

vision mirror is adjusted properly. Before driving off, I wonder if we test our brakes in case they might fail at a crucial moment. I also noticed that the pilots are subject to a special provision. They are not permitted to take an intoxicating drink so many hours before taking charge of a plane. I wonder if we could get everybody who is in charge of a car to abstain for just half the time that applies to a pilot in this regard. If we did that I feel that in a matter of weeks our roads would be free of much of the toll that is being taken today.

I might say that our north was the only part of Australia I had not seen. I had seen every other part, including the Northern Territory, north Queensland, and south Tasmania. I came back with the impression that we have a wonderful heritage in the north; a heritage handed to us by the people who pioneered it. I honour those pioneers. We have to help the citizens who are there today, but we also have a greater duty; we must plan for the citizens of tomorrow; and when we depart we must leave our State a better place than it is today. When we plan for the north, we must always plan not only for the present, but also with an eye to the future. If we do that, perhaps in another 50 years—I hope it will be in 50 years—the people who live in the north will at least call us wise and blessed.

I would like to pay a tribute to the public servants. Year by year I find that as my work with them continues they seem to become more and more efficient, helpful, and courteous, and I could not sit down without expressing that tribute to them. Finally, I am pleased to see that the Leader of the House has returned from his trip overseas, I am sure, a much wiser and better informed man; and, as the session progresses, no doubt he will speak of matters arising out of his experience and we will have an opportunity to debate them with him.

I am pleased to see that you, Sir, and all other members of the House are enjoying good health. There are a couple I know who have been poorly, but they are now enjoying better health which I hope will continue so that they can do their work efficiently.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. H. C. Strickland.

## SUPPLY BILL

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

*House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 3rd August, 1966

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

## QUESTIONS (40) : ON NOTICE

## MOTOR VEHICLES

*Brake Faults*

1. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Police:
  - (1) Is he aware that under very wet conditions the brakes on some popular makes of cars fail to act at times?
  - (2) If he is not so aware, will he make immediate inquiries on the matter?
  - (3) As a private motorist can be in trouble for having faulty brakes, should not the makers of cars be under compulsion to have brakes fitted that work under all conditions?
  - (4) In view of the fact that temporary brake failure could be the cause of many accidents, will he have urgent action taken on the matter?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) Yes. Under adverse conditions such as driving through deep water where the braking mechanism is partly submerged, all makes of cars will suffer brake failure to a varying degree depending on the amount of water in the mechanism and the type of brake fitted.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) There is no known type of brake which will work perfectly when subjected to adverse conditions. The efficiency of the braking mechanism is the subject of constant research by motor vehicle manufacturers.
- (4) Accidents do occur as a result of brake failure but, in general, such failure is due to the lack of proper maintenance or lack of road surface adhesion, such as in wet weather. Generally, the efficiency of braking mechanism is improving with new designs and the position is constantly watched.

## MIDLAND-KOONGAMIA BUS SERVICE

*Improvement, and Commencement of New Service*

2. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Transport:
  - (1) Has any decision been made to improve the bus service between Midland and Koongamia?
  - (2) Is it proposed to run a service via Clayton Street?
  - (3) When will the new service (if any) be commenced?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

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

## MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY LAND AT MIDLAND

*Leasing for Business Purposes*

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:
  - (1) Has the area of land taken over from the Midland Railway Company in Midland been leased for business purposes?
  - (2) Are negotiations taking place for leasing?
  - (3) If answers to (1) and (2) are in the negative, what is planned for the area by the Government?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) Finality of Government requirements in the area has not yet been achieved.

## MIDLAND RAILWAY STATION

*New Structure: Tender, Commencement, and Opening*

4. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:
  - (1) Has a tender been accepted for building the new railway station at Midland?
  - (2) If so,
    - (a) when will work commence;
    - (b) what will be the approximate date of opening for business?

Mr. COURT replied:

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

## WEST MIDLAND RAILWAY STATION

*Shelter for Passengers*

5. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:
  - (1) Is additional shelter being arranged for West Midland Station?
  - (2) When will the new shelter, if approved, be in position?
  - (3) Will ample enclosed shelter be provided for train commuters?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes, as advised in answer to question 20 asked by the honourable member on Tuesday, the 2nd August, 1966.
- (2) Investigations are at present being carried out as to design and to determine if the proposed shelter will be adequate and suitable for requirements.  
Erection will be undertaken as early as practicable.
- (3) If the honourable member refers to covered shelter the answer is, "Yes". If the question refers to covered enclosed shelter then enclosure is not proposed for reasons given in answer to question 20 asked by the honourable member on Tuesday, the 2nd August, 1966.

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

#### DRUNKEN DRIVING

##### *Increased Penalties, and Convictions*

8. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) On what date did the increased penalties for driving a vehicle whilst under the influence of alcohol come into effect?
- (2) Since then, what is the number of—  
(a) first offenders;  
(b) others?
- (3) What are the comparable figures covering the same calendar period of the previous year?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) 19th November, 1965.
- (2) From the 19th November, 1965 to the 30th June, 1966  
(a) 225.  
(b) 77.
- (3) (a) First offenders 363.  
(b) Others 103.

Mr. Graham: Your increased penalties have increased the offences.

#### METROPOLITAN TRAFFIC AREA

##### *Armada-Kelmscott District: Inclusion*

9. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has the metropolitan traffic area been extended to include the district of the Armada-Kelmscott Shire Council?
- (2) What is the operative date of the change?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) No, but a request by the Council of the Shire of Armada-Kelmscott that the whole of the shire be included in the metropolitan traffic area has been approved.
- (2) Licensing of vehicles and control of traffic will be taken over officially as from the 1st October, 1966.

The council's traffic inspector has resigned and, in order to provide some traffic supervision in the district pending the official changeover, police traffic patrols have been extended to include major roads passing through Armadale.

#### JURY CASES

##### *Transfer from Carnarvon to Geraldton*

10. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) What was the reason for transferring two jury cases from Carnarvon to Geraldton to be heard?
- (2) How many witnesses were required to be transported from Carnarvon to Geraldton in each case?
- (3) How long did each case last?
- (4) What was the cost of—  
(a) transporting each witness to and from Geraldton;  
(b) accommodation at Geraldton of each witness;  
(c) the amount paid as witness fees to each witness?
- (5) What was the length of time each witness was required to be away from Carnarvon?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) The two jury cases were transferred from Carnarvon to Geraldton by order of the Chief Justice on an application by the Crown Prosecutor to change the venue of trial.  
The Chief Justice and the Crown Law Department considered that the facilities available at Carnarvon for a mixed jury were inadequate.
- (2) In the first case four witnesses; in the second case four witnesses.
- (3) The first case two days; the second case one and a half days.
- (4) (a) The total cost of transporting the witnesses was \$130.50, being the cost of a charter plane. In addition two witnesses made the return journey in a departmental car.  
(b) \$1.00 per night for each witness from Carnarvon was allowed in addition to the witness fee, which would normally be paid to a Geraldton resident.  
(c) In the case of three witnesses, \$5, one witness \$6, one witness \$14, the remaining three witnesses being two police officers and an officer of the Crown were not entitled to witness fees.
- (5) The time each witness was required to be away from Carnarvon for the particular trials varied from less than one day to three days.

**LAND AT CARNARVON***Release for Home Building and Light Industry*

11. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) When will his department be releasing land at Carnarvon for home building and light industry?
- (2) On what date did the Shire of Carnarvon make representations to him for land to be made available for housing and industry?
- (3) Has any definite reply been sent to the Shire of Carnarvon in respect of their request and, if so, what was the reply?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Eight light industrial sites have recently been surveyed and will be released shortly. The release of residential sites is dependent upon the results of the submissions of the Shire of Carnarvon which are at present under consideration.
- (2) Discussions with the shire president took place on the 30th March, 1966, and formal submissions were made by the Shire on the 27th April and the 23rd May, 1966.
- (3) Submissions of the shire were acknowledged on the 25th May, 1966, and consideration is currently being given to the requests involved.

**BRICKS***Carnarvon: Preference, and Type Used by Government*

12. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) In how many Government or departmental houses at Carnarvon have pressed or wire cut bricks been used?
- (2) What is the cost per thousand, delivered to Carnarvon, of pressed or wire cut bricks?
- (3) How does this price compare with the locally-made cement bricks?
- (4) What are the advantages of using pressed or wire cut bricks instead of the locally-made cement bricks?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Four (three built by the commission on behalf of the Medical Department and one on behalf of the Rural & Industries Bank).
- (2) Prices vary from \$114.53 to \$141.45 depending on the type of brick and the colour used.
- (3) Local cement bricks approximately \$45.00 per 1,000.
- (4) Burnt clay bricks are not subject to the following conditions which are required for cement bricks:—

- (a) Curing — approximately 12 weeks before cement bricks can be placed in walling.
- (b) Testing—all cement bricks must be subject to University testing prior to use. This applies to a random sample taken from each batch.
- (c) Aggregate—basic materials vary with the locality.
- (d) Movement—cement bricks are liable to greater movement due to climatic fluctuations resulting in possible fracture of mortar joints.
- (e) Finish—interior finish to walls must include retarded plaster to floating coat and hard wall plaster to setting coat. The expense is not great individually but could be affected in mass housing of cement brick construction.

**SOLAR HEATERS***Carnarvon: Installation and Boosters*

13. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is the cost of a solar heater installed in a house at Carnarvon?
- (2) How many houses have been supplied with solar heaters at Carnarvon?
- (3) Since installation, how many solar heaters have been equipped with boosters?
- (4) What is the make and type of the boosters and the cost of supplying and installing each?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) From \$760.00 to \$885.00 with a booster.  
From \$650.00 to \$695.00 without a booster.  
Depending on the type and date of installation.
- (2) Installed in houses previously built, 21.  
Installed during construction of new houses, 10.  
There are no installations in State Housing Commission rental homes.
- (3) 15.
- (4) Metters Speediheat Solid Fuel from \$320.00 to \$410.00.

**STATE RENTAL HOMES***Carnarvon: Applications and Building Programme*

14. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many applications are outstanding for State rental homes at Carnarvon?
- (2) How many applicants were allocated State rental homes at Carnarvon during the past twelve months?

- (3) How many State rental homes are to be built at Carnarvon during this financial year?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) 69.  
 (2) 25—Twelve new houses and thirteen re-occupations.  
 (3) Subject to availability of land, 23 units.  
 In addition, seven units will be built for Government employees.

#### ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

*Administration: Extra Staff, Vehicles Purchased, and Tape Recorders*

15. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) How many extra—  
 (a) clerical;  
 (b) outside  
 staff have been employed to administer and police the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act?  
 (2) How many vehicles have been purchased for the policing of the Act?  
 (3) How many tape recorders are being used for recording of spottings?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) 13 male.  
       6 female.  
 (2) 10.  
 (3) 10 by road maintenance spotters and  
 13 by departmental officers, other than road maintenance spotters.  
 23 Total

#### MOTOR VEHICLES

*License Fees*

16. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Police:

What is the license fee, excluding third party insurance and surcharge, on the following cars:—

- (a) Holden sedan;  
 (b) Holden station wagon;  
 (c) Falcon sedan;  
 (d) Falcon station wagon;  
 (e) Valiant sedan;  
 (f) Valiant station wagon;  
 (g) Austin Freeway sedan?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

	Tare Weight and License Fee.	Cwt.	\$
(a) 1965 Holden special sedan, manual	23.25	27	
(b) 1965 Holden special station sedan (manual)	24.75	29	
(c) 1965 Falcon sedan, manual	23.00	26	
(d) 1965 Falcon station sedan, manual	25.25	30	

(e) 1965 Valiant sedan, manual	24.50	29
(f) 1965 Valiant station sedan, manual	26.00	30
(g) 1964 Austin Freeway sedan, manual	22.50	26

*Classifications, Registrations, License Fees, and Over-load Permits*

17. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) What was the total number of motor vehicles registered in W.A. for the year ending the 30th June, 1966, in the following classifications:—  
 (a) Motor cars and station wagons;  
 (b) utilities and vans;  
 (c) trucks and prime movers;  
 (d) motor cycles;  
 (e) semi-trailer attachments, two and four wheel trailers and caravans?  
 (2) What was the total amount of license fees collected from the vehicles referred to in (1)?  
 (3) What amount was collected by the police for over-load permits for the year ending the 30th June, 1966?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

(1) Figures as at the 30th June, 1966, are not yet available but at the 30th March, 1966, vehicles registered in Western Australia were—	
(a) Motor cars	181,637
Station wagons	32,274
	213,911
(b) Utilities	41,010
Panel vans	10,504
	51,514
(c) Wagons and prime movers	30,314
(d) Motor cycles	8,966
(e) Semi-trailers, trailers and caravans	46,038
	350,743

- (2) The total amount collected for the year ended the 30th June, 1966, was \$8,892,806.  
 (3) \$34,415.

#### HOUSING AND SWIMMING POOL AT EXMOUTH

*Cost: Proportion Borne by State*

18. Mr. NORTON asked the Premier:

- (1) What proportion of the cost of the building of present houses at Exmouth is to be borne by the State and from what funds?  
 (2) What proportion of the cost of the swimming pool at Exmouth is to be borne by the State?

*Provision for Single Accommodation*

- (3) Is any accommodation to be provided for single male and female workers at Exmouth?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) One-third from loan funds.
- (2) One-third.
- (3) This matter is now under investigation and a decision is expected shortly.

#### KWINANA FREEWAY

##### *Route, Plan, and River Reclamation*

19. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has a route for the extension of the Kwinana Freeway beyond Canning Bridge been planned?
- (2) If "Yes", will he table the plan?
- (3) If no plan has been approved, what routes are currently under consideration and when is it expected a plan will be adopted?
- (4) In view of the anxiety of persons whose properties could be adversely affected will he, as early as possible, make a statement on the Kwinana Freeway proposals and indicate to what extent, if at all, reclamation of the river is involved?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) to (4) The Metropolitan Region Scheme adopted by Parliament in 1963 shows the route of Kwinana Freeway crossing the Canning River at Deepwater Point. The Main Roads Department has investigated an alternative route with a river crossing at Mt. Henry. The results of the investigation show that there are no major differences in engineering factors and costs between the alternatives. Both alternatives involve river reclamation which can be reduced by re-routing a third alternative through heavily developed residential areas. Investigation of this last alternative has not been pursued at this stage. The diagrams drawn up are only design studies and it would be misleading and premature to table such preliminary information. Any change in the adopted alignment will require the approval of Parliament as it would constitute a major amendment to the region scheme.

#### DE LEUW CATHER & CO.

##### *Engagement by Main Roads Department as Consultants*

20. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) On what financial basis has the firm De Leuw Cather & Co. been engaged as consultants to the Main Roads Department?
- (2) If the company has a contract what is its term?
- (3) What is the total amount in fees and expenses already paid to the

company and what additional amount is due to date but not yet paid?

*Plan No. 3034 T.B. 3324: Advice*

- (4) Was plan No. 3034 T.B. 3324 prepared in accordance with advice given by the company?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) On the basis of payment for actual time spent on the works.
- (2) There is no contract but an agreement was arranged by an exchange of letters.
- (3) Since this company was first engaged about five years ago the total amount paid by the Main Roads Department is \$424,123. Approximately \$20,000 is due to date for which accounts have not been received.
- (4) No.

#### NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING

##### *Leave: Disadvantages of Western Australians*

21. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has he reflected on the unfairness to national service trainees from this State which results from their being at a disadvantage when going to their homes during periods of leave?
- (2) Does he not think that some scheme should be devised which recognises this disadvantage and compensates our trainees to some extent in the matter of time and expense?
- (3) Will he make representations to the Commonwealth Government with a view to having some special provision made towards evening up the inequality which exists and under which it costs a Western Australian trainee more than two hundred dollars to have his leave at home?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) to (3) In general terms, I am aware of these difficulties. Inquiries will be made and the honourable member advised at a later date.

#### LOTTERIES CONTROL ACT

*Agency: Application by Mr. E. T. Sargent*

22. Mr. TONKIN asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Did he see in *The West Australian* of the 13th July last a letter from Edgar T. Sargent in which he complained that he had been refused an agency by the Lotteries Commission on the grounds there were already enough agents in the city area and subsequently an agency was granted to another person to sell tickets in the locality?

- (2) Did he investigate the matter?
- (3) Was Mr. Sargent refused an agency for the reason stated?
- (4) If "No", what was the reason?
- (5) If, in the opinion of the commission, there were sufficient agencies already established in the city area, why was an additional agent appointed?
- (6) What criteria are used by the commission to form a judgment on an application for an agency?
- (7) On which of these was Mr. Sargent lacking as compared with the person who was subsequently given an agency?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) Because an agency had been held there previously and the site was regarded highly by the commission.
- (6) (a) Density of passing public.  
(b) Suitability of applicant.
- (7) Poor density of passing public.

23. *This question was postponed.*

#### ROAD TRANSPORT

*Pak Poy and Associates: Inquiry, and Cost Involved*

24. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has there recently been in Perth a representative of an Eastern States firm named Pak Poy and Associates?
- (2) If "Yes," was the firm seeking information on transport problems in the metropolitan area?
- (3) On whose behalf was the information being sought?
- (4) Is the Western Australian Government involved in any expense in connection with this inquiry?
- (5) If "Yes," to what amount?
- (6) Into what particular aspects of road transport was the firm in question making inquiries?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) On behalf of the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads.
- (4) No.
- (5) Answered by (4).
- (6) The firm has been retained by the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads to make recommendations as to methods by which all capital cities' road needs can be compared on a scientific and uniform basis. The Commonwealth bureau has the function of reviewing urban and rural road needs of all Australian States.

Thus the firm in question was making inquiries relative to overall aspects of transport in the Perth metropolitan region since road needs cannot be dissociated from levels of service offered by all forms of transport.

#### EDUCATION

*Deaf Children: Criticism and Defects*

25. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has he noticed that for a considerable period of time there have been appearing in *The West Australian* letters very critical of educational provision in this State for deaf children?
- (2) As he or a high-ranking officer of the Education Department invariably makes a statement in defence when there is criticism of some aspect of general education in either our primary or secondary schools, why is it that no authoritative public statement has been made in reply to criticism of education for deaf children?
- (3) Has the Education Department a satisfactory answer to the strictures which have been published or plans to remedy the defects if the criticism has been warranted?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The criticism has come from members of the Deaf Children's Welfare Group. Representatives of the group waited on the Minister for Education in September, 1965, and put forward certain proposals for the improvement of deaf education. The group has since been kept informed by letter of the action taken with respect to the matters discussed at that time. This was considered preferable to engaging in a newspaper correspondence.
- (3) The department has a satisfactory answer. Some matters raised by the deputation, which the department had under consideration at the time, have since been implemented.

#### LAND

*Exchange between University and Education Department: Particulars*

26. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) What are the particulars of the land exchange which he explained in a statement published in *The West Australian* on the 30th March last had been agreed on between the University and the Education Department and which did not commit the Government to any reclamation of the Swan River?

- (2) What area of parklands, if any, is ceded to the University under this agreement?
- (3) Is it intended to replace such parklands and, if so, can this be done without some reclamation of the Swan River?
- (4) If reclamation of the Swan River is involved, what is the estimated area?
- (5) Is the area of 2 acres 2 roods 5 perches which formed part of Class "A" Reserve 17375 and which was surveyed as the proposed deviation of Hackett Drive and shown coloured dark brown on Lands and Surveys original plan No. 6430, ceded to the University under the exchange agreed on?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The land to be acquired by the Government for the purposes of a teachers' training college comprises portion of Swan Location 3086 and portion of Perth Lot 440. The area is approximately 9 acres and is bounded by Stirling Highway, Hampden, Clifton and Gordon Roads. A further 25 acres in the Daglish area is also made available by the University to the Government. In exchange, the University is to be granted—
  - (a) a section of Hackett Drive to be closed by 1st January, 1971, and containing 2 acres 2 roods 6 perches;
  - (b) two parcels of 5 acres 1 rood 17 perches and 22 perches excised from Reserve 17375 (National Parks Board) by the Reserves Act, 1957, and now vacant Crown land.
- In addition to (a) and (b) an area of 3 acres 3 roods 23 perches has already been included in the University reserve as part of the exchange arrangement. The total area to be granted to the University is therefore 11 acres 3 roods 28 perches.
- (2) 5 acres 1 rood 39 perches was excised from Reserve 17375 (National Parks Board) for part of the original site for a teachers' training college, and it is now proposed to make this available to the University in the exchange undertaking.
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) No.

#### MITCHELL FREEWAY INTERCHANGE *Sand Filling, and Cost of Drainage*

27. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What quantity of sand has been

deposited on the site of the proposed interchange for the Mitchell Freeway and what is the cost to date?

- (2) What additional quantity is required to be deposited and what is the estimated cost?
- (3) Of the total quantity of sand deposited, what quantity will have to be removed subsequently?
- (4) Where is it proposed to place the excess sand, and what is the estimated cost of removal?
- (5) What was the cost of sinking the draining holes required on the site of the proposed traffic interchange?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The total quantity of sand deposited to date at the interchange, not including that used purely for reclamation, is 2,708,684 cubic yards at a cost of \$1,637,822.
  - (2) The additional quantity required will be between 800,000 and 1,300,000 cubic yards. The estimated additional cost of this sand will be between \$520,000 and \$845,000.
  - (3) The total quantity of sand to be subsequently removed will be between 500,000 and 1,000,000 cubic yards depending upon the results of tests to determine the rate at which the mud compresses.
  - (4) No decision has yet been reached as to where the excess sand will be deposited. Until such decision is made the cost of removal cannot be determined.
  - (5) The total cost was \$1,022,507.
28. *This question was postponed.*

#### BETTING

##### *Criticism by Board of Letter to Governor*

29. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:
  - (1) Will he state the grounds upon which the members of the Totalisator Agency Board came to the conclusion that the criticism of it which was contained in a letter from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to His Excellency the Governor was "not warranted"?
  - (2) Will he specifically state also the grounds upon which the members of the Totalisator Agency Board concluded that the letter itself was "open to criticism in several respects"?
  - (3) On what date was the opinion of the board formed on the letter in question?
  - (4) How many members of the board were present when the letter was discussed?



Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

I ask that this question be postponed until the 30th August so that the board can be consulted.

Mr. Tonkin: So long as it is not until after Christmas.

### TECHNICAL EDUCATION

#### *Bunbury: Site*

30. Mr. WILLIAMS asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has a site yet been proposed, or acquired, for a new technical school in Bunbury?
- (2) If "Yes",—
  - (a) what is the location of the site;
  - (b) was consideration given to the other sites within the district; if so, where;
  - (c) what were the reasons for accepting the site?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Adjacent to the proposed new civic centre in the "big swamp" area.
- (b) Yes, to a site south of the proposed ring road which is being reserved for a future branch of the Institute of Technology and to an area east of Carey Park.
- (c) Because it is more centrally situated.

### IRON ORE

#### *Wilgie Mia: Development of Deposits*

31. Mr. BURT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

When can a decision be expected from the Government regarding the granting of the right to develop the Wilgie Mia iron deposits near Cue?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

No immediate decision can be expected. The applications received are being considered.

32. *This question was postponed.*

### TECHNICAL EDUCATION

#### *Shearing: Provision of Course*

33. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Education:

As there appears to be an urgent need for shearers in this State, would he undertake to have investigations made with a view to having shearing taught as a subject through technical schools?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The Education Department will investigate this need.

### NAVAL BASES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

#### *Location and Decision*

34. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

- (1) Have approaches been made to the Government by the Commonwealth Government and British Government to establish naval or submarine bases on the coastline of W.A.?
- (2) If approaches have been made, what areas have been suggested and final determinations made?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) I am unaware of any approaches to the Government by either the Commonwealth or British Governments.
- (2) Answered by (1).

### MOTOR VEHICLES

#### *Type "L" Gross Loads*

35. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Police:

When licensing vehicle type "L" under the third schedule of the Traffic Act, 1919-1965, what is the gross load of this vehicle—

- (a) without over-load permit;
- (b) with over-load permit?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

The loading capacity of a vehicle is the difference between the tare of the vehicle or combination of vehicles and the aggregate weight, calculated in accordance with the Traffic (Vehicle Weights) Regulations, 1963.

These regulations provide for consideration of the following factors in determining aggregate weight:—

- (a) Manufacturer's gross vehicle weight;
- (b) Tyre, axle, and group axle loading;
- (c) Extreme axle spacing.

As information has not been given as to the tare, make, and model of any particular vehicle a definite answer cannot be given to the question. However, vehicles of this class normally would be allowed an aggregate weight of approximately 22 tons. This aggregate could be increased to a maximum of approximately 29½ tons under an additional loading permit.

### CARAVANS

#### *Licensing: Variation between States*

36. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Do the requirements and conditions for the licensing of caravans differ in this State from other States?

- (2) If so, what are the main differences?
- (3) Is any action being taken to standardise licensing between States?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) and (2) The position in other States is not known, but inquiries will be made and the information supplied to the honourable member.
- (3) I am not aware of any action being taken to standardise licensing conditions, other than requirements for mechanical conditions and attachments to motor vehicles, being considered by the Australian Motor Vehicle Standards Committee.

#### COURTHOUSE AT FREMANTLE

##### *Accommodation: Need for Increase*

37. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Relevant to my question 16 of the 7th September, 1965—

- (1) Can he make known the likely date upon which alternative and more commodious Fremantle Court premises will be available?
- (2) Is he aware—
  - (a) That the accommodation situation is aggravated by State Housing tenants paying rent at the existing court premises;
  - (b) That figures of takings associated with court work reveal a growing and urgent demand for alternative premises;
  - (c) That no witness room exists;
  - (d) That witnesses for the defence and otherwise intermingle and that this could be considered not conducive to justice being done as a consequence of possible collusion;
  - (e) That the magistrate's movements are impeded in corridors between room and court by having to push through those paying rent, witnesses, lawyers, court officials, and others—in short that more privacy should be available to a magistrate's status and the dignity of his position?

Housing that the Fremantle R. & I. Bank would be a more appropriate place to pay State Housing Commission rent?

- (4) As such a change could bring increased banking business to the R. & I. Bank throughout the State, will he recommend that the R. & I. Bank in all areas be declared receiving places for State Housing Commission rent?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No. The question of temporary alternative accommodation and the selection of a suitable site for the building of a new courthouse some time in the future is currently being investigated. In the meantime, the Architectural Division of the P.W.D. is examining the feasibility of making alterations and additions to the existing building.
- (2) (a) Yes.  
(b) Yes.  
(c) Yes, but the alterations and additions referred to in my answer to question (1), if such be considered practicable, would include a room for witnesses.  
(d) The provision of a witness room would not eliminate the intermingling of witnesses, as experience has shown that, where such rooms are provided, witnesses generally prefer to congregate outside the court building rather than in the room provided.  
(e) Yes, to some extent, but this would be relieved if the alterations and additions referred to can be undertaken.
- (3) and (4) This will be referred to the Minister for Housing for his consideration.

#### COLLIE COAL

##### *Cost at Pit Mouth*

38. Mr. MAY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What was the price per ton paid for all grades of coal at pit mouth at the termination of the 1966 coal contracts with the Griffin Coal Mining Company?
- (2) What was the price per ton paid for all grades of coal at pit mouth at the termination of the 1966 coal contracts with the Western Collieries Limited?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) The present average cost of coal from the Griffin Company is \$2.87 per ton and from the

#### *R. & I. Bank: Use for Rent Receipts*

- (3) To relieve to some extent the numbers visiting the court house will he recommend to Cabinet or the Minister for

Western Collieries is \$6.08. (The current coal contracts do not expire until the 31st December, 1966.)

### HOUSING

#### *Davis Park: Migrant Accommodation, and Rent Increases*

39. Mr. CURRAN asked the Minister for Immigration:

- (1) How many home units in Davis Park, Fremantle, have been leased by his department for migrant purposes?
- (2) Does the department propose to increase the number and convert this area to a "Migrant Staging Centre"?
- (3) What is the reason for the steep increase in rents compared with State Housing tenants in the same type of dwelling in the same area?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Nine out of a total of 20, which are to be made available progressively.
- (2) No.
- (3) An economic rental was determined which took into account the short term nature of tenancy and added facilities necessary for newly arrived migrants.

### FISHING

#### *Boat Licenses Issued to E. B. Kelly and E. K. Warnock*

40. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna:

- (1) On what date was Mr. Erskine B. Kelly granted a fishing boat license 1519?
- (2) What was the name of the fishing boat in respect of which the license was granted, and what was the registration number?
- (3) What is the explanation for the statement by the Director of the Department of Fisheries in his letter under date the 18th May, 1965, to Mr. Erskine B. Kelly that: "You advised that you had sold your old boat L.F.B. G.367 *Scandal* to a syndicate which used it as a pleasure launch. Our boat license records appear to indicate, however, that this vessel was sold to Mr. E. K. Warnock who used it as a cray-fishing vessel and eventually replaced it with another one the *Maxine*"?
- (4) Was the *Scandal* ever sold to E. K. Warnock?
- (5) What boat was actually replaced with the *Maxine* and what was the registration number of such boat?
- (6) Was this boat used for crayfishing and if so by whom and under what boat license?

- (7) As according to a letter from the Minister for Fisheries to The Hon. H. K. Watson under date the 22nd December, 1965: "When the license for the fishing boat *Maxine* was issued on the 1st March, 1963, the registered number G.351 was inadvertently duplicated" what other boat had that registration number at the time?
- (8) Was this other boat being used for crayfishing and if so, by whom and under what boat license?
- (9) Did the records of the Fisheries Department show that the *Scandal* was being used for crayfishing at any time subsequent to April, 1963?
- (10) If "Yes", by whom was it supposed to be so used and under what boat license?
- (11) On the 30th November, 1963, what boat licenses were held by E. K. Warnock and what were the registration numbers of the boats in respect of which the boat licenses were held?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) 31st December, 1962.
- (2) *Scandal*. L.F.B.G. 351.
- (3) The full text of this letter read as follows:—

When you called at this office on May 10, you advised that you had sold your old boat L.F.B.G. 367 "*Scandal*" to a syndicate which used it as a pleasure launch. Our boat license records appear to indicate, however, that this vessel was sold to Mr. E. K. Warnock, who used it as a crayfishing vessel and eventually replaced it with another one, the "*Maxine*". In addition, the Harbour and Light Department advise that they have no record of the "*Scandal*" being registered as a pleasure boat. These points will need to be cleared up in your written application.

It later transpired that the departmental record had been misinterpreted, as the vessel was not sold to Mr. Warnock.

- (4) No.
- (5) A 16-foot vessel with a 5 ft. 6 in. beam. L.F.B.G. 351.
- (6) Yes. E. K. Warnock of 58 Ferguson Street, Midland Junction. Fishing boat license 1772.
- (7) *Scandal*.
- (8) Yes. E. B. Kelly of 110 Grant Street, Cottesloe. Fishing boat license 1519.
- (9) No.
- (10) Not applicable.
- (11) Fishing boat license 1772. L.F.B.G. 351.

# **QUESTIONS (7): WITHOUT NOTICE** **TELEVISION**

## *Kalgoorlie and Surrounding Districts: Provision of Service*

1. Mr. BURT asked the Premier:  
Can he inform the House now or, if not, could he obtain the information as to whether the establishment of a microwave radio link between Perth and the Eastern States will result in the provision of a television service to Kalgoorlie and surrounding districts?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I cannot give an answer to that question, but I will certainly take the matter up immediately, because it is of vital importance to the area concerned.

## **WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS**

### *Negotiations for Disposal*

2. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for the North-West:
  - (1) Is the Minister or his Government negotiating with private firms or companies for the disposal of the State-owned Wyndham Meat Works?
  - (2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes", what companies?
  - (3) If the answer is "No", will he assure the House that no action by himself or his Government will be taken to dispose of these meatworks?

Mr. COURT replied:

In answer to the honourable member, no negotiations have been entered into in respect of the Wyndham Meat Works. Representations have been made to the Government, as is well known in the Kimberley region, for the Wyndham Meat Works to be operated by a group which feels it could achieve better results for the East Kimberley pastoralists. The Government will consider this in due course.

## **TRANSPORT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

### *Report by Mr. Wayne: Availability*

3. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Premier:  
Would he arrange to have copies of the report submitted by Mr. Wayne printed in sufficient quantities so that members, and other persons interested, may be able to obtain the information?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I have already discussed this matter with the Minister for

Transport and it is proposed to have sufficient copies printed to meet the demand.

## **RIVERVALE CROSSING**

### *Rerouting of Buses*

4. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the possibility of the right-hand turning of M.T.T. buses into Streatley Road, Rivervale, causing congestion at the Rivervale crossing, has the M.T.T. any proposal to reroute those buses to another venue?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

In reply to the honourable member, the Chairman of the Transport Trust, the deputy chairman, and myself had an on-the-spot meeting this morning and it was considered advantageous to divert the buses to the next street. We have contacted the Perth City Council in connection with this matter. It is anticipated that the buses will commence to use the new route as from Sunday next.

## **COAL CONTRACTS AT COLLIE**

### *Date of Announcement*

5. Mr. MAY asked the Premier:  
Having regard to the anxiety existing in Collie with regard to the new contracts for coal, can the Premier state when an announcement can be expected with regard to the contracts which should come into operation on the 1st January, 1967?

Mr. BRAND replied:

In reply to the member for Collie, this is not an easy matter. Cabinet has given a lot of time to obtaining a decision on the contracts, and will reach a decision as quickly as possible.

It is appreciated that this is a matter of urgency for the people of Collie. The Minister for Electricity has not been well and this, too, has occasioned some delay in the discussion.

## **SIGNS ALONG GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY**

### *Meaning*

6. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Works:

Certain figures are placed on signs along the Great Eastern Highway and I notice the figure 94 crops up at regular intervals. Can the Minister for Works advise whether that figure denotes the maximum or minimum speed allowable?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON** replied:

In reply to the member for Avon, this sign denotes route 94. Relevant publicity was given to this matter; and all major highways will be given a number in accordance with a decision by all States of the Commonwealth that main routes should be numbered.

*Wording*

7. **Mr. GAYFER** asked the Minister for Works:

Further to my previous question, if this is necessary why then was the wording "route" not put above the figure 94 to keep it separate from speed indication signs which are also along the road?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON** replied:

In reply to the honourable member, one expects that the brains which we were given should be used sometimes.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY**

*Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 28th July, on the following motion by Mr. W. A. Manning:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

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

**MR. HAWKE** (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [5.5 p.m.]: Reference was made during the debate yesterday on the Supply Bill to the retirement of Mr. Fred Islip on the 30th June last from the important position of Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. I wish to congratulate those officers of this House who, as a result of Mr. Islip's retirement, have received promotion. It would not be practicable to wish them a period in office, in their respective positions, as long as the one Mr. Islip had, but I am sure we would wish each one of them a long and successful term in the offices they now occupy. To those who have promotion prospects ahead of them—maybe in the dim future—we would hope that will come to them in due course.

I make my next few remarks with considerable diffidence. In the Speech with which His Excellency the Governor was pleased to open Parliament reference was made, and no doubt properly made, to the passing of Senators Paltridge and Vincent, and also to the passing of The Hon-

ourable Hubert Parker. I was surprised, in that situation, to find that no reference was made to the passing of Emil Nulsen who, as we all know, was a member of this Assembly for many years and also a Minister of the Crown for several years.

I am not voicing any complaint or criticism of the Government in this matter because I believe most sincerely the omission, or the failure to include the late Mr. Nulsen's name in this particular reference, was due to an oversight.

**Mr. Brand**: It certainly was an oversight.

**Mr. HAWKE**: However, I trust that in future, when similar circumstances arise, the most meticulous care will be used to ensure this situation does not occur again.

I listened with much interest to the member for Narrogin, as I always do, and I hope I will have an opportunity to hear him again in this debate at some later stage, provided a member of his Country Party moves an amendment to the motion now before us. I was particularly interested in what he had to say regarding the trade deficit which Western Australia suffers in its trading operations with the other States of Australia. This is a subject in which I am very deeply interested, and have been for a great many years, as members of this Chamber would know.

Unfortunately, the trade deficit which this State has with the other States of Australia appears to be increasing by leaps and bounds each year. The figures given to us by the member for Narrogin show the trade deficit for the financial year 1964-65 to have been \$234,000,000. In other words, we are sending to the Eastern States, to buy goods from them, \$234,000,000 more per year at the present time than they are sending to this State to buy from us. There should, in that situation, be plenty of room for the energies and organising abilities of the Government's appropriate Ministers; and also a considerable amount of room, I would hope, to promote the establishment of new industries and to expand industries in various parts of the State, including the more important country towns, among which would be, of course, Narrogin.

The Governor's Speech makes reference to many subjects and it is not my intention to deal with many of them. I was interested in the reference to land development in Western Australia. The information in the Speech makes it clear that land development is continuing to go on apace. This is a matter for satisfaction no doubt. However, I wonder whether we, as a State, in promoting rapid development of new land areas are not to some substantial extent excluding the areas of land which have been released in years gone by and which have been developed and have subsequently, in many instances, to a large extent gone out of production because of erosion by salt—or the spread of salt—or because of uncontrolled water flow in more recent rainy seasons, and also because of sand erosion.

From what I can gather, this is an acute problem in many of our settled areas. It is indeed so acute as to have caused considerable worry to a large number of local governing authorities in the South-West Land Division of Western Australia. These authorities have already requested the Government, through the Minister for Agriculture, to set up a special department to deal with this problem of soil erosion. A fair amount of publicity has been given to this matter in recent weeks.

In one public statement the Minister for Agriculture gave an assurance to those particularly concerned in the country, and to the public generally, that the situation was in hand; that the problem was under control; that there was no necessity for any special department to be set up or for any special moves or policy to be initiated. I had the opportunity recently of listening to an ex-Government officer who appears to me to be exceptionally qualified to understand the nature and the extent of this problem in Western Australia.

He is so concerned about the growth and seriousness of the problem as to have made it, to a large extent, his sole subject for consideration. He is willing to make his advice and services available even gratis for the purpose of trying to have it tackled.

However, before it is likely to be tackled by the Government, the Minister most particularly concerned must not only realise its serious nature but also be prepared to admit it. I cannot believe the Minister for Agriculture does not recognise the seriousness of the problem and the continued growth and spread of it. Why he would not admit this publicly is perhaps understandable—he could feel that it would be a reflection upon his own particular officers and upon himself as Minister for Agriculture in Western Australia. However, it seems to me the problem has become so serious and is growing so quickly as to make it dangerous for nobody to consider the particular situation other than one Minister, or two, three, or four officers—whatever the number of officers be—who are concerned in this situation.

I have discussed this matter with a number of farmers and I have also discussed it with some members of Parliament on the Government side of the House. Each one with whom I have discussed the problem admits it is exceedingly serious, and is growing at a rather alarming rate. Because of this, I would appeal to the Government, as a whole, to look more closely at this problem and take additional steps of a practical character to try to reduce its seriousness, and certainly to prevent its growth in the years ahead.

I do not think that any personal consideration should be allowed to enter into the situation. This is a State problem: indirectly, it is part of a national problem. It is not much use, Mr. Speaker, developing 1,000,000 acres of new country in

Western Australia if, at the same time, hundreds of thousands of acres of already developed country are being reduced in their productive capacity because of erosion caused by the spread of salt, water flow, or by strong winds.

Mr. Kelly: Over-stocking, too.

Mr. HAWKE: The subject of superphosphate is one with which we are all familiar. If I remember correctly, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn has tried in each of the last two parliamentary sessions prior to this one to persuade a majority of members in this House to agree to the setting up of an inquiry into all phases of the manufacture and distribution of superphosphate, including the price charged to the consumers. In each of the last two sessions, a majority of members in the House have defeated his desires and his motion in this matter.

We, on this side of the House, have known that some members on the Government side have been most unhappy about the attitude which the Government has taken in opposing the motions put forward on those occasions by the member to whom I have referred. Evidently, the members on the Government side who have been increasingly dissatisfied with the Government's attitude have, themselves, been able to exercise more influence this year than in other years. Maybe they have said to the Government, "Unless the Government undertakes to do something about this subject of superphosphate—no matter how small or ineffective it might be—and unless the Government makes some public statement about it before Parliament meets, or on the day Parliament meets, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn will give notice of a motion similar to the one he moved last session, and the session before. If this motion is moved, then we, on the Government side, will again be embarrassed; we will have to line up with the Government, and with the Ministers, and follow their lead by opposing the motion of the member for Merredin-Yilgarn. We, on the Government side, would then have to go back to our electorates and stand up to the criticism which many farmers will level at us for defeating a move in the Legislative Assembly to have the operations of this industry thoroughly investigated."

I am sure the member for Merredin-Yilgarn would join with me, and other members on this side of the House, in congratulating those members on the Government side who, by persistent effort, have at last persuaded the Government to agree to do something about this; and, through their efforts, the Government has made a public statement about superphosphate. However, that which the Government has so far undertaken to do is not very much.

Mr. Kelly: Nevertheless, the mess is increasing all the time.

Mr. HAWKE: We have been told by the Premier of the Government's intention to arrange to have talks as between representatives of the Government and representatives of the superphosphate manufacturing companies for the purpose of trying to have some action taken—goodness knows what sort of action—to overcome some of the complaints, criticism, and protests which farmers have been voicing regarding the distribution and the sale price of superphosphate.

The Premier has also told us that, in the event of the discussions being non-productive of a worth-while result, the Government would then give every consideration to the setting up of a Royal Commission—or some other type of inquiry—which would searchingly investigate the whole situation and make recommendations to the Government.

There is much more one could say about this subject and problem. However, it is not primarily my subject, or my problem. So far as members on this side of the House are concerned, this problem is very much more in the keeping of the member for Merredin-Yilgarn. Doubtless, he will have much to say about it before this session has been completed.

I would like to say a few words about the Ord River scheme. I am just wondering how much effect a statement made some time ago by the Minister for the North-West in this State had upon the thinking of the Ministers of the Federal Government in relation to their making substantial additional financial assistance available to Western Australia. I have here a statement taken from the *Sunday Times* of the 29th November, 1964, which reports the Minister for the North-West as saying "that Western Australia might be preparing to go it alone" in connection with the Ord River scheme. He further said, "The State Government does not give up easily. If we miss out one way we will give it a go another way."

I would think, Mr. Speaker, the Minister for the North-West—even better than I—would know there is one thing you cannot afford to injure when you are seeking financial, or other, assistance from the Ministers of the Commonwealth Government; what you cannot afford to dent, or injure, is their dignity.

Mr. Court: You have given it a pretty hard dent on occasions.

Mr. HAWKE: My experiences over the years with Ministers at Canberra—and, to a large extent, with members of Parliament at Canberra—have led me to believe that whenever a person was elected to the Federal Parliament, he soon found after he had been there for any length of time that he either had to be a world-beater, or nothing. I repeat, either a world-beater, or nothing. I suppose it is natural enough in that situation that everyone who went there set out to be a world-beater

and, after a while, probably persuaded himself he was.

In any event, Federal Ministers naturally think—and they might have some justification for thinking it, too—they are far superior to State Ministers and deal with far bigger and far wider subjects and problems.

Therefore, if one is anxious to get good practical results from them in any negotiations which are proceeding, it is not wise, in my thinking, more or less to say to them, "We have made a request to you, as Ministers in the Federal Government, to advance us in the next six months an additional \$40,000,000 to enable the Ord River irrigation scheme to be completed," and after the Federal Ministers have failed to come up and say, "Yes," to put the pressure right on them by saying, "If you do not come up with this \$40,000,000 in the next six weeks—or 10 weeks, or whatever it may be—we will 'go it alone'."

Mr. Court: I would not have said that.

Mr. HAWKE: The immediate reaction of Federal Ministers in this situation would be: "Very well, that saves us from any further worry or thought; that saves us from, perhaps, putting some extra taxation upon the people of Australia; that absolves us from the anxiety of finding an additional \$40,000,000 for the Ord River irrigation scheme."

In these circumstances, I would think the cause of the Ord River scheme—in so far as obtaining the additional Federal financial assistance which was requested was concerned—was prejudiced and not assisted by the rather dramatic and spectacular declaration of the Minister for the North-West when he, in effect, declared Western Australia would, if necessary, "go it alone."

I am not quite sure where the Minister made this dramatic and spectacular declaration. It might have been made at some dinner, or following some dinner. I understand it was made at some function of more than ordinary significance.

Mr. Court: I am very interested to get your advice on the suggestion that I should go along to the Commonwealth and adopt a very humble manner, because you can speak from some experience.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not suggesting the Minister should approach the Commonwealth in a humble manner, but I am suggesting that when the Minister for the North-West, or any other Minister in this State Government, approaches the Commonwealth for large financial assistance it would be wise to concentrate upon the merits and the absolute necessity for such assistance to enable the scheme to be initiated or, alternatively, if it had already been initiated, to enable it to be completed. In the situation I have been discussing it is fatal, at a critical period of the negotiations, to say, "Unless the Commonwealth Government comes up with this money within so many days or weeks, Western

Australia will go it alone." I am sure that did not help our case to any degree but, on the contrary, probably prejudiced it to some extent.

Nevertheless, I naturally wish the State Government well in the negotiations which are to proceed shortly when State Ministers and Commonwealth Ministers will discuss this matter inside out. I repeat: I trust these negotiations will be attended with all the success which the Premier, his colleagues, and everybody else in Western Australia, with few exceptions I should think, would wish.

We have read a great deal about iron ore since Parliament was last in session. In fact, we have read so much about it in recent weeks I think everybody is confused. I doubt whether even the member for South Perth, who is an expert on this subject, knows where we are. There has been agreement after agreement, and amalgamations as between one company and other companies. There has been some degree of interference in regard to price by the Commonwealth Government which has acted largely, I think, under pressure from the Federal Country Party, through its leader, the Commonwealth Minister for Trade, The Honourable John McEwan.

I must frankly admit that I have not been able to keep my finger on all the developments. I was going well for quite a while and I was up with the field, but then the whole scene seemed to change so quickly as to make it impossible for anybody to keep up completely with what was going on unless one concentrated on that subject alone.

The only other comment I want to make on iron ore exports from this State to overseas countries is that this activity could have been operating years before it actually started. I think it is understood now by a great many people that the Commonwealth Government, prior to 1959, deliberately, and for party-political reasons, refused to lift the embargo to allow Western Australia, and of course other States if they wished, to exploit its iron ore deposits for the purpose of exporting quantities to overseas countries. At that time the Federal Government took refuge, not in a coward's castle but in a liar's castle, by deliberately misrepresenting the situation; by making the falsest claims imaginable about the reserves of iron ore that were known to exist in Australia, when it was known to quite a few people in Western Australia that reserves of good quality iron ore existed in this State far beyond the total which the Commonwealth Government was claiming existed in the whole of Australia at that time.

There is no doubt that party politics entered very largely into the situation prior to 1959 or 1960, and that the decisions made by the Commonwealth Government in the few years before 1960 were made purely on a party-political basis to prevent the then Labor Government in Western Australia from going ahead with plans to export iron ore from this State to overseas coun-

tries and, from the net proceeds, to establish iron and steel industries in Western Australia.

We have heard a great deal of talk, and we have read a lot, also, in various publications, about the inflow of capital from overseas countries into Australia. We have read of a great deal of British capital coming in and a great deal of capital from the United States of America coming in; and maybe capital from other countries has come into Australia, not in such great volume as from Britain and the United States, but, nevertheless, in fairly substantial quantities. We know that much of this capital has come in because companies in Britain and the United States of America have either completely bought out established industries in Australia, or have bought a controlling interest in those industries.

There has been a great deal of concern in the minds of many people in Australia because of this development. There has been much criticism of it. I think I am correct in saying the Federal Minister for Trade in Australia has been one of the strongest critics of these takeovers of Australian industry and other activities in Australia by overseas companies. The development of the situation has naturally led seriously-minded people to wonder why Australian companies which have pioneered industry—which have built up industry—have, all of a sudden, surrendered to the temptation to sell the industry, either totally or by granting majority control to these overseas companies. No doubt the excessive prices offered by overseas companies for Australian industries—for the complete purchase of them, or for majority control of them—has proven too good to resist, and apparently the financial aspect of these offers has been the deciding factor.

In this respect I was extremely disappointed, in a way, to read, in the Governor's Speech, the item on solar salt. Salt is a very common article and one would have thought that here was something which Western Australians could have developed themselves without any assistance from Eastern Australia, and certainly without assistance, financial or otherwise, from any other country in the world. Yet even in this field we find a company from San Francisco has signed an agreement with the Government to establish at Port Hedland a salt industry to give an output of 1,000,000 tons a year at a capital cost of \$7,000,000.

Mr. Court: We just could not get anyone in Australia interested..

Mr. HAWKE: I am not criticising the Minister or the Government; I am simply drawing attention to something which appears to be part of a national problem in Australia. If it be not possible—and I am sure it was not possible, as the Minister has assured us—to get Western Australians or Australians to develop a salt industry, what has happened to Western Australians or to Australians?



Mr. Court: I think one of the problems, if I might just comment for a moment, is the fact that the Australian project at Shark Bay ran into some rather heavy difficulties, and this naturally caused some concern about the technical aspects of the industry.

Mr. HAWKE: That might be. However, I am beginning to wonder whether Australian interests and those who normally would enter the development of industry, and those who normally would carry on industries already established, are losing interest in the development of their own country.

One would think in this period of time which, as we know, is one of great expansion all over Australia, plenty of money would be available within Australia; that Australian companies and Australian individual businessmen would be getting more and more involved in the development and expansion of industry in this country as against avoiding this great task. Is there something wrong with our national and individual character in this period of time as compared to our national and individual character which existed 10, 20, 30, or 50 years ago?

Are we now more concerned about chasing easy living than we are in further developing industry, and accepting responsibility for establishing more industry; in attempting to develop, in greater measure, Australia as a whole? This is a situation, which, to my mind is extremely serious and one which warrants close consideration and attention by every member of Parliament in Australia, no matter whether he be a Minister of the Crown, a Leader of the Opposition or a private member. I cannot believe this total situation would develop the way it has, if enough Australians were keen enough, courageous enough, and determined enough about the development of Australian industries and resources, as they were in years gone by.

I hope other members will give the House the benefit of any views which they might have in connection with this matter, and I am sure it would be helpful to our general consideration of the problem if the Premier and the Minister for Industrial Development were to participate, at some stage, in this debate and give us the benefit of their impressions and ideas.

As far as I can judge the situation, Australians are going backwards in this field; and if we are going backwards in this field the probability is that we will be going backwards in other fields, if not at the present time then in the years not far ahead. We are supposed to be much better educated in these times than in any of the days in the previous history of Australia. Our children are supposed to be getting not only more and better general education, but more and better technical and scientific education.

As I said earlier there is plenty of money in Australia. I know a lot of it belongs to small earners who put a certain amount in

the savings banks from time to time as they are able to. There are great sums of money in the savings banks in Australia but surely these people, who have not very large amounts of money to invest, could be inspired to make it available for investment in existing industry and for the development of new industry, if the appeal were made to them in the right way and upon the right patriotic basis.

I realise far too many people in Australia in recent years have suffered because of the crash of big companies, and therefore they would be very reluctant to be caught up in any new investment which might be offered to them, unless the new investment was beyond question and beyond reproach. Some very big companies have crashed financially in recent times.

We also know that in respect of some of those companies there appears to have been a great deal of deliberate dishonesty on the part of some of those associated with them, in falsely representing to the people of Australia the financial strength and stability of the companies concerned, with the result that many people who had been led into putting their money into them—sincerely believing they were making a good investment—found out later that most, if not all, of their investment had gone down the drain.

We are also aware that in this State some of the returns provided by way of dividend or interest upon money invested were extravagant beyond question, and extravagant almost beyond description. Investors were promised returns of 15, 20, and 25 per cent., or more, by the prospectuses issued by some of these people.

I am afraid quite a number of people in Australia allowed their innate greed—if I might use that word without doing so offensively—to run away with their judgement. Consequently they not only did not receive the 20 or 25 per cent. return per annum but lost a considerable amount, if not the whole, of their capital as well.

However, there are still in Australia some highly reputable and solid industries controlled totally or mainly by Australians. My fear is there will not be many such industries controlled totally or mainly by Australians, if the present trend of take-over by overseas interests goes on unchecked.

It has been suggested there should be some solid restrictive legislation put upon the Statute book in regard to this problem; maybe there should be, but it would be far better from the national point of view, and from that of the worth and determination of our own citizens, if this problem could be faced up to and overcome without legislation. In other words, it would be a great thing if there were a resurgence of practical patriotism among the citizens in Australia, not only about living in Australia and boasting about their Australian citizenship and the Australian way of life, but to do something solid and practical to ensure that most

industries and most activities in Western Australia would be Australian-owned and Australian-controlled.

**MR. FLETCHER** (Fremantle) [5.52 p.m.]: My need to speak at this stage does not necessarily arise from choice, but because no member opposite appears to be anxious to rise on such an important debate as this. Surely members opposite must have as many important matters in respect of their electorates to discuss as those on this side of the House.

The first matter I wish to deal with concerns the Minister for Industrial Development and for the North-West. In the Governor's Speech the following is stated:—

For the first time in the history of the State Parliament, members of both Houses undertook a specially arranged tour of the north of the State. There is no doubt that this was a highly desirable undertaking, giving members an opportunity to extend their knowledge and personal understanding of a very important part of the State.

I endorse those remarks of His Excellency with enthusiasm. It was a very desirable move, and it enabled us to see the activities that are taking place up there; and members on both sides of the House are now, as a consequence of this very worth-while step taken by the Government in general, and the Minister in particular, better acquainted with the developments in the north. It is usual for me to be critical of the Government, but on this occasion I am not. I commend the Government for the step it took.

**Mr. Brand:** Carry on in that strain. You are making a very good speech.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I am not saying this to ingratiate myself with members opposite, because later I may be speaking in a condemnatory way on the shortcomings of the Government.

**Mr. Brand:** Tell us what the average is.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I, and I am sure other members, found the trip to be particularly interesting. As long ago as 1938 I worked on Koolan Island. On the recent tour I was able—admittedly only from the air—to compare the activities now taking place with those undertaken under primitive conditions during 1938.

We saw activities relating to the pastoral industry, to various types of minerals including iron ore, to the pelletising projects that are planned, and to the railways associated with these projects. We saw activities in relation to oil search, and the development of the oil industry on Barrow Island was particularly interesting.

We were able to see the site of the solar salt project. The area of flat terrain so adjacent to the sea seems to lend itself ideally to this industry. Having seen similar activities in Rockhampton, Queensland, on a much smaller scale

not long before this, I think the activities now taking place in that area of Western Australia show the potential which exists to bolster the economy of Western Australia.

We saw other major projects, including the prawn industry and the construction of the installations at North West Cape. We saw new towns, roads, and railways under construction. It was a splendid experience and I am grateful for the opportunity to make the tour.

There was one discordant note on which I must now comment. When we entered the North West Cape area we had to have a pass to permit us to go into Australian territory, and the accompanying piece of paper which I had taken along stated, in effect, that a portion of the territory of Western Australia had been ceded for the exclusive use of our American friends. I do not blame the State Government for this, because it is a Federal Government responsibility. The paper stated that this terrain was in effect, the exclusive territory of the American forces.

I do not like any portion of Western Australia being given over to anybody but Australians in general, and Western Australians in particular. I do not like the thought that this particular area will be guarded by people, possibly with guns, when the American forces occupy that site. Members, I am sure, including the Premier, are justified in agreeing to such valuable plant and equipment being guarded, but to my way of thinking it does not justify the presence of troops on our territory who would very likely refuse the right of Australian citizens to walk on any part of this their own soil.

Other references in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor relate to investments from local and external sources. I dealt with those to some extent last evening, and rather heatedly at times, but I notice that the leading article in today's *The West Australian* also refers to that subject. The last paragraph of the article is consistent with my comments, because it states—

In other words, decisions made in board rooms in New York and London should not be allowed to disrupt employment and other policies in Australia or hinder the export expansion we need to generate our own capital.

Now this has caused me concern for some time. I am asking the purpose of electing any member to this House to make decisions on behalf of the people he represents if those decisions are to be offset by decisions made in Washington or London by elected representatives in those countries. Can members see my line of reasoning? Many members cannot, simply because they are not listening. However, what I am saying will go on record. I repeat what I have already said: We are elected in Western Australia to represent our people yet decisions can be made in Washington and London by elected representatives of those

countries—or even by business interests, as the paper states—which can offset or upset decisions we make here as those elected representatives of our people.

Mr. Brand: You talk about us not listening. You know we do listen quite a lot, but look at your own benches.

Mr. FLETCHER: I said "members". I did not necessarily allude to the Government benches.

Mr. Brand: You looked at us.

Mr. FLETCHER: I did not necessarily allude to the Government benches, but I did notice I was getting better attention from a greater number on this side than on the Premier's side.

Mr. Brand: Have a look around!

Mr. Jamieson: Bully for you!

Mr. FLETCHER: There could be fewer members on this side. They are away preparing material for this very worth-while debate.

Mr. Court: There is no doubt about your loyalty!

Mr. Brand: Top line.

Mr. FLETCHER: But I repeat that of the percentage occupying the Government benches few were listening to me because they were involved in animated discussion—

Mr. Brand: About what you were saying.

Mr. FLETCHER: —reading, and so on. It was an important point and I hope—

Mr. Grayden: We were discussing what you were talking about.

Mr. Dunn: We were trying to find out what you were talking about.

Mr. FLETCHER: I must admit the Minister for Transport was giving me an attentive hearing—

Mr. Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. FLETCHER: —on this very important issue. It was sufficiently important for the leading article to deal with it. I could read more to illustrate my point but will not do so. I do not need to rely entirely on it. I am frequently critical of the Press for not mentioning things I think it should mention, but on this occasion we see eye to eye on the effect of overseas capital on our economy.

Mr. Dunn: You work on the use and abuse theory—use it when you can and abuse it when you cannot.

Mr. FLETCHER: I work on the basis that I am concerned to see that the same thing does not happen here in Australia as has already happened in Canada where the economy is controlled from south of the border. I mentioned last night how the country's economy can be so dominated that its foreign policy is also affected. If we have finance from overseas sources, we want it without strings, and we do not want articles manufactured which are already manufactured by industries in this country.

A paragraph in the Governor's Speech concerning fisheries reads as follows:—

A fall in crayfish production has been to a large extent offset by the development of a valuable prawn industry in the Exmouth Gulf and Carnarvon areas. The prime value of fish caught in the past year is expected to exceed \$13,000,000.

This is very important. Of the \$13,000,000 worth of fish much is exported to America as craytails. The resultant American dollars, known as hard currency, are extremely valuable to Australia. However, unfortunately, as a consequence of the cost of freight from this country on foreign ships, much, if not all, of the dollar currency is absorbed. Therefore although we make a gain by the sale of our fish and thereby obtain hard currency, we lose much of it in the freight costs involved in getting the fish away from our shores.

The paragraph I just quoted mentions the fall in crayfish production. Members may be interested and, I hope, alarmed to know that the crayfish industry has declined annually over the past three to five years as a consequence of the past and recent depredations involving the taking of undersized crayfish which have been sold to those as far away as the Eastern States. Some of these crayfish were being transported East in 8-ton refrigerated trucks.

Thanks to the Fisheries Department, which is subjected to much unjustified and unfair criticism, this traffic has been reduced to a trickle. In the past, bags of these crayfish used to leave the areas of fishing activity but now, as a consequence of the vigilance of the Fisheries Department, the traffic is just a trickle, involving perhaps the amateur fishermen and friends of fishermen who may receive half a dozen crayfish which are generally known as furries. I think that mainly the reason for this continued small traffic is the result of a genuine mistake being made in assessing the size of the crayfish on board fishing craft, and by the time the mistake is made it is too late to throw these furries back into the sea.

It is hoped that as a consequence of having stopped, to a major extent, this illicit traffic in undersized crayfish, the crayfishing industry will build up again to what it was in the past. I sincerely hope so, because it is a very valuable industry to Australia in general; to Western Australia in particular, from our point of view; and, from my own personal point of view, to Fremantle. A large percentage of the economy of the Fremantle area is dependent upon the crayfishing industry. There are families there who are dependent on the industry as a consequence of the catching, the processing, and the exporting of crayfish through such firms as the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative Society. I hope I have made my point: that it is a very important industry.

Fortunately, the prawning industry has taken up the slack in respect of what has been lost in the crayfishing industry. The industry has been revitalised by the catching and processing of prawns.

Another reference is made in the Governor's Speech to Wundowie. I have this evening been saying nice things about the Minister for Industrial Development, but I very much regret I have to be critical about the sale of this public property for a fraction of its original cost to A.N.I. Pty. Ltd. The Premier is waiting to interject but before he does I want to say that if that industry had been increased by the Government, at the taxpayer's expense, by the establishment of a forging plant, and subsequently given sufficient orders by the Government—instead of those orders and contracts being given to private enterprise outside—then the Wundowie charcoal iron and forging plant could have been run at a profit to the public.

I do not think the Minister or the Premier heard my line of reasoning, but I have made my point. I repeat, that if that forging plant had been established—admittedly at the taxpayer's expense, at public expense—and orders had been received, instead of the orders going to private enterprise, then Wundowie could have run at a profit. It did run at a profit originally but it has declined since this Government has been in office. Members opposite cannot contradict that.

Mr. Brand: Yes, we can.

Mr. Court: A big loss was made before we came into office.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am bringing the blame home to this Government. I admit there was a loss during one year before the present Government took office, because I quoted figures previously. But to the best of my sincere knowledge it was only one year, and then only a very slight loss. In previous years it made thousands of pounds profit.

Mr. Court: With respect, it made huge losses which we had to write off.

Mr. FLETCHER: Unfortunately I have not the figures which I had with me when I last spoke on this subject, but as the Leader of the Opposition knows, Wundowie was doing very satisfactorily until this Government came to office. Now the public property is being unloaded on to the friends of the Government.

It would be to the advantage of the public if we kept Wundowie, installed the forging plant, and gave this plant Government orders for castings. The Government is now giving the plant to A.N.I. Pty Ltd. The profits will go to that company and its shareholders, and not to the public of Western Australia.

Like my leader—or my deputy leader—I wonder who is running the project now. Is it being run by A.N.I. or is the Wundowie management running it?

I am glancing at the Governor's Speech to see what else I can be critical about. I notice that the Governor also referred to homes. He said that in the past year 2,500 homes were built by the State Housing Commission, and this was 400 more than the previous year. There are still not near enough homes for our people plus migrants.

Mr. Brand: That is right.

Mr. FLETCHER: I know the Premier admits it, and I know that the Premier last night heard the dissertation from myself—and the Minister for Housing also heard it—on the fact that not enough Federal money was made available to the Premier to disburse among the Ministers and to enable more homes to be built. If Federal money was not used for less worthwhile purposes, such as I quoted last night, it would be available for the building of homes. I still think as I did last night, and I am critical of the Government to that extent. A priority should be established and housing for our people should be the No. 1 item, even if other portfolios find it difficult to manage.

Mr. Brand: Some years ago you were critical of our defence.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Government is also responsible, as I mentioned last night, for permitting the situation to develop where houses and land are beyond the reach of many people.

Mr. Brand: What about South Australia?

Mr. FLETCHER: What about nothing else but the subject I am talking about?

Mr. Brand: What about Tasmania?

Mr. FLETCHER: What about what a very learned gentleman said some 2,000 years ago? It was Socrates I believe who said, "To cover a local evil create a menace abroad." In effect, members opposite would stop the member for Fremantle from talking about what is going on under our noses by starting to talk about Moscow or Peking or Tasmania or somewhere else.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. FLETCHER: Mr. Speaker, you might have noticed the alacrity with which I again jumped to my feet, in case some member opposite wished to leap to the defence of the Government, and the Minister, on this matter of housing, on the assumption that I had finished what I had to say. This is not the case; I still have quite a lot to say on the subject as, in fact, I had during the last session of Parliament.

I quote from *Hansard*, page 2545, volume 3 of 1965. I am speaking of the Minister for Housing—

This evening he quoted certain statistics which no doubt were supplied to him by the very efficient man-

agement at the State Housing Commission. I can only rely on statistics I obtain through the medium of the Press and I should like to refer to an article in *The West Australian* of the 27th October, 1965—which is of recent date—under the heading of "W.A. Needs More Housing for Migrants." There is a graph with the article and it is based on the figures provided by the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics in regard to new houses completed in Western Australia since 1950.

I am sure the Minister regrets I have found this article.

Then, I went on to quote that article, which reads in part—

Western Australia needs a vigorous housing programme if it is to meet the challenge of the present development projects.

We cannot increase the flow of skilled migrant tradesmen we need till we provide more houses for them and their families.

I interpolated here to add, "and for our own Australian families." To continue—

Lack of housing is restricting the migration flow into this State.

I quote, again, another passage from that particular article and my comment at that time—

If they apply to the S.H.C. for a house on the day they land in W.A. they can expect to wait—judging by present delays—for 20 months before they can rent a State house in the metropolitan area, or from 14 to 17 months before they can buy one.

I interpolate here to say that this is the very important point of that article. The article goes on to say—

Yet the key building industry is running well below its production capacity in both private and government home-building. The current rate of construction is more than 1,000 houses a year less than it was ten years ago.

I asked the members of this House, "Which Government was in office 10 years ago?" The article continues—

The government housing programme is little more than half what it was ten years ago.

I asked, Mr. Speaker, "Which Government was in office 10 years ago?" and the Minister for Housing interjected by saying, "I think he has read that graph incorrectly." Quite frankly, I do not blame the Minister for interjecting to that effect.

Mr. Rushton: What was the total number of the houses built?

Mr. FLETCHER: I think the honourable member should hide his head in shame at the fact that the Government housing programme was little more than half what it was 10 years ago.

Mr. O'Neill: Did you say that, or was that the Press article?

Mr. FLETCHER: That was the Press article based on figures compiled by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics.

Mr. O'Neill: I have seen the graph, too.

Mr. Bickerton: Do you not think that the Press tells the truth?

Mr. FLETCHER: I repeat, the Press was quoting from figures compiled by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. I ask members not to delay my valuable time for I am sure the Speaker must have his eye on the clock. I emphasise that this is a very important matter which touches the people of our State.

For the benefit of the members of the House, I will read a few paragraphs from an editorial which appeared in the *Daily News* on Tuesday, the 15th March, 1966—

The State Government is still doing no better than scratching around the housing problem.

It seems more interested in maintaining an unsatisfactory *status quo* than in taking effective action.

In view of the figures I have just quoted, the Government is not maintaining the *status quo* but, in fact, it is going backwards. The article continues—

The problems of housing in WA are simply explained—building blocks cost too much and young couples find it hard to save a deposit and get additional finance.

Further on in the article, it says—

Instead of providing cheap land—thereby helping also to arrest the spiralling of land prices elsewhere—it offered the Woodlands blocks at prices comparable with inflated land values and under terms in some ways more burdensome than those demanded by private speculators.

#### PUBLIC REACTION

The real value of a scheme such as Woodlands can properly be measured by public reaction to it.

Since the scheme was announced nine months ago 79 blocks have been offered to the public in two groups.

The first group of 50 blocks attracted only 39 eligible applicants. And the result of the second offering of 29 blocks, announced yesterday, was that only 18 had been taken up.

The Government still has more than 800 blocks to be offered under the scheme over the next four years. At this rate its prospects of unloading these under current terms of sale would appear rather bleak.

I have annotated this article with the words "healthy competition", and I should like to digress on this aspect.

If I remember correctly, in our policy speech at the last election—or even the previous election—the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wanted an area of land to subdivide, and sell, at prices which the public could afford, and this would stop land-sharks from cornering the market in land.

That was the situation, and here was an opportunity for this Government, with 800 blocks on its hands, to sell at a price which the public could pay and, consequently, set up competition against those who were, and are, exploiting our people by selling land to them at prices in excess of what they, as families, could pay.

Let me illustrate my point by coming close to my own home; let me quote what I paid for a block of land, and a house, in Hilton Park in 1949. I tell this House that I paid £2,100 for a three-bedroomed house and a block of land in 1949 when, unfortunately, Labor went out of office on a Federal basis. Now, within a stone's throw of my own land—my own property—a block of land only, without a house, was recently sold for £2,600 by comparison with, as I have said, a three-bedroomed house, plus land, which cost £2,100 in 1949. That is, a three-bedroomed house. That is what our people are subjected to by the State and Commonwealth Liberal Governments. As a result, a wife is forced to obtain employment in order to assist in maintaining, or in acquiring, a roof over her family's head. I have here another editorial, taken from the *Daily News* of Thursday, the 17th March, 1966. It reads—

**Needy are Forgotten**

It is difficult to believe that the State Government has any genuine wish to make home-building cheaper.

The Government, it seems, would like home-building to be easier, but not by bringing down land prices—and land prices provide the key to the whole housing mess in W.A.

And mess it is.

That is how our Press alludes to that suggestion. The article continues—

It is an indictment of any Government that in the midst of prosperity young people in good, secure employment should find it a relatively harder job to get their own home than people similarly placed 30 years ago.

Mr. May: What is the Minister doing about it?

Mr. FLETCHER: Am I not justified in quoting as an example my own home for which I paid £2,100 in 1949, including the block of land, when, in comparison, an adjacent block of land only was sold for £2,600 a short time ago? The reason I am so critical of the situation is because the Government does not believe in controls. My party does not believe in controls, either, for controls' sake, but we do believe in them when their implementation is vital to the interests and welfare of the people. The editorial headed, "Needy are Forgotten", continues as follows:—

Yet the Government, at the prices it asks, is prepared to make a profit of over \$2,000 a block.

That is a reference to the Woodlands Estate. Continuing—

Under the new proposal both the Government and the speculators will profit from house-hungry young couples.

Somewhere along the line the needs of these people have been forgotten.

They, it seems, are the ones unlikely to gain any advantage from the Government's plans to dispose of its 900 blocks.

I have already indicated to the House how those 900 blocks could be disposed of at prices which could create competition against those who seek to exploit the situation by charging inflated prices for blocks of land. At the top of this newspaper article I have made a little note—"Prominent businessman. Can I help with houses for his tradesmen and others who leave for other employers up north?" I made that note to keep in mind the fact that the Vice-president of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce asked for my co-operation in trying to obtain houses for his employees so that they would remain in his employ. No doubt he has also been in touch with the Minister. The housing situation vitally affects my electorate, and so it concerns me and my constituents. I can recall criticism that was levelled against the construction of the Graham flats, or the Wandana flats I think they are called.

Mr. O'Neill: They are two separate buildings.

Mr. FLETCHER: In any event, I consider that a structure similar to the Graham flats could be erected in the Fremantle district to fill the present need. Whilst I am not greatly in favour of flat construction by the State Housing Commission, if it satisfies the needs of employees who may be single, or those whose families are off their hands, then some effort has been made to solve the problem.

Something of this nature must be done to satisfy the housing needs of people in my electorate, and the needs of employers in the Fremantle district, including the Vice-president of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce. On the same newspaper article I have made another note—"Cheaper by the Dozen." This has reference to cheaper provision of electricity, water supplies, and sewerage when they are made available to multi-unit homes.

I have here another article taken from *The West Australian*, dated the 22nd June, 1966, which is headed, "Higher Costs May Mean More Flats." The construction of flats may satisfy some, but not all. Let me quote what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament had to say on this problem. He was speaking about the £750 which has to be saved by a young couple before they become eligible for the Commonwealth housing grant of £250. For a young couple to save this amount in these days is almost an impossible task. In another article

taken from *The West Australian* dated the 10th July, 1964, and headed, "Department Battling With Housing Plan," the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament (Mr. Whitlam) is reported as having said—

If the Labor Party had produced during the election campaign a proposal such as the one before us, it would have been berated for offering an electoral bribe.

If a Labor Government had taken 6 months to produce the legislation to carry out the proposal, it would have been accused of an electoral stunt.

The prospects of young people acquiring the bonus of £250 for having saved £750 are almost negligible, even on the inflated wages of today. Recently the Commonwealth Minister for Housing, Senator Rankin, was highlighted on a television programme when handing over a \$500 cheque to somebody who had achieved the practically impossible feat of saving £750 in the time allowed. Presumably the cheque was being paid to the son and daughter-in-law of some wealthy type in one of the more salubrious electorates.

I am fully aware why this handing over of the cheque by Senator Rankin was filmed on television. This is an election year, but many members of the public would recognise that merely as cheap propaganda in an endeavour to retain the Federal Government in office. I have here another newspaper article written by Athol Thomas, which is headed, "Urban Land Prices and Speculation" and it is taken from *The West Australian*, dated the 5th April, 1965. Two of the paragraphs in that article read as follows:—

"God's air is available to all," said the young married man. "You can bathe for nothing in God's ocean.

But you're up to your eyebrows if you try to get hold of a piece of God's land."

Unfortunately, neither God nor his earthly representative hold the title deeds to the kind of land in the Perth metropolitan region wanted by young marrieds.

That sort of criticism appears now in our newspapers. However, I guarantee that, as sure as I stand here at this moment, none of this criticism will appear in the Press during the coming election campaign. I say to the member for Darling Range, and to others who criticise me for quoting newspaper extracts, that none of what I have quoted this evening—which is a criticism of this Government—will appear in the Press on the eve of the next State or Federal election—

Mr. Dunn: I did not criticise you for quoting Press articles.

Mr. FLETCHER:—unless the State Government is kicked out for maladministration before then.

Mr. O'Neil: It might be debarred for tedious repetition.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Speaker will be the best judge of that. Last night I asked the Premier a question regarding meat. I will not go into the question in detail. I asked him whether he was aware that the Bureau of Agricultural Economics had said that the lower consumption arose from higher meat prices. The Premier replied he was aware of this. I then asked: if he is aware that higher meat prices still prevail, will he inform the House as to what measures the Government is taking to ensure that, prior to export, adequate meat is available at reasonable prices to, in particular, those on pensions and low incomes? To this the Premier replied—

The domestic price of meat moved with the world price. Any arrangement to restrict exports and create an artificially low price in Australia would have to be nation-wide and farmers would almost certainly claim a subsidy to the level of the world price. The Government is of the opinion that a scheme along the lines mentioned above would raise more problems than it would solve.

What about the problems of those who are trying to buy meat at the present inflated prices? The Premier's answer continued—

Adjustments to the basic wage allow for changes in meat prices and no doubt the Commonwealth Budget will consider the pensioners' position.

Let me say in relation to the adjustments to the basic wage that they came at least three months after the inflated meat prices had existed. I hope I have made my point in this respect. In reply to the second part of the Premier's answer, which said that no doubt the Commonwealth Budget would consider the pensioners' position, I would ask to what extent in the past has it considered this position. There may be an increase of 60c in the basic pension wage, as mentioned in the Press as recently as this morning.

Mr. May: That is the maximum.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is so. However, the debate on the Address-in-Reply has given me the opportunity, without tedious repetition, to make known my dissatisfaction, particularly in regard to the housing situation, or lack of housing, in the State of Western Australia under the present Liberal-Country Party Government.

MR. RHATIGAN (Kimberley) [7.53 p.m.]: My remarks will be very brief. From the answer to my question without notice this afternoon to the Minister for the North-West it would appear obvious that negotiations are in progress for the sale of the Wyndham Meat Works. I hope I am wrong in thinking this. Those meat-works were up there to create compe-

titution. At that time a firm bought cattle that were driven in by small pastoralists who might have been offered £1 or 30s. per head, as may have been the case. The pastoralists had no alternative but to sell, and that is the very reason for the establishment of these works. If these meatworks are sold, or given away by this Government—as was the case with the timber mills and other State enterprises—it would be the most dreadful thing that could happen to the growers of the Kimberleys. I hope I am not right in my assumption.

I am not speaking from notes but from facts. The Minister said that the people in the Kimberleys knew about this. In fact, however, they do not know about it. I know the Minister has done flying trips through that area, but I too, have made trips along the beef roads and right through the north, and I am sure these people do not realise what is happening. I hope this report is published for their edification, so they will know what the Minister and his Government have in mind.

The answer I was given leaves me in no doubt that the object of this Government is to dispose of the Wyndham Meat Works; to sell them, or give them away. In the course of their trip members have briefly seen these works, and know them to be a paying concern. They are certainly paying their way. If the Government is going to sell these meatworks, there is nothing I can do to prevent it; but for heavens sake do not let us give them away.

There has been a good deal of publicity concerning M.M.A. Although I have been back here only a couple of days, I think I have had more experience in my travels with M.M.A. than has any other member in this House. Before Ansett came in, M.M.A. was doing a mighty job. But since Reg Ansett has come in, what has he done? He has sent over a couple of his obsolete planes, and I assure members I have no intention of flying in them ever again.

I had two experiences while flying in these planes. On one occasion I was grounded at Port Hedland for 24 hours, and on the other trip I was grounded at Derby for 24 hours. The plane in question was hired from the Philippines, and it is a rattletrap of a damn thing. I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker. How that plane is permitted to take to the air I do not know.

At this point I would like to say that I disagree with the remarks of Mr. Wayne, the Commissioner of Railways. He may know a lot about railways but I do not think he knows very much about the matter on which he comments. The report I have states—

There was justification for one company only (MacRobertson Miller Airlines) holding the franchise for air services in the North, Mr. Wayne said. The company was giving satisfaction to most of its users.

How ridiculous that is! Has Mr. Wayne had any experience of travelling with M.M.A., particularly since Reg Ansett came into the show? I suggest to Mr. Wayne that he make a booking with M.M.A. to fly on the plane that was hired from the Philippines. He would then have some experience of the matter. There are many other comments made by Mr. Wayne with which I do not agree, and I suggest that he has some experience of these matters before he puts out the type of report he did.

Mr. O'Connor: Don't you think he has flown to the north?

Mr. RHATIGAN: He may have done so, but I would like to know whether he has flown in this thing that has been hired from the Philippines. Has the Minister?

Mr. O'Connor: I have had at least one flight.

Mr. RHATIGAN: How many have I done?

Mr. O'Neil: One too many, apparently.

Mr. RHATIGAN: That is possible, and if I do so again it will probably be my last flight.

Mr. Bickerton: Port Hedland is alright.

Mr. RHATIGAN: It was a Sunday night. I have the greatest admiration for MacRobertson Miller Airlines because they pioneered these flights. Theirs was a reasonably good service until Ansett came in. He is sending in his obsolete stuff and neither I nor my electors are going to tolerate it.

I give full marks to the pilots, to their staff, and to their ground crews who are trying to do something impossible, particularly since Ansett came in. When Ansett came into the picture we thought everything would be all right, but the position has grown worse. I cannot speak too highly of the pilots and members of the ground crews for the marvellous job they are doing in most difficult circumstances.

This company is trying to do the job with a couple of wheelbarrows when 2-ton trucks are required. I am describing the situation in that way in a few words. Once again, in regard to State ships, I do not agree with Mr. Wayne at all. He would be well advised to stick to his railways, as he knows something about them, but quite obviously he does not know enough about the traffic requirements of the north.

MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [8.1 p.m.]: I would like to pass some comments in the debate on the Address-in-Reply. There do not seem to be many speakers on our side of the House who are prepared to participate. I do not know whether they are satisfied with everything which affects their electorates or whether they have no complaints.

Firstly, in speaking on the subject of agriculture I am very pleased that the Government has at last decided to pur-



chase a property in the Stirling electorate for the purpose of establishing a research station. Members will recall that ever since I have been in this House I have expressed the need for greater research to be carried out in the lower great southern region. The Government was not getting enough benefit from its investment in war service land settlement through lack of research into many problems which now come under the influence of the south coast. It is pleasing to hear that the Minister has announced his intention to purchase a farm for the establishment of a research station in that area.

There is also a move to carry out some research into the growing of particular types of vines for the establishment of a selective wine industry in the Mt. Barker district. It is very encouraging to see that step being taken. This will diversify the agricultural expansion of the area.

One matter which should concern everybody is that many people today talk about the increase in stock numbers which has taken place in Australia, and could take place in Western Australia. We know, for instance, that the sheep numbers in Western Australia have risen by a fantastic degree over the last few years. One expert said recently that Australia should increase its stock numbers to 30,000,000 sheep. It is hard to reconcile this with the report that New South Wales lost 17,000,000 sheep in the drought.

Over the last few years Western Australia has had the best run of successive good seasons ever experienced. The stock numbers have risen, but I would issue a note of warning to all stock owners: They should so balance their pasture development, their fodder conservation, and water conservation, as to make sure that they will not be placed in an unfortunate position should they happen to strike a bad year or two by having too many stock on their properties.

It is not right for a farmer, or a group of farmers to rely on the prospect of somebody else looking after them, if some setback should occur. Each person should make sure that he can carry the stock he runs, even if the season is not quite as successful as it should be.

Unfortunately even in good seasons we find farmers overstocking to the extent that they lose large numbers of sheep, and a great proportion of lambs. They blame this on anybody but themselves. I issue a word of warning to those in the stock industry: They should remember that successive good seasons are often followed by one or two bad ones. Therefore it behoves them to take particular care of their position.

One aspect of agriculture which appeals to me is the effort which has been made in the last year or two to process the waste fruit in the apple industry. The processors have done a good job, and the

Minister for Industrial Development has been very active in this regard, but in the last season I was staggered—in view of the estimate of the crop—because before the season had hardly commenced we were told no more reject fruit would be required. Then I discovered that the processors, to make sure that they had enough apple juice on hand, had imported 22,000 gallons of apple juice from Tasmania. To me this was a tragedy.

This was brought about by the fact that the people in the apple industry had taken into account only the rejects that would be available from the packing sheds; they had forgotten about the rejects that are thrown away from the orchard. It is a tragedy for this State to be importing apple juice from Tasmania when we have apples in this State going to waste. It is a disgrace to the people in charge of the industry that this should happen.

Most of us are aware that the organisation of war service land settlement has now ceased. I am very pleased that the scheme has proved so successful and that it should be wound up at this particular stage. I will not weary the House with a number of facts relating to war service land settlement, except to say that about 1,000 men have been settled under the scheme, and in the vicinity of \$100,000,000 has been spent on it. The most significant fact is that at the present time over \$40,000,000 of that money has been repaid to the war service land settlement authority, or to the people who supplied the finance.

Perhaps this is the most successful and satisfactory land settlement and land development scheme that has taken place in Western Australia. A great deal of this expansion took place in my electorate. I am rather proud of the fact that the scheme was started by a Government of the same political colour as this one, and that it was concluded also by a Government of that political colour; but all Governments which have been connected with the scheme did a tremendous job in implementing it and in bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion.

I am also proud of the fact that the initial development under that scheme was carried out in the Plantagenet district; and the genesis of that development is attributed to Mr. McLarty, as he was then, when he became Premier of this State. He paid a visit to the Mt. Barker district at the request of Mr. Russell Dumas, now Sir Russell Dumas, and it was my privilege to put before the then Premier a case for the development of the thousands of acres of Crown land in that district which were then lying idle.

One of the greatest advocates for the development of the land west of Mt. Barker was the late Mr. W. H. Crain who wrote, talked, and worked for many years in advocating its development. Where formerly there was indifferent timber country,

today we find hundreds of farms and most of them are carrying in the vicinity of 2,000 sheep. In my view that is a very satisfactory conclusion to a worth-while effort.

On many occasions I have mentioned the necessity for the better housing of people on the land. Here I would say how pleased I am with the efforts of the Commonwealth Development Bank in this matter. It is said—I think it is a fact—that half of the houses in the great southern area, say, from Cranbrook south towards Albany, and east and west of that area are being built with Commonwealth Development Bank finance. A tremendous amount of development is taking place in that area with Commonwealth Development Bank finance, and it is pleasing to know that at least somebody is prepared to make long-term finance available so that settlers can be better housed than they were in the past.

I would now like to mention a few points in regard to education. The education of our country children is very satisfactory and we must appreciate the work that is being done by the teachers in the Education Department. However, I have one suggestion to which I hope the Minister will give some consideration. Much of the trouble in country areas is due to the fact that headmasters, in particular, and senior teachers have an urgent desire to return to the metropolitan area. One cannot blame them for this as many are approaching retirement and wish to get back to the metropolitan area in order to purchase a house for their retirement.

In these days, when on many occasions incentives are being offered to different people, some incentive should be offered to headmasters in order to induce them to stay in country areas longer than the normal span that might be expected of them; and I would suggest that after a recognised period of, say, five years, headmasters be given an incentive by making bonuses available to enable them to purchase houses when they retire. I do not like the idea of bonuses, but we have seen this principle recently introduced into the nursing profession, and I think it would be just as successful if applied to headmasters, in particular, and senior men whom we want to keep in the country rather than see them gravitate back to the metropolitan area for the purpose of obtaining a house for their retirement.

Mr. W. Hegney: What about promotion for the teachers?

Mr. MITCHELL: In country areas there are many teachers on supply who are available, if necessary, to go back to work for a few weeks. However, quite often these ex-teachers suffer from a lack of up-to-date knowledge and I think the department should allow them to attend the schools of instruction that are carried out each year in country schools, even though it may not be necessary for them to actually teach. This would not cost anything because the schools are conducted and attended by regular teachers. Ex-teachers

should have the opportunity of attending those schools as it would give them a better chance to fulfil their duties if they were called upon to resume teaching.

Agricultural education in the country is gaining momentum and I am pleased with the progress being made at the Denmark School of Agriculture. I am hoping the department will expand that school, because it has the setting, the land, and everything else necessary to make it a really good agricultural college; and I hope the department will do just that.

In my particular town there is now established day-school agriculture education. We have a nice farm which was purchased some years ago. It is a good school and the education is equivalent to that of any other agricultural college, except that it is run on a day basis. This has been a worth-while experiment which I hope will be extended and improved.

As most members know, under the redistribution of seats which has just been announced, the electorate of Stirling takes in quite a fair area of the Albany township. If it were my privilege to represent that area it would not mean that I would have more regard for Albany than I have always had; it would not mean that I desired improvements to various things in Albany any more than I have in the past. I have always endeavoured to get the Government to effect improvements and I have always appreciated the assistance given me by the member for Albany; and I hope, in turn, that I have been of assistance to him in some cases.

I believe Albany has a very important part to play on the south coast and is deserving of all the support it can get as far as its harbour is concerned. The harbour does require a third berth; and, despite the comments that have been made, I maintain the foreshore road to the port of Albany is absolutely essential because of the ever-growing volume of traffic coming into the town, and through it. I am convinced that the port will never be fully developed until the foreshore road is put in and I urge the Government to give more consideration to that matter.

The establishment of a teachers' training college or a University college in the country areas of Western Australia has often been discussed, and if it is decided to build one in the country I am naturally hoping that Albany will be the town chosen for it.

The provision of electricity is making rapid strides and we must all be pleased with the expansion that has taken place. However, I believe more finance should be made available for electrical expansion. I am wondering if we are expanding our electricity supplies at the rate we should be. I believe we are keeping up with requirements, but we know that in most industrialised areas of the world, and even in Australia, in order to get the full benefit of industry, it is necessary to have a surplus supply of electricity.

Mr. May: Do you think oil or coal should be used for the production of it?

Mr. MITCHELL: I have some revolutionary ideas on this matter. I have often wondered what the Government did with the report it obtained from the French engineers with regard to the establishment of a tidal power station in the north. With all the activities that are now taking place in the north, I am of the opinion that this tidal power station should be established; and, if this were done it could, perhaps, put us in front as far as world supplies of electricity are concerned.

Mr. May: What about the south-west?

Mr. MITCHELL: It is fairly well catered for at the present time; and, I believe, if necessary, more will be supplied by this Government which has been so active in the provision of electricity in the past few years.

Mr. May: I do not think you know too much about it.

Mr. MITCHELL: The main subject, and perhaps the most important with which I wish to deal tonight concerns road safety. I believe this is one of the greatest problems confronting the authorities of this State and, perhaps, the world today. The Minister for Transport has returned recently from the Eastern States and has said that there are eight points which it was decided would be studied in an effort to make vehicles safer.

Most members will know I asked the Minister for Police some questions today relative to the braking systems on some of the popular makes of motorcars. These braking systems today are a disgrace to those who manufacture the cars and an absolute indictment of the business people of this world who allow the vehicles to be sold. I asked a question as to whether the temporary failure of brakes could be the cause of many of the accidents which occur today, and on this point I would like to relate a personal experience I had recently.

Unfortunately I have to drive a Holden motorcar. Being a member of Parliament I cannot afford anything better. I have known that the braking system of a Holden fails if the road is excessively wet and although I mentioned this fact last year nothing has been done about it. Recently I was coming from Mt. Barker and had driven through rain and many pools of water for approximately 150 miles. I came to the 57-mile peg on the Albany Highway and then saw a truck in front of me. I decided I would pass it. I was travelling at about 40 miles an hour and applied the brakes. But there were no brakes and I finished up under the tray of the semi-trailer truck with the wind-screen not far from the back of the truck. It was only an act of God that my wife and I were not killed. There were no skid marks. I just did not have any braking power.

The Holden people maintained that there was something wrong with the brakes. The R.A.C. examined them and said that the brakes were perfect but that water had got into them. It is said that no car has been manufactured in which the brakes are satisfactory if wet. Between 1946 and 1957 I drove a Nash car and an Austin car for 250,000 miles and although there was a lot of water on the roads in those days, I did not have one failure of brakes. With a Holden car—and I do not say that this fault is peculiar to Holdens—if it is driven through water there is a temporary loss of braking power.

If the car were examined five minutes later, it is quite possible that the brakes would be found to be perfect. But I maintain that many of the lives lost on the roads today could have been as a result of the temporary failure of the brakes. A man could run into the side of a train and get killed, just as my wife and I could have been when our brakes failed. In my case all that would have been said would have been, "The silly old fool. He always drove too fast and did not look where he was going." If all the occupants of a car are killed there is no-one to say that the brakes failed.

The Holden people say that the brakes cannot be sealed because it would cost money. What if it did? Last year they made £19,000,000. What a pity it would be if they had spent a few of those pounds providing efficient braking power under all circumstances! They can find money to boost the engine power because they think that will gain more sales. What a pity it would be if they spent some of the £19,000,000 on improving the braking power to an efficient standard! It is disgraceful that the manufacturers do not provide a sufficient and efficient braking system under all circumstances.

I know some people will say that after a driver has driven his car through water he must put his foot on the brake; but if wet conditions are experienced consistently for 150 miles the driver cannot be expected to remember every few miles to put his foot on the brake. I believe it is a damnable disgrace that the manufacturers of these cars make them death traps for those who use them. Someone should look into the matter. The Government should take some action to ensure that cars on the roads have an efficient braking system, operative under all conditions.

Another important matter which I believe should be checked concerns the use of red lights except as a danger signal. Red lights in neon signs should be banned. I know that even in country areas, near the red flashing lights at railway crossings one often finds flashing lights from snack bars or restaurants which are visible to a driver. Red is a danger signal and should be used only as such and its use should not be permitted indiscriminately.

in the city or elsewhere. It should be reserved for use as a danger signal only. I believe that the use of red lights for purposes other than to warn of danger has been the cause of many of our increasing number of accidents.

Another dangerous practice I have noticed on the roads on many occasions is indulged in by some truck drivers. As we know trucks are compelled to carry extra lights to indicate that they are trucks. Some of these lights are so near red that it is impossible to determine whether they are red or orange. I have been approaching a truck from a distance over the brow of a hill and have seen what I thought were two red lights and I have assumed that shortly I would have to overtake it. Then all of a sudden I have found that the vehicle in front of me is a truck, and it is not travelling in the same direction as I am but is coming towards me. Members can realise the danger of this situation.

Red should be used for the rear of vehicles. Red lights, or anything approaching red, should not be allowed on the front of a vehicle. If vehicles are approaching from opposite directions, they should have white lights at all points where they are necessary and red should be reserved for the rear.

People say they do not know why so many accidents occur on country roads, and I have given two reasons for them tonight. I believe they contribute to many of our accidents. The main, and most important one is the temporary brake failure of vehicles; and I repeat that this is a disgrace to the manufacturers—

Mr. W. Hegney: Hear, hear!

Mr. MITCHELL: —and the engineers who turn them out. So long as I am able to do anything about it I intend to do so to ensure that something is done to prevent big businesses manufacturing rubbishy vehicles which are not fit to drive.

Those are a few comments I have in mind. I hope, perhaps on the Estimates and so on, to make further comments later.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [8.30 p.m.]: There does not seem to be anyone on the Government side prepared to speak so I will take this opportunity to say a few words. First of all I would like to congratulate the Government on organising the two trips for members of Parliament through the north. I feel it has done a great deal of good because we members from the north have to talk on subjects different from those discussed by other members, and now those members will have some idea of what we are talking about, and the various difficulties we have in our walks of life.

I will deal firstly with the matter of housing at Carnarvon, which is a very important and vital subject to that area. At the beginning of this year we had 71 applications for housing from the small

town of Carnarvon. Many of these people are living, with their families, in caravans and makeshift accommodation whilst waiting perhaps 18 months or two years for housing accommodation.

Today I asked the Minister a question regarding the number of applications still pending as far as Carnarvon is concerned, and even as late as today the number has been reduced by only two over the last eight or nine months. Of course, the excuse is that there is no land available.

Mr. O'Neil: That is the reason; not an excuse.

Mr. NORTON: That is the excuse given. Who has to decide whether suitable land is available? The Lands Department or the Housing Commission? It appears to me the Lands Department is frightened to part with any of its land and is trying to hang on to it for as long as possible. I have suggested very suitable areas in Carnarvon, but apparently the Lands Department will not release the land under any circumstances at all. That department wants to see the housing project established some six miles from the town. That would mean another set-up like Wyndham. We want a town that is consolidated and where the various amenities can be developed at the least possible cost.

Mr. Bovell: Isn't flooding a problem?

Mr. NORTON: Not on the land I have put forward. There is housing right alongside it, across the bitumen road where there is water and power. Land was sold there just recently for as much as \$2,000 for a building block. If the land was likely to be flooded it would not have realised \$2,000 for a building block.

Mr. Toms: It did at Alfred Cove.

Mr. NORTON: It is difficult for Carnarvon to hold permanent employees in the essential services when it is unable to supply reasonable housing. I guarantee that if the Americans were there and said they would like some houses built they would be made available. It would be a case of "How many and how soon." But unfortunately the tracking station at Carnarvon is run by A.W.A. and not by the Americans, so there is no co-operation from the commission.

Mr. O'Neil: The Americans build their own houses at Exmouth.

Mr. NORTON: I notice the Government is also building a large number.

Mr. O'Neil: Those houses are not for the Americans; they are for the Australians.

Mr. NORTON: For the Australians working for the Americans. What about the Australians working for Australians; are they not entitled to housing? Last year 25 houses were made available during the year, of which 12 resulted from natural

turnover of tenants, the balance being new houses. That is a very small number for a growing area which has no other possibility of getting houses. The Carnarvon Shire Council has done a wonderful job and has supplied well over 50 houses for the tracking station. It has helped in that respect. But the people who service the town and carry it are not getting any consideration whatsoever.

So I think the Government and the Lands Department should take a little more interest in this more remote area to see that houses are made available. I have made constant representation to the Lands Department as has the shire council but so far we have not got very far at all with respect to land.

There is another point which I wish to touch on and that is with regard to departmental houses which have been equipped, or supplied, with solar heaters. Today I asked the Minister for Housing a number of questions about this problem. I believe I should have asked the Minister for Works as the matter comes under his jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the Minister for Housing supplied me with some of the answers which actually told me what I wanted to know. The solar heaters were installed in various houses at costs ranging from \$760 to \$895 but not one of them has operated efficiently. Not one! So one might say that that amount of money was an absolute dead loss. The Government has now had to supply those houses with booster units. The boosters being supplied are "Mettors Speedie Heat", which are costing the department another \$320 and up to \$410. It is costing that amount of money just to put a booster on the solar heaters which were supplied in the original contract with the department.

I do not think any notice was taken of the type of solar heater supplied, how it was manufactured, or who manufactured it. As a matter of fact, I think they were manufactured not such a great distance from Carnarvon. I cannot say that is an actual fact but I do not think they were manufactured in Perth.

Returning to the subject of land, the lack of land at Carnarvon is forcing the price sky high. Land is now being sold for prices up to \$4,000 for a building block, and even so offers at about that figure are being refused. The Lands Department takes a terrific time to release land to the public, when it is available. Just recently it released four blocks, two of which I asked to be released over two years ago. It took two years to release them. They were released at an upset price of about \$300 and within a few minutes the price jumped to \$1400, and one went to \$1600, so keen was the demand for the land.

Land released last August has now been completely built out except for one block which, I think, is held by a speculator. Land is also badly needed for light industry purposes. There are

a number of people operating light industry in the town who require land urgently so that they can establish themselves. There is a bodybuilder and blacksmith—a person badly needed in the town—working under adverse conditions in a bit of a shed on a plantation.

Another young fellow wishing to start an engineering business is unable to get suitable premises. A joiner also wants to start a business. Another man wants to carry out domestic electrical repairs—re-winding motors for electric refrigerators and washing machines and so on—and he is having to work under conditions which are not entirely suitable. He also carries out electrical wiring and is badly in need of land so that he can carry on his business properly and carry sufficient stores for the purpose.

The Minister says consideration is being given to this, and that land will be made available to these people in the near future. What is "the near future" as far as the Lands Department is concerned? The department seems to be like Kathleen Mavourneen; it is determined not to let the land go.

The primary school is badly in need of classrooms. In fact, by next February we will need at least another seven classrooms. The Minister told me he had written a letter on this subject but so far it has not come to hand. He told me he had actually sent the letter but up to the present I have not received it. The position is that Overseas Telecommunications are establishing themselves at Carnarvon and will be building 16 or 18 houses. Likewise, the tracking station will be increasing its staff as soon as the shire council has completed its houses, and this will mean another 20 houses.

The department's statistics provide for 1.7 school-age children per family. If we use that figure as a basis we will see there can be another 63 children to be accommodated.

At the present time there are two classes from the primary school housed in the high school and, numerically, this involves over 80 children. The classrooms at the primary school accommodate an average of 44.5 children per classroom and, based on the normal increases which we have had over the past few years, I am reliably informed that there will be 183 children requiring classrooms by February next. The number of classrooms at the primary school can only be increased by two, as there is no room on the school ground for more than two to be added.

I have submitted a plan showing an area which could be developed very easily for a school on quite good land close to the town. Up to date, I have heard nothing in respect of this. By taking away two grades, at least, from the primary school and putting them in the high school, they are considered as not attached to the primary school, but to the high school. In effect, the grading of the

primary school is being kept back and the primary school is not entitled to the various subsidies which it would normally receive. As I understand the position, the primary school is now classed as an "A"-class school whereas it should be classed as a "1A" school, as it has well over 600 children attending at the present time.

I asked a question in regard to water supplies, with particular reference to water being supplied to certain properties at Carnarvon. I think the answer which the Minister for Works gave is rather amusing and I do not think he could have read it when he did supply the answer. I asked whether certain people had applied for water and the dates on which they had applied. The Minister gave this information to me and the dates he gave were all in March, April, and May, 1965.

These are straightout domestic supplies and it would not cost any more than \$400 to \$600 at the most to put the water on to these places. I have been pursuing the Public Works Department—or the Country Water Supply Department—to obtain a decision on this. Because I could not obtain a satisfactory decision, I had to ask the Minister for Water Supplies a question, which was, "Have the applicants been advised of the acceptance or rejection of their application?" The answer he gave was, "No, but now that the loan allocation for 1966-67 has been received an early decision can be anticipated, and advice should be given to the applicants within the next two weeks."

These applications were made well before the last financial year commenced and the suggestion that they should allocate loan funds to a small extension like this is quite ridiculous.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: They will have the information within two weeks.

Mr. NORTON: The Minister means, within 18 to 20 months after their date of application. It is just as well they have been able to have water carted to them.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is three weeks since I have been informed of this.

Mr. NORTON: But 18 to 20 months since they made their applications.

Perhaps the fault is not so much with the Minister as with the employees in his department. Whilst I am on this point, I would mention that when the old North-West Department of the Public Works Department was operative, one could, at least, get things done. This department was complete within itself but now, with the Public Works Department split up into various sections, one does not know where one is going. I believe it is a fact that if a letter is delivered at the office in Carnarvon it takes a week to arrive at the other end.

Mr. Bovell: A new member is probably what is needed.

Mr. NORTON: This is a typical comment from a member of the Government and coincides with the story which was circulated in my area last election to the effect, "Until you get rid of Dan Norton, you will not get anywhere with this Government."

Mr. Bovell: The present Government has put Carnarvon on the map.

Mr. NORTON: I would now like to say a few words on the matter of traffic regulations which are causing a great deal of trouble and concern in the outback. As you, Sir, will remember, first of all last year the road maintenance tax was brought in. This was followed by the increase in registration fees for motor vehicles. But, nothing was intimated to us regarding the alteration in respect of traffic regulations.

Yesterday, I asked some questions, both of the Minister for Railways and the Minister for Transport, in respect of certain Government vehicles. It appears to me that what is right for the Government is not right for the private person. The regulations set down that certain things must be done to certain vehicles—we cannot have any more weight than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tons on the front axle, and so on. However, in asking these questions, particularly of the Minister for Railways, we find that one vehicle has, in fact, a front axle tare weight of 10,227 lb. which is very much in excess of the total weight allowed on any front axle. Further, if one were to look at the tare weights and the carrying capacity of various other vehicles, one would find that at full passenger capacity they would all be overloaded and, in addition, this overload would be increased still further through the luggage, parcels, etc., which the various railway buses carry.

With regard to the M.T.T. buses, although initially they are not overweight on the front axle, they are getting very close to it. When one has regard for their total tare weight and the number of passengers they carry, both sitting and standing, one sees at once that at their maximum load they are all overweight. The vehicle referred to in this answer remains unknown because the name of the manufacturer is not given but it has a tare weight of 162½ cwt. This bus has seating for 48 and standing for 24, which is required under the regulations.

For the sake of a basis, if we took the 72 people as weighing just eight stone, or 1 cwt. each, we would find that their combined weight would load the vehicle to practically its maximum capacity—and very little weight in excess of this would cause it to be overloaded.

We find, too, that buses are allowed to be greater in length than any other rigid vehicle; buses can be over-width and, yet, they are not required to carry an over-width sign which is forced on all private enterprise and on private owners.

From the foregoing it would appear that what is good for the Government is not good for the private person. If we must have rules and regulations, then they should be uniform ones and everyone should comply with them.

In April, there appeared in the paper an article headed, "M.T.T. Buses Contravene Regulations." In this particular report it is stated that there are a number of M.T.T. buses which are minus left-hand rear vision mirrors—a requirement which is laid down in the regulations. A driver claimed that at least 60 per cent. of the M.T.T. vehicles had no external left-hand rear vision mirrors. A spot-check by a reporter showed that 13 out of 21 were without rear vision mirrors; others were without speedos. If the Government is going to allow buses to be over-width, over-length, over-weight, and without these various safety devices in dense traffic in the city, surely the Government could allow vehicles in the north, and the remote areas, where it is essential to have wide, fast, and efficient transport, some latitude in regard to their size.

Mr. O'Connor: Did you say that the buses were still over-width? If they are, they are permitted by regulation to be that way.

Mr. NORTON: They are still over-width.

Mr. Court: No, they are not. This is a new regulation.

Mr. NORTON: I have here a photostat copy of regulations sent out to the shires in connection with road trains applicable only to the north. These apply only to the north of Western Australia and to cattle trains operating in that area. I do not know why the Police Department is quibbling over an extra six inches in the width of a vehicle, because, in this area it would not make any difference if the vehicle was 8 ft. or 8 ft. 6 in. wide. However, the extra six inches makes a tremendous difference in the capacity of the vehicle and the type of load it can carry.

The main point at issue, of course, is: Why make special regulations for the north? Why are the regulations not applicable to the whole of the State? To reduce the width of these vehicles by six inches would cost a considerable amount of money. Also, a number of these vehicles—not all of them—were built after obtaining police permission. Plans and specifications were submitted to the Police Department before the vehicles were ordered, and the police granted permission for them to be built according to those specifications, which included the extra six inches in width.

Suddenly the decision is made that these vehicles are dangerous because of the extra width. One vehicle in Carnarvon is extremely well built. It is of all-steel construction, and cross members are welded to the summers, and therefore to reduce the width of the vehicle by 6 inches would

mean that the vehicle would have to be cut apart, and the overall cost of altering it would amount to \$4,000 before it would meet the standards provided by the latest regulations.

Regulations, and the imposition of the road maintenance tax and other taxes, have had such an adverse effect on stock transporters that, instead of four stock transporters operating from Carnarvon, there is now only one. The other three hauliers have converted their vehicles to tip trucks for general haulage use. The reason is that they find it easier to comply with the rules and regulations for this form of cartage than to engage in the carting of stock.

I have here a letter addressed to me sent by one of the stock firms which complains of the difficulty it is having in obtaining vehicles to carry stock. This firm points out that there is only one stock transport operator in Carnarvon with a truck available for stock carting. This firm, last year, had the task of transporting 13,000 head of sheep and 400 head of cattle on behalf of various owners.

This year the same firm has arranged for the transport of 17,000 head of sheep and 1,096 head of cattle. It was eventually able to obtain trucks from both Geraldton and Northampton for this transport job. This meant that the owners of the stock had to pay road maintenance tax on these vehicles, and had to meet the cost of their travelling 300 miles or more before they commenced transporting the stock. These are the burdens that are being imposed on the people in the district by taxes and rigid regulations. Ever since the tax has been imposed letters of complaint and articles have appeared in the Press at various times on the unfairness of this tax; and, in addition, members representing the north have received complaints from various organisations, such as the Pastoralists Association and the Farmers' Union.

I have here before me a copy of a document sent to me by the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of Western Australia. Copies were sent to all members representing north-west electorates and also, I would say, to the member for Murchison. This document contains a submission to the Minister for Police (Mr. Craig) in respect of the transport regulations, and it is dated the 13th May, 1966. It is quite a substantial submission, but my advice is that this association has not yet received a reply to its very comprehensive submission. I am certain that you would greatly appreciate reading it, Mr. Speaker, because it sets out very clearly, and in very definite terms, what is required in regard to transport in remote areas. I would like to read the whole of this submission to the House, but I fear that time would not permit me because I could not resist commenting at length on the various points that are made in it.

However, there is another matter which I wish to discuss quite extensively. It

concerns the sizes of tyres fitted to motor vehicles. I have raised this matter in the House previously and it is something which I think needs to be discussed in greater detail because only today I have learned that the Main Roads Department has now taken over complete control of all over-width trucks. The Police Department no longer has anything to do with them.

The Main Roads Department may have efficient engineers who understand road-making, but I do not believe it has ever examined transport problems. In appendix A of the traffic regulations, which will be tabled in due course, it is found that the various types of vehicles and the weights they can carry are set out very clearly. There are a number of vehicles the capacity of which is limited by the size of their tyres. There are five in all. They are trucks that are fitted with dual wheels and they definitely have a load limitation due to tyre equipment.

In these regulations no consideration has been given to tyre equipment, maker's specifications, or the tonnage of the vehicles. All the vehicles listed in this particular schedule could be equipped with 10.00 x 20 tyres. They are sufficiently strong to carry up to over 5,000 lb. per tyre.

I would now like to outline to the House the specifications for a "G"-class truck under the schedule. According to the manufacturer's specifications the gross weight of this vehicle, with an all up load, is 24 tons. This is a three-axled truck, with an overall length of 30 ft. The length of the body is 24 ft. 6 in., and it has a bogey with dual wheels. The tare weight of the vehicle is 9½ tons, giving a payload of 14½ tons. To carry this load it would have to be equipped with 10 tyres, the size of each being 11.00 x 20 and 14 ply, which gives a total of 780 square inches of tyre contact with the road. This is equal to 69 lb. per square inch of road contact or 1 ton to 32½ square inches.

In appendix A we find that the gross load of this vehicle is 17½ tons with a tare weight of 9½ tons, if the payload is 8 tons. To carry a payload of 8 tons a transport operator would be required to fit only 10 tyres each 9.00 x 20 and 10 ply which would give a total of 620 square inches of tyre contact with the road as against 680 lb. of tyre pressure, or 63¼ lb. per square inch, which is equal to 35½ square inches per ton. Each tyre carries 3,920 lb.

However, the point is that each tyre will have practically the same pressure on the road, but a truck which is operated under the specifications laid down under appendix A will have to run three trips to do the same amount of work as the other truck would do in two. In other words, in the first instance there is one-third more road wear over the same distance, with the same load, than there is in the other.

I could speak at considerable length in relation to tyre weight, etc. It is an interesting study. We find that with the ex-

ception of five vehicles, as I said before, all of the trucks could be equipped with 10.00 x 20 tyres. But the vehicles that can be equipped with the smaller tyres, that is, if the maker's specifications will allow it, are the far heavier types of vehicles. They are the "G" type, the "J," the "L," the "M" and the "Ma" types. In the case of the "Ma" type which has a gross carrying capacity of 25 tons, we find that the load on each tyre is only 2,800 lb. In the case of the "M" type, which has two tyres less, it is still 25 tons with a tyre pressure of 3,111 lb. The "L" type, which also has a gross capacity of 25 tons, has 14 tyres, with a pressure of 4,000 lb. per tyre.

So it will be seen that none of these regulations have taken into consideration the pressure on the road surface in respect of the load. In the regulations I have referred to there is no mention of the low profile tyre. This tyre, which is to replace the duals of 10.00 x 20, has a cross-section of 18 by 19.5 inches. So it will be seen that instead of being nine inches across in its cross-section, it is eight inches. It runs almost as a balloon tyre, and it would act as a pneumatic roller and keep the road in perfect order. But, as I have said, the regulations in question do not acknowledge that such a tyre exists, and this fact should be taken into consideration.

When we look at another part of the regulations which deal with the tandem axles for both single and dual tyres, we find that tandem axle dual tyres take 29,000 lb. gross load, which is 3,625 lb. per tyre, while the tandem axle single tyres take a gross load of 20,000 lb. weight, which means 5,000 lb. per tyre. Which type would you sooner have, Mr. Speaker, the tandem dual, or the single tyres? There would be a tremendous difference in their effect on the road surface. If 5,000 lb. can be allowed on one type of tyre, surely it can be allowed on the other. By and large the tyres are made to carry 66 lb. to 71 lb. per square inch of tyre contact on the road.

I would now like to refer to the road maintenance tax which is hitting the remote areas very hard. Personally, I cannot understand why we should have to keep on making up this matching money. When introducing the road maintenance tax legislation the Premier claimed it was to raise £600,000, or \$1,200,000 per year; but when I spoke to that particular Bill last year I estimated it would bring in over \$2,000,000. From an answer to a question yesterday it is very obvious that over \$2,000,000, will be forthcoming.

I feel that the Commonwealth Government is almost blackmailing the various States into getting some of their petrol or liquid fuel tax back, because when we look at the amount collected for the year ended the 30th June, 1965, we find that the net customs and excise duties collected on petrol (excluding aviation spirit) was \$163,248,000, while the net customs and excise duty collected on automotive diesel



fuel was \$9,630,000. The amount of repayments to the States under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, 1964, was \$130,000,000, which left \$42,878,000 to go into the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Commonwealth.

I cannot see why we must raise extra money to get back taxes we have already paid. I understand that when the Treasury gave the figures to the Premier in estimating what this road maintenance tax would bring in, it had no idea of the position at all. That is very apparent. The Treasury made a guess at it, and this guess was a long way out. Yet I, as a layman, had a very good idea as to the amount this tax would bring in.

If the people in the Treasury, or others who may be concerned, would only make some inquiries of the people who live in the country and who are using the road haulage they would get some appreciation of the amount that would be brought in. In the *Northern Times* of the 7th April, 1966, there is a heading: "Pastoralists Consider Road Maintenance Tax Unfair." The report goes on to say—

The way the Act was brought in was also criticised by the association. It believed the Act was rushed through Parliament without any thought given to the people it would affect most or to them having the chance to state the effect it would have on what the association believes is an already overburdened industry.

That supports what I have said. If we approach the people the tax will affect we will get some idea of the position. I would now like to refer to an article which appeared on the 7th July, 1966. This could interest the Minister for Lands because it is written from Busselton. I will not read it all because it follows the same pattern as the others. There are, however, two extracts I wish to quote. They are as follows:—

The president of the dairy section of the Farmers' Union, Mr. J. Thomson, of Margaret River said the union's executive considered the Act had been hastily conceived without regard to the effect it would have on the rural community.

Mr. O'Connor: Which paper is this?

Mr. NORTON: I am quoting from the country edition of *The West Australian* dated the 7th July, 1966. It also, said—

The union would press for amendment of the Bill in the next session of Parliament.

I wonder who is going to make that amendment? Apparently the union will ask somebody to make it—perhaps it will ask the member for the district.

Mr. Bovell: You leave my district to me.

Mr. NORTON: I am merely quoting what the people in the Minister's district are saying. I wonder how much this tax will eventually bring in? I certainly know who it is going to hit. When this Act

was brought in we were told it was to catch the interstate hauliers. That sounds a laudable proposition. In answers to questions yesterday the Minister told us that in three months 223 hauliers had paid their tax, and it was thought that 110 had dodged payment of this tax. The 223 who paid their tax paid \$20,712 for three months.

In a full year at the same rate they will pay \$82,842. I wonder who will have to pay to make up the \$2,250,000 that has to be earned. It will be the people who are living in the remote areas, and those in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne, and Murchison districts. It is not fair to tax these people so heavily, because they are battling to keep those parts of the State going, and they are to be levied over \$2,000,000 in order to collect less than \$100,000 from interstate hauliers. As I said on the last occasion when I spoke on this subject, I believe this tax should be spread over all the road users, and I shall deal with that aspect later on.

I want to show how the tax affects the people, particularly those in my electorate. It is hitting everybody in the remote areas, and no-one misses out. The truck owners do not carry this burden; it is being passed on, and irrespective of what one buys in those parts the price has been increased and that increase has been approved by the Transport Commission.

To give an idea of the increases—and these have been approved by the Transport Commission—I wish to give some comparative figures. On the Perth to Carnarvon run, the parcel rate per 1 cwt. was \$1.80 originally, but now it has increased to \$2.07; per ton it has increased from \$21 to \$24.15. On the Geraldton to Carnarvon run the parcel rate per 1 cwt. increased from 68c to 78c, while the ton rate has increased from \$12 to \$13.80. On the Carnarvon to Exmouth run the general cargo rate per cwt. was \$1.51, but it has increased to \$1.62; the freezer rate has been increased from \$29 to \$33.35 per ton, and the general cargo rate per ton has increased from \$15 to \$17.25.

On the Perth to Exmouth run the former rate of \$65 per ton on freezer cargo has increased to \$74.75; the general cargo rate has increased from \$44.50 to \$51.20 per ton; and the parcel rate per cwt. has increased from \$2.75 to \$3.16. On the Perth to Port Hedland run, the general cargo rate per ton has increased from \$78 to \$85. So we can see the transport costs have gone up very considerably, due to the increase imposed by the road maintenance tax and approved by the commission.

Last year quite a lot of produce was sent down from Carnarvon. It included about 150,000 cases of bananas, 143,000 bags of beans, 72,000 cases of tomatoes, 16,000 bags of capsicums, 375 bags of chillies, 15,528 bags of pumpkins, 13,358 cases of rock melons, 375 cases of paw-

paws, 373 cases of mangoes, 964 bags of egg fruit, 6,792 dozen water melons, and 26,727 bags of cucumbers.

I have not worked out the increase in freight for all this produce, and I shall only give the increase in respect of a few. The increase in freight for bananas was \$8,486, beans \$4,287, tomatoes \$2,882, and rock melons \$534, giving a total of \$16,189. To that we have to add the increased freight on everything that is carted to Carnarvon; and in respect of produce, all the packing materials have to be carted from Perth. The manures have to be carted from Geraldton to Carnarvon because of the lack of shipping.

This year blood and bone from Wyndham has been shipped to Geraldton, off-loaded and carted to Carnarvon. The State Shipping Service has agreed to waive the freight from Carnarvon to Geraldton providing there are 125 tons per shipment, but the planters will have to pay around \$13 for back-loading on this manure from Geraldton, a portion of which will go to the road maintenance tax. No matter what a person is engaged in he will feel the impact of this tax.

When we consider the stations and the workers around the town, no matter what the commodity is, they will have to pay the extra tax. If a person works out of town and his supplies have to be sent to him he also has to pay the road maintenance tax, on top of the normal costs. As in the case of the primary producer, the pastoralist has to pay a double tax for the transport of stock, because he loads one way only. Wool carting is also a one-way loading and a double tax has to be paid. The pastoralist is hit in every respect, and on top of that on the commodities which have to be carried week by week by the mailman to him there is a proportionate increase in the price, due to the tax. In the same way people working on stations, contractors and others are being hit harder and harder all the time.

There are a few prospectors in the Murchison, and a few in my electorate, who work away from State batteries. There is one prospector in my electorate who carts the ore to Meekatharra for crushing. He has to pay road maintenance tax on over 200 miles each way on the vehicle he uses. Similarly, trucks carting ore from Kalgoorlie to treatment plants will have to pay the tax. The Main Roads Department contractor who owns a tip truck with a bogey will also have to pay the road maintenance tax, as there is no exemption, and so the cost to that department will be increased.

The shires have been hit by the reduction in license fees, and a reduction in license fees means a reduction in matching money received, so they are down on their revenue. The Carnarvon Shire has just bought two large tip trucks, and the road maintenance tax will have to be paid on them because they are of 12-yard

capacity. The position is getting to be absolutely farcical.

Some alteration should be made to the Act. No useful purpose would be served in criticising the Act if a suggestion were not put forward to get around the difficulties. I have a suggestion which is very similar to the one I put forward last year. I have gone to considerable trouble to work this out. I do not say I am enamoured with it, because it is another tax on the people, but it is nevertheless a tax which will affect every person who owns a motor vehicle, a caravan, a trailer, or a motor cycle.

This is a tax on every vehicle license. I have taken out figures from the *Western Australian Year Book No. 5* and find that for the year 1964 the amount of actual license fees paid to the police or to shire councils was \$6,852,128. If this figure were increased by 20 per cent. the total amount would be increased by \$1,370,246, which is just slightly more than the Premier set out to obtain from the road maintenance tax.

In answer to a question today, we were told that the amount of license fees collected to the end of June was \$8,892,806. With the increase in license fees, and the increased number of vehicles licensed, the levy on the license could be reduced to 15 per cent., which would give us \$1,333,920 which, again, is in excess of the amount estimated by the Premier.

Again, I come back to this: Why should the few people in the remote areas have to pay the bulk of this tax in order to catch a few interstate hauliers who probably will not pay a total of \$100,000 in any one year? It is quite unfair.

If we have a look at the cost of licensing, and the amount the levy will increase the license fee paid by the average person, we will find it is not very much. Today the Minister gave me the license fees for quite a number of popular cars. I do not intend to go through them all, but I will take my own car as an example. The license fee, including third party and surcharge, was \$43.05, and the actual license fee was \$24. Under the 1964 figures I would have had to pay \$4.80 extra per year. Under the figures for this year I would pay \$3.60, which would hardly be noticed. So one can see it is not very hard to get around this matter, and everybody using the road would, to some extent, be charged in respect of the roads they use. If the matter were handled this way, we would not be faced with the big expense which is being incurred at the present time for policing and administering the Act.

Administration costs are hard to estimate. As a matter of fact, last session I estimated they would be in the vicinity of £75,000, or \$150,000, and the member for Mt. Marshall interjected and said my figure was far too low. I now agree that that is so when I see the number of people

who have to be employed in respect of this tax and the number of vehicles and other things that have to be supplied.

The **SPEAKER**: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. **NORTON**: I have actually finished my speech, Mr. Speaker, but it is my intention to move an amendment to the motion moved by the member for Narrogin.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

But we regret the Government has not foreshadowed any move to abolish or substantially reduce the heavy burden placed upon the costs of production and the cost of living throughout all country districts by the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, No. 69 of 1965.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Bickerton.

*House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Thursday, the 4th August, 1966

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

### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE ROADS

#### *Kimberley Districts: Expenditure*

The Hon. H. C. **STRICKLAND** asked the Minister for Justice:

I wish to ask a question of the Minister for Justice but before doing so I would preface it by

saying that yesterday I asked a question which was misunderstood in the department and therefore I am asking it again today, on this occasion without notice. The question is as follows:—

What amounts have been allocated for all funds for expenditure in the Kimberley districts this financial year?

The question related to main roads funds.

The Hon. A. F. **GRIFFITH** replied:

I am sorry if the honourable member was given incorrect information. I feel, however, that he means what amount has been allocated from each fund, rather than for each fund. The honourable member said, "for each fund." I think he means from each fund. Mr. Strickland was good enough to acquaint me with the fact that he desired this information. The information I have is—

	\$
Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, 1964	1,811,000
Commonwealth Beef Road Grant	1,500,000
Road Maintenance Fund	239,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,550,000</b>

### QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

#### MINBALUP AND SOUTH KENSINGTON OCCUPATIONAL CENTRES

#### *Transport and Subsidy Arrangements for Children*

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

- (1) Will the Minister advise whether there is to be a variation of the existing special transport arrangements whereby children attending the Minbalup and South Kensington occupation centres are picked up at their homes each morning and returned to their homes each afternoon?
- (2) If so, is it envisaged that, under the new proposal, many of the children will be required to travel to the centres by public transport?
- (3) If the reply to (2) is "Yes", will it be necessary for any of these children to travel on more than one mode of transport in order to attend the centres?
- (4) If the reply to (3) is "Yes"—  
(a) what arrangements, if any,