

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 6th August, 1969

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

QUESTIONS (10): ON NOTICE EDUCATION

Norseman Junior High School

1. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is the Minister for Education aware that the Norseman Junior High School lacks adequate fire extinguishing apparatus, and due to this situation there is a very poor safety standard in the classrooms?
- (2) Will the Minister take immediate action to provide this necessary fire-fighting equipment?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Fire extinguishers are standard equipment in schools where the nature of the teaching, e.g., science, manual arts, home economics, or the type of building, e.g. multi storey, presents some element of risk.
- (2) The situation at the Norseman Junior High School has been referred to the Public Works Department for examination and supply of the appropriate extinguishers.

2. *This question was postponed.*

TOWN PLANNING Fremantle Scheme

3. The Hon. R. THOMPSON, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Prior to his granting preliminary approval of the Fremantle Town Planning Scheme No. 2, did the Minister give consideration to all aspects of the scheme in view of the fact that—
 - (a) this scheme makes provision for high density residential development in the establishment of GR4, GR5 and GR6 Zones; and
 - (b) if such land is zoned for high density residential development, all public open space, shopping and other amenities and facilities, should be planned on the basis that the bulk, if not all, the land zoned for high density residential development will be used for that purpose?

- (2) Has sufficient provision been made in the scheme plan for (a) water, (b) sewerage, (c) roadway widening, (d) public open space, (e) shopping, and (f) other amenities and facilities, which will be necessary for the increased population in the area by reason of the high density development?

- (3) Could the Municipality of Fremantle Act, 1925-1959, be used in relation to this Town Planning Scheme?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The document is a zoning scheme, and it is not the purpose or function of the plan to make provision for water or sewerage services as such, or necessarily for road widenings; the remainder of the question is answered in paragraph 1.
- (3) The Municipality of Fremantle Act, 1925-1959, may be used either before or after the scheme becomes operative.

DEATH DUTY

Number of Estates and Receipts

4. The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice:

Would the Minister advise the House—

- (a) the number of estates from which death duty was received to the end of each of the financial years from 1962 to 1968 inclusive; and
- (b) if the figures are available, the number of estates from which death duty was received for the financial year ended June 1969, also the total amount of death duty received during that year?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) Period ended 30/6/62—3,777
 Period ended 30/6/63—3,763
 Period ended 30/6/64—3,816
 Period ended 30/6/65—4,349
 Period ended 30/6/66—4,135
 Period ended 30/6/67—4,698
 Period ended 30/6/68—4,614
- (b) Number of estates, 4,751.
 Total duty received, \$6,364,180.

QUARRYING

Dust Nuisance

5. The Hon. J. DOLAN, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines:

What positive measures have quarrying companies in the Gosnells Shire area taken, in the last five years, to lessen the dust nuisance?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

During the last five years the quarrying companies in the Gosnells Shire area have taken the following measures to lessen the dust nuisance—

Readymix Quarry.

Plant—maintained in good condition the microdyne and field dust collecting units in the primary and tertiary crushing sections, modified the extractor housing above the screens; installed a wet type dust collector over a newly installed crusher; installed high pressure water sprays at all transfer points. Quarry Excavation Area—constructed a mobile water tank to spray the roads.

Stockpile Area—erected stand pipes at various localities in the stockpile area to permit the use of sprinklers.

Swan Quarries.

Plant—installed fans and hoods over tertiary crushers and screens; fine mist sprays were installed; obtained the services of a consultant and as a result connected a Joy-turbulaire wet type scrubber of capacity 20,000 c.f.m., by ducting to all points where dust occurs in the quaternary and resonex sections of the plant; currently negotiating to obtain further dust suppression equipment for the quaternary section.

Quarry Excavation Area—periodically spray with oil all roads and the quarry floor.

6. *This question was postponed.*

MAIN ROADS

Kulin-Lake Grace Diversion

7 The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines:

With reference to the Kulin-Lake Grace diversion road—

- (a) how much was the construction cost; and
- (b) what was the cost of the requisite resumptions?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(a) \$87,459.

(b) The Main Roads Department has paid \$3,391 in respect to claims already submitted, and expects that a further commitment of about \$4,000 will be involved for the remainder of the land taken for this road.

MOON LANDING

Congratulatory Message

8. The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines:

Bearing in mind the huge success of the recent Apollo 11 moon landing project by N.A.S.A., astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins, Carnarvon Tracking Station, and others, will the Minister advise the House—

- (a) has a congratulatory message been sent to those concerned on behalf of the State expressing great satisfaction with the outcome of the mission and the safe return to earth of the astronauts; and
- (b) if not, can this be done without delay?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) and (b) Yes. An appropriate message was conveyed through the United States Consul in Perth to "all concerned" on the 26th July, 1969.

COURTHOUSES

Use of Police Station at Kondinin

9. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Police Station at Kondinin is used as a courthouse, and the room in which the Court is held measures twelve feet by twelve feet and has to house all records as well as all office equipment?
- (2) Is he also aware that solicitors desirous of interviewing clients have no facilities provided and are required to do so outside the building?
- (3) Will the Minister give early and favourable consideration to providing a suitable courthouse commensurate with the size and importance of the town of Kondinin?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) The project has been included in the draft loan programme for 1969-70, but approval will be dependent on availability of loan funds.

EDUCATION

Primary School at Manjimup

10. The Hon. V. J. FERRY, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What progress has been made towards acquiring a site for the establishment of a second primary school at Manjimup?

- (2) By what date may the new school be ready for use?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Negotiations for the acquisition of a suitable site are proceeding and it is hoped that these will be finalised in the near future.
- (2) At present it is anticipated that the school will be ready by the beginning of the 1970 school year.

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Election

On motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), resolved:

That in accordance with Standing Order No. 34, the following members be elected to act as Deputy Chairmen of Committees for the present session—The Hon. F. D. Willmott, The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, and The Hon. J. M. Thomson.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Election

On motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) the following sessional committees were elected:—

Standing Orders.—The Hon. F. D. Willmott, The Hon. H. C. Strickland, and The Hon. J. M. Thomson.

Library.—The Hon. V. J. Ferry, and The Hon. R. F. Hutchison.

House.—The Hon. J. Heitman, The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson, The Hon. R. Thompson, and The Hon. J. Dolan.

Printing.—The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs, and The Hon. E. C. House.

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.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY

Amendment to Motion

Debate resumed, from the 5th August, on the following motion by The Hon. J. Heitman:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency:—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

To which The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition) had moved an amendment—

That the following be added to the motion:—

; but this House views with concern that despite the commendable efforts in the private sector, housing shortages remain in so many areas of the State, the price of land is still high and building blocks remain in short supply, families are still being forced to pay exorbitant rents, and migrant intake is being restricted because of doubts about being suitably housed in Western Australia.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [4.54 p.m.]: We are becoming fairly accustomed in this House in recent times to members moving amendments to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Deservedly so!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That, of course, is entirely a matter of opinion or, in fact, of convenience, depending upon one's point of view. Whilst I say this, I hasten to add that it is the undoubted right of any individual member of the Chamber to endeavour to add some words of his own particular liking to this formal address, whether to express some gratification or some disappointment on any subject commented upon by His Excellency.

On this occasion it appears to be on a point of dissatisfaction that Mr. Willesee expresses himself. I imagine the honourable member must have said to himself, "I think I must move a motion of this nature to keep this pot boiling a little. If I do not, then the feeling may get abroad that I am satisfied with the efforts the Government has made since the last time I moved a similar motion." You will remember, Mr. President, that that was about a year ago.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I would like to correct you. I did not move an amendment a year ago.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I stand corrected. However, this subject was considerably discussed on some pretext or other about a year ago.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I reject the word "pretext."

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am making the speech.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You are making a hell of a mess of it up to now.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member has hardly allowed me to say one or two words without interrupting me.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: It is unusual for you not to know what you are talking about.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the honourable member continues with this sort of conversation across the Chamber he cannot expect me to be kind to him.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I respect your kindness.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Up to this point I intended to be reasonably kind, because I gave the honourable member credit for trying to keep a pot boiling, which he thinks needs a lot of fire underneath it. In this particular case, Mr. Willesee desires the House to express some concern in relation to housing and, in order to do this, he relies very heavily indeed upon newspaper reports and the opinions of other people. If it had not been for his undoubted ability to read these reports, on going through his speech one would find that he had little to say on his own behalf.

At this point I think we should refresh our minds on what His Excellency had to say in his opening Speech in regard to housing and related problems. Members were informed as follows:—

Western Australia's population now exceeds 939,000. The increase last year of 4.3% was more than twice the average for Australia. Almost two-thirds of the gain came from migration.

How Mr. Willesee was able to say to us that our migration policy has slowed down is beyond my understanding.

When the Prime Minister made a recent visit to this State I heard him say that last year Western Australia took migrants at a rate double the Australian average. As the Western Australian intake was 4.6 per cent. and the Australian average was, I think, in the vicinity of 2.03 per cent., I find it extremely difficult to understand Mr. Willesee's remarks. Further, when I read this morning's issue of *The West Australian* I noted that the programme for immigration exceeded the target for Australia by more than 15,000 during the last financial year and that we could expect this figure to increase even more. The immigration target for 1969-70 is likely to be 175,000 and, according to the article the intake could be as high as 190,000.

How the honourable member can say that our migration policy has slowed down completely bewilders me. I am not concerned with what Mr. Snedden is reported to have said. However, I cannot help but think there is some inaccuracy in the statement or that, in some way, the statement reported is not correct.

However, I am obliged to say that whatever the migration policy of this Government is it shows a marked comparison with the policy of the Government which was in power before the present Government took office in 1959. I know that the honourable member was not a member of the Government at that time, but the migration policy was at a complete standstill. I still think it is wrong to say that the migration policy of Western Australia has slowed down because of the lack of housing, when the contrary is the situation.

With a record number of more than 16,000 houses and flats completed last year the rate of growth of home building in this State was also more than twice the national average. So at least we are doing as well in this direction as the rest of Australia.

From my reading of the amendment I see that the honourable member gives credit to the private sector which is responsible for the construction of housing, but gives absolutely no credit to the State Housing Commission other than in his speech. If I remember rightly he referred to the State Housing Commission but he gives no credit, in his amendment, to any efforts of the State Housing Commission.

I have said in this House previously, and I repeat it, that one cannot possibly look at what is done by one sector of the housing industry and compare it with another sector. Both sectors are an integral part of the home construction programme of the State, and this is the only way it can be looked at sensibly.

It is known that in respect of each housing allocation made to the State Housing Commission, 30 per cent. of the allocation is by force of Statute distributed to building societies. The building societies use that money for the construction of houses. So, I repeat, the two sectors of building go hand in glove.

When His Excellency the Governor delivered his Speech in this Chamber he emphasised that a major continuing need in our rapid growth situation was housing, and that the building and construction industry was experiencing the highest level of activity in history. This is an undeniable fact.

Those people who come to the State of Western Australia on periodic visits, and those who live here, cannot help but see the growth of building right throughout the whole of the metropolitan area and in the country districts. In addressing the members of this Chamber, the Governor expressed the view that members would be aware of Government measures to release additional land for housing, and measures to restrain land prices. He pointed out that there was already evidence that these actions were proving effective.

With a view to permitting further expansion, mention was made of the development of the metropolitan water supply system to cope with increased housing needs and industrial demands. Site preparation is proceeding at the North and South Dandalup River dam sites. Members were informed that construction would begin later this year on the trunk main to connect these proposed new sources of supply to the Serpentine scheme. New water supply schemes have been constructed and commissioned during the year in another five country districts, and all this is related to the expansion of housing.

Sales of electricity and gas have increased by 15 per cent. during the last financial year, and this has obliged the State Electricity Commission to maintain an extensive construction programme for additional generating plant and transmission services to keep pace with the increasing demand created by housing.

The Governor, in his Speech, advised members that it was the Government's intention to provide additional relief to home owners and to protect them from the effect of sudden increases in land values. This will be reflected in amendments to land tax legislation. Furthermore, His Excellency informed us that the State Housing Act would be amended to enable an interest subsidy scheme to be introduced. Under this scheme housing commission applicants would be assisted to purchase homes through permanent building societies. These efforts are all apart from the efforts being made by the private sector. Nevertheless, Mr. Willesee desires members to add to their expression of loyalty and thanks, a rider in the terms of his amendment.

I have merely mentioned the remarks of the Governor because they are all connected and directed at the one particular aspect of the State's expansion—an expansion unheralded in its history—and that is housing and building, generally speaking.

It is certainly most refreshing to find the Leader of the Opposition, as spokesman for the Labor Party, commending the efforts of private enterprise for the part it is playing in attacking the unprecedented demand for housing—a demand which is so evidently a by-product of the unprecedented growth rate currently being experienced in Western Australia.

It is, however, somewhat disconcerting to find the honourable member apparently unaware of what is going on around him, and unaware of the efforts being made to overcome this vexing problem. With this in mind I thought I would just take members, very briefly, through some of the remarks made by the Governor during his Speech on opening day.

Mr. Willesee has interpreted His Excellency's statement as being an indication that the Government believes that the situation is now satisfactory. His Excellency said that actions already taken are proving effective, and this cannot be denied. However, there was no suggestion in the Governor's Speech, or in my remarks, that the Government is yet satisfied with its efforts. If the honourable member is not satisfied with the Government's efforts, all I can say is that makes two of us.

However, my dissatisfaction is in a different direction. The Government, of course, is not satisfied but it will continue to go on in an attempt to solve the problem brought about by this unprecedented growth.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: What does the Minister aim at, roughly, as the price of a building block in the future?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will come to that a little later in my remarks. When the honourable member mentioned this matter yesterday I asked him whether he would take into consideration what was happening in other States, but he brushed me off because that did not suit his argument.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I think that is quite irrelevant.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then why brush off my remarks yesterday?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Because I thought they were quite irrelevant.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Regular injections, by Government departments and instrumentalities, of serviced blocks into the market at prices below current market values is contributing in no small degree to this trend. However, to assume that the Government considers the problem solved is to assume incorrectly. If one refers to today's northern supplement to *The West Australian* newspaper one will see that 2,200 blocks have been sold in three years. This is the very thing which the honourable member criticises. He said that the Rural and Industries Bank must be making a handsome profit, and that in relation to the development of land the development was not quick enough or good enough.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That is right.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I suggest that if the honourable member looks at the article to which I have referred he will see that the Rural and Industries Bank plans to develop 750 acres of land in the Hamersley area by 1973. The article sets out the progressive programme of the development. These things cannot just be done by a wave of the hand or a wave of a wand.

One of these fine days, when the honourable member is sitting on this side of the House, he will find that it is easy to talk but, by comparison, much more difficult to do.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Has that been your experience?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, it has not been my experience altogether. However, I am learning as a result.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The Minister learnt while on this side of the Chamber.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is only a fool who will not learn.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Even if he is only a slow learner.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will not comment on that. Legislative action, some already intimated in His Excellency's Speech, as well as further practical steps, which I will enumerate in a comprehensive report on the housing situation in a few moments, will clearly indicate that we are continually and actively attacking the problem. It is not as though the Government is sitting down and doing nothing whatsoever.

I would like to refer briefly to some comments made by Mr. Willesee. Firstly, I refer to the possibility that some applicants may not have replied to the circular sent out by the State Housing Commission in its recent comprehensive survey of all applications lodged with the commission. Yesterday, I tried to make a helpful interjection with respect to the responsibility of people in the matter of the changing of their address. It has always been the responsibility of the applicants to keep the commission notified of any change of address. I think that is the responsibility of all of us, and that responsibility is laid down in some laws. It is certainly laid down in the State Electoral Act and the Commonwealth Electoral Act that we shall notify our change of address. The final paragraphs of the letter forwarded to applicants reads as follows:—

It is important, to you, that you keep this Office advised of any change of address. Should the Commission be unable to locate you, your application will be withdrawn.

Of course, there will always be people who will fail to keep the commission advised; and it was ever thus. When the survey was undertaken wide publicity was given to it through the Press, through the radio, and through television. Applicants who failed to receive a *pro forma* were advised to contact the commission. Some 200 did so. Over 6,000 applicants failed to return the forms, and follow-up action by certified mail has already commenced.

It will be seen that we cannot just dismiss those who did not reply and say that because they did not reply the Government

has struck them off the Housing Commission list. The follow-up process, by certified mail, has already commenced.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Did you say that a letter is being sent by certified mail to a person you already know is not there?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: How do we know he is not there?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Because he did not reply.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Is that an indication?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Definitely, because you have already said in the first letter that he must reply.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Is that the end-all?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: No, a very weak effort.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Do you say that an applicant should be struck off?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: If he was not at the address in the first place, how could he be there in the second place?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Well, if he does not reply in the first place, does the honourable member suggest that we should not worry about him at all?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Contact the applicant by some other process.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Do not change the text of your argument.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Do not put words into my mouth.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the applicant does not reply the first time, should we not worry about him?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: As I said, do not put words into my mouth.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There may have been a number of reasons why he did not reply to the letter.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: He may have been away.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I agree.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: If he is away on holidays he loses his entitlement; I know that already.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There may be some point in Mr. Willesee's argument that if the applicant did not reply the first time he would not reply the second time. However, if we did not make an effort to see what could be done we would be criticised. I was Minister for Housing for six years, and the same procedure was followed before I took over that office, and circulars were sent out.

If a reply is not received after the first communication an effort is made to follow it up and, apart from a physical check, that is the only way to cover the situation. The commission could not send officers to

the houses concerned and have them knock on the door to see whether the applicants were still in residence at that address. That would not be a practical solution to the problem, because it would be too difficult to carry it out. So the commission has this follow-up letter, and the procedure relative to the withdrawal of applications is no different from that which has applied previously.

Some reference was made to comments reported to have been made by a Mr. Hannaford of the Housing Industry Association. I do not intend to spend much time on this point but simply to remark that it is easy to pinpoint a problem of any type—and in any State. However, it is important to examine what actions are being taken by responsible authorities to tackle the problem; and I think Mr. Hannaford ought to have known of the close consultation that takes place between the Housing Industry Association in this State and the Government, and the implementation of the association's suggestions in helping to overcome the problem in the availability of land.

In the June issue of the Housing Industry Association's publication, which compares the activities of the housing industry State by State, there will be found—if one cares to have a look at this journal—not only the cause, but also a report of the massive effort of the industry in this State which is outstripping all other States in tackling the problem.

I would like to refer to the broad picture of performance in the housing field in Western Australia, and here I do not confine my remarks to what the private sector has done, as one sector in the field, or what the Housing Commission has done. I repeat: it is the collective effort to put roofs over the heads of the people that counts most of all. During 1968-69 completions of houses and flats are estimated at approximately 16,000 units. I referred to that figure a few moments ago. This makes 1968-69 the third year in succession in which the previous year's completions—being the highest to that date—were exceeded. So for each year over the last three years the previous year's figures have been exceeded.

Measures taken by the Government to encourage and increase home building activity to keep pace with the population growth brought about by the high rate of industrial and rural expansion became apparent in 1966-67 when 10,014 units were completed. The rate continued to accelerate with 12,250 completions in 1967-68, and now an estimated 16,000 units in 1968-69. This greatly increased rate of construction has created a high demand for serviced building sites, particularly in the metropolitan area, with a consequential rise in land prices.

My colleague, the Minister for Town Planning, has provided me with some information concerning the amount of land

and the number of building blocks that are available, and the total reaches high proportions. I shall not bore members with the details, but he sets out the figures showing the urban acreage and the yield per lot, and when the land was approved. It makes interesting reading. However, despite the high rate of home construction and the ready availability of private project-homes for purchase, the demand, particularly from the lower income groups, continues to be high. A large proportion of this demand is, of course, directed to the State Housing Commission through either a need or a desire to take advantage of the more favourable rental and finance arrangements as compared with those available from alternative sources.

A comprehensive survey of 16,650 outstanding applications, recently carried out by the commission, revealed that of the 10,131 replies received, 37.5 per cent. were occupying accommodation lower than the State Housing Commission standard; 62.5 per cent. were occupying accommodation equal to or above the State Housing Commission standard; 47.3 per cent. were paying more than 25 per cent. of the family income in rental; and 52.7 per cent. were paying equal to or less than 25 per cent. of the family income in rental.

I have made this remark before, and I repeat it: under the provisions of the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, 30 per cent. of the loan funds are made available each year to the building societies. This factor alone, of course, brings the programmes of both the private sector and the State Housing Commission together for obvious reasons.

Apart from this financial backing, the Government, through the Registrar of Building Societies, has greatly encouraged the formation of new societies and the extension of society activities into country and developing areas. At the 30th June, 1969, it was estimated that at least 22,000 homes were being purchased with the assistance of building society finance, and the assets of all societies approximated \$130,000,000. Currently, 15 permanent societies are operating and there are 246 terminating societies. These terminating societies are managed by 20 secretaries and 47 separate directorates.

During October, 1968, the permanent building societies introduced a new investment scheme of a 6 per cent. interest return over a "no-fixed" term, which opened up a much wider field, and they are now competing closely with all savings institutions, utilising the deposit savings book facilities, and are attracting considerable public interest.

Complementing the activities of the building societies is the Housing Loan Guarantee Act which provides means for financial institutions to make large scale loans to institutions with full security by way of a 100 per cent. guarantee. We all

know of that legislation. The Act was introduced in 1957 and, to give credit where it is due, I think it was Mr. Graham who introduced it when he was Minister for Housing. With subsequent amendments the Act now enables lending institutions to make high ratio advances to families of low and moderate means without any additional charge. The interest rate charge may not exceed 6½ per cent. per annum reducible.

The maximum loan permitted is \$10,000 in metropolitan and country areas, and \$13,000 in areas north of the 26th parallel. The value of the house, excluding land, must not exceed \$10,000 in the metropolitan area, \$11,000 in country areas, and \$17,500 in areas north of the 26th parallel.

The activities of the State Housing Commission extend throughout the whole State and, in addition to the construction of houses and flats under the State Housing Act and Commonwealth and State Housing Agreements, include—

The management as agent of the Commonwealth War Service Homes Scheme in Western Australia;

Construction of houses for other Government departments (both Commonwealth and State) in Western Australia;

Construction and maintenance of houses for the Government Employees' Housing Authority.

At the 30th June, 1969, the commission had completed, under all schemes since the 30th June, 1944, a total of 48,017 units of houses and flats throughout the State. During the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1969, 1,863 houses and flats were completed in the following areas:—

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|------------------------|-------|
| Metropolitan area | 1,186 |
| Country | 553 |
| North of 26th parallel | 124 |

and a further 1,870 units are under construction.

In the interests of conserving land resources and making the most economical use of available facilities such as sewerage, water, and power, the commission has been extensively programming construction in the metropolitan region to include flats and terrace houses in addition to individual homes. At the 30th June, 1969, \$13,500,000 worth of medium density accommodation, representing 1,569 units, was either under construction or out for tender. These projects are scattered throughout the metropolitan region, with the major activity taking place at Balga, Coolbellup, North Beach, Midland, Kwinana, and Fremantle and with projects at Bentley—and we have heard something about that from—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: And you will hear something more about it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As I was about to say, there are 504 units for Bentley, 252 for Lockridge, and 69 units for Mosman Park. These are expected to be commenced in the next few months.

Forward planning for 1969-70 envisages calling tenders for a total of 2,557 units in the metropolitan region, of which 1,524 units will be in flats and terrace houses, and the balance of 1,033 units will be in individual homes.

I have already said that Mr. Logan has given me some detailed information about the availability of land but I do not intend to weary the House with the figures. However, I want members to know that the figures Mr. Logan has given me are an indication of the amount of land that is available. Mr. Willesee is calling upon the Government to make more and more land available, and my only answer to that is that more land will be made available and, as time goes on, still more land will be made available—to wit, the type of development that is going on at Hamersley and to which reference was made this morning in the northern districts section of *The West Australian*.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Would you table Mr. Logan's information for the benefit of the House?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will ask him what he thinks about it. He might give it to the honourable member.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I would like the House to have a look at it, and not me particularly.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will talk to Mr. Logan about it.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Thank you for nothing!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I conclude my remarks on these lines: I take no exception to Mr. Willesee being concerned about our housing problem, although he does not appear to me to be in a very good mood this afternoon.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You have not helped me much.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have purposely not helped the honourable member. I think it is my job to point out to the House what efforts are being put into housing and to acquaint the honourable member with the situation because, apparently, he does not know. All thinking members of the community are amazed to witness the great demand for building sites which has forced our land prices to high levels; but for Mr. Willesee to suggest that the Government is obviously satisfied with the degree of success it has attained in restraining land prices is, of course, hardly realistic.

Mr. Willesee has implied that in the matter of housing the Government has been complacent, but in view of our efforts to resolve the housing problems, as I have

indicated to the House, the implication is hardly fair. He gives great credit to the private sector of the building industry—credit which I am sure the builders in the private sector will be pleased to receive—but he gives no credit whatsoever to the State Housing Commission for its efforts, and I think he should have done this in the terms I have outlined.

I question whether the proposed amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion represents an appropriate or an effective means of resolving a problem which is so close to the Government's heart, because the Government will continue to do all it possibly can to solve this problem knowing that we are living in a period—in this decade of our lives—when the progress of the State has never been so great; when our attendant problems have been greater than we have ever known them to be before, but the Government will carry on in an endeavour to resolve the problem. I hope the House, Mr. President, will not approve the amendment moved.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [5.32 p.m.]: My leader, Mr. Willesee, has moved this amendment, which I consider is worthy of support, because anyone who represents people and who is concerned for the welfare of families and the income of families would be remiss in his duty if he did not point out, in a constructive manner to the Government—not to embarrass it—that more should be done to assist people who are in dire need of suitable accommodation; and the position is that in Western Australia at present there are thousands of people who are in dire need of accommodation.

Seven points were raised by my leader. First of all he referred to the private building sector, to which he gave credit. He then mentioned the housing shortage that has been with us for the life of this Government, and the price of land which is still high. It is only during the last couple of months that the price of land has levelled out, if it has levelled out at this stage. The lack of finance may be the reason for some movement towards the levelling out of land prices at present. Mr. Willesee also referred to the shortage of building blocks, exorbitant rents, and migrant intake.

Due to an engagement I will have to limit the time I will speak on this matter this evening, but last year I think I spoke for about one and a half hours and I pointed out the inadequacies of the present housing situation that affects the average person who is desirous of getting married; who wants to have a family; who wants to live in a reasonable home and not in a substandard block of flats, at the back of a house, or in the lean-tos in which people are forced to live today. Should any member care to deny what I

am saying and consider that my remarks are foolish he can accompany me and I will take him to 20 places that have been reported to me and which have been inspected by the State Housing Commission in the past two months. No-one can deny that what I am saying is a fact, and I am only one member of Parliament. There are hundreds of people living in substandard accommodation, because they cannot afford the exorbitant rents that are being asked today.

Last year, when I said that no landlord would let a house for under \$19 a week, Mr. Clive Griffiths interjected by saying, "I saw one in the paper for \$18.50." Those are his exact words. Any member who so desires can look them up in *Hansard*. The Minister questioned me on this statement, but the rentals that are being asked today by those in the private sector are \$22, \$25, and upwards. However, when one makes an inquiry as to the letting of these places one is told that no children are allowed.

The Hon. E. C. House: And there is a lot of key money asked for on top of that.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, I will tell the House about key money in a moment. How can we expect people who are in the lower-income bracket to pay a rental such as that? Yet these people are being consistently refused accommodation by the State Housing Commission. Since last year, despite my representations on their behalf, 110 people have had their applications for assistance rejected by the State Housing Commission. Those figures can be checked. I would imagine that the State Housing Commission inspectors, after making inquiries in regard to those 110 applications, would have submitted a rather favourable report to the effect that these people should be assisted to obtain other accommodation.

I cannot attach any blame whatsoever to the State Housing Commission or its officers, because they have my deepest sympathy. Like myself, a person who tries to do something for these people, the officers of the Housing Commission are consistently endeavouring to assist housing applicants. However, I get sick and tired of saying to such people, "No, I cannot help you," and I feel sure that the officers of the Housing Commission feel the same as I do about this situation. I would be the last person to reflect on the way they are trying to carry out the shocking job they have to perform.

Mr. Willesee is virtually being accused of giving no credit to the State Housing Commission, but he did not cast any reflections on the Housing Commission for the work it is doing. He accused the Government of not paying sufficient attention to the problem, and if the Government

does not make the necessary funds available to the Housing Commission, the commission cannot carry out its proper function. When replying to Mr. Willesee, the Minister said he is accustomed to amendments being moved to the Address-in-Reply motion, but I point out that we did not move any amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion last year; this was a subject that came up for discussion under the Supply Bill.

The Minister went on to say that we are keeping the pot boiling. Of course we are keeping the pot boiling, but in a constructive manner. We want more houses built so that families can grow up in a healthy atmosphere. I am sick and tired of hearing people continually complaining of exorbitant rents. If the Government is anxious to do something constructive to help people in need of accommodation, and further reduce the number of applicants who are waiting for houses, as was reported in this morning's newspaper, it must place a ceiling on the exorbitant rents that unscrupulous landlords charge for substandard dwellings.

As I have said, a report appeared in this morning's newspaper that some 18,000 applications—some are dual applications, of course—at the State Housing Commission are awaiting attention, and the solution I have suggested would have a great bearing in effecting a reduction in the number of applicants for housing; that is, limit the amount that can be charged as rental for substandard dwellings. It is not uncommon for one to see substandard dwellings occupied by families today. I will tell the House where there is one now. Last week the State Housing Commission rejected the application of the occupant of this house for other accommodation. The name of that person is Howells, and he is living in Alexander Road, East Fremantle. The house is occupied by the man, his wife, his three children, and his sick mother-in-law. They are all living in one bedroom, and the basic salary of this man is \$40 a week. However, because he works seven days a week when he can get the overtime, the Housing Commission claims he is earning sufficient income to afford the higher rent.

The State Housing Commission requires that any applicant for a rental home must not have income in excess of \$52.67 a week, plus \$1.92 a week for each child, which amounts to \$100 a year per child. Although the Howells' family is living in substandard accommodation, the Housing Commission is obliged to reject his application for alternative accommodation, because it does not have a house in which to accommodate the family.

The State Housing Commission is now dealing with applications for purchase homes in the Fremantle area lodged in September, 1965. When this Government came into office the waiting period for an applicant for a purchase home was

four months, but I would say that now the waiting period for a purchase home would be 10 years, or even longer. The figures will prove that. If one compared the number of purchase homes that are being built this year with the number of applicants who are waiting for such homes, one would find that the average waiting period would be 10 years.

I have had much experience in regard to applicants for rental homes, and we now find that a person whose turn has been reached and whose application for a rental home has been passed is not granted a rental home in turn. This is a fact, because last Wednesday a person approached me and pointed out that he had applied for a rental home on the 1st December, 1965, and the Housing Commission is now dealing with applications that have been lodged up to about the middle of December, 1965. This person should have been offered a house five or six months ago, but no offer was made, because the Housing Commission was waiting for the September priorities for purchase homes to be filled. The commission by-passed this person's turn for rental accommodation.

This person could have been waiting another two years for a purchase home if I had not made some representations to obtain a house for him. That applicant was successful in his efforts, but there is only one applicant in 30 who is granted a home when one makes representations to the Housing Commission to obtain accommodation for people in similar circumstances. In relation to that aspect, I would point out that I have never made any frivolous representations to the Housing Commission, because I know what ticks down there and I am aware of the eligibility of applicants, and I usually advise them whether or not they have a chance of obtaining a house.

One can easily realise, therefore, that the housing situation has deteriorated. I now return to rents and tenancies control. If we are to effect fairness and justice, this is something that must be introduced. It is not only Australians who are charging exorbitant rents for rental accommodation, but also many migrants are charging excessive prices for substandard dwellings. We are fast reaching the situation that exists at present in Melbourne. When I was riding in a bus through Melbourne one day in company with Mr. Logan he pointed out to me the slums of Melbourne. In discussion he passed the remark that in Melbourne there were many millionaire slum owners.

We are reaching the stage where a similar situation could develop in Western Australia. These landlords who own substandard accommodation are continually evicting the tenants. After a tenant who has been paying \$18 a week for the accommodation has been evicted, the landlord then says to the incoming tenant, "I have done this place up and I now want \$20 a week for it." A case in Hamilton

Hill that was brought to my knowledge is worth repeating, especially following the interjection that was made in regard to bonds.

In this instance a dilapidated shanty was offered to a young man. Over a three-year period I had made representation to the Housing Commission to obtain a house for him, but his application for emergent assistance was rejected. This young chap heard of this house being vacant in Hamilton Hill and he made inquiries of the agent. He found that the rental was \$18 a week, with a bond of \$50. He had to pay the bond before he was handed the key to inspect the house. After paying the bond and inspecting the house he asked me to accompany him so that I might have a look at it. I did so and I found there was hardly a piece of glass intact in the windows. I do not think they were broken by vandals, because I feel certain that no vandal would dirty his shoes by walking on the property. The stove was in a shocking and dirty condition, and in the front enclosed sleepout the previous owner had housed some kangaroo dogs for a considerable period, and one can imagine the mess that was there. Yet the agent wanted a \$50 bond and he got it.

Naturally I took steps to have this bond refunded, and I got the health authorities to put a work order on the house. This is the type of migrant who owns a few houses around the area, and who capitalises on the housing situation.

I think the Government has a responsibility to the genuine people who are in need of houses. Controls must be put on the speculators. I think that local authorities, in the main, are remiss because they are not paying sufficient attention to the substandard dwellings in their districts; they should do something urgently about these dwellings. The Government should act in conjunction with the local authorities with a view to controlling rents which are beyond the capacity of the average person to pay.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Do you not think that the attitude or the behaviour of some tenants—such as the one you have just mentioned—brings about these problems? They created the mess the house was in.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is true. I am not denying that for one moment, but when an agent asks for a \$50 bond for a house in the condition I have described, then I think he has some responsibility to ensure it is acceptable.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: He should have cleaned it up first and then asked for the bond.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Not all people are ideal tenants. I know this from the experience of the State Housing Commission. Many a time I have told the tenants, who had received queries from the commission, to uplift their standards. That is

only fair and reasonable; because the semi-Government properties in which they live must be looked after. They have an obligation to do the right thing.

I come to the question of the availability of building blocks. The Minister did not read out Mr. Logan's figures in respect of the availability of blocks. Just before or just after the last election the Premier set up a land consultative committee which was charged with the responsibility of ensuring that a great deal of land was put on the market as a matter of urgency, in an attempt to curb the inflationary price of land.

One of the areas which the Premier's committee visited was Melville. In one sector on the south side of High Road there are about 3,000 acres of vacant land. This land is owned by five parties—whether they be companies or individuals I would not know—and at the time the Melville City Council was told that this land had to be developed. In saying this I reply on what was told to me by a responsible person from the Melville City Council, and I have nothing in writing to prove it. The council was told that if this land was not developed by the owners then the consultative committee would see that it was developed by itself or by some other body.

The Melville City Council was most anxious for this land to be released. It even appointed a qualified town planner (Mr. Treloar), who for many years had been a planner with the Town Planning Board. He set about to try to bring some sort of plan—in conjunction with various Government departments—into being, so that there could be development as rapidly as possible in the area.

Over a 12-month period the council endeavoured to get the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board to supply plans of its proposed water and sewerage extensions in that area. An application was made to the board about 12 months ago; but despite numerous requests since that time only one officer of the department has visited the council. No plans have been submitted and no replies have been received to the letters which were sent.

I now turn to the Main Roads Department and its functions. Before any area can be planned for development it is necessary to have information on what main roads will be built through it. This department has written only one nebulous letter to the council, but has not supplied any plans of future road construction; and there the matter rests. Regarding education, no advice has been received from the Education Department as to its intentions in the area.

We on this side criticise the inflated land prices; and in respect of this land in Melville, for each year that it remains vacant

it is costing between \$120,000 to \$130,000 in rates, based on last year's rating. The owners want to develop the land and the shire also desires it to be developed, but the owners cannot do this because the Government departments concerned will not co-operate with one another to arrive at a development plan, so as to comply with the wish of the consultative committee that more land in the metropolitan area be released. Anyone who doubts the veracity of what I have said can go to the Melville City Council and find out the facts for himself.

If this matter is resolved in three years, the amount that will be added to the price of the land for the rates and taxes paid will be \$500,000. I cannot see the owner selling this land at cheaper than the market value. If the Government were to direct its departments to consult and co-operate with one another then it might be possible to bring this development plan to fruition within six months.

While I am on the question of the inflationary price of land, it is time the Government gave some consideration to inserting in the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act a section similar to section 28A of the Town Planning and Development Act under which, when a roadway is constructed, the adjoining landowners have to bear a proportion of the cost where the road runs past or abuts the properties of the adjoining owners. What causes a definite inflationary spiral in the price of land is that when a person develops land he has to pay the cost of extension of water and sewerage services to the area. Then he sets a value on the blocks to be sold. Let us assume it is \$7,000 a block.

We find that the developer of the land alongside—land which abuts the water and sewerage extensions—is provided with these services without having to bear any portion of the cost of the extensions. This developer would say, "The blocks next door have been sold at \$7,000 each. I want \$7,500 for each of my blocks." This is what happens, and it is about time we considered the insertion of a section similar to section 28A of the Town Planning and Development Act into the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act.

Now I come to something which has been a bugbear for many years to me and to the district I represent; and I am sure it has been a bugbear to other members. We know that when people shift to an area beyond the perimeter of the existing services they have to live in dwellings which are without services or amenities. They are not provided with water, transport, electricity, nor in some cases schools. I cannot see why in the Fremantle area, or the area south of the river at Melville, we should have to tolerate 2,268 acres of pines. The assessed value of these pines when they are

cut down in 1980, which is in 11 years' time—that is, if they do grow, but many of them are dying and it appears that others will just be able to linger on—is between \$2,000,000 and \$3,000,000. That is allowing for the maximum value of these pines in 11 years' time.

At present there is no revenue going to the State by way of taxes on this land. It is land which belongs to the University. Also the local authorities receive no benefit from the land. This represents \$30,000,000 worth of building blocks on which houses could be constructed. If we allow for 3½ blocks to an acre, there will be over 7,000 building blocks in that area.

There are no drainage problems; and no sewerage is required, because this is sandy, undulating country. Here is a cheap way to develop urgently needed residential land, and the Government should compel the University to do something about it. If we are sincere in our efforts to provide more building blocks, we should not tolerate the growing of pines in the area in question, especially when these pines affect the health of the people who suffer from asthma.

I now turn to another aspect of this question; that is, where the money from land speculation goes. I am referring to the speculators and those who have made millions out of land deals in this State, and whom this Government has not done anything to curb. I recall reading an article in the *Weekend News* about five or six weeks ago on the success of two young tycoons. One came from the Eastern States, and the other was a well-known footballer in this State. These two people met and began dealing in land together. They had very little capital, but they had the will to work. Today we find they have become millionaires many times over. This happened in less than six years.

I could have referred to this article but last year when I was speaking on the Address-in-Reply debate I was accused of quoting from newspapers, although at the time I only quoted about three inches from the Adelaide newspaper *The Advertiser*. For that reason I choose not to quote the article which appeared in the *Weekend News*, because I do not want to be accused—as my leader was—of quoting from newspapers. Here is a case of two people who in the course of about six years became multi-millionaires. This happened while the people had to pay exorbitant prices for building blocks as a result of the actions of land developers such as these two.

There are many such speculators and developers, and they include companies. One of these is a corporation which controls 52 or 53 companies. Most of the profits earned by these speculators have come from the pockets of people who could ill afford to pay the high prices charged for the blocks.

Another estate which comes readily to mind and where trouble is being experienced is the Kardinya Estate No. 2. Mr. Lavery knows this one well, as does Mr. Dolan. The developers wanted \$12,800 for the top blocks of land in that estate which is not a quarter of a mile away from a Housing Commission area. It is on lower ground than the Housing Commission area and yet, as I say, the developers wanted \$12,800 for a block. Is it not time the Government took action in regard to this matter?

In the Kardinya Estate and in the Booragoon subdivision of Applecross, approximately 50 houses have been up for sale for something like six months, and the highest price being asked is \$28,000. It is obvious that the spec builders think everyone in Western Australia is a millionaire, but everyone is not. Even the person on quite a good salary cannot, with the cost of living, education expenses, and so on, pay an exorbitant price for a home.

I can see that in the near future a recession in the building trade in Western Australia will occur because many of the builders will feel the pinch unless something is done quickly, not to level out the price of land, but to reduce it. At one time the accepted principle was that a house should cost three times the amount paid for the block of land on which the house was to be erected. If the value of a house to be built was \$6,000 it was thought reasonable for that house to be erected on a \$2,000 block of land. However, the ratio now is not three to one; it is one to one in the private sector.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Not all over the place.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That might be true. We could go to Medina, Calista, and so on, because the Government is making land available down there. However, the cheapest block of land that I know of in any subdivision around Fremantle is \$7,000. I doubt if I would build on such a block because it is usually a block in a low lying area by a sump or a trap. The lowest is \$7,000 and many of these blocks involve the owner in the payment of extra charges. For instance, in the Hamilton Heights area there are extra water charges because the subdivision took place long before the requirements of the present legislation came into force. Also involved are extra power charges and so on.

Therefore it can be seen that we do not criticise the Government unduly. We criticise with a view to being constructive in order that people in the lower income bracket might be decently housed.

My time has nearly expired so I will continue to speak on this subject when I am speaking to either the Address-in-Reply or the Supply Bill. This subject is something which affects 15,000 or 16,000

people who are on the books of the State Housing Commission waiting for houses. It also affects many thousands of people who are just above that wage bracket—those who are on \$55 or \$56 a week and who are therefore not eligible to apply to the State Housing Commission.

It is very evident that a crisis does exist and I will deal with the migrant aspect at a later stage. I support the amendment.

Sitting suspended from 6.5 to 7.30 p.m.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan) [7.30 p.m.]: I support the amendment moved by Mr. Willesee and I wish to refer to a couple of points which it contains and which seem to have been studiously avoided. I refer to the fact that the price of land is still high and I hope, Sir, to give figures to the House which I think will convince anybody at all that the price of land in Western Australia is too high.

Firstly, I refer to a statement made by Mr. Hannaford. Personally, I do not know Mr. Hannaford; in fact, I would not know him from Adam except that he probably would be dressed differently. However, he has made some statements which are evidently provocative. I do not intend to comment on some of the things he has said nor will I agree with them or deny them. Nevertheless, he made a number of statements which are perfectly true and I think I will be able to convince any member of the House that what he said is true.

Mr. Hannaford said that Perth building blocks are about \$3,000 overpriced. He was comparing the prices which exist here with the prices which obtain in other capital cities. In addition, he said that flat rentals in Western Australia are out of proportion and that the average cost of flat accommodation for a young married couple in Perth would be about \$20 to \$25 compared with \$16 to \$18 average in the other capital cities.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: He did not do his homework very well.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I think I can convince even the Minister that some of the facts from the other capital cities do bear out what he said.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It doesn't in Canberra. I have just come back.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Nor in Darwin.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am talking about States and not the Commonwealth. Mr. Hannaford is contrasting the position here with the present situation in Sydney and Melbourne where housing blocks within a seven-mile radius of the city can be bought for \$4,000. Blocks within a seven-mile radius of Adelaide can be bought for \$2,000.

Let me start, first of all, with the position here. If any member wishes I will show him the main papers from the other capital cities to which I am referring when

I have finished my speech. Any member may look to see that what I am saying is exactly the same as what is contained in those papers.

This morning's issue of *The West Australian* contains advertisements showing the prices of various blocks of land. Members may go through every one I have marked off. I have omitted none except those blocks which overlook the river and which have a definitely inflated value of \$16,000 or \$18,000, or something of that nature. I have taken the average type of block in the average district around the metropolitan area. The average cost of a block in the metropolitan area of Perth is approximately \$6,000.

Within seven miles of the city centre of Adelaide blocks are selling at an average price of \$2,000. For example, in a suburb such as Rostrevor, where I have been on many occasions and which is an excellent suburb with every facility, in the foothills not very far from Adelaide, the price range is from \$3,050 to a maximum of \$3,720. I have marked other places where blocks are mentioned. Whilst some of the blocks in the suburbs of Adelaide are in the \$2,000 range, the average price would be about \$3,000. That figure does not allow, of course, for exceptionally highly-priced blocks, nor does it allow for those which are well below the average of \$3,000.

The situation in Brisbane is absolutely amazing. Some of the best areas with which some members may be well acquainted are mentioned in *The Courier-Mail*. For example, Mt. Gravatt and Bracken Heights are mentioned. These suburbs are within seven or eight miles of the City of Brisbane and have every facility. They are serviced with water and gas, electricity, sewerage, transport, tar-sealed roads, shops, and schools. As I have said they have every facility. The minimum price of these blocks is \$1,550 and the maximum is just over \$3,000.

The same state of affairs obtains in Sydney; blocks within a 10-mile radius of the G.P.O. are within the \$3,000 to \$4,000 mark.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I can take you 17 miles out of Sydney in tiger country where the cost is \$6,500 to \$7,000.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I could take the Minister to some parts of Sydney where blocks would cost \$50,000 and probably to other parts where they might be as high as \$100,000. That does not alter the fact that blocks are advertised in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on any Saturday at an average price of \$3,000 to \$4,000. If members care to go through the paper and take every district they will see that the price I have mentioned is the average one.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What do you think the reason is that these blocks—

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will develop my points and then the Minister may interject if he likes later on. I always accord him

the courtesy of not saying one word while he is speaking and I will always do that unless it is on a point of information.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am sorry if I upset you.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: In Brisbane, blocks in suburbs which are very well known, such as Indooroopilly, Riverside, and Jindalee, which are all within seven miles of the city and which have every facility, are available at an average price of \$3,000.

Richmond is not very far from Sydney and there is very good transport to and from the city. This area is sewered and has every convenience and yet the prices of blocks range from a minimum of \$1,750 to a maximum of \$4,000. The same state of affairs applies in Melbourne.

I can just imagine the situation which would obtain in Western Australia if we could transfer one of the pages of *The Courier-Mail* and make it a page of *The West Australian*. If the names of the suburbs within a seven-mile radius of Brisbane were altered to the names of the suburbs within a seven-mile radius of Perth, people in Western Australia would be in an absolute frenzy to get to those places in order to avail themselves of the houses which are to let.

Some people are inclined to say that we are a State on the move. Queensland is also a State on the move. No-one should think that Queensland is not developing at a great rate. Nevertheless the situation which exists there is very different from the one which exists here. I took some advertisements out of the "To Let" columns of the *The Courier-Mail*. A typical one refers to a property at Maroochydore, which is a Brisbane suburb. A two-bedroomed house, with two sleep-outs, which is carpeted and has a septic system is to let at \$60 per month. I wonder where one could find a house like that in the metropolitan area of Perth.

If an advertisement such as that were to appear in *The West Australian* on a Saturday morning there would be a queue of people extending from the suburb in question to the Town Hall in Perth. They would all be lining up to try to obtain the house. There are other similar advertisements in the Brisbane paper. One is a three-bedroomed home with every convenience which is to let at \$16 per week. Another is a two-bedroomed house at \$18 per week. Also there is a three-bedroomed house at \$19 per week. In fact, most of them are under \$20 per week.

It is most amazing to me that this type of thing really exists. Members are at liberty to look at these cuttings afterwards to see that it is absolutely true that the prices in Perth are inflated by comparison with the prices in other States.

That is the real situation and something must be done about it. I am prepared to play my part to see whether we can get land values down to something approaching normal.

I would like to comment briefly on a few of the remarks made by the Minister. He referred to the statement of Mr. Snedden that there was a lag in migration because of the housing situation. The Minister felt Mr. Snedden had probably made a mistake. I will allow that to pass.

However, the Minister also mentioned that migration to Western Australia had almost ceased by 1959 when the present Government took office. That may be perfectly true, and I will not contradict the Minister.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It does not bear contradicting.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would like to point out to the Minister and other members of the House that we, in Australia, should always be indebted to the man who started migration to Australia; the man who really set the system which operates today on its feet; I refer to Arthur Calwell. I defy any member to say that he did not play a worthy part in the development of Australia through the wonderful work he did in establishing the migration system which exists today. Like most men who do something really worth while all he earned for himself was a cognomen—that of "Kisser Calwell." That was because, I think, he went on board when the 200,000th migrant arrived in Australia and kissed a little girl. He was only doing what any politician would do in order to get votes.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Speak for yourself. Would you come at that?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would come at that. My only stipulation is that the person must be over 18.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I know a great Australian who earned the nickname of "Pig Iron Bob."

The Hon. J. DOLAN: There was some quite interesting backfire about people who change addresses and do not notify the Housing Commission. Let me tell one story in order to illustrate what can happen. In this particular case I was rewarded by getting a house for a young couple. When the young man married, his mother-in-law was not too happy with him. I do not know the reasons or whether that is a common complaint.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Was he happy with her?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: He had applied for a Housing Commission home, but started his married life by living in his mother-in-law's home. There was a row and the couple left. After a certain space

of time had elapsed the Housing Commission notified him that he was due for a home and that it was prepared to make one available to him.

He never received that letter. Apparently the mother-in-law could not care less and any letters which arrived for him were destroyed. Possibly she tore them up, threw them into the wastepaper basket, or into the fire. A couple of years later he came to me and said that he thought that his turn must have arrived. I thought that his turn must have been long overdue. I took all the particulars and confronted the people at the Housing Commission.

May I pause at this stage to say that I make no criticism of the State Housing Commission. I have never implied criticism of any Government department. I think this Government is fortunate, and previous Governments were fortunate, and Governments to come will be fortunate in the Civil Service and the public servants we have in this State. I feel they are doing the best job they possibly can and I have never implied any criticism of them.

However, this was just one of those things that happened. The officers told me they had sent a notification to the gentleman to say that his turn had been reached and that they had a house waiting for him. When he did not reply, his name was crossed off the list, and he was told he had to start again and make a fresh application. Armed with the facts, of course, I then proceeded to point out to the officers that it was not the fault of the person concerned; it was the fault of the peculiar circumstances which resulted in the letter going astray.

I feel that things of this nature can happen when people move. They forget to notify their change of address, much the same as they forget to record on the electoral rolls the fact that they have moved, and letters can go astray before catching up to the persons concerned.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: All mothers-in-law are not as bad as that.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have given the House one example of the sort of thing that can happen. This is a rather peculiar case, but one can imagine the minor reasons which could cause letters to go astray and result in the people concerned being crossed off the commission's waiting list.

I do not intend to be longwinded on this matter. I feel that Mr. Willesee had every justification in drawing this problem to the attention of the Government. The Government may claim, of course, that it has done this, that, or the other thing; but I think the remark made by Mr. Willesee about the private sector was perfectly true, and he commended the private sector for what it is doing. However, there are plenty

of private sectors which can be criticised, and Mr. Ron Thompson handled this aspect very well.

For example, every week I have cases of people paying exorbitant rents for houses that no member in this House would live in. These unfortunate circumstances are a reflection on some of our landlords. Of course, I would agree with the interjection by, I think, the Minister for Local Government regarding some of the tenants.

In this respect, about three weeks ago a fellow phoned me on a Wednesday and said that he wanted to get a State Housing Commission home because he was being evicted on the following Saturday. I asked him to tell me his story and the reason for his being evicted, and whether he paid his rent. He said he was behind with his rent and when I asked by how much he said it was \$635. I asked how long he had been in the house and whether he had ever paid any rent. He said he had been in the house for three years and he did not know whether he had paid any rent. When I asked him how he came to get into this mess he replied that he was buying a car. However, he told me that he had not slipped up on the payments for the car.

I told the gentleman the best thing he could do was to live in the car because I would not take a case like that to the Housing Commission. I told him the commission was a landlord and as such it wanted good tenants, and it had hundreds of good tenants waiting. I said, "Why should I try on your behalf? You are at fault and if you are evicted it is just too bad. You had better help yourself." I indicated that I was not there to find houses for people who, in anybody's language, were bad tenants.

Let us face up to it: whether one is in Government or in Opposition one must admit that the housing position is critical and it is not being solved as rapidly as anybody would wish. Nobody who has human sympathies and who listens to some of the stories I do, and who visits some people and sees the unhappy circumstances they are in, as I do, can view with any degree of comfort the fact that the waiting list is being extended and extended, so that the time is now approximately four years.

The Housing Commission is in a most difficult position, and I feel the utmost sympathy for its officers when I go along and tell them these stories—they are not just "stories," they are true and factual reports—only to be told that nothing can be done. There is only one reason for this, and that is because the homes are not there to put people in. We have to face up to this realistically. This is the actual position which exists at this time, and it does not matter how much anybody talks about it, it will still exist.

I would hope that the waiting period for homes for people in the lower and middle-class incomes will come back to what it

was once—three or four months. I think the waiting period was no more than six months when I first came into this House. In those days when I took cases to the commission, quite a large percentage of them would be placed on the emergency list. However, this is almost an impossibility today.

I have had some terrible cases. I will not shock the House by telling members about them, but they are of such a nature that if I had not been able to develop the capacity to put them out of my mind, I would get no sleep at all on some nights. However, one develops a frame of mind in which one just has to forget these things after doing the best one can for the people concerned.

An amendment of this nature is justified, if only to bring to the notice of the House the position which exists today. By comparison with the other States, the statement of Mr. Hannaford is perfectly true. I do not go along with some of the comments he made, nor do I intend to comment upon them, but his statement regarding the housing position, the rental position, and the price of land in other capital cities—and I do not include Canberra—is factual. Those States are much better off than we are.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You didn't tell me I could interject, but you have not told me why building blocks are cheaper in other States.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I do not think it is my job to find out these things. It is the job of the Government to find out what is happening. The other capital cities are older than ours and have developed more fully. We in this State have not reached the same stage of development as the other States have done.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You know the reason.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I know that in a place like Brisbane it is possible to purchase a good building block which is fully developed, including sewerage, only seven and a half miles from the city, for \$2,000. That is a state of affairs that does not exist here.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Nobody would want to go there to live.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: There are more people living in Brisbane than in Perth.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: The people here do not want to go over there to live.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The people in Brisbane do not want to come here.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Quite a lot of them do come over here to live.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The Minister will find that people like to live in the place in which they were born and bred, because

they have established themselves there. Maybe I could give another example for the Minister to ponder upon: he will find that elderly pensioners and so on who live in an area such as the goldfields do not wish to come to the city. They want to live in the place in which they were born and where they have their friends. I have nothing further to say except that I support the amendment and I feel it is completely justified.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) 17.53 p.m.): I was interested to hear the Minister reply to the speech made by Mr. Willesee. The Minister castigated the Leader of the Opposition for moving an amendment, and one would almost take it that members should not attack the Government in any shape or form—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Nor should they.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND:—nor enlighten people on the misdeeds of the Government. The Minister for Mines has adopted quite a different attitude from that which he adopted in this House some 15 or 16 years ago when he supported an amendment moved by The Hon. A. L. Loton. This was during the first session after the Hawke Government took office, and the amendment was in relation to a rise in railway freights. However, I do not think the Minister said one word about the amendment, but he waved election pamphlets around.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: He was young and inexperienced.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It was a totally justified amendment.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Well, the Minister was allowed to make a preliminary speech and so I should imagine that others are too. I like to draw attention to these positions when they arise, and I think the attitude of the Minister illustrates once again the arrogance of the Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is absolute piffle!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It draws attention to the arrogant approach of the Government to the Opposition and to the public in general. The crux of this amendment is to censure the Government for its handling of the housing problem through its own Housing Commission, and not through private enterprise. That is the substance of the amendment, and I think it is a very worthy one. Unfortunately, a major portion of this Government has been led along by those who foster that major portion. The proof is there to see; it is a private enterprise Government, and it has looked after private enterprise. In other words, it has obeyed its masters. The Government has

channelled its funds for housing into private enterprise; and, as a result, it has not built as many homes, and it finds itself in a desperate situation.

Last year the State Housing Commission—even though it cribs a bit with charitable organisations and so on—built a few more than 1,800 homes; and, in its own words, it has some 18,000 applicants. We could say that some of those applicants are not genuine, but the commission would have a good 10,000 people waiting for houses, and yet it built only 1,800 houses last year. In the last few years of the McLarty Government, as many as 3,000 homes per year were constructed, and yet that Government found itself in a terrific mess. Members may recall how people were sleeping on the balconies of boarding and apartment houses all around Perth.

The McLarty Government lost the election in 1953 on the housing question, and the Hawke Government which followed pledged that it would rectify the position, which it did. That Government built 4,000, 4,500, and 5,000 houses a year, but it was castigated by the present Minister here for spending too much money too quickly.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: There were still 10,000 applicants when I became Minister.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: In one of his speeches in this House the Minister said that the Hawke Government spent the money in half the time it should have done and, as a consequence, there was unemployment for the other half of the time of that Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: As a matter of fact that is correct. It put the country in debt.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Liberal Party requested Canberra to prevent the Hawke Government from building the Wandana flats. It wanted Senator Spooner to restrict the expenditure on housing to houses only. Nobody can deny that because it is a positive fact. Of course, the idea was to starve the Government of money; there is no doubt about that.

However this did not succeed. The housing problem was solved and this Government now finds itself in a position similar to that which prevailed in 1953 because it has channelled the money into private enterprise—into the private sector as it is termed—and this has forced up the price of land and housing.

We all know that at every auction developers and builders buy blocks of land on which to build houses. They then either let these houses at exorbitant rents or, preferably, they sell them at a high price to enable them to buy more blocks. Accordingly the position has snowballed to such an extent that these high costs are continuing to rise to a point where the ordinary man or worker on the lower rung

of the ladder finds it difficult, if not impossible, to buy a home, because he is completely priced out. Those in the middle income bracket are also reaching this point of being priced out of the market as a result of the private sector of the building industry having taken over.

For the most part the developers who build houses in the near and outer suburbs prefer to sell these houses rather than let them. If any member cares to drive around the new suburbs he will see that most of the new houses that have been built have "For Sale" notices on them or notices which read, "Sorry, sold." It would be difficult to find a house that was to let. Because of these activities the prospective home owner is forced to pay higher prices for the building of his home and this quite apart from paying the high price for the necessary land.

Only a few days ago it was stated in the Press that there would be an increase in the interest rates; though one building society does advertise constantly in the daily paper that it will not alter its rate of interest; that it will continue to be 7 per cent. Other building societies have increased their interest rate from 7 to 8 per cent. Accordingly the white collar worker in the middle income bracket is beginning to wonder how he is going to meet the high cost of purchasing a house when it is necessary for him to pay 8 per cent. interest. He just cannot do it.

As a result of the Government having looked after its supporters and having considered the needs of big interests, it has, in effect, priced itself out of the housing position. It is a crying shame that the present Government should have built only 1,800 houses last year; and this number includes houses built for shire councils, Government employees, and so on.

The Government has actually reduced the percentage of its funds for home building, which percentage was provided for by a similar Government way back in 1952. If that is not disgraceful government in relation to housing I do not know what is. It is quite wrong that this should have been done.

It is wrong to have a Housing Commission and not provide that authority with sufficient funds to enable it to carry out its job. We all criticise the Housing Commission, but heavens above, it cannot do the work it would like to do unless it is supplied with the necessary money. If I were to draw an analogy I would say it is like getting a carpenter or a fitter to carry out a job without giving him the tools to do so.

I feel it is quite in order for Mr. Willesee to have moved an amendment in an endeavour to castigate the Government and to draw the attention of the House and, we hope, of the public, to the very sorry state of affairs. I feel the amendment is

wisely put together and deserves the support of the House, though I doubt very much whether it will get any support.

I remember the Minister for Mines when he was just The Hon. A. F. Griffith, castigating the Labor members who then sat in the House. There were only nine Labor members in the House at that time. I remember him castigating them because of their silence; they did not interject. He did not like their silence. The Minister now represents the Government, and he has 20 followers behind him in this House. Perhaps I can now repeat his words and say that the Government members are very silent on this occasion, and we wonder why they are so silent. At that time Mr. Griffith was attempting to provoke the nine Labor members in the House.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Whom are you attempting to provoke?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I do not wish to provoke anybody, because I do not want to be here any longer than is necessary. It is essential that the obvious and absolute facts should be placed on record in relation to the housing position. The Government is virtually rolling in wealth.

The Hon. E. C. House: It gave it all to the school teachers.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is all going into the railways and into the Mitchell Freeway, though we are not progressing very far in that regard. This Government appears to place more importance on duplicating a line from, say, Kalgoorlie to Esperance than it does on housing. The expenditure on that line will run into some millions. A line already exists in that area and it can quite easily handle the traffic.

I do not say, however, that this project should not be undertaken, but we should consider first things first. I feel the housing situation should be resolved, and the disastrous situation could be resolved if the Government provided the Housing Commission with more funds and ensured that the money was spent in the right direction.

The Hon. E. C. House: What else would you chop out from the country areas?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I do not want to chop out anything from the country.

The Hon. E. C. House: You are talking about the Esperance line.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I did not say it should not be built. I merely said it should not be duplicated at this time because there is already a line in that area. I merely make the point that to duplicate the line at this point of time is to get our priorities out of order. The housing situation should get No. 1 priority as against the Esperance line being duplicated, because the present line can handle all the traffic required of it at the moment.

Incidentally, I cannot see how it will only cost the few millions that have been suggested.

I would say the Government deserves the greatest censure in connection with the percentage of loan funds which it gives to the Housing Commission for the erection of homes. I feel the Government should have a second look at what the private sector of the building industry has done and is doing. I assert without fear of contradiction that the private sector has caused the present boom in land prices. It has bought the land at auction, built houses on the land it has bought and resold the properties. This could not have been done without making a profit.

The position has snowballed over the years and has got completely out of hand, and it will continue to be impossible while the developers persist in buying land, building houses on such land, and later selling the properties at prices which even the white-collar workers—those in the middle income group—cannot afford to pay, because their salaries are insufficient to enter into the commitments necessary to purchase a house.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) [8.11 p.m.]: In rising to support the amendment moved by my leader I would say that I do not think any member of the House, be he the leader or otherwise, would deny the fact that land values are now getting beyond the reach of even the white-collar worker—if I might borrow the expression used by Mr. Strickland. Those in the lower income group, of course, are only able to obtain a home through the State Housing Commission. When we refer to the State Housing Commission we mean the Government, of course.

Of the funds the Government receives from the Commonwealth for building, 40 per cent. must be allocated to building societies; so, in fact, those people above the allowable income set by the Housing Commission can still be assisted and given a loan from the commission.

One of the points on which I rise is that the Leader of the House (The Hon. A. F. Griffith) expounded a theory when he was Minister for Housing—a theory which I supported—that we should encourage as many people as possible to build their own homes, rather than have a large percentage of rental homes built out of the money available to the State Housing Commission. In effect, we should do all we can to assist those people who have some money to buy a purchase home from the State Housing Commission.

As time has gone on the position has deteriorated, but I do not think anyone would suggest that with the added growth in the population of the State we do not require a greater number of homes to be built. When the Minister for Housing

quotes the number of houses built by both the private sector and by the Government, the total figure looks very good.

However, when one considers the number of home units or rental units that are being erected in the State—I am not referring to the metropolitan area only—the number being built by the Government represents quite a small percentage of the total. Irrespective of what money the Government is receiving from the Commonwealth with which to build homes, I think it should realise its position and demand further help from the Federal Government. Let us all be faithful to ourselves and admit that over the last few years one instrumentality after another has been applying to the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance, be it for education, health, or, in this case, housing. It seems that this is the authority from which the money should come in order to build more houses.

With other members on this side of the Chamber I feel that the Government has not made a successful attempt to obtain further funds for building from the Commonwealth Government. I agree that some of the difficulties that have arisen in regard to the building of homes by the State Housing Commission not only stem from the fact that land prices are high, but also from the fact that the State Housing Commission is disposing of land on a status basis.

I now wish to refer to the area of Dianella in which 126 blocks have just been allocated by ballot. This area of land was taken up some years ago by a Labor Government; and what a thrashing the present leader of this Chamber gave the then Government. As a matter of fact, he even moved a motion in this House.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: He moved this motion on the 21st October, and I refer members to page 2249 of *Hansard* of that year.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In 1954.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I thought I stated the year. I hope I did. The motion was as follows:—

That, in the opinion of this House, the recent resumptions of land, as announced in *The West Australian* on the 19th October, and contained in *Government Gazette* No. 49 of the 8th October, by the State Housing Commission, are unnecessary in view of the very large areas of land held by the Commission, and in many cases grossly unfair to small individual land-holders, and this House requests the Government to review the recent resumptions with a view to the cancellation of the majority of them.

I would imagine the honourable member then considered the situation to be the same as that which caused Mr. Willesee to move his amendment, with one exception: Mr. Willesee's amendment asks for more houses to be built and Mr. Griffith's motion was to stop the Housing Commission from buying more land.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That motion was moved because the Government you supported gave an unequivocal undertaking that it did not intend to resume any more land, but it led to us.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The Minister knows that the reason for his motion was that the then Opposition wanted to bring down legislation which would prevent the State Housing Commission having any further rights to resume any land at any time in this State.

The final result has been that we have a situation where 126 blocks were made available through the State Housing Commission by ballot, at a sum of \$6,000 per block. When the present Minister moved his motion he used up 11½ pages of *Hansard* and 55 minutes of time in castigating the Government for trying to obtain cheap land on which to build houses for the lower-income group.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is not true.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Any member who wishes can read the speech made by the present Minister at that time. There are 11½ pages; and it is interesting to read some of the remarks of the honourable member and also some of the interjections that were made.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You ask Mrs. Hutchison; she knows all about it.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The point I want to make is that we have the Minister for Housing telling us that Mr. Hannaford said it is wrong that the commission is selling blocks of land for \$6,000. The Minister for Housing says that with this \$6,000 the Housing Commission can build more houses.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That is what it will do with it.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I am not an economist or an accountant, even though other members in this Chamber are, but if my memory serves me correctly, at the time the Labor Government paid about \$400 per acre for land that is now serviced and which would be of great value. From where is the State Housing Commission going to buy land now?

Why should not a white-collar worker in the lower-income group be able to build a house in areas such as Dianella if he has been careful enough to save up the deposit? When one has a look at the

type of home that is being built, it is only an ordinary cottage with a little extra facing. It is not even possible to place a double bed in this type of house; it is necessary to have single beds. The cost of the land and the house is exorbitant. Why does not the State Housing Commission—this is something I am against, but I would not deny it the right—use some areas for high density building? Why not build duplex homes? Why is the Housing Commission unable to keep the price of land down?

According to figures given by the Minister in regard to a recent investigation, the number of applicants is still around 14,000. Therefore, if a person is in a position to pay a deposit, why should that person have to wait three years for a home? Surely to goodness the Government has enough initiative to raise funds to build homes for people who want to buy them, even if it cannot do so for rental homes! That is something about which I am concerned; and it does not concern me only.

I have a number of friends who do not share my political views, but they have made approaches to me in regard to land prices. One is the mayor of a very big city in my electorate. He said to me that every time a new plan for subdivision comes before his council he wishes he were a socialist. Every time a new subdivision goes before the Melville Shire the increase in the price of land in connection with one group—T. M. Burke—is so high that even the council is worried about it.

I have been speaking in regard to the high price of land, and the next point I wish to raise is in regard to rents. I know that about three years ago I got into a lot of trouble in this Chamber because I read from a State Housing Commission report how many home units were being built in the State by the private sector and the Government. However, what was not said in the report was that the home units being built by the private sector could not compare in any way with commission homes as far as rents were concerned.

In the case of the State Housing Commission the rent is based on the economics of the case in point—the area of land and the number of houses in the area. Places like Brentwood were planned. The homes are built and the project is costed. The Minister would agree that what I have said is correct. The principle is to have an economic rent; and I think amortisation takes place over 40 years or 45 years. However, when houses are built by private enterprise it has to make a profit. No-one objects to the State Housing Commission making a profit that will allow it to budget for a surplus each year. I do not think anybody would object to that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In order to subsidise a lot of rents.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: That is correct. The Minister brought a good point forward. The State Housing Commission, at times, has found that it is not economic to change tenants if a person has a temporary setback in his financial situation. In this regard the Housing Commission has been good. It gives these people a rebate of rent over a period and when the financial position of that person improves he pays a normal rent.

Another point I have to concede to the Housing Commission is in regard to widows and their families. A rebate of rent applies; and money has to be found from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to meet this. However, an attempt should be made to build sufficient homes at least to meet the demand of 75 per cent. of the applicants that go before the State Housing Commission. I am referring to those people whose applications are approved, as I know that some are not approved.

At one time I was living in a flat at Applecross and the rent was £6 per week. It was a two-bedroomed flat with one long room divided into a lounge and a place for meals. The bedrooms were small and the rooms were not lined, the bricks being rubbed down and sand washed. After three and a quarter years I was paying £9 9s. per week.

The Hon. E. C. House: That is a prestige area.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: No, it was a War Service Homes area where people bought land for £100 or £180 in 1952 and 1953. The area now has a new rating valuation and in some cases a residential block is valued at \$3,200; and I understand that a lady and four children who are now in that flat are paying \$24.

When I was in hospital a friend came to see me and I referred the matter to Mr. Dolan, because it concerned his electorate. It concerned a lady with two sons and an aged mother who were paying \$14 per week, but within the last two months the rent was raised to \$20, and three weeks ago it was again raised to \$25.

The lady to whom I have referred is a divorcee and her husband has to pay a certain amount of money to her. However, where can she obtain a place in which to live which will cost under \$25 a week, which is a basic rent in Gwentyfred Road, South Perth, at the moment?

This is the type of problem I am meeting all the time. Another problem concerns those who are eligible for purchase homes, and who have been accepted as such by the State Housing Commission. I handled a case only a few weeks ago where a woman and her three children were living in one room of the same house in which her mother lived. The husband was working

overtime and had already saved \$500 towards the deposit. However, I am told that he cannot get a home for at least another eight months. He has already been on the list for three years and four months.

Is it any wonder that the Leader of the Opposition has found it necessary to move his amendment to the Address-in-Reply? Before I resume my seat I want to make it very clear that my thoughts are shared by the land agents in the South Metropolitan Province. The land agents have told me that they are almost ashamed to ask the rents which they are forced to charge. Some of those land agents' offices have been established in the Fremantle area for 60 or 70 years and that is the opinion their representatives hold.

I regret having to speak in this Chamber in support of an amendment such as that moved by the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister said that the moving of amendments is becoming a habit. Of course, it is the habit of all Oppositions to move amendments.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not say it was becoming a habit; I said it was becoming customary.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have noticed that the Minister has moved quite a few amendments since he has been in Parliament.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) {8.33 p.m.}: This amendment to the Address-in-Reply reminds me of a gummy ewe. Neither the amendment to the motion nor the gummy ewe have any teeth. If the gummy ewe is sold it will not bring very much, and if this amendment to the motion is passed we will not have very much either. The Opposition and the Government, in fact all political parties, are concerned with the problem but the main thing is the solution.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You will therefore support the amendment to the motion?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I cannot support an amendment which offers no solution. When Mr. Willesee spoke on the Address-in-Reply he suggested that more urban land be released for purchase. What would happen if we did release more land—all the deferred urban land in the State? Would it reduce the price for certain? Would it accomplish what the honourable member thinks it would accomplish? I do not think that such a release would reduce the price of land because a standard price has been set throughout Western Australia.

I believe this standard price would be maintained even though all the deferred land was thrown open. So this is not a solution. There has to be something more drastic to bring down the price of land. If the price is brought down drastically what financial effect will it have on people who

have already purchased land? All those factors have to be considered and the moving in this House of an amendment to a motion provides no simple solution to the problem.

The Government is attempting to relieve the housing shortage and the situation generally as far as possible. Plans are being made and schemes are being introduced at the present time to step up the provision of housing in this State and I agree with the Minister that an improvement cannot be effected with a wave of the hand or the wave of a wand. Matters such as this take time to overcome.

I believe that in time we will catch up with the housing shortage. In the meantime, we have to do the best we can. Referring to the exorbitant rents which are being charged, it is only natural that when an article is in short supply the price goes up, and this is something which is very difficult to overcome.

Towards the end of the amendment to the motion there is reference to the migrant intake being restricted. If my memory serves me correctly, it was not very many years ago that the Labor Party was advocating the restriction of migration.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: How many years ago?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not know how many years ago.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: He is never too sure of anything.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I am sure that some years ago the Labor Party was advocating the restriction of migration because there were not enough jobs to go around. I may have a bad memory but I think I am right.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I think you might be right, too.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Labor Party is now complaining because there is a shortage of housing which is restricting migration. One cannot have the best of both worlds, and at one time say that migration should be restricted and at another time say that migration is restricted because of the lack of housing.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I quoted what a Commonwealth Minister said in your political feature of the 4th August.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I know what Mr. Willesee quoted from but we have to be sure that the shortage of housing is restricting migration. We still have the highest migrant intake in Australia. Whether we could take more migrants if we had the housing is what the Federal Minister was questioning. He suggested that if there were no housing problem we could probably take more migrants. Possibly when more houses are available we can take more migrants if it is thought necessary.

The way the amendment to the motion is framed, even if the House agreed to it it would not get us anywhere. A solid plan should be put forward to help the Government. We in the Country Party have gone into this subject and tried to devise ways and means to overcome the problem. I know the Labor Party is concerned, and I am sure the Liberal Party is concerned, yet nobody has a solution to the problem.

An amendment such as the one moved will not serve any purpose at all. As I have said, it is like a gummy ewe and I could not support such an amendment unless it had some teeth and contained a suggestion to overcome the problem.

THE HON. E. C. HOUSE (South) [8.39 p.m.]: This amendment does give one an opportunity to voice some opinions on the housing situation. I cannot altogether agree with Mr. Baxter that a standard has been set and because of that we have to keep to that standard.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I did not say that we should keep it at that.

The Hon. E. C. HOUSE: I cannot see any reason at all why the State Housing Commission should have set such a high price on the land which it balloted. The State Housing Commission has virtually set a standard and it is very hard to break down such a standard.

There is no doubt that our prices are the highest in the Commonwealth and they must have a long-term effect on those people who have to pay them. This would not matter so much if it were not all borrowed money that is involved. However, this is the case with most young people. Not only do they have to borrow to purchase the land, but they have to borrow to build a house, and they have to borrow to buy everything which they put into the house. I do not call this a buoyant economy. I do not think that this is something to be very proud about. We should try to keep the prices down and I think a genuine effort should be made to do that.

I do not altogether agree with the suggestion that if more money were allocated by the Commonwealth Government this would solve the problem. So much other building is going on at the moment that the building trade is mainly bound up in those projects. If more money were released it is very doubtful whether it would reduce the cost of housing, or gain us very much because the cost structure generally within the building trade, from the purchase of land to the finished product, is beyond all reason. Some of the profits are excessive and they could do with some examination.

I did not rise, really, to make those comments. I wanted to refer to the high cost of rents for flats. Because of the shortage of accommodation high rents are charged and they are showing profits beyond all reason.

The percentage of profit gained from the construction of flats is exorbitant; there is no other word for it. Teachers are demanding higher salaries and when we consider that those teachers are paying \$20 to \$24 a week in rent we can see that the problem becomes one not so much of the salary which is paid now, but the general cost structure and what that salary has to provide. Therein lies the trouble. Instead of paying out another \$4,000,000 in wages the teacher problem might well be overcome if rents, third party insurance, and all other such expenses, were a lot lower than they are now. A reduction in those costs would serve exactly the same purpose and create a much healthier economy.

I think I am right in saying that the maximum wage one can earn and still be eligible for a purchase home is about \$54. That is about the figure, with an allowance of \$100 a year for each child. When such an applicant receives a wage which is only slightly above the \$54 he has to go to a building society to obtain a loan. When he applies to a building society he has to have an income of \$85 to \$90 a week in order to amortize the loan from the building society. Those people are forever in no man's land. In the interim they have to pay high rents for flats—up to \$25 per week—which virtually does not allow them to save the deposit required by a building society.

The building societies do not consider overtime payments as part of the amortization requirement, but that a person must actually be earning the necessary amount of money per week. Therefore, we have the problem where a great many young people are earning more than the maximum allowed by the Housing Commission, but they cannot catch up to the amount required by the building societies. Surely it would be much better if more money were directed towards building homes for young people and making those homes available through the State Housing Commission.

At the moment those living in the country areas are fairly well situated so far as housing is concerned, and this has been brought about to a great extent by the threat of wheat quotas, the lack of machinery sales, the drought, and so on. However, I think every State and nation should always remember the effects of farm spending on the general economy. One can blow up a balloon until it bursts; that has been the situation throughout history and in every country. One has only to read history to know how often the balloons have burst.

If one visits legatees one realises only too well how deeply in debt most people are. When a breadwinner dies and one has to visit the widow one sees just how much these people are committed for. In my opinion it is a shocking state of affairs and so I think there is a definite need to try to keep prices down for both land and rents, and for everything else, too.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [8.46 p.m.]: By the amendment moved by Mr. Willesee we are asked to support the proposal that this House views with concern certain matters: That there is a housing shortage, for a start. That is true. That the price of land is still high, which is true. That building blocks remain in short supply, which is true. That families are forced to pay exorbitant rents, which is true. That the migrant intake is being restricted, which is true also.

All of these matters should be of concern to members sitting in this House. It is a fact that nobody lives in a tent in the metropolitan area. It would be a sad reflection on the Government if this were so. Can it be claimed, therefore, that there is a housing shortage? That this is indisputable is demonstrated by the high rents that are able to be obtained and by the mushrooming flat development. If housing were not in short supply neither of these two conditions would exist.

There are also many cases where elderly people live with their married children, not because they wish to do so, but because they are not able to pay the high rents necessary to obtain independent accommodation. Other people live in shared accommodation and in substandard dwellings—as has been pointed out by other members—because any building with four walls and a roof is better than no dwelling at all.

Because of the housing shortage owners are able to obtain rents for the very poorest accommodation at a level far above the real value of the actual premises. This is the sort of accommodation that under normal conditions, or under other conditions, no-one would consider.

The spiralling land prices are a phenomenon of which this House has heard a great deal, but not just in recent months or in this session of Parliament. It has been well known and documented over the last several years. Yet as recently as the 5th May the Premier was reported as saying—

I have left suggestions that we must get right down to dealing with this right now.

That was on the 5th May, and after all that had gone on over several years before!

That statement, I suggest, is symptomatic of the lack of understanding this Government has now and has had in previous years of the difficulties ordinary people are faced with because of the wildly inflating costs of land and housing.

There have been vague expressions of hope that the market will level off, and it may do so. However, let us have a look at the prices that are now being paid for land. They would certainly not indicate that that is so. In today's issue of *The West Australian* blocks in Dianella were advertised for \$8,250, \$8,450, and \$6,500. At an auction in March land in that area was sold for prices between \$5,000 and \$6,810. So even in that short time we can see that the prices have increased.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: They might not have got those prices. They are only advertised prices.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Recently I heard of a block of land that was purchased in a northern beach suburb for \$6,000 and it was sold a short time afterwards for \$8,500.

The State Housing Commission has a plan to ballot lots in the Dianella-Yokine area at prices between \$5,510 and \$6,670, and it received a flood of applications as the prices are below current market values, which are estimated at between \$7,000 and \$8,000. It is interesting to note that the average price at the previous auction was \$5,860. Here again, this is not an indication of any levelling-off in prices and yet if we assume that blocks were available at \$5,000, what would this mean to the purchaser? If he is able to make a deposit of \$1,000 he must make repayments of \$17.50 per week over the normal five-year term. Then, at the same time, because that person does not own a home he has to pay rent of about \$20 per week. Therefore, from that man's income he is paying out \$37.50 per week for land and rent. This, if it applies to people on the lower incomes, would represent 50 per cent. or more of the family income.

The Government is still dithering around with the problem. Statements have been made about releasing large areas of land—anything up to 21,000 blocks. However, this still has not been done and prices are still spiralling and people are still being forced to pay exorbitant rents and ever-increasing costs for housing land. It does not seem that the Government appreciates the real state of affairs. It has shown little sign over the past three years that it does because even in June the Premier, while overseas, was reported as saying that a tribunal may be needed to set land prices. Surely at this stage the Government has decided what effective measures it should take. It has had long enough to do so.

The Minister for Mines referred to the lending of building societies and stated that higher interest rates had attracted extra funds to housing. It was reported on the 19th July that the building societies provided loans for 6,528 homes. This was a record compared with the previous figure of 3,862. These figures are very satisfying. Previously banks were the chief sources of housing finance. Is this still the case, or will we find that the banks are investing their money in the building societies and consequently home builders are having to pay higher interest charges?

If we look at the cost of an average lower-priced home we will see that it is usually around about \$13,000—that is, for the house and land. If the young couple who are buying such a house are able to get together a deposit of \$1,500 they would probably have to make repayments of about \$22 per week. This is the sort of situation that this Government is forcing upon people who are on the lower incomes. They are the people who are not able to obtain loans from other societies or from the banks. A bank would normally stipulate that the repayments for a loan did not exceed 25 per cent. of the income. With a sum of \$22 the young man would have to be earning an income of \$88 a week, which is well above the average earnings, including overtime. In this situation such a home purchaser would be an unattractive prospect to a bank and would have no bargaining power at all.

People in such income groups have to accept whatever properties are available, no matter what the quality of the workmanship in the home may be. They find it difficult to obtain land or to get together a reasonable deposit for a house. More often than not they have to accept a first mortgage of about \$8,000 at an interest rate of 8 per cent. reducible. Then they have to obtain the remainder of their finance by means of a short-term loan at a flat rate of interest at about 9 per cent. After three years, they would have to redeem that loan in full and then be faced with further charges for the preparation of another mortgage, stamp duty, and whatever other costs are involved.

This is the situation that people in better circumstances do not have to face. It has long been the case—certainly since this Government has been in power. People in the lower income group are faced with all these extra burdens.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Would you say that this is the first time that these people have had to do this sort of thing? It has only been so since this Government came into office?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Did I say that?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It sounds like it. You indicated that that is so.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The building trade, I would suggest, is also concerned over the high cost of land. This was indicated by Mr. Hannaford. The building trade does not find the higher costs of land to be an advantage so far as it is concerned. A builder has to find the necessary finance to buy a block of land on which to build, and then he has to arrange the finance necessary for the materials. The next time he has to buy a block of land he finds that costs have gone up again and any profits he has made are absorbed in the extra costs for the next block of land he has to buy. I think members must support the amendment moved by Mr. Willesee because all the matters referred to should concern us greatly.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Town Planning) [8.59 p.m.]: I have said in this House before, when we have been talking about the price of land, that we ought to appreciate the fact that land which is for sale has been bought and paid for by people who have gone out to buy it of their own free will and accord. They have bought it on the open market. Nobody has asked them to go and buy it so how can one stop them from paying the prices which are paid for land?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Would you expect them to sell it at a reduced price?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Ever since I have been the Minister for Town Planning I have been trying to tell people that there is no shortage of land. Neither there is. There never has been. A total of 114,000 acres was zoned as urban in the metropolitan region and there are still 50,000 acres available—it is still vacant.

That has been the process all the way through. We have kept this far ahead of the position at all times and I have repeatedly told people through the Press that there is no need to panic and at last they are beginning to appreciate what I have been saying. How can one set the price for a block of land when people go out and bid one against the other?

I know of an instance where a spec builder wanted a few blocks of land on which to build houses. He valued the land at a little under \$4,000 a block, but a young couple bid \$6,000 for it. If they had had any common sense they could have approached the builder and said, "If you buy that block of land you can build a house on it for us" and they would have saved themselves \$2,000. In the process of bidding for land, many people who are even supporters of the Labor Party have formed groups and contributed to a pool so that they could speculate in land for the purpose of making an enhanced profit. This happens among people in every walk of life.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Only the Labor Party boys would do that; they are the only ones!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This has occurred among people in every walk of life.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Why did you not persist with the R. & I. Bank proposal in December of last year?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Leader of the Opposition must bear in mind that the amount of Crown land available within the metropolitan region is very limited.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Well, you are selling it!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: We sold the Crown land that was available in the Hamersley area to the R. & I. Bank so that it could enter into a programme of development, because that was the only way we could do it. It is only the fault of the people themselves that the present high prices for land exist. Mr. Dolan stated that people in other States, particularly Queensland, are paying much less for a block of land than they are here, but one has to compare block with block. Whilst I was in Sydney I went 17 miles out into the scrub to inspect a new land subdivision. The upset price of a block of land there was \$6,000, so I do not know where Mr. Dolan got his values from.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I got them from *The Sydney Morning Herald*. One can see them advertised in that newspaper every Saturday morning.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The blocks 17 miles out from Sydney that I have mentioned were in goat country and they were selling at \$6,000 each. When Mr. Dolan was talking about Queensland he did not say anything about its increase in population, either as a result of natural increase or by immigration.

The Hon. J. Dolan: So that you will know, I will tell you that when I speak to the Address-in-Reply motion.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Not too many people give the Government credit for making an effort to meet the situation that has been brought about by the terrific growth in the population of this State. It is a generally acknowledged fact that any State or nation, in normal circumstances can cope with a 2 per cent. increase in population. When the increase rises to 3, 4, and 5 per cent. within a matter of five years, surely some people must give some body credit for making an effort to catch up with the housing shortage, which is what the Government is doing.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I give credit to everybody but the Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is absolutely correct.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: When people say that prices are not levelling off, one has only to read the headlines that have

appeared in *The West Australian* and other newspapers over the past few months. I noticed that a headline appearing in the *Weekend News* of the 7th June, 1969, read, "Suburban land prices level off in many areas" and in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June there appeared the headline, "Levelling out in land prices, says auctioneer." Further, in *The West Australian* of the 4th July, 1969, there was the headline, "Government moves on land are hitting speculators."

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: About 10 years too late!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: On the 13th July, 1969, in *The Sunday Times* the headline, "Most blocks fail to sell" appeared. Also, I know of two areas where the majority of the blocks of land that were put up for auction did not even get a bid, and at that stage the price of each block was about \$4,000.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Where were they?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: One was in the Midland area and another in the Kelm-scott area. Another interesting fact was that on the 1st July, 1969, Landall advertised 84 homes for sale at a price of only \$13,850 in eight different suburbs. That price included the cost of land. On the 2nd August, only a month later, about 120 homes were offered for sale, and on the same day another company offered 47 homes for sale. If this is not doing something to catch up with the housing shortage, I do not know what it is.

Today I submitted a statement to the Press announcing that we have arranged with three companies to throw open 60 per cent. of urban deferred land and declare it urban. The conditions of this agreement are that the blocks will be put up for sale at a price of between \$3,500 and \$4,000. We have been trying to negotiate with these three companies for some considerable time and they have now agreed to come to the party. The other 40 per cent. of the blocks will be put up at auction or sold at market price. I hope that this arrangement will contain the price of land not only in this area, but also in other areas.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: What do you think the blocks will sell for?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Minister has just told you that they will sell for a price between \$3,500 and \$4000.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That is about true value.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Where are these blocks?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They are situated in the Sorrento-Mullaloo area. To date we have not been able to impose restrictions to any great extent on the sale of such land. The only reason the conditions have been accepted is that we have

told these people that we will rezone this land as urban land. This is a very good break-through so far as the control of land is concerned. By making land available in the Hamersley area through medium of the R. & I. Bank previously we tried to control prices at that time. I think I can say now that no further land in the metropolitan area will be rezoned unless the same conditions applying to the Sorrento-Mullaloo area are observed. It is of no use developing the Sorrento-Mullaloo area and other districts unless we have the attendant growth with them.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The Lands Department made blocks of land at Calista available to speculative builders at cheap prices in order that they might build homes on it subject to certain conditions. Now that they are being granted land in other areas they are selling the blocks at greatly enhanced prices. This is occurring in the Orelia area.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Land is being made available to private developers on the condition that they do not make a profit on the land. The R. & I. Bank is doing the same at Hamersley; it is making land available to private developers on similar conditions. Before the developers are granted the land the bank wants to know the price at which they will be selling the houses. The man who is making a profit out of land is the one who buys a block of land at an auction one day and sells it the following day. If this is occurring, how can one claim that there is a shortage of land? I know that the Perth City Council conducted an auction of blocks of land just before last Christmas. They were all sold, but the next day 75 per cent. of those blocks had "For Sale" notices on them. There is no shortage of land when this can be done. The people who purchased those blocks from the Perth City Council did not want the blocks for the purpose of building houses on them; they merely wanted to make a profit on them.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: The main contention of my amendment is that there is a group of people who cannot pay above a certain figure for a block of land, and it is this group we are trying to assist at the present time.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is quite true, but I point out that the State Housing Commission is selling blocks of land at Karrinyup at \$6,000 each, which is \$1,500 below the market price, and the commission is using the money it obtains from the sale of these blocks to build low-cost houses for the people whom the Opposition is anxious to assist.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: But they have not got the land.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes they have.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You are forcing the individual buyer to pay more than he is able to afford.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They are saying, in effect, "If you are interested in this price, here is the land."

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That is quite true.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The profit it is making out of this land will be used to build low-cost homes to provide accommodation for those people the Opposition is anxious to assist.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The commission could not build houses on that land, because the price of it would be too high for the people the commission is trying to house.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Only because you have taken this new figure. The land is no better than it was before.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will continue to address the Chair.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Very well, Mr. President. When it entered into that contract, the Housing Commission probably made history. It was a matter of \$5,000,000 in one hit. I do not know from what other source the commission would obtain the money when it is spending \$5,000,000 in one hit.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: This is one of the greatest factors contributing to the high rentals.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not think it is.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Of course, the conditions which apply to the Sorrento-Mullaloo area are fairly stiff. The company has to contribute to the cost of water supplies and sewerage, and it will have to pay \$50,000 for the construction of controlled-access roads. It is making available land, two to three chains wide, for these controlled-access roads. It is also making available school sites, for both primary and high schools, free of cost.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The statement will be appearing in the newspaper tomorrow, will it?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes.

The Hon. J. Dolan: We can read all about it then.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, I was merely pointing out what the company will be doing. Mr. House has drawn attention to the high rentals of flats. This may be a fact, but we should look at the situation the State was in previously when we

had rent control. The only way to overcome this problem is to introduce rent control once again, but immediately that is done flat building will cease.

The Hon. E. C. House: Without rent control, people are paying as much key money now as they were before.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Flats were not able to be built before. It is only in the last 10 years that flats have been built to any great extent, because the owners are now able to get sufficient return on their money.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The return is too high.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It may be too high, but they are getting it.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: This is what has caused the rentals of flats to go up.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I think the honourable member will need to investigate the matter more thoroughly than that. I have mentioned those factors relating to the problem and the record is here for everybody to read. The fact remains that there are still 50,000 acres of vacant land available for home-building purposes. I have made this information available in order to make people realise that there is no need to pay high prices for land when, in three or four years they will still be able to buy the blocks that are available now at the current prices offering. In view of the fact that the Government has done all these things I cannot support the amendment.

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

| Ayes—8 | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Hon. R. F. Cloughton | Hon. F. R. H. Lavery |
| Hon. J. Dolan | Hon. H. C. Strickland |
| Hon. J. J. Garrigan | Hon. W. F. Willesee |
| Hon. R. F. Hutchison | Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs |
| (Teller) | |

| Noes—15 | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Hon. C. R. Abbey | Hon. G. C. MacKinnon |
| Hon. N. E. Baxter | Hon. N. McNeill |
| Hon. G. W. Berry | Hon. S. T. J. Thompson |
| Hon. G. E. D. Brand | Hon. J. M. Thomson |
| Hon. V. J. Ferry | Hon. F. R. White |
| Hon. A. F. Griffith | Hon. F. D. Willmott |
| Hon. Clive Griffiths | Hon. J. Heitman |
| Hon. L. A. Logan | (Teller) |

| Pairs | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ayes | Noes |
| Hon. F. J. S. Wise | Hon. I. G. Medcalf |
| Hon. R. Thompson | Hon. J. G. Hislop |

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. G. W. Berry.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Assembly Personnel

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

House adjourned at 9.20 p.m.