good enough and big enough to acknowledge that he has been treated well on two occasions by the Federal Government and by the present Prime Minister. It is as well that we get the record straight, because the Government was handed a financial situation which I suggest—in fact, I claim without reservation—was the best financial situation, relatively, of all the Australian States, due to the degree of caution that had been exercised.

When the Brand Government brought down its Budget last year it allowed what was then thought to be an over-generous amount for wage increases—over \$4,000,000—but, as it happened, the trend of events in Australia was such that unprecedented wage increases were granted. These, of course, cannot be avoided by a Government. There are services such as railways, teachers, police, and ordinary civil servants, and the Government of the day has to accept these things. It was always our policy to accept them with good grace and to incorporate them into the budgetary system.

No doubt more will be said, in the course of the debate that will ensue on the Address-in-Reply, about the promises of the present Government. I am sure the Premier has been in this game long enough to know that he will not have an easy road in respect of the promises he made, which he has indicated to the public will be difficult to keep or will not be kept.

In the course of this debate I want to refer to two particular matters which I consider call for comment at this stage. I was very surprised to hear this morning, and to read later, that the A.L.P. State Executive had requested the Government to abandon the feasibility study in respect of bringing gas from central Australia to Western Australia.

The reason given for this was that there now appears to be a major gas field off the north-west coast of this State and, therefore, it would be better to develop that field rather than one in central Australia. I hope the Government will not agree to this request for the simple reason that there is no country in the world that has a surplus of indigenous fuel.

Australia has a tremendous task facing it to develop its natural resources. This development can only be achieved with adequate supplies of water and adequate supplies of cheap power. It may be that after the feasibility study is carried out in respect of bringing natural gas from central Australia through to the Goldfields, into the Murchison, and then possibly on to the metropolitan area in due course, we could find that we have a tremendous natural gas field of our own. Some people have enthusiastically suggested that the field could be bigger than Bass Strait, but I think they are being a little bullish to suggest that at the moment.

However, if it turns out that we do have a tremendous gas field of our own, we will still not have lost anything because the greatest single negotiating power a Government can have is to know what its resources are. Tremendous progress has been made over the last few years in endeavouring to find out what resources are available in this State, especially when compared with what we knew in 1950 and 1960. That is one of the reasons why the Brand Government had a feasibility study carried out in respect of tidal power. This was done in an effort to determine once and for all how economic it would be to harness the tides because we were desperately trying to find indigenous sources of fuel and energy. The fact that that study was undertaken means that we have for all time the basic records and the technical data should we ever need to harness the energy of our tides. I suggest that if the need ever arises we will have gained something like 18 months.

The same argument applies in respect of our natural gas. It is interesting to note that the predictions made previously that once a gas field is harnessed it will be found to be bigger than anticipated are being borne out. At the time when the Dongara gas field was first proved to be of a sufficient size to warrant the building of a pipeline to Perth, we were quite emphatic that no-one would be prepared to spend that amount of money unless he was certain it was an economic proposition. I know I just could not believe that anyone would do that without being certain of the Dongara reserves. However, it has been proved in the history of natural gas and oil finds throughout the world that once enough reserve has been proved to justify the basic harnessing of the fuel, more money is spent on exploration until eventually the project expands to prodigious proportions.

It is also interesting to note that even since the decision was taken in respect of the Dongara field, the potential of that field has multiplied. I think that decision was made virtually on the basis of 15 years supply of gas at 80,000,000 cubic feet per day, which is very small. Before very long we will have to think in terms of something

involving up to 1,000,000,000 cubic feet per day. When one tells that to some people they say it cannot be justified; but it can be justified because—as the new Minister has already found, I think—one shops around for the people to use it.

I would be most disappointed if, at the request of the A.L.P., the Government balked at the spending of some \$50,000 on a feasibility study of the central Australian field, and took the risk that the Rankin and Scott Reef fields will be large and harnessable.

Mr. May: As a result of the statement made by the Federal Government, I have already had three or four phone calls from Tokyo today.

Mr. COURT: I can see a situation developing on two fronts where we could be taking natural gas from central Australia partly for our own use and partly for liquifying to send abroad, thus reducing the unit costs; because if the gas is brought in in double the volume the economics are naturally improved.

If, at the same time, we could do the same thing with the Scott Reef and Rankin fields—which will be tremendously expensive to harness in view of the fact that oil in commercial quantities has not been found—we would have a volume which would be manageable and which would give us a low unit cost when shared with export markets.

I do not want to see the product exported because the best and most economical place to use any natural fuel is at the place it is located. But we might have to have some exports initially. I believe Australia will never have too much indigenous fuel. If the Collie field is proved to be, say, five times greater than we think it is at present, it will still not be a drop in the ocean compared with what will be needed in Western Australia's industrial programme in the future. This is the only way to look upon the matter. If we find that Collie has five times as much as we thought it had, we will soon find a way to use it if we pursue a vigorous development programme and encourage people to come here. I emphasise that we will never have too much natural, indigenous fuel, energy, or water.

The other point I wish to mention concerns the unfortunate announcement by Mr. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia, in the Press this morning. This is a most unfortunate matter and it is beyond my comprehension how a man in such a responsible position could make a statement which almost amounts to political larrikinism. It certainly does not do him any good. We have been most fortunate in the past in that the States, competing as hard as they will with one another, have never publicly said anything derogatory or embarrassing about another State.

We have had situations in which Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and ourselves have been competing vigorously for something; but there has always been an understanding that the States will not be involved in this type of thing because it does not do Australia any good, and it does not help our own cause. It creates uncertainty in the minds of the people.

I do not accept Mr. Dunstan's prediction that Western Australia is out of the race for this project. I think the two Ministers concerned have the capacity to negotiate and win this deal if they can twist the arms of the S.E.C. and the Treasury a little more. In my experience we had reached the stage where, if we could get the price of power down by one-tenth of a cent, we could have had the industry. However, the S.E.C., with justifiable caution, was concerned as to whether it could meet the situation.

I want to say that this industry is vital to the State. It is urgent that we break the ice in petrochemicals. We have been trying to break the ice in this field for 12 years—going back to the time when the present Premier negotiated very hard to break in with the Dow Chemical people and the Goodrich people in 1958—but the industry has always eluded us. It is a most difficult industry to fit into the Western Australian scene and if we miss out this time, and the industry goes to the Eastern States, it will be a generation before we have another opportunity.

If, after it has negotiated with the S.E.C., the Government finds that the price cannot be brought down to manageable proportions, bearing in mind that we cannot match the offers that have been made by other States for cheap power, I would like to feel that the Government would at least come to Parliament and lay down the facts. I am sure the Government would find Parliament most receptive and understanding and that Parliament would try to help it over the hurdle and not talk only in terms of its being a concession to a particular company.

As I see it the situation is this: If we do not achieve this breakthrough in the near future and get into the petrochemical field through the caustic chlorine industry and, through that, into E.D.C. and the like, we will miss the opportunity to set off the chain reaction that will pass into the titanium tetrachloride industry the upgrading of ilmenite, into the smelting of aluminium, and eventually into the more sophisticated metals like titanium and magnesium.

I wish the Ministers well in their negotiations for triggering off what will be a very important chain reaction in this State and I would like them to know the problem they have with the S.E.C. The S.E.C., no doubt, is out to look after itself and says, "We are here to make a profit.

"We want to make all we can for ourselves." It also says, "There is a limit to the amount of power we can supply."

I think this is the time when we will have to adopt some unorthodox financial methods if we are to break the impasse and create the extra capacity that is necessary to supply this fuel at the right price. The Government has yet to decide whether the alternative of a power station gridded into the S.E.C. system, which has been suggested by a Japanese firm, is feasible and will get the power costs down; but I would like the Government to feel that we on this side of the House understand the problem and that it is one of those things where we have a responsibility to do the best we can from both sides of the House to get over the hurdle. It is essentially a case of being frank about the problem either publicly or privately, in order to see what we can do to match this difference in fuel and power costs.

When we went out of office, my understanding of the position at the time was that the Japanese were not expecting us to match the power price that was being offered to them by the other States. They accept the fact that the other States have cheap indigenous fuel. The three States with cheap indigenous fuel are Victoria, with natural gas; New South Wales, with fuel coal as distinct from coking coal; and Queensland, with its cheaper fuel coal. This is so because, at present, in view of the position in which we are placed with limited Collie coal, we are largely dependent on imported fuel.

The Japanese expect us to reduce our power costs to manageable proportions. We do have some factors in our favour. We have a ready-made market for caustic from the expanding production of alumina. We have the ilmenite that has to be upgraded to be used in the titanium tetrachloride industry; and, of course, we have the alumina on the spot to be converted to aluminium. I believe that in view of the goodwill that has been generated between Western Australia and the Japanese companies involved, there is no reason why we cannot work out a deal which will be satisfactory to the State and will trigger off what I believe will be a chain reaction that would be expanding in another generation.

If we do not get in this time and the Eastern States obtain the next petrochemical industry, added to the ones they already have—they have many over there now and they are hungry for more, because they want the added volume and the economies of scale—I believe we will miss out, and I also believe that the Commonwealth on a national level should have a vital interest in this industry and make it possible for us to get this breakthrough.

I do not think any of us can really envisage what will be the net result of getting this chain reaction started. One can

theorise and say it will lead to the production and use of other chemicals, but in my experience even the most optimistic estimates are inadequate to match the real development that will take place, to say nothing of the fact that a new set of career opportunities for young people in this State will be generated.

Mr. Graham: You may be interested to know that the principals of the companies most interested in the Kwinana area are likely to be visiting Western Australia in the course of the next few weeks.

Mr. COURT: I hope they do. I understood they were coming in August, and I think the Minister will agree that there is no lack of goodwill on their part, otherwise they would not have persisted for as long as they have. I know we worked hard on them for two years and unless they found what appeared to be an insoluble problem they wanted to keep discussing the matter. The only dark cloud on the horizon is the announcement by Mr. Dunstan this morning.

Mr. Graham: You have had some nasty things to say about Mr. Dunstan and what he has said publicly. I would like to hear your views on what the Liberal Minister for National Development has had to say and the problems he has created.

Mr. COURT: In what way?

Mr. Graham: Have you been reading the newspapers?

Mr. COURT: I have read his comments on enriched fuel and the particulars surrounding it.

Mr. Graham: It is reported in the Press that he is using his influence in an endeavour to persuade this concern to go to Queensland, which is his own State, instead of coming to Perth.

Mr. COURT: Perhaps we can get this in its proper perspective. I heard that Queensland—not Mr. Swartz—had been vigorously pursuing the matter, and one cannot blame it for that because that State has a good power plant at Gladstone.

Mr. Graham: No, this was the Minister.

Mr. COURT: The goal it was chasing was to get this particular industry into Gladstone. Queensland receive Commonwealth assistance with power—I took exception to that when I was Minister because we were not getting the same sort of treatment—and it also has a particularly big customer for caustic. The big problem I could envisage was in regard to caustic for our alumina industry. If Queensland could produce caustic at Gladstone and we had to transport caustic to this State in Australian-manned ships with freight rates that are about the most expensive in the world, it would mean that our alumina industry would be at a great disadvantage.

This is what I heard when I learned that Queensland was pursuing the project, but I could not object to its pursuing it, in the same way as I could not object to its being pursued by New South Wales or Victoria.

Mr. Graham: We cannot blame Mr. Dunstan for trying to get the project for his State.

Mr. COURT: I blame him for what he said this morning.

Mr. Graham: What about the Minister for National Development trying to use his influence to persuade his Government to attract the project to his own State?

Mr. COURT: If he did it I would have been very angry.

Mr. Graham: It is true.

Mr. COURT: I know that Queensland battled hard, but it did not adopt the tactics Mr. Dunstan adopted.

Mr. Graham: Every State can fight its hardest, but a Commonwealth Minister has no right to do that. It is dastardly to do that.

Mr. COURT: I would want proof that he did do it. If he did I would be into him boots and all if I happened to be Minister at the time. I did not pull any punches with the Commonwealth when I was Minister.

Mr. May: Would you believe in an executive director from Japan?

Mr. COURT: Yes, if the honourable member is talking about a Mitsubishi director. That is a very reputable concern, as are the senior people we deal with in Japan. There is a great deal of goodwill there. They knew there was a problem of shipping salt in Australian-manned ships from ports in the north. It is dearer to bring salt to Perth from the north than it is to send it all around the world in foreign ships. They are also conscious of our high labour costs problem and the power cost problem. There was one very important aspect; that is, we had a customer on the spot, and the trade will expand.

Mr. Jamieson: And a Commonwealth Minister trying to sabotage Western Australia.

Mr. COURT: Let me know more about this and, if correct, I will join in the chorus with the Minister.

Mr. Jamieson: I am pleased to see he was unsuccessful and that the Japanese people have more principle than he has.

Mr. COURT: I am glad about that. There is a lot of goodwill and it does not do the Government any good to try to damage that goodwill which was generated by the previous Government. The present Government should be anxious to retain it.

Mr. Jamieson: You might be glad of this later on.

Mr. COURT: It is just as well that you be told this because I think we all have to work to retain this goodwill which we have in many countries now and which is vital if we are to go ahead.

Mr. Speaker, the final remarks I want to make concern the Public Accounts Committee. No doubt there will be a lot more said about this in the course of the session, because we are introducing something which is not new and not exactly novel elsewhere, but it is certainly new and novel to this State, and I believe that the members who are appointed to this committee accept a tremendous responsibility.

The fortunes of State finances over the next few years are quite unpredictable. I think there will be a dramatic change in the relationship between Commonwealth and State in respect of finances over the next few years. There has to be because the States are becoming more sophisticated in the nature of their development, and the demands of the people are becoming more important and more sophisticated and certainly much bigger, and this will bring about a dramatic change in the present arrangement between the Commonwealth and the State. Now, in this atmosphere the new Public Accounts Committee will go into its work and I would hope that all members, irrespective of their parties, will approach this with responsibility. I am sure they will. They will want to, because it is not a question of having any political advantage while on a committee of that kind.

The objective of the member for Pilbara, who was one of the prime movers in this scheme, if I remember his words correctly, was to have some body who could look at these things in detail and, where it was thought appropriate, advise the Parliament of its findings. In other words, there would be some body that would have detailed access to figures which were not normally available to members of Parliament. In fact it would be impossible to let 51 members of Parliament have a look at these figures, so the idea was to set up a committee to investigate the figures in detail and to advise the Parliament where they thought something needed amplification or was not adequately covered in the Treasurer's Estimates when he brought them down.

I can see quite a challenging situation for the members of this committee, bearing in mind they are from different parties. The Government will have a majority, which is normal in cases like this, but leaving that point out altogether, the fact is that the members of the committee will see information which would be normally denied to the rank and file members of Parliament; and there will be temptations from time to time, not exactly to use this information, but to become a little concerned about its implications in regard to themselves and to their parties in the different electorates.

I think these members in their first three years of office will, in fact, set a pattern which will be tremendously important in the future financial history of this State. I do not think people who voted for this without giving it much thought probably realised the great responsibility that the foundation members will accept when they go into their work.

I wish them well; I hope that it works out. I have always had some reservations about this type of committee, in this very transitory period of Commonwealth-State finances. I am sure that the members who will be appointed will be conscious of their responsibility, not only for the work they will do over the next three years but for the pattern they will set as to the techniques they will follow and the reports they will make. In other words they will virtually make precedents as to the extent of their report and the amount of detail to go to Parliament, and the type of thing that should be subject to further scrutiny by Parliament as a whole as distinct from the committee. I support the Bill.

MR. MENSAROS (Floreat) [8.15 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, may I add my congratulations to those you have already received. I am sure you will do credit to the Speakership and to the many illustrious predecessors you have had. It is often said, Sir, and emphasised, that one of the main attributes of your office is impartiality. I hope and trust that your term will be marked by your own party and Government as being not only impartial but sometimes even too impartial.

I congratulate the Chairman of Committees and his deputies and wish to emphasise again and place on record my best wishes to the Premier and his Ministers in the performance of their duties during their tenure of office.

May I also congratulate the new members and say to them that I am looking forward to their undoubtedly useful and sometimes, perhaps, even outstanding contributions to the proceedings of this House. And last but not least, to the officers of the House and the attendants and staff go my repeated thanks and appreciation for all their services and the invaluable assistance they have rendered me and, no doubt, every other member.

The Bill before the House serves the purpose of enabling the Government to draw some advance funds to continue the business of governing. In doing so the various Ministers of the Crown on the one hand are charged to execute the exact provisions of the Statutes and regulations which were decided upon and allowed by this House. On the other hand, however—although it still be within the authority and framework of these Statutes and regulations—the Ministers will exercise a discretionary power with manifold administrative decisions.

It is one of these administrative decisions which I would like to mention tonight in this debate, and I am afraid in a very disapproving manner. I do so not only because of my own experience and convictions but also because I have been asked by many within my electorate, and indeed by many outside it, to use this first available opportunity to record my deep concern and disapproval and, indeed, to protest against this administrative decision.

My concern, of course, is about the decision of the Premier, in his capacity as Minister for Education, when he allowed, as it was reported, students or pupils—one never knows nowadays which is the right expression for various purposes, but either way they are children until they reach the age of 18 and my concern is about his permission to allow children and teachers to participate in a street demonstration known as the moratorium march on the 30th June, 1971.

I am strongly convinced that this decision was wrong in principle; it created a dangerous precedent and has already proved itself as having had bad consequences in practice.

Furthermore, it was aggravated by the fact that the Premier decided to lend the authority of his high office to this course, to this partisan political street demonstration, by leading the march.

Irrespective of my agreement or disagreement with his political views, I wish to remain in the position where I can continuously, and without hesitation, have the highest respect for this office and its bearer, the Premier. The Premier represents the whole of the State, old and young, children and teachers, citizens and newcomers, and no-one, no Western Australian, should ever be discouraged in his or her due respect for this high constitutional office and its bearer, the Premier, unless we want to encourage anarchy against the rule of law.

Let me dwell, however, on the permission for school children to march, which is wrong in principle as a precedent and in its already experienced consequences. I take them one at a time.

I think it is wrong in principle to introduce into, or even encourage, partisan politics in schools, where no politics should interfere in the moulding of youngsters' intellectual abilities to comprehend the issues which they are going to face.

Teaching, and particularly compulsory teaching, is for the purpose of giving information and developing the objective faculties of youth to enable them to arrive at judgments based on these informative facts. State school teaching does not and should not aim to encourage prejudice or to encourage one particular partisan political view. The decision of the Premier as Minister for Education, however, did exactly this, it encouraged and influenced

children to take part in one particular political demonstration. To prove this point I refer to the front page article of *The West Australian* of the 29th June which expressly says, and I quote—

Mr. Tonkin, who is Minister for Education, said that students in senior forms who wanted to express an opinion in favour of the moratorium campaign could march if they had the permission of their parents.

It does not say, "Students who want to express an opinion in favour or against the moratorium, or who want to be neutral observers."

There is no doubt left in anyone's mind. It meant that those and those only who favour one political view could attend the march.

Nobody recognised this wrong principle, however, more readily, though perhaps belatedly, than the Premier himself. In his letter to the editor of *The West Australian* of the 8th July he came up with a quite different explanation and said—

In permitting them to attend the march, I had it in mind that they should be exposed to all aspects of the occasion.

Some people sympathetic to the cause of demonstrations might contend that the permit was no encouragement to, or influence on, the children, as the parents' permission was requested.

Nobody can tell me, however, that this was not encouragement. I think we would all agree that the vast majority of healthy children would gladly take any opportunity to miss school. If I might mention my personal experience in connection with this matter I would point out that I was invited to dinner on the night of the 30th June and my host's daughter, who is doing her Leaving, was apprehensive because she was not allowed by her school to march. Thank God private schools apparently availed themselves of better judgment!

Mr. Davies: Christian Brothers College gave permission.

Mr. MENSAROS: Bad for them. When I asked her, however, whether she would have attended the march she replied, "Of course I would have done so." When, however, I further inquired whether she knew what it was all about, she confessed that she had no idea but "it would have been good fun."

I think most members would have had the same experience when watching television on the night when children were interviewed and when it was shown that they obviously had no idea, before the march, what it was all about.

These were the innocent youngsters who were being influenced. The fact that the permission of the parents was required,

and/or obtained, in my mind points only to bad conscience and proves again the point that the decision was wrong in principle—indeed it was an immoral and a shocking decision.

We do not usually ask the permission of parents to do the right thing by their children. Children are required compulsorily to attend school, even though some of their parents might not permit it. The permission of the parents is not requested to teach the children history or social studies. Had the Premier not needed to justify his prejudiced decision he would not have asked for the permission of the parents.

Even permissions, however, were not obtained in most cases. I can only vouch for my personal experience as the result of my observations and the inquiries I made, because I did not receive a reply to my question—No. 14 on today's notice paper—in the second part of which I asked the Minister for Education, "How many of the participant students produced written permission from their parents?" The reply I did receive was that the actual record of the absences was not compiled.

The decision was further wrong in principle, Sir, because it created political controversy amongst teachers in every school, because whether they chose to march or stay and carry out their duties they inevitably had to declare their political allegiance. They were placed in an intolerable position as a result of the Premier's high-handed decision. The headmasters concerned, their colleges, and those children who knew what it was all about, had to be fully aware of the political allegiance of all the teachers in their school. Surely this breaks down their much needed integrity.

I would go further and say that the decision was wrong because it must have shaken the confidence of some people at least in the Department of Education and their devoted and unblemished public servants. A decision like the one that was made by the Minister usually emanates from the public servants who are charged with the day-to-day order and discipline of the schools. These public servants rightly expect support from their Minister in their endeavours to further education and to resist party political influences in the schools.

In order to try to restore this confidence in the department I asked the Premier, in his capacity as Minister for Education, whether I was correct in assuming that his decision as reported in the Press to allow students to march was not taken on the advice of any senior public servant. The reply I received, for which I am grateful, proves me right—that the department had nothing to do with this decision.

I also submit that the Premier's strongly objectionable party political decision created a dangerous precedent. It created a tool which less responsible leaders could use to exploit school children for any political purpose in the future, as they have been, and indeed are, used by every dictator all over the world.

The blunt fact is that I am, perhaps unfortunately for me, in a better position than any other member to speak about this matter. When I refer to this question I do not rely on readings from history or the newspapers; I speak from my own bitter experience because I was in Vienna on the 15th March, 1938, when Hitler and his troops marched in and raped the independence of Austria, a small country with a history of more than 1,000 years.

It is worth while remembering in connection with the recent controversy whether children can march in a State or Federal issue that Austria was composed of a Federation of nine States, and foreign occupation was surely a Federal and not a State matter. Who lined the streets and who was there when Hitler spoke from the balcony of the Imperial Hotel?

Mr. Davies: The silent majority who did nothing.

Mr. MENSAROS: It was the school children who were having a jolly day off from school.

I was in Hungary during 1947-1948 when school children, and all, demonstrated voluntarily under the budding regime of Stalin's serfs. The connotation of the word "voluntary," was, however, slightly different under those circumstances. If one did not demonstrate voluntarily, something rather unkind happened to one in due course. What were these demonstrations for? They were for peace, of course. It sounds rather familiar. There were a few brave men who challenged the Government about allowing children to go out. The reply was quite simple. It was this: Who can object to demonstrating for world peace in a democracy? Is this not familiar?

Finally, as I have submitted, the Premier's ill-considered decision has led to very bad consequences. These consequences could have been even worse, for who can guarantee that a mass demonstration does not lead to violence, to injury, or even to loss of life? But the position was bad enough as it was. It was bad enough to allow children to watch a breach of the law in the burning of what were purported to be national service documents; it was bad enough to allow them to watch active treason being committed when, as was reported, demonstrators shouted for victory to the Viet Cong. All this was done under the leadership of the bearer of the highest constitutional office of our State, thus inevitably implying his approval.

I could not agree more with the remark of a learned magistrate who was reported in *The West Australian* of the 8th July as having said—

Demonstrators, with the single-mindedness of youth or the fixed beliefs they assume, are markedly intolerant of any person who appears to think otherwise.

I ask: Is this the kind of intolerance, to say the least, to which children have to be subjected?

There were, however, much worse consequences, for who takes the responsibility and who faces the parents of those 14 and possibly many more undetected school children who, but for the Premier's decision, could have stayed in school and studied, but who, instead, were caught shoplifting? These were the children, using the permission given allegedly to mature and considerate pre-voting-age students to absent themselves from school, who were caught shoplifting.

It is not I, but a former detective-sergeant, who was reported in the *Daily News* of the 8th July as saying—

Apparently the little blighters took the day off for the march, and then went to work in the shops.

Again I say that the Premier himself must have seen that he had made the wrong decision; for, had he been convinced that it was the right thing for students to demonstrate—as I have known and respected him as a man of principle—he certainly would have begrudged and condemned the fact that only a few of the students availed themselves of the opportunity to turn up. Instead, however, he used this fact as an excuse, saying that after all not a great deal of harm had been done, because only a few had marched.

The Premier, in his letter to the editor of *The West Australian* published on the 8th July, remarked to one of his critics—

It might comfort him to know that a survey by the Education Department has shown that absenteeism among teachers and children on the day of the Moratorium March was no higher than on any normal day.

But was it? If we calculate, as the Minister for Police said in his reply to my question, that 5,500 people marched, this number—even including professionals from Trades Hall and professional demonstrators from the University—does not represent 1 per cent. of the total population of the metropolitan area. Surely there were more than 40 children marching; and this number would be approximately equivalent to 1 per cent. of the high school students in the metropolitan area! So children were represented in a much higher percentage than the average population.

I have said what my conscience dictated and what many of my constituents have asked me to say. I did not intend to be unkind or disrespectful to the Premier, but there are high principles involved—principles fundamental to our democratic institutions, tried and tested by all and by experience.

If children are to be educated to grow up and express sound political judgments, surely they should do so by using their knowledge and brains in debates, instead of their boots and bottoms in marches and sit-ins.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) (8.35 p.m.): First of all I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to your high office. Only a few weeks ago you were one of my deputies, but now you hold the top office in the House. I am pleased to see you there, and I know you will carry out your duties to the satisfaction of the House.

I would like to congratulate the new Chairman of Committees, and I wish him as happy a term of office as I had. I know he will be able to carry out his duties to the satisfaction of the House.

We have before us a Bill which allocates a tremendous sum of money—something like \$210,000,000—and we are asked to pass it without a great deal of information being placed before us. This is the normal step for the Government to take at this time of the session. I suppose it indicates that the House must have a certain amount of faith in the Cabinet and in the Premier using that money to the satisfaction of most of the people of the State. I think this is a very important facet of the situation.

This time there is a difference. We have reached a milestone in history in one respect, in that we now have the Public Accounts Committee which I hope will be able to accomplish something worth while in its examination of the accounts, and in its reports to the House. I can assure the House that as a member of that committee I will endeavour to do my utmost to achieve something worth while.

Concerning the promises made by the Premier, we notice some things which will affect very considerably the amount of money he has to spend. Today I asked a question of the Minister for Agriculture regarding farmers who felt that they must realise on their properties or lease them; and there seems to be no alternative. The answer given by the Minister was that the would-be vendor should search for a buyer who was willing to apply to the Rural Reconstruction Authority for help to buy him out. This places the burden on the farmer again, and he is placed in a very difficult position in having to find his own way out.

This contrasts markedly with the promises made by the Premier when he said that those who wished to get off their properties, because they had no future, would be assisted to dispose of them. He said that possibly the Government would buy those properties in order to ensure that the equity already established would not be lost. I submit there is a tremendous discrepancy between the answer given by the Minister for Agriculture today and what the Premier promised prior to the last election. These are matters of which notice should be taken.

Another promise which I consider to be a very important one concerns receipts stamp duty. The Premier said that the Australian Labor Party felt morally bound to refund the money paid under an illegal tax. He added that it would be a big burden for him to meet, but he felt duty-bound to pay the money back. This would thrust a tremendous burden upon the finances of the State. Perhaps the Premier has taken the responsibility off his own bat for the refund of the several million dollars. He said he felt he had a responsibility, but I would remind him the amount of money involved is very large.

I refer to another promise he made. Today I also asked a question of the Minister for Agriculture regarding applicants who had applied for rural reconstruction relief and who had been rejected. Of 74 who have applied so far, 49 have been rejected. This is a substantial proportion. Obviously these people need some assistance. The Minister said, in reply to my suggestion that the rejected applicants be referred to a committee with a view to giving some advice to the farmers concerned, that a voluntary committee could not be given any authority to confer with creditors or mortgagees in order to commit public funds. However, the Government could have an advisory committee, and it could use up some of the funds which the Premier has available. On a number of occasions the Premier made election promises and on one occasion he made the following statement:—

Even without additional Commonwealth assistance, I am prepared to spend \$3 million a year on this form of relief.

The Minister did not refer to the \$3,000,000 which must be available this year—it is available every year. The Minister did not say that the farmers who were rejected under the Rural Reconstruction Scheme could have a share of the \$3,000,000 which the Premier has available.

I think the Premier said recently that he did not promise to do everything in the first year. In answer to a question I asked of the Minister for Electricity regarding new charges and the date they would be applicable, the Minister said, "As soon as practicable." I do not think that is good enough.

While referring to promises which have been made I would like to remind you, Mr. Speaker, of what the present Premier said some time ago. He said, "A promise is a promise and no amount of talking will remove the responsibility to fulfil it." Those were the words of the present Premier and I hope he will remember them when he is planning his Budget because he has, indeed, made some promises.

I might mention, as an aside, that I hope the Public Accounts Committee will set a good example in caring for the finances of this State. Tonight I received a notice of the inaugural meeting which will be held tomorrow, and the notice is on a form which was printed some time before 1910. I hope this is an indication of the sort of economy which will be practised by the Public Accounts Committee.

I would also like to refer to promises made to a group of people in an organisation called the United Farmers and Graziers Association or, in ordinary parlance, the UFGAs. The hopes of those people were raised before the election when they were wearing out the carpets in the then Leader of the Opposition's office; they were coming away with high hopes. Those hopes have now been dashed to the ground because the present Premier shows no concern for those farmers and denies any pact. The Minister for Works, in commenting on this fact, said those people were living in another world.

I agree that they were living in another world before the election, but since the election they have come down to earth. Their hopes have been completely dashed. The words, "As soon as practicable" are not good enough, because the farming community needs the assistance now.

Mr. H. D. Evans: They needed it three years ago.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Three years ago the position was not as bad as it is today, and if the Minister for Agriculture is not aware of that fact he should study his papers. The wool situation has deteriorated over the last 12 months.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What did you people do during the greater part of that 12 months' period?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I would suggest that now is the time the assistance is required, not only to save the farmers but also to save the rest of the community. I refer to the storekeepers and others, because there is no money to spend. Also, I understand that the work which is usually available to small contractors in country areas, such as repair work or small alterations or additions to Government buildings, schools, and hospitals, is now being done by contractors from the city. This information has been given to me quite genuinely by those in the know, but I have not yet been able to check the details. If my information is correct, then this is a sorry

state of affairs because if ever work was needed in the country it is at the present time. The city areas have not been affected to the same extent as the country areas. It is entirely wrong to send men from the city to do work in the country.

I thought I would say those few words because it is very important that the Government realises that the situation is not something to be remedied as soon as practicable; it needs to be remedied right now. If the present Government thinks that the last Government should have done this, I would remind the present Government that the situation was not the same as that which we have now reached. There is only one Government which can do the job at the present time, and that is the Government which sits opposite us tonight.

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren—Minister for Agriculture) [8.46 p.m.]: Firstly, I would like to join with other members who have extended their congratulations to you this evening, Mr. Speaker. I sincerely accord you my own congratulations. I also congratulate all the new members who have taken their places in the Chamber. It is not so very long since I experienced the same feelings as the new members.

I regret that the Leader of the Country Party is not in his seat. That is most unfortunate because he would have been the recipient of several of my remarks had he been here. The Leader of the Country Party was critical of the Premier, and he went on to be critical of the rural policies of the present Government. He made reference to emergency loans, and for your edification, Mr. Speaker, the loans were of \$2,000 granted to farmers who were in a situation which could only be described as desperate. Those farmers had no chance of putting in this year's crop, and without the assistance their economic situation would have been disastrous. The loan was made against a crop lien.

The loans were made following a visit by myself to the drought areas of the southern region, and a subsequent report to Cabinet. The Leader of the Country Party said that his Government intended to do this. Well, that may have been so but there is no evidence to indicate that the loans would have been forthcoming. There is no evidence to show that they would not have been forthcoming, but there was no report in the Press, at any stage, and there was no awareness by the farmers to whom this help was finally extended. I am not saying that the previous Government would not have made these loans available to the farmers, but I do say there is no evidence that such a situation would have occurred.

The point is we recognised the situation and did something at the earliest practicable moment. At the same time, at the

second meeting of Cabinet an early sitting of Parliament was considered because of the disastrous situation in the rural areas.

On the question of rural reconstruction, I think the matter could have been handled more expeditiously than it has been. I would like to point out to the Leader of the Country Party that one evening last September the present Government, which was then in Opposition, moved an urgency motion to discuss the rural situation. Standing Orders were suspended to permit this and attention was drawn to the situation which prevailed. Indeed, the situation revealed at that stage was rather alarming and the Minister had been aware of it for some months.

However, it was not until there had been considerable questioning by the then Opposition and a particularly interesting set of feature articles in *The West Australian* that it was shown that over 3,000 farmers were in a hopeless position. Their plight was known at that time but even after that not a single thing was done about it. Yet, the leader of the Country Party has put forward criticisms of a certain nature tonight.

Mr. Nalder: That is complete rot, and you know it!

Mr. H. D. EVANS: What did the honourable member do after the situation was drawn to his attention?

Mr. Nalder: How many times did I go to Canberra to discuss it with the Federal Government?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: No publicity was given to it in this House or anywhere else. The Opposition at the time suggested that the balance in the Rural Reconstruction Fund could be a means by which some action could be taken. However that action was not taken by the Government of the day. Nothing at all was done, and yet the Leader of the Country Party has the temerity to stand up and be critical tonight. This is a situation which has arisen after twelve years of Government by the Liberal-Country Party coalition. A situation existing at the end of twelve years surely just did not happen! Surely the Government for the twelve-year period must be culpable to some degree. Nevertheless the Leader of the Country Party has the temerity to turn around and cast aspersions at this juncture.

On the matter of rural reconstruction, I would point out that the officers involved and the members of the Government who sit on the benches on your right hand, Mr. Speaker, have performed in an admirable way, and ratifying legislation will be brought down later in the session. At the same time, I mention that the scheme is operating and is effective.

The need for sound policies was discussed at the time of the urgency motion to which I have referred. As a matter of fact, the

need was discussed three years ago when the member for Collie put forward a request for a Select Committee to be appointed to inquire into meat marketing in the hope that a statutory authority would be formed. As I say, that was three years ago and about the same time that I urged for a Royal Commission into rural industries in the south-west. These requests were ignored.

Mr. O'Connor: Would you support one now?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: We happen to be in the position where we can do something about it or, at least, attempt to; that is the difference.

The relief measures which have been brought forward to date should not be disregarded. A statement on electricity charges has been made and, as soon as practicable, uniform charges will be introduced. It has been indicated that relief will be forthcoming in the matter of conditional purchase and pastoral leases. The Premier has made announcements on this already.

On the matter of marketing, it has been indicated that the Government will introduce a lamb marketing authority.

Sir David Brand: Had not that decision been made?

Mr. Nalder: You will not give credit to the previous Government.

Mr. Court: Pastoral leases were dealt with by the previous Government.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: It was written into our platform that a lamb and meat marketing authority would be introduced. The member for Collie put this proposition forward three years ago. Do not tell us that the idea came from members who now occupy the seats on the opposite side of the House. This has been our basic policy for years. Had the idea emanated from members on the other side, I wonder why they did not do something about it. After all they only had twelve years!

Mr. Nalder: Fancy putting that over. The lambs will be bleating in the country when they hear that.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: It is pointless for members opposite to say, "We would have done this, but we only had twelve years." In regard to arrant political hypocrisy, I do not think that in this House we have seen the like of the statement by the Leader of the Country Party tonight. More has been achieved in the last twelve weeks than in the previous twelve years.

Mr. Nalder: Talk to the farmers.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for East Melville, and before someone asks me whether he is speaking from the wrong seat, I wish to mention that the honourable member now occupies the seat which was allocated to the member for Cottesloe. The two members have changed places. I thought I should mention this in

case anyone thinks that the member for East Melville is speaking from the wrong seat.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville) [8.55 p.m.] : A much greater mistake in the matter of changing seats has been made in the State of Western Australia, Mr. Speaker, because we find that we are sitting on your left hand instead of on your right. Perhaps the people of the State will, in the not too distant future, appreciate what they have done, and there may be a change.

I do not want members of the Government to imagine that I am indulging in wishful thinking. I can well recall my first three years in this House. I happened to be elected to Parliament in 1959 at the time of a change of Government. For almost the whole of that session I heard incessant interjections from the side which we now occupy to the effect that the Liberal-Country Party coalition would not last three months. We were there for twelve years. I do not point this out to engender any hope in those who now sit on your right.

Mr. May: At least we have completed the three months.

Mr. O'NEIL: Other members will be aware that this is the first occasion I have sat in Opposition, and it is a rather interesting experience. I can now read the paper and think that the problems belong to somebody else.

I have noticed that, as to the performance of those who sat behind the Ministerial benches, certain statements were made to the effect that they were gagged, did not seem to show a great deal of interest in debates, and the like. Judging from today's notice paper that situation has not changed. Some 34 questions were asked, but not one from a member on the Government side of the House. For some strange reason, despite the extremely short period of time that the Government has been in office, each back-bencher knows all the answers.

Mr. Lapham: The Ministers are co-operative now. They give us the answers.

Mr. O'NEIL: Apart from the speech by the new Minister for Agriculture there has not been one speaker from the opposite side, with the exception, of course, of the Treasurer, who introduced the Bill.

Mr. Davies: There is nothing to answer yet.

Mr. Lapham: We will be speaking, never worry.

Mr. O'NEIL: We will watch with interest to see whether our experience in looking at the House from this side is any different from looking at it from that side.

I do not propose to delay the passage of the Supply Bill, for reasons known best to those who have been Ministers for a while and now find themselves in the

back-bench Opposition. Also, I find I am a little inhibited in regard to some remarks I would like to make, because the Minister for Housing and Labour is unavoidably absent from the Chamber. I appreciate the reasons for his absence. However, I think it would be natural for me to want to discuss topics which are related to his portfolio as I have had more experience with these matters than with others.

One matter does concern me greatly, however, and it relates to one of the promises made by the Premier, who was then Leader of the Opposition, at the last election. I refer to a proposition to interfere, in my view, with what is the good and efficient management of the building society movement in this State. At the time he was concerned—and I think quite fairly—at the price being paid for housing finance and the instalments required by young people who were purchasing their homes. However, the movement in repayment of home purchase was no greater than the movement in prices of any other kind of commodity and, in fact, it was an investment in something which would probably be the one and only major purchase for life for very many people.

We have to know and thoroughly understand what the building society movement is. We should realise how important it is and be convinced that it is run efficiently in the interests not only of those people who invest but also of those who borrow.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Why is the interest rate charged to home builders in this State the highest in the Commonwealth?

Mr. O'NEIL: I do not know whether it is relevant to the point, but I wish to mention that the then Leader of the Opposition (Mr. J. T. Tonkin) made a promise—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That is right.

Mr. O'NEIL: —that he would reduce by \$5 a week the price of home purchase and that he would do it by two means: subsidy on the one hand, and interest rate control on the other.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That is right.

Mr. O'NEIL: He also said it would apply not only to future borrowers but also to those who are currently repaying mortgages.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That is right.

Mr. O'NEIL: I do not know whether the Premier realised at the time that there are some 28,000 people buying homes through the building society movement. If one multiplies 28,000 by the \$5 a week that will be saved, and multiplies that by 50 weeks in the year, we will say, the answer is \$15,000,000 a year. Where will that come from?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: From the building societies.

Mr. O'NEIL: What proportion will be a subsidy by the State, and how much will be saved by reducing the interest rate?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Instead of doing a lot of guessing, you might wait until the legislation comes before the House.

Mr. O'NEIL: I did not notice any reference to this legislation in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did you put all the legislation, projected or otherwise, in the Governor's Speech?

Mr. O'NEIL: This is most important. There are 28,000 home purchasers in this State who are waiting for this Government to save them \$5 a week.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: When did any Government ever put all its projected legislation in the Governor's Speech?

Mr. O'NEIL: Does the Premier guarantee that in this session there will be legislation the effect of which will be to save every home purchase borrower \$5 a week?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Wait and see.

Mr. O'Connor: We will die of old age.

Mr. O'NEIL: Having established the fact that we cannot be certain we will have this legislation at all—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You said that; I did not.

Mr. O'NEIL: I asked the Premier for a guarantee that we would see it, and he said, "Wait and see." Having been left in the limbo of lost souls on the issue—perhaps that is a better way to put it—let us come back to the movement which this Government proposes to interfere with. The building society movement is very tightly controlled by a Building Societies Act—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did you say "tightly controlled?"

Mr. O'NEIL: Has the Premier ever read the Act?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You have a great imagination.

Mr. O'NEIL: I point out that in 1970, which is not very long ago, this Parliament passed legislation which very greatly tightened the control and management of building societies, not because this Parliament thought it ought to be done, but because the building societies themselves recognised their responsibility to the community and recognised that there was a necessity to guard the interests of their investors as well as the interests of their borrowers, and they conjointly submitted a proposition designed to ensure that there would be uniform and strict control over their activities.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Are you arguing that there should not be any control of the borrowing rate?

Mr. O'NEIL: Which rate is to be controlled?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Are you arguing that way?

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes, I am.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Why did the Country Party Government of Queensland find it necessary to do what I propose to do?

Mr. O'NEIL: Has that particular action been taken in Queensland? The Premier should read his policy speech very carefully because he mentioned that legislation existed which would enable certain things to be done. That is a very cagey way of saying, "It is on the Statute book, but I am not certain whether or not it has been done." I suggest the Premier should check it very carefully.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It has already been checked.

Mr. O'NEIL: We will hear about it later when a similar Bill to this comes before us again.

One must remember that there are a number of instrumentalities, institutions, Governments, and local governments competing for the available loan funds in this country. The building societies are not the least of these. The mean rate to the investor is not set by a Statute of this Parliament or any other Parliament; it is set by the Federal authorities who control the fiscal management of the country. It is basically the rate that is determined from time to time as the long-term bond rate. If the Commonwealth Government decides it will give people 7 per cent. for the money they invest in bonds, that is the mean with which every other borrower must compete. One therefore finds that people who borrow money for the conduct of their businesses use that bond rate as the mean.

Building societies in this State have set a similar figure, which may be $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. or $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. above it. That is what building societies must pay for the money they lend to home purchasers. If their borrowing rate is regulated at 6 per cent., they will not get any money. It is as simple as that. The difference between the rate at which they borrow money and the rate at which they lend it to the home purchaser is something between $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. in this State. Out of this come the management fees of the society, payment of staff, maintenance of records, and the like. No dividends are paid to directors of building societies. Building societies are co-operatives. I think the maximum amount that any chairman of directors of a building society receives is about \$1,500 a year, and the three or four directors might receive \$500 or \$200. If any profits are made in the operations of building societies, they either go back to investors by way of payments on their investments or they go back to the consumers of the money; namely, the home purchasers.

The previous Government set about endeavouring to increase the funds available for the purchase of homes. The easiest

and best way to do it was actively to encourage a building society movement in this State. This was done through the policies of the Government, through the registrar, and through an advisory committee comprising representatives of all sectors, including officers of the Treasury. A system was established under which we could obtain greater sums of money from the public and from other sources for investment in housing, which is probably one of the most important investments a State can make for the welfare of its people.

It is rather surprising that in 1958-59 the amount advanced by building societies was \$3,500,000. In 1969-70 the amount advanced was \$93,000,000, which I suggest is a fairly substantial increase. The total amount that had been advanced for home purchase over that period was \$239,000,000. To use a colloquialism, "That ain't hay." That is money.

If one compares the situation that exists in this State in respect of the savings in building societies with the situation that exists in other States, one can see the fallacy in having an investment rate to borrowers as low as that applying in New South Wales. At the time I am speaking of, which is 1969-70, just prior to the election, the savings in building societies per head of population in this State were \$226.70, compared with \$129.10 in New South Wales and \$30.30 in Victoria. So much for the $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. below the interest rate in this State.

So it is quite evident that the policies pursued by the building society movement under the direction of the Government and the advisory committee certainly made much more money available for housing in this State. It is also significant that 70 per cent. of the houses being purchased in Western Australia are financed with funds made available by building societies. This compares with a figure of somewhere between 45 and 50 per cent. in New South Wales and 20 per cent. in Victoria.

The building society movement, as it is called, operates in two areas; namely, the permanent society section and the terminating society section. However, let me remind members that both sections are essentially co-operatives. No dividends are paid to directors or shareholders other than the investors.

Mr. Bickerton: What do they run them for?

Mr. O'NEIL: Because they are a means of channelling more money into home building which is more effective than the method of investing money in savings banks. Apart from the amount required by Statute to maintain liquid reserves, all the money in building societies may be loaned for housing. I think 70 per cent. of the money invested in savings banks is directed towards special borrowings, Government loans, and the like and the remaining 30 per cent. of investors' savings

may be used for home building purposes. I would hazard a guess—it is most difficult to obtain the actual figure—that something less than 25 per cent. of the money on deposit in savings banks accounts is, in fact, directed into individual home purchases.

Mr. Bickerton: You wouldn't think anyone would bother to go into it if they did not get anything out of it.

Mr. O'NEIL: I think the honourable member does not understand the meaning of a co-operative. If he is a socialist he ought to understand it.

Mr. Bickerton: They are co-operative all right! Who decides where the funds are to be invested?

Mr. O'NEIL: The funds are invested in bricks and mortar—in houses.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: All of them?

Mr. O'NEIL: There is provision in the Building Societies Act that by a special resolution of directors funds may be made available for another purpose, but the amount is limited. I think if the Premier looks at the amendments made to the Act in 1950 and the regulations pertaining thereto he will find that there is control over the areas in which these moneys may be invested. I will not say there is control over all the moneys because I know investments are made in other directions, but the bulk of building societies' funds goes into housing. Certainly a much higher percentage of building society funds is directed towards building than is the case with savings bank deposits.

Mr. Court: There has to be provision for transitory deposits.

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes. Building societies are required by Statute to maintain not less than $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of their invested funds as liquid assets. From a report I read in the weekend Press, I think the average is in excess of 15 per cent. I noticed—I think it was in this morning's paper—that there is now a fairly free availability of funds for housing through the building society movement.

To prove the importance and the acceptance of home finance from the building society movement, one has only to look at the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. I am not too sure whether such an agreement exists at the moment because I understand that the last agreement expired at the end of the last financial year. However, under that agreement all States which are allocated funds under the works and housing programme are required to allocate not less than 30 per cent. of those funds to the building society movement. Therefore, let us take great care when we commence to interfere with a legitimate, recognised co-operative institution whose sole aim is to make money available to

people who wish to buy homes. The movement has no other aims, and there is no individual profit-making within it. I support the Bill.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [9.15 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with other members who have this evening offered their congratulations to you on achieving the exalted position of Speaker of the House. I wish you well and trust that you will carry out your duties as capably as your predecessors. I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate the new members and wish them well, and also to congratulate the Premier and the new Ministers.

In looking at the front bench of the Government, one recollects that the A.L.P. is supposed to represent a cross section of the community. I notice that there are four school teachers and two solicitors on the front bench opposite. However, I wonder where are the farmers, carpenters, etc., and why none are on the front bench.

Mr. Graham: How many farmers were on the front bench of the previous Government?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Many more than there are at present.

Mr. Graham: Would you like to name one or two?

Mr. O'CONNOR: The former Minister for Agriculture was a farmer.

Mr. Graham: Was!

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister for Education was a farmer, and the Premier at that time was also a farmer. I know the Minister's memory is short, but if he casts it back to last session he will remember this.

Mr. Graham: Get out! The Premier's farm was a sideline.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I know this is a touchy subject because the Deputy Premier is conscious of the fact that the members who have been elected to the front bench do not represent a cross section of the community, and there are some notable absentees. Here we have a party which is supposed to look after the people who are down the ladder a little—the Aborigines and so on. Yet one member opposite has spent a great deal of time with the Aborigines, and has done excellent work on their behalf. I refer to the member for Maylands, who has worked hard for the Aborigines. Where is he now? He is not on the front bench. There are four teachers on the front bench, but the member for Maylands is not there although he has done more for the Aborigines than anyone else opposite.

Mr. T. D. Evans: That is an unfair statement.

Several members interjected.

Mr. Davies: We will give you a vote next time you are elected to Cabinet. You do what the boss tells you.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister will have a chance to speak directly if he wishes.

The **SPEAKER**: Order! If only one member speaks at a time we will get through much quicker.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Consider the member for Collie. Probably he is the only member of this House on the Government side with tremendous experience in the field of mining.

Mr. Brady: You will get on.

Mr. O'CONNOR: He is the member who in this House carried the case for the miners and who worked very hard and capably for them in many ways. He has worked as hard as he possibly could but he is left on the back bench. We can go further and consider the north-west. Who is the logical member to represent the north-west in the Cabinet? It is the member for Pilbara, of course.

Mr. Bickerton: You must have strength from the back bench.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am glad I have the honourable member's support. However, what happened to the member for Pilbara? Did he get thrown out on the casting vote of the Premier? Maybe the Premier could tell us. Members who have the experience which members on the front bench do not possess have been left out. It is a pity to see so many teachers and solicitors when a fair cross section of members is not represented.

Mr. May: You had a wonderful experience with the railways.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes, I had some problems and the Minister was one of them.

Mr. May: I agree.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would like to pay a compliment to my leader. He was the Premier of this State for a record 12 years and he led it through an unprecedented era of expansion. I believe he will go down as one of the great leaders of this State.

Mr. Graham: He has gone down, anyway.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister will be the next.

Mr. Graham: You are so wrong.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Of course, the Minister who is interjecting has said before each election over the last 12 years that the Government would be defeated. Eventually he had to be right. I think if I say the same thing but over a shorter period I will be right also.

Mr. Graham: It is like East Perth winning the premiership.

Mr. O'CONNOR: They have been second on so many occasions.

Mr. Graham: So has the Labor Party.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would now like to make some comments about the present Premier. While of course our leader has

gone down as one of the greatest leaders of this State, I think the present Premier can be classed as one of the great "mis-leaders" of this State. I say this because if we have a look at some of his pre-election promises and post-election statements we wonder where they come from. When we have members of his own party indicating that the Premier must have two policy speeches; one that he published and one he hid, I can almost believe it is the truth.

Prior to the election the Premier played with words on a number of occasions. When he offered free books and materials to pupils most of the people of Western Australia thought he was referring to all school children, but in fact he referred only to primary school children. I believe that this statement, in itself, misled the people and it should have been clearly stated that he was referring only to primary school children.

Mr. Tonkin: I did not say all children.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Since the tea break I have had a look at the statement made by the Premier on the 15th December, and if the Premier has had a look at it he would have seen that what I am saying is true. I would have thought the Premier of a State would have noticed a statement such as that because most people believed that this statement referred to all school children and not just primary school children.

Mr. Graham: You would know what most people think?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Unlike the Minister I have the feeling for what most people think.

Mr. Graham: You know what most people in Western Australia think, do you?

Mr. O'CONNOR: On the 15th December, the then Premier, Sir David Brand, said—

The impact on the State's Budget of all the increased wages would be about \$12,000,000 in 1970-71 and probably total more than \$20,000,000 in a full year.

It amazes me how so many members of the present Government missed that article because it was followed by a statement made by the Secretary of the T.L.C., Mr. Coleman.

Mr. Davies: Did he forecast it at that stage?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes, he did. I have a copy of the article, if the Minister wishes to see it.

Mr. Davies: He did not forecast the deficit; he merely stated what the cost would be.

Mr. O'CONNOR: On the 14th December the then Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier, stated that he thought his promises would cost more than those

made by Sir David Brand. He is the only one who thought that, because everyone else knew they would cost more; something like \$9,500,000 instead of \$2,500,000.

Mr. Nalder: He forgot about that \$15,000,000 I just told him about.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In the same issue of *The West Australian*, dated the 13th February, 1971, the present Premier stated—

I am confident that without any increase in taxes I shall comfortably meet all the promises I have made.

I wonder how bad things would be for him to meet them uncomfortably. When we realise that the Premier indicated that he would do this without any tax increases we wonder what he was thinking about or how responsible he was. Already we have had considerable increases in hospital charges and increases in water rates.

Sir David Brand: Fifty per cent.

Mr. Graham: He reduced water rates.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That may have occurred in your electorate. On the 15th February—

Mr. Graham: He reduced the rates.

Mr. O'Neil: But the bill went up.

Mr. O'CONNOR: This again is one of those misleading statements I have referred to, but we have become used to them now. Instead of straightforward statements being made we feel that things are being hidden under the cover.

Mr. Graham: Nothing hidden!

Mr. O'CONNOR: In *The West Australian* of the 15th February, 1971, the present Premier refuted any suggestion that he could not finance any of his election promises. This statement was made three days before the election. I wonder why he made it? On the 11th March, 1971, he had some second thoughts, because the election was over and he was reported as having admitted that it would be difficult to meet his election promises.

Mr. Graham: That is because of that Treasury report of the 18th February which the then Premier did not disclose.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Again we have someone indicating that this is so, because on the 15th December the financial position of the State was quite clearly known. At that time the position should have been well and truly known.

One also wonders what the position was in regard to the United Farmers and Graziers Association. In *The West Australian* of the 3rd May, 1971, the United Farmers and Graziers Association disputed the claim by the Premier, Mr. J. T. Tonkin, that there was no bargain between the U.F.G.A. and the A.L.P. before the last State election. The organisation

went on to say that there was an arrangement. It stated the arrangement was made on the 13th August. In addition it said this—

It was agreed that in return for U.F.G.A. second preferences the Labor Government would:

Immediately stop proceedings by banks, hire-purchase companies, stock firms and mortgagees and re-enact the Mortgagees Rights Restriction Act.

Agree to marketing authorities for all rural produce immediately.

Oust corporation farms from rural industry.

Appoint a prices commissioner.

They also made various other statements.

Mr. Nalder: Do you know whether they have withdrawn their subscription to the Labor Party, or not?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I think the Labor Party started them off. If we made an investigation into who started U.F.G.A. we would get a surprise. I wonder if Mr. Latter was the one who started it. Perhaps the Premier could tell us, and I may ask him that question later on.

Mr. Fletcher: The U.F.G.A. is unhappy with your Government.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Because some of its members were A.L.P. members.

Sir David Brand: They are unhappy now.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The only water that is coming now is that coming from the tears of the farmers under the present Government. The U.F.G.A. went on to say that it had asked Mr. Tonkin whether he would look on the U.F.G.A. as an ally and see that marketing authorities included U.F.G.A. personnel, and Mr. Tonkin stated that he saw no problem. Of course he would not, because he could see a few extra votes. However, what does that matter now? We can dispute that later on. I was not there when the statements were made and the Premier has now refuted them, but five men were there and they made the arrangements with the then Leader of the Opposition.

I know the Government has a mandate to abolish the road maintenance tax. I think this is most unfortunate.

Mr. Tonkin: Unfortunate for whom?

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Premier will let me explain I will tell him, because I am aware that he does not know. It is most unfortunate for the people because it will mean they will lose several millions of dollars that were being used on roads in this State. It appears fairly obvious to me that private motorists in this State will eventually suffer as a result of the abolition of this tax that was imposed on heavy haulage contractors, especially when the High Court stated that it was these people,

when compared to other road users, who caused disproportionate damage to the roads.

During the last session I asked the present Premier whether he intended to implement a tax on motor vehicles in this State if the road maintenance tax was abolished. He did not answer, so I must presume that this is what he intends to do, and I take it that we will find out this year. He has a mandate to abolish the road maintenance tax, but he does not have a mandate to implement a further tax on the motoring public of this State to replace it.

Mr. Graham: Who said he was going to do it?

Mr. O'CONNOR: He did not say he was not going to, and I have asked him several times.

Will the Deputy Premier tell me now that the Premier is not going to introduce a tax on private motorists to replace the road maintenance tax? The Deputy Premier says he is not. If he wants to speak up, come on! We are listening. The silence grows, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Do you know that jumping to conclusions is a most fallacious form of reasoning?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I know that, but when we have a secretive Government, as we have now, that will not answer questions, what do we do?

Mr. Graham: What is the price of oil fuel to the State Electricity Commission? The secretive Government! You are a funny boy.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If we have not got a secretive Government, I will ask the Premier, through you, Mr. Speaker: Is it the Premier's intention to tax the private motorist in this State following the abolition of the road maintenance tax? Hear the silence! Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I knew this would be the reaction.

Mr. Graham: You will find out when the Bill is introduced.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Mr. Speaker, will you have a look at this? I think it is a little disappointing to see the Government has split the portfolios of railways and transport. We had two forms of transport under the Minister for Transport in this State; and it is noticeable, too, that the South Australian Government sent members over to this State to investigate it and to get a picture of having one authorising body for transport, with the idea of implementing such a system in South Australia. Whilst we are proceeding in this direction here, it is a pity to see it split up to the degree it is at this particular stage.

When we have a look at all the statements that have been made, we wonder where this Government is headed. What is going to happen?—the abolition of road

maintenance tax; the split-up of the transport departments; the refund of the receipts duty tax by the Premier; the promises made to the United Farmers and Graziers Association; the statements in connection with fluoride that have been made and refuted, and the comments made regarding free books to students. I just wonder how far the Government will go.

When we listened to the comments of the Minister for Agriculture tonight, he said Cabinet had considered an early sitting of Parliament because of the rural position. The fact that it did not go any further in that matter, I presume, indicates its views on it: that it was not sufficiently concerned to proceed with an early sitting of Parliament.

Mr. H. D. Evans: It could make arrangements for rural reconstruction in some other way.

Mr. O'CONNOR: When we have a party that has pushed for two sessions of Parliament and as soon as it gets in has only one, where are we going?

Mr. T. D. Evans: That is an unfair and untrue statement to say we excluded one this year. You know it was not planned to hold two sessions in an election year.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Did not your Government, whilst in Opposition, state at one time or other it would have a second session of Parliament? It most certainly did. Anyhow, I hope that the tide turns for the better and that in future we will know what the Government is doing. I hope it advises the Opposition and the people of this State what it is doing and that it will move in a better direction than it has up to this stage.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [9.34 p.m.]: First of all, might I take this opportunity of congratulating you, Sir, on your appointment to the office of Speaker. Some years ago, when I was the member for Middle Swan you, at that time were the chairman of the Bayswater Road Board and it never ceased to astonish me—and I was always very grateful for this—that in the many dealings I, as a Liberal, had with your board, you went out of your way to be impartial in the extreme. In these circumstances I am quite certain that you are going to exercise the same impartiality in the present office that you occupy. For this reason I am pleased indeed to see that you have been thus appointed.

Tonight I want to get away from the subjects that have been discussed up until now and draw the attention of the Premier to the plight of the Aborigines in central Western Australia, particularly in the Warburton area. I do that because I believe the situation there is extremely serious as far as Aborigines are concerned; and, in view of the fact that tonight we are talking in terms of granting supply to the extent of \$211,000,000, I think it is an appropriate time to suggest to the Treasurer that he

give very serious thought indeed to allocating a fairly large portion of this sum towards the alleviation of the plight of the Aborigines to which I refer.

The Treasurer might recall that about 1956, which is 15 years ago, I had the opportunity here of moving for a Select Committee to inquire into the conditions which obtained in that central desert area. The House agreed to the appointment of a Select Committee. One was appointed. Subsequently a rather exhaustive study was made of the Aborigines in the Laverton, Leonora, and the Warburton area, and afterwards the Select Committee came up with a report. I am certainly not going to refer to it tonight, because we have not got the time, but it was a fairly scathing indictment of the situation which did exist.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to read the conclusion we came to because it was a very brief one. It was to this effect—

The Committee has arrived at the conclusion that the plight of the aborigines in the Warbuton-Laverton area is deplorable to the extreme. The natives lack even the most basic necessities of life. Malnutrition and blindness and disease, abortion and infanticide and burns and other injuries are commonplace. Game is extremely scarce on the reserve, water supplies for drinking precarious, and adequate medical attention far beyond the resources of the Warburton Mission. Employment opportunities for mission educated children are hopelessly insufficient and in the circumstances education only serves to leave them more poorly fitted for fending for themselves when thrown back on their own resources at the completion of that education. Immediate food and medical aid are urgently necessary for these people and permanent provision for them a pressing obligation on the State.

That was the conclusion arrived at by the Select Committee to which I am referring. It was composed, of course, of members of all parties. Mr. Bovell, who has since left, was one member of the committee, and the present member for Karinyup was a member. We also had a Mr. Jack Rhatigan and Mr. Ted Oldfield. Notwithstanding the fact that 15 years have elapsed since the attention of this Parliament was forcibly drawn to that situation, we find that there has been no improvement in the area, and if anything the situation is possibly worse.

Now this is an extraordinary situation indeed, and I base the statement on the report of another group which recently visited the Warburton Range area. This group was composed of Pastor Doug Nicholls, an Aboriginal, and a leading Melbourne doctor, Dr Henrichsen. I understand that he lectures at the university

in Melbourne and that he is a doctor of considerable repute. He took time off to leave his practice in Melbourne and come over here with Pastor Doug Nicholls and go out there for the first three weeks of April of this year to find out what the situation was. Shortly after the Select Committee had been there, Pastor Doug Nicholls went out himself with others and had a look at the position which obtained; so he wanted to go back 15 years later and see what had happened.

The report that they have issued indicates quite clearly, as I mentioned earlier, that the situation is as bad now as it was then. For instance, at the Warburton Mission, where the population is about 580, the members of this latest committee pointed out that the hospital facilities there are composed of a small tin shed with one bed, and they make the statement that there is no maternity service for the 580 natives. They say the women go into the bushes, away from camp, to have their babies. Under these conditions the infant mortality rate is extremely high. They were unable to obtain figures.

So members can see there is a mission where there are 580 Aborigines. They have a small tin shed with one bed and, here and now, when a woman wants to have a baby, she goes into the bush and has the baby there. That is the situation which prevails at the present time. It is a situation which has prevailed for the last 15 years, since attention was drawn to it in 1956.

On the question of sanitation the committee pointed out that toilet blocks were available, but if the entire population of 580 decided to use these toilet blocks they would be totally inadequate. In connection with health the report points out that there is a high proportion of chest and respiratory tract infection and disease. The committee saw a number of children with discharging ears and the sisters indicated that gastro-intestinal infections were a problem.

In respect of nutrition the report states that many of the families depend on monthly social service payments, pensions, and child endowment. It states that they use this money to buy food at the mission but that they lack any understanding of the nutritional value of food. They will spend the whole cheque in one day and for a couple of days they are overfed on food of little value and, as a result, for the rest of the month they starve.

So we have a situation where social service cheques are being paid to the natives who promptly go to the mission store and spend the lot in two days. For the rest of the month they only just survive. The report states—

The sisters were adamant that, although there did not appear to be starvation at the moment, during the summer months, when the school area

was closed, there was a real fear of children dying of starvation. On their own initiative, and out of their own salaries, they gave food to some starving natives.

On the question of housing the report states, "Housing as we know it, was non-existent, apart from housing for the Mission staff"; and in connection with employment the report points out, "At the moment there is no employment opportunity in the Warburton Area."

That is the situation obtaining at the Warburton Mission, notwithstanding that we had a Select Committee in 1956 to inquire into the position and also notwithstanding the fact that attention was drawn to the position that obtained in such forcible terms and to such an extent that the report aroused a controversy throughout Australia. All sorts of people came forward at that time, however, and they decried the report of the Select Committee.

It was said that the situation was not nearly as bad as it had been portrayed, yet we find that that situation still obtains even though all these years have elapsed. The party that went out recently—the one composed of Pastor Doug Nicholls and Dr. Henrichsen—went further to Wingelina and found the situation there to be even worse. Wingelina, of course, is near the Western Australian and South Australian border where nickel mining was carried out. International Nickel opened up the area and explored for nickel. It has since left the area. The party in question investigated the position and in respect of Wingelina it points out that no medical facilities whatsoever were available. In respect of eye diseases the party reports that—

80 per cent. of the people we saw had infective eye disease, probably trachoma. In some of the children, the condition was so severe that, unless they are treated reasonably soon, blindness may result.

The report adds—

Many of the children had discharging ears. Many suffered signs of scurvy, as indicated by bleeding of the gums on contact.

That is the situation at Wingelina where the population is approximately 100. In respect of nutrition at Wingelina the report states—

This was extremely poor in some cases, almost to the point of starvation. There appears to be little game in the area. I understand the natives largely depend on food from a mining venture nearby. Some seven of the men were employed by Wingelina Nickel and their wages provided most of the food purchased through the mining firm.

The report further points out that sanitation and maternity facilities were non-existent. That is the situation which exists in the central desert area at the moment, and it is not much better on the eastern goldfields.

There is no employment whatever at the Warburton Mission. We have 580 people in the Warburton Mission area sitting around receiving pensions and doing nothing at all for the handouts they receive. There is no attempt by the missionaries to ensure that they get nutritional food, nor is any attempt made to help them eke out the food they do receive. When they are paid their cheques they generally spend the amount within a couple of days.

The report stated that the incidence of trachoma was 80 per cent. at the Warburton Mission and the same applies in the eastern goldfields. At the Warburton Mission there was also a high incidence of syphilis and other venereal diseases and it was very difficult to determine whether or not the natives suffered from this disease, because of the incidence of a similar disease called yaws. The symptoms are very much alike and apparently impossible to diagnose for certain without a blood culture. The matron, however, was not qualified to take such a culture. So syphilis and other venereal diseases were rife in 1956 and the situation is much the same today.

On a recent tour of the eastern goldfields I was told by most reliable individuals at Laverton that the incidence of venereal disease amongst the natives was 50 per cent.

Mr. Hartrey: How did they find out?

Mr. GRAYDEN: They are responsible types of people and I checked the information. If the incidence of venereal disease is anywhere near 50 per cent. it is a shocking state of affairs. It must be appreciated that in the Laverton, Leonora, and Wiluna areas there might be only 1,000 natives and, if venereal disease is rife to the extent I have mentioned, those who require treatment can all surely be rounded up with a view to giving them the necessary treatment to arrest the disease.

Mr. Davies: What medical staff have they got?

Mr. GRAYDEN: There are two nursing sisters at the Warburton Mission who, I believe, are extremely capable, but they cannot give the medical attention required. I am not criticising the mission in any way at all, nor am I criticising the sisters. The party which went out and investigated the position spoke highly of the work done by the sisters, and they mentioned that, when he was available, the doctor flew to the Warburton Mission from Kalgoorlie.

I am criticising the fact that the incidence of disease is so high in this area and also that no attempt is being made to provide some sort of employment for these people. They are simply allowed to sit around and receive handouts.

The other day a member in another place mentioned that the nomadic type of native to whom we are referring could well be accommodated in a kibbutz-type of community settlement. I cannot agree more. It is something I have suggested in the past, because during the war I was stationed in Palestine and I took the opportunity to visit the community settlements there. I was tremendously impressed with the set-up. It would be an ideal solution and would help accommodate the natives in the outer areas of Australia.

These community settlements are completely self-contained. They provide employment, housing, medical attention, education for the children, and all sort of social and cultural amenities. If one were established at Warburton Mission it would certainly be a stepping stone to teaching those people how to become integrated into our society.

I hope the Government will look very closely at the suggestion made by a member in another place and give consideration to establishing a community settlement at the Warburton Range, because it would be extremely valuable there. If that were done it would be an ideal way to integrate these people into our society. Once they have lived in a community settlement for some time they will have less difficulty in being assimilated into the way of life in other parts of Australia.

I do not want to delay the House any longer. I simply want to emphasise to the Government the plight of Aborigines living in this area. In spending some of the money which will be made available by the Bill before us, I hope the Government will give serious consideration to the plight of the Aborigines in the areas to which I have referred.

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Treasurer) [9.52 p.m.]: To you, Mr. Speaker, I accord with a great deal of goodwill my acknowledgement of your assumption of your high office of dignity and importance. With other members I extend to those who have been recipients of good wishes my congratulation also, for the various reasons stated by the other speakers.

This evening, as is the wont of the Leader of the Opposition, he opened the debate on the Supply Bill after the second reading had been introduced. He spoke, first of all, about the separation of those subjects rightly called tertiary education subjects from those falling properly within the jurisdiction of the Education Act.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to say, "I do not aver that the Treasurer will be incapable of administering the various tertiary education subjects." A few weeks before that he said something a little more complimentary, because it was with some humility and a great deal of modesty that I read in the political notes of *The West Australian* of the 1st July the following reference to me—

The State Treasurer, Mr. Evans, a minister with a sound academic background and well qualified to speak on educational matters acknowledged this. . .

If that be so, I can safely say that the separation of those two functions of education has been a safe and a desirable one.

The Leader of the Opposition became quite concerned, because it has been alleged—so he said—certain unnamed Ministers of this Government had made the statement that on assumption of office we came into a depleted Treasury. The Leader of the Opposition went on at great pains to aver, to affirm, and to state quite categorically that the Treasury was, in fact, quite healthy when the change of Government was effected.

Mr. Court: In Western Australia.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Whilst the Leader of the Opposition was speaking I invited him to indicate the dates to which he had made reference, without definition, when he, prior to the election, had in fact spelt out in loud and clear letters of warning to the electorate as a whole that the State was bordering on an economic crisis.

I was told to refer to *The West Australian* of the 15th December and the 10th February. This I did, but it appears that I searched in vain because in neither of those references did I find a clear statement that in this, or in the remaining part of the 1970-71 financial year, the State was facing a financial crisis.

It is true the Leader of the Opposition spoke about the effect of the 6 per cent. national wage decision, but at no time and in no part of this article did he refer to the fact that the consequences thereafter would likely be a deficit or any part of a deficit.

Mr. O'Connor: Did he say it would bring about a cost of \$20,000,000 in a full year?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Yes, but he did not indicate any deficit.

Mr. O'Connor: You cannot work out figures very well.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Having listened to the debate this evening I find myself in the happy position of being able to agree for the first time in many months with an editorial which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 16th July, under the

heading of "Labor's test." I am quite convinced, having heard and having participated in this debate, of the truth and the wisdom of the words I am about to quote from that editorial—

The Government's main troubles are extra-parliamentary. Its assumption of office has coincided with a sharp deterioration in the State's finances . . . There were clear signs before the February election of financial strain.

Sir David Brand: That should have been clear to everyone, not only to the leader writer.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: That the Leader of the Opposition was well aware of this is undisputed, because by letter to the former Prime Minister in February, 1971, the Leader of the Opposition as the then Premier of the State said—

Mr. Prime Minister

Like all other States we are faced this year with substantial additional wage costs for which no provision was made in our Budget. . .

However, I am sure that no Treasurer could have anticipated the huge salary and wage rises which have taken place in the last six months.

I could go on quoting, but I will not do so. However, I do intend to refer to a minute from the Under-Treasurer which I received the day after I was sworn into office. It is dated the 3rd March, 1971, and reads as follows:—

State Finances

Attached is a minute which I addressed to the former Treasurer on 19 February. I am not aware of any action taken on that minute. . .

To date, there has been no action in this State to prune expenditure or to increase taxes and charges.

If anything, Western Australia is in a worse financial situation than any other State.

Let us have a look at the minute addressed by the Under-Treasurer to the former Treasurer.

Mr. Court: What date was the 19th February? Was it not the very eve of the election?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: He said—

The current budgetary situation gives rise to concern.

In paragraph 6 of this minute he said—

Consequently, the deficit now expected for 1970/71 is in the order of \$10 million which is due entirely to wage increases in excess of the provisions in the Budget.

This was the advice which the Under-Treasurer gave to the Treasurer at that time: the situation confronting the State

was due entirely to wage increases in excess of provisions that had been put aside in the Budget.

Mr. Court: That is what we are telling you.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Yet the Leader of the Opposition was trying to say that this was due to extravagant promises made by the previous Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Court: When you get to your office call for the Premier's Press release of the 10th February.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I have it right here.

Mr. Court: Not the newspaper report; the Press release of the 10th February. You will find all the information there that you want.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The Premier of the day—the present Leader of the Opposition—claimed that not only was he aware, but that he had taken every reasonable step to make the electors aware of the serious economic plight of the State at the time. But did this prevent him, or dissuade him, or discourage him from making promises which would, if implemented, cost \$2,500,000? Not at all!

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition now says that I should have a look at the previous Premier's Press release dated the 10th February. I am aware of the election promises made by the present Leader of the Opposition subsequent to the 10th February.

Mr. O'Connor: What about the promises of the present Premier?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I do not wish to delay the House, nor to delay the passage of this measure. However, I feel it incumbent on me to make some reference—even if only small—to each speaker who contributed to this debate because I am grateful for those contributions even if I cannot appreciate all the comments which have been made.

Firstly I will refer to the Leader of the Country Party and also the member for Narrogin, both of whom addressed themselves to the question of rural reconstruction. I am sure that after hearing the comments of the Minister for Agriculture they will agree that they heard more than they expected, and a lot more than they cared to hear.

Mr. Nalder: A lot of hysterics.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition then joined in the debate and he went to great pains to try to rebut any impression that the present Government inherited a financial situation, which in his own words, was not good. He went on to say that had it not been for retrospective payments—and there had been careful husbandry to meet the retrospective payments—the State could well have finished the financial year with a credit balance or, at least, no deficit at

all. However, it serves him no good purpose if his premise is based on the condition that "if something did not happen," because what he claims might or might not have happened did, in fact, occur.

This particular contingency did, in fact, occur. So the argument of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition serves no useful purpose at all. In fact, it emphasises the point that neither the former Government nor the former Leader of the Opposition could reasonably be expected to believe that there was to be such a huge escalation in wages. However, it was within the knowledge of the former Premier—the present Leader of the Opposition—prior to the election, and he could have drawn the attention of the electors to this fact. Apparently he made a Press statement on the 10th February, but subsequent to that he made election promises which, in his own words, could well have meant the expenditure of \$2,500,000. He said that because of the escalation of wages the Government could be facing a wage bill of some \$20,000,000. Now, is this a responsible attitude?

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition improved as he proceeded. Before he improved, of course, there was a great deal of scope for such improvement, but improve he did. He then went on to express his thoughts, his words, and his aspirations relating to the new Public Accounts Committee. I can assure him that his views here are in accord with those of the Government, and as the Treasurer I offer all goodwill and I will make available to the committee every reasonable facility to ensure that it is able to give proper effect to its most worth-while function.

The member for Floreat addressed himself to the question of education and the administration of the Education Act. I am quite sure that when the occasion offers itself the Minister for Education will be able to answer the queries which were raised.

The member for East Melville spoke on housing finance and the building society movement. I would say to him if he can muster some small measure of patience his patience will be rewarded when legislation which is contemplated is brought before the House. I cannot assure him that he will enjoy what he will read, but I am sure we will hear some grateful comments from home purchasers.

Mr. Court: That is if you do not scare all the money away.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The member for Mt. Lawley commenced his speech with some facetious remarks, and then concluded by referring to subjects more emotional than financial and more fanciful than realistic.

Finally, I would like to refer to the speech of the member for South Perth who spoke on the extreme plight of our

Aborigines. One does not deny the sincerity of the member for South Perth on any subject, and in particular on this subject. However, I was tempted to jump to a conclusion. I had to bear in mind the warning which was referred to by, I think, the Premier in an interjection to the member for East Melville, that the reasoning of one who jumps to a conclusion can be based on fallacy. I was tempted to believe that the member for South Perth was going to suggest that the plight of the Aborigines was something which had just come into being overnight. However, I resisted the temptation and my mortification was rewarded because the member for South Perth went on to say that some 15 years ago he, with other members of this House, had visited the Mt. Margaret and Warburton district. He was able to indicate that during the 12 years of the former Government the situation had not improved and, in his own words, if anything the position was now much worse.

I would like to assure the member for South Perth that this Government has a great deal of faith in its present Minister for Health and its present Minister for Community Welfare. I am sure that a new dawn is awakening and that a new and better deal is ensured for those people.

I thank members who have participated in this debate, Mr. Speaker, and I again commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Norton) in the Chair; Mr. T. D. Evans (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I commence my duties as Chairman of Committees in this Chamber I wish to thank all members for having elected me to this very important position. It will be my desire to maintain the high traditions of this office, but I will require the co-operation and indulgence of members in doing this. Members can be assured of my indulgence with them so far as Standing Orders will permit me.

Clauses 1 to 3 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. T. D. Evans (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 10.14 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 21st July, 1971

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE

1. EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

Effect of Britain's Entry

The Hon. N. McNEILL, to the Leader of the House:

With reference to the statement by the Hon. Premier, reported in the Press on the 3rd June, 1971, that Britain's entry into the European Economic Community would not greatly disadvantage Western Australia, I ask—

- (a) will the Government prepare and publish a detailed and authoritative report on the effect on Western Australian exports which would result from Britain's entry into the European Economic Community, and the steps the Government is taking in order to compensate for the possible loss of markets, particularly for primary produce; and
- (b) what was the total value in 1970-71 of Western Australian exports to Britain and Europe which could be so affected?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

As an interim reply to the honourable member's question, the following statement is submitted.

A more detailed report will be prepared as developments between the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth become available.

Effects of U.K. Entry Into The E.E.C.

It now appears unlikely that transitional arrangements will be made for Australian agricultural imports into the United Kingdom when that country enters the European Economic Community. An exception is sugar.

The agricultural industries likely to be most seriously affected by U.K. entry into the E.E.C. are dairying, canned fruit, dried fruit, apples and pears and the sugar industry. Sales of soft wheats are also likely to be reduced. Sales of coarse grains may not be seriously reduced below recent levels, as the E.E.C. is itself a major importer of animal feedstuffs; however, the opportunities for growth in exports