

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 8th October, 1969

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

## QUESTIONS (29): ON NOTICE

### 1. POLICE

#### Report on "Pelican"

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has any decision yet been made regarding the 3rd September, 1969, issue of *Pelican*?
- (2) If so, what are the terms of the police report?
- (3) Is it intended to prosecute?
- (4) If no decision has been made, how does he account for a lapse of more than a month in determining whether an article and/or a few pictures taken from other publications are indecent or obscene?
- (5) When is it anticipated a decision will be made?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) A decision has not yet been made.
- (4) The matter has been referred for a legal opinion.
- (5) When a legal opinion has been considered.

### 2. STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

#### Financial Result

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is he aware of the financial result of the State Housing Commission's trading for the year ended the 30th June, 1969?
- (2) If so, what was the profit?
- (3) Of the profit, how much was gained respectively from—
  - (a) rental charges;
  - (b) land sales;
  - (c) other (give details)?
- (4) If the result of the year's trading is not yet known when does he anticipate it will be?

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

(1) Yes.

	\$
(2) State Housing Fund ..	3,647,710
Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement Fund—	
1945 Agreement ..	325,868
1956 Agreement ..	1,118,647
	<u>\$5,092,225</u>

(3) As this answer involves a considerable amount of dissection which is not yet completed, the information will be supplied to the honourable member by letter as soon as it is available.

(4) Answered by (1).

3. *This question was postponed.*

### 4. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

#### Farmers' Contributory Group Scheme

Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Has the financial side of the Farmers' Contributory Group Scheme been altered inasmuch as the 50 per cent. group cash requirement is no longer a requisite?
- (2) Is it therefore now a fact that 100 per cent. farmer cash contribution is now the demand?
- (3) If such is the case, how long has this system been operating and why was the change made?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The Contributory Extension Scheme in country areas has not been changed since 1966.
- (2) No. The farmer may make his contribution in either of two ways as follows:—

- (a) Make a capital contribution equal to the construction cost of the extra line above the free part, and make a quarterly payment for depreciation, maintenance, and a small administration fee. (This amounts to 6½ per cent. of the capital cost of the extra line.), or
- (b) make a capital contribution of 2.18 times the construction cost of the extra line, and avoid any quarterly payments.

A rebate of 10 per cent. is allowed on all capital payments. All capital payments are refunded in full without interest, after thirty years, if not sooner.

A pamphlet outlining the basis and provisions of the Contributory Extension Scheme is available, and I have here a copy which I request be tabled.

(3) See (1) and (2) above.

*The pamphlet was tabled.*

### 5.

## HOUSING

### Two-unit Dwellings

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Since the 12th September last, how many dwellings containing two sleeping units have been allocated by the State Housing Commission within a perimeter

which would be regarded as reasonable for a student attending Tuart Hill Senior High School?

- (2) How many of these were for emergent cases?
- (3) How long had they been on the emergency list?

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

- (1) None in the areas of Joondanna, Yokine, Tuart Hill, Nollamara and Balga, which have been taken as representing the reasonable perimeter referred to by the honourable member.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

#### 6. GNOWANGERUP SHIRE *Referendum*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) On what date was the Gnowangerup Shire Council requested to supply information regarding a resolution that a referendum would be held re dividing the shire district?
- (2) Has he yet received a reply?
- (3) If so, what are its terms?
- (4) What action, if any, does he intend to take?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The 21st August, 1969.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The following is an extract from the reply:—

A motion to the effect that a suggested dividing line be drawn by an independent body for presentation at a district referendum was in fact passed at a meeting of Council on the 17th December, 1968. This minute was published in a local newspaper along with other notes from this particular meeting. At a meeting held on the 15th January, 1969, notice to rescind the minute was given. This notice appeared in the same local paper on the 20th February, 1969. The minute was then subsequently rescinded at a meeting of Council held on the 12th February 1969 and the matter was highlighted in a further edition of the paper on the 27th February, 1969.

- (4) None—other than to advise the inquirer.

#### 7. WATER SUPPLIES *Guilderton*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has the Guilderton water supply scheme come into operation?

- (2) If not, when is this to take place?
- (3) What is the basis of charges which will be levelled against—
  - (a) those dwellings connected with the scheme;
  - (b) those dwellings not connected;
  - (c) vacant lots?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) (a) 7½c in the dollar on estimated net annual value, plus charges for water as follows:—
  - First 60,000 gallons 20c per 1,000 gallons.
  - Next 40,000 gallons 25c per 1,000 gallons.
  - Over 100,000 gallons 30c per 1,000 gallons.
- (b) 7½c in the dollar on estimated net annual value, providing water is available; if not, no charge.
- (c) \$4 annual charge if water is available.

#### 8.

#### FERTILISERS

##### *Superphosphate Orders*

Mr. YOUNG asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Owing to the unavoidable delay in the issuing of wheat quotas will the Superphosphate Distribution Committee extend the date for the lodgment of superphosphate orders for a period of two weeks after the issue of wheat quotas?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The superphosphate delivery plan is designed to ensure arrangements for each farmer by scheduling in advance his intended months for delivery.

These schedules do not in any way replace or act as an order—each scheduled delivery needs to be covered in due course by a firm order from the farmer.

Farmers' schedules are flowing in steadily and the distribution committee hopes that this will continue.

The committee is keeping a close watch on the situation this year and will be meeting again in a fortnight's time.

It must be realised that the advance indications provided by the individual schedules are essential to effective planning.

No difficulty is foreseen in providing for all superphosphate requirements, but supply of the huge quantity involved calls for carefully planned programmes for raw

material, shipping, manpower, manufacture, loading, and transport.

9.

**HEALTH***Blood Donors*

Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

With a view to reassuring potential blood donors—R.H. negative and other groupings—that arthritis and other complaints are not communicable to recipients, will he endeavour to have TV, Press and other media reassure the community to this effect with a view to obtaining additional donors?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

This matter will be referred to the Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service which is in control of this activity in Western Australia.

10.

**EDUCATION***School Canteens*

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is his department's policy in respect of canteens at—
  - (a) primary schools;
  - (b) junior and three-year high schools; and
  - (c) five-year high schools?
- (2) What financial assistance, if any, is made by his department to the building of canteens in respect of (a), (b), and (c) above?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) (a) Provided by parents and citizens' associations with subsidy assistance by the department.
- (b) Junior high schools—same as primary.  
Three-year high schools—provided by department.
- (c) Provided by department.
- (2) The department provides 33½ per cent. of the total cost to a maximum subsidy of \$4,000 in the case of primary schools and junior high schools. Canteens at high schools and senior high schools are provided entirely by the department.

11.

**WOOD CHIP INDUSTRY***Negotiations*

Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

As the time limit placed upon the W.A. Chip and Pulp Company to present a satisfactory proposal for the establishment of a chipping plant at Diamond Tree has expired, will he indicate the present stage of negotiations between the company, the Japanese interests and the Government?

Mr. COURT replied:

The company has asked for a further extension of time by which to satisfy the Government regarding sales contract and other requirements. This request is currently under consideration. In the meantime the agreement is being kept current.

12.

**STAMP ACT***High Court Decision*

Mr. BERTRAM asked the Treasurer:

- (1) If section 101A of the Stamp Act is ultimately held to be valid, will Hamersley Iron Ltd. be obliged to pay interest on the stamp duty which it has so far failed to pay?
- (2) If "Yes", at what rate and from what date?
- (3) If "No", why?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Because there is no power under the Stamp Act to charge interest.

13.

**INFLATION***Curbing*

Mr. BERTRAM asked the Premier:

- (1) In view of the fact that it is generally acknowledged that inflation strikes hardest at those who can least afford it, including young married couples and students, what steps apart from fixation of wages has the Government taken since 1959 to curb inflation?
- (2) What steps are now being taken and what steps are proposed to be taken to curb inflation?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

- (1) and (2) The management of the economy is in the hands of the Commonwealth Government which alone possesses the necessary powers to control its course through monetary and fiscal measures not available to State Governments.

14.

**REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE***Supplying of Details*

Mr. BERTRAM asked the Treasurer:

- (1) Will he supply—
  - (a) details of the actual revenue and expenditure for State Trading concerns in tabular form from and including the year ended the 30th June, 1959, to date;
  - (b) the Consolidated Revenue Fund actual revenue and expenditure in tabular form from and including the year ended the 30th June, 1959, to date?
- (2) If "No" to both, why?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

1 (a)

Year ended 30th June	West Australian Meat Export Works		State Engineering Works		State Building Supplies	
	Revenue	Expenditure	Revenue	Expenditure	Revenue	Expenditure
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1959	1,689,188	1,674,664	1,947,700	1,758,340	6,080,814	6,174,548
1960	1,532,186	1,526,144	1,342,692	1,263,114	5,764,926	5,835,668
1961	1,659,758	1,646,523	1,175,206	1,085,496	6,103,556	6,241,268
1962	1,622,810	1,613,940	1,272,634	1,147,702	(b)	(b)
1963	1,807,320	1,804,954	1,335,658	1,211,660	.....	.....
1964	1,964,118	1,960,986	1,462,820	1,324,298	.....	.....
1965	2,252,118	2,121,830	1,584,526	1,390,448	.....	.....
1966	2,520,674	2,356,006	1,667,467	1,485,736	.....	.....
1967	2,624,693	2,616,208	1,658,773	1,515,302	.....	.....
1968	3,089,844	3,031,376	1,734,337	1,572,521	.....	.....
1969	3,512,442	3,504,553	1,757,767	1,656,167	.....	.....

Year ended 30th June	Wyndham Freezing, Canning and Meat Export Works		State Shipping Service (a)		State Hotels	
	Revenue	Expenditure	Revenue	Expenditure	Revenue	Expenditure
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1959	2,868,786	2,750,860	2,037,384	3,885,636	449,418	435,642
1960	3,736,204	3,547,194	2,055,120	3,945,424	358,886	355,524
1961	3,485,230	3,342,154	2,142,430	4,009,116	196,952	216,600
1962	2,905,184	2,847,776	2,381,646	4,665,710	(c)	(c)
1963	2,965,058	2,906,648	2,236,268	4,496,152	.....	.....
1964	2,922,688	2,851,294	2,667,544	5,103,472	.....	.....
1965	2,703,260	2,628,248	3,464,022	6,124,578	.....	.....
1966	2,525,084	2,466,228	4,150,826	6,881,558	.....	.....
1967	(e)	(e)	(d)	(d)	.....	.....
1968	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1969	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

(a) For year ended 31st December prior to year quoted.

(b) The undertaking was sold from 1st July, 1961.

(c) The hotels were sold from various dates during 1960-61.

(d) Control of the concern was taken over by the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission from 15th November, 1965.

(e) The undertaking was sold from 20th March, 1967.

(1) (b)—

	Revenue	Expenditure
	\$	\$
1959	120,136,474	123,505,940
1960	128,775,824	131,587,452
1961	138,665,420	141,074,573
1962	149,851,571	151,779,597
1963	157,181,536	158,687,286
1964	167,888,470	170,680,830
1965	180,143,018	184,840,068
1966	206,655,347	206,665,457
1967	228,146,198	228,173,692
1968	250,737,839	249,909,203
1969	275,081,341	276,136,959

(2) Answered by (1).

# 15. CANNINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Tenders

Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Education:

When will tenders be called for the building of the Cannington Primary School?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Tenders have been called and will close at 4 p.m. on Thursday the 16th October, 1969.

# 16. POULTRY INDUSTRY

## Controlled Production

Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Has he received a request from the Poultry Farmers' Association of W.A. for a referendum to determine whether the industry is in favour of controlled production in Western Australia?

(2) If so, is it his intention to grant this request; if not, why not?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No. The request was considered by the Government, but as no conclusive evidence had been furnished to indicate that a scheme for licensing growers would provide monetary benefits to those growers, it was felt no further action towards formulating a licensing scheme for introduction into this State was warranted.

17. **MARKETING BOARDS**

*Production Control*

Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many of the marketing boards established under State Acts (including those currently before Parliament) have the power to control production in their various spheres and which are they?
- (2) Which of the marketing boards have not the power to control production?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The Western Australian Barley Marketing Board.

The Milk Board of Western Australia.

The Western Australian Potato Marketing Board.

Provision also exists in the Marketing of Linseed Bill, 1969, presently before Parliament, for a board with power to control production.

- (2) The Dairy Products Marketing Board.

The Dried Fruits Board (W.A.).

The Western Australian Wheat Board.

The Western Australian Egg Marketing Board.

Provision exists in the Marketing of Onions Act, 1938, for a board to be appointed.

In the Marketing of Cyprus Barrel Medic Seed Bill, 1969, presently before Parliament, there is no provision for the marketing board to have power to control production.

18. *This question was postponed.*

19. **SCHOOL HOLIDAY**

*American Moon Astronauts*

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Education:

Is it intended to grant a school holiday in full or part on Friday, the 31st October, to honour the American moon astronauts who are to visit Western Australia at that time?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

This is under consideration, but no decision has yet been made.

20. *This question was postponed.*

21. **ROAD FUNDS**

*Distribution*

Mr. CASH asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Do the methods used to distribute road funds vary from State to State; if so, in what way?
- (2) How do the methods used in this State compare with those of the other States?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The methods used to distribute road funds vary from State to State, particularly with regard to the distribution of those Commonwealth funds which must be spent on "other rural roads" or allocated to local authorities in the metropolitan area.
- (2) Compared with Western Australia, in the other States local authorities have not shared in the distribution of State vehicle license revenues. While vehicle license revenues are now paid into a central fund in this State, the previous amount received by local authorities has been included in the base grant to local authorities under the new grants scheme. Generally speaking, the allocation of Commonwealth funds for "other rural roads" to local authorities in the other States has been more restricted with regard to approval and supervision of the works than in Western Australia. Also in the other States Commonwealth funds have not been allocated to metropolitan local authorities for road works, whereas in this State metropolitan local authorities have received a share of Commonwealth road funds and this practice is being continued under the new grants scheme.

22. **FEDERAL ELECTIONS**

*Use of State Schools as Polling Booths*

Mr. CASH asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will he state in general terms the details of the arrangement between the State and the Commonwealth for the use of State schools as polling booths for Federal elections?
- (2) As he will now be aware that the West Morley Primary School Parents and Citizens' Association has had to postpone its fete from the 25th October to the 15th November because the school has been designated a polling booth for the Federal elections, will he state if he considers it reasonable

that the general uncertainty about the dates for Federal elections should be allowed to seriously affect the fete and fund raising programmes of parents and citizens' organisations?

- (3) As the West Morley Parents and Citizens' Association chose the 25th October as its "fete" day six months ago, is the Commonwealth electoral officer's decision that the fete shall not be held a fair ruling, considering that the holding of the fete would not have interfered with the conduct of the polling booth which will be situated in a demountable classroom some distance from the main school rooms and quadrangle?
- (4) In view of this exercise by the Commonwealth electoral officer of absolute authority over the State Government property will he give consideration to ensuring by regulation or legislation that the future use of State schools for Federal elections only be permitted where the Commonwealth electoral officer is granted the use of the school on the basis that any programmed activity organised by the parents and citizens' association is not interfered with?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) It has long been established practice for the State Government, at the request of the Prime Minister, to approve the use of public buildings, including schools, as polling booths for Federal elections.
- (2) It would be impractical for the date of a Federal election to be varied to suit the convenience of a parents and citizens' association whereas it is possible for a parents and citizens' association to alter the date of a function and this has been done on most occasions.
- (3) I have discussed this matter with the Commonwealth electoral officer and am satisfied that he would need to have control over the whole of the school grounds in order to ensure proper conduct of the poll.
- (4) Approval to use schools as polling booths is given by the Government and I am not prepared to legislate to make this approval always subject to the wishes of a local parents and citizens' association. However an investigation will be made into the practicability of excepting such

schools from the general approval given to the Commonwealth Government in future elections.

23.

#### LAND

##### *Reserves: Metropolitan Area*

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Lands:

Referring to my question on the 7th October, what is the acreage of each reserve of 500 acres and over under the control of the Crown and Government instrumentalities within the metropolitan region?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

The acreage of each of the reserves in the metropolitan region containing 500 acres and over is as follows—

Reserve No.	Area (to nearest acre)	Reserve No.	Area (to nearest acre)
1720	991	15556	1,257
1774	9,800	21018	875
4127	620	21314	919
4561	1,135	22897	1,180
5704	824	23118	740
6203	222,962	23229	2,543
7125	1,220	23780	734
7349	760	24411	1,050
7415	1,094	24781	602
7537	3,735	25746	550
8018	793	26868	530
8224	500	27575	2,780
9299	642	28662	1,568
9868	6,743	29241	627
10233	546	....	....

24.

#### NATIVE SACRED AREAS

##### *Legislation*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) Does he intend to introduce a Bill during the current session to protect native sacred areas, etc.?
- (2) Will copies of the Bill be made available to the public?
- (3) Will the Bill be similar to the South Australian legislation?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) to (3) It is not proposed to introduce a Bill for this purpose during the current session.

25 to 27. *These questions were postponed.*

28.

#### DUST NUISANCE

##### *Swan Quarries, Maddington*

Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does he realise the dust problem from the Maddington Swan quarries is still as bad as ever?
- (2) If "Yes", what is being done to rectify this problem apart from installing dust meters in the area?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The dust problem from this quarry has lessened over the past year.
- (2) In July the company placed orders for wet type dust extraction equipment for the final screening and outloading operations. This equipment will cost about \$40,000 and will be commissioned by Christmas 1969.

- (5) Council has resolved to issue a stop work order. This requires the approval of the Secretary for Local Government and the approval has not been granted.
- (6) to (8) This is a matter of law.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr. Davies, leave of absence for six weeks granted to Mr. May (Clontarf) on the ground of urgent public business.

#### 29. SHIRE OF GOSNELLS

##### *Rezoning Scheme*

Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) As the rezoning scheme submitted to the Town Planning Board by the Shire of Gosnells—which proposes the rezoning of certain sections of the Thornlie area to permit construction of flats—has not yet been dealt with, what is the total number of objections received so far to the proposed scheme?
- (2) What authority, if any, did Fernihough Estates Pty. Ltd. have to commence building flats in Lester Drive, Thornlie, which is in the affected area?
- (3) Why was the said building allowed to commence before objections to the scheme now before him have not been heard?
- (4) Why was the building of flats commenced before the closing date set for the receipt of objections and before the objections received had been determined?
- (5) What action has been taken or is proposed to be taken, if any, in connection with the said company building prematurely?
- (6) If the Shire of Gosnells has purported to give the said company authority to commence building, has it acted within its power?
- (7) If "Yes", under what Statute?
- (8) If "No", will he use his influence to have the shire withdraw such permission and/or notify the said company that the purported permission is a nullity?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) 253. These were all on a duplicated form.
- (2) A building license was issued by council's building surveyor on the 22nd August, 1969.
- (3) and (4) Because of the issue by the council's building surveyor of the building license.

#### CLOSING DAYS OF SESSION: FIRST PERIOD

##### *Standing Orders Suspension*

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [4.48 p.m.]: I move—

That until the 31st December, 1969, or such earlier date as may be ordered—

- (1) Standing Order 224 (Grievances) be suspended and
- (2) The Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be introduced without notice, to be passed through all their remaining stages on the same day, and all Messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the same day they are received.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, this is a motion that comes down about this time each session. It simply seeks to suspend grievance day and to enable Parliament to put the Bills through all stages on the same day. The motion is simply one to enable us to expedite the business of the House as we near the end of the session.

By way of further explanation—which perhaps might be more closely allied to the next motion which I propose to move and which deals with the suspension of private members' business—I would add that I hope we might be able to reach the end of this particular part of the session early in November, but until such time as some progress is made on the General Revenue Estimates and the Loan Estimates it is a little difficult, within a week or two, to come to any firm decision.

There appear to be some 15 or 18 Bills remaining on the notice paper, some of which are not very important. On the other hand it is possible that one or two Bills may have to be introduced following any decision that might result from the application made to the High Court for the right to appeal to the Privy Council. In the event of that application being unsuccessful, we may have to adopt other measures following on discussions with the Prime Minister.

**MR. TONKIN** (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [4.50 p.m.]: We do not object to this motion. It is one which, as the Premier has said, is generally brought forward at this time of the session. It may be a fond hope, but I do hope we will reach a time when full consideration can be given to all Bills without having to rush the various stages through at the end of a session, as a result of which the Bills do not get the attention they should.

I was hoping that when the Government decided to have the session in two parts it would be able to prepare its legislation and introduce it to Parliament so that it would not be necessary to put Bills through all stages in one sitting. Apparently we have not got properly into gear on this matter yet, so we have to do as we have done before.

I know it is difficult to have legislation prepared in time to bring it to the House in the final stages of a session without having to suspend Standing Orders, but I think a special effort ought to be made to do this. It is not satisfactory towards the end of the session, when we sit longer hours, for a number of Bills to have to receive attention. It is just not physically possible to give them the scrutiny and attention which ought to be given.

Standing Orders generally provide for the various stages, which give ample opportunity for proper consideration of measures—and we are here for that purpose. When we suspend Standing Orders we churn the legislation through as one would sausage meat through a machine. That is not good enough and we ought to try to improve upon it.

I know that when we were the Government the position was very little different and many Bills were brought down towards the end of each session and it was necessary for us to suspend Standing Orders in order to get them passed through all stages; but I think a real endeavour should be made, now that we have two parts to the session, to try to overcome this problem or, in any event, to reduce it to a minimum.

For some time I have been expecting certain Bills to come forward that I know the Government is obliged to bring down, but there is no suggestion that they are ready at this stage. I do not wish them to be brought down in the last week of the present part of the session because that will impose upon us the impossible task of trying to give proper consideration to the legislation.

I repeat that we have no objection to the motion and will do our best to expedite the business of the House, but I hope that in the future the Government will endeavour to effect considerable improvement upon this practice.

**SIR DAVID BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) [4.53 p.m.]: I know the Leader of the Opposition, in co-operating in this manner, has spoken the truth about the difficulties. He was Deputy Premier for six years and he must know the reason why, in spite of having two sittings in the session, we face the same problems, which spring from human nature; and no matter how we try, there always seem to be last-minute decisions on legislation and the delay in having it prepared.

Although we have the advantage—or disadvantage, whichever point of view one likes to take—of the two sittings—I know some members share the point of view that it is a disadvantage—let me say that there are still the same difficulties. Although the Government would like to adhere to the Standing Orders as they are without their suspension, it does seem to me that little is given away if, after passing a second reading, we can get a measure through to another place without the delay that is occasioned by the Standing Orders as they are at the present time.

Up to date we have not cut short the actual debates; and on occasions we have sat a little longer than we should have done, but certainly not as long as we have sat in past years while I have been in this House—and that includes the time of the Labor Government and the present Government.

I assure the Leader of the Opposition we will continue to do our best, and if we are able to reach the Utopia for which he hopes, we will be pleased.

Question put and passed.

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

### *Precedence on all Sitting Days*

**SIR DAVID BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) [4.55 p.m.]: I move—

That, until the 31st December, 1969, or such earlier date as may be ordered, on and after Wednesday, 15th October, 1969, Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesday as on all other days.

The motion itself is self-explanatory and all members understand exactly what it means. It will confer upon the Government the right to give precedence to its own business. However, I undertake, as I have always done in the past, to deal with the private members' business that is on the notice paper at the time of the suspension; and I will endeavour to co-operate with private members in every way.

As I have already said, there are 15 to 18 Bills to deal with, as far as I am aware, and we have the two lots of Estimates. We hope there will not be any last minute rush. In any case, that is



one of the reasons why I am not prepared to set a date right now on which to end this part of the session, but I think it would be good tactics to set a date in the final period so we can work to that end, and know where we all stand on the matter.

As I am on my feet, I might say there seems to be a little difficulty in fixing the beginning of the next part of this session because Easter falls on or near the end of March. I would warn members that it is possible we may sit a fortnight before Easter—somewhere about the 17th. I have not discussed this yet with Cabinet or with the Leader of the Opposition, but it could be that we could meet a fortnight before Easter to try to finish about the end of April.

Mr. Graham: Would that be a good omen, to start on St. Patrick's Day?

Sir DAVID BRAND: I have great faith in St. Patrick's Day.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [4.57 p.m.]: We have no objection to this motion either. It is one which is ordinarily brought forward for special purposes, and I rely upon the assurance given by the Premier that private members' business on the notice paper will be dealt with after the actual suspension of Standing Orders. I make that point because this afternoon notice was given from this side of the House of a Bill to be introduced, and I am hoping an opportunity will be given to us to consider that measure and have it properly dealt with.

This Bill is being introduced as a result of an undertaking which we gave, so we are anxious to discharge that obligation. It has to be expected, of course, that when we are getting towards the end of the session, Government business—although it may not always be of more importance than matters brought forward by private members—is nevertheless entitled to prior consideration. We have no objection to that as it has always been the practice. Therefore we agree to the motion.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) [4.59 p.m.]: I have no objection to this motion and support what has been said by the Leader of the Opposition. It has been customary, of course, until such time as this motion has been passed, for Wednesdays to be devoted to private members' business and for it to take precedence over Government business. It has also been customary on that day for third readings of Government measures to be listed on the notice paper above private members' business.

Third readings of Bills can sometimes develop into fairly long discussions and take up a good deal of the time on Wednesdays—time which should be devoted to dealing with the business of private members.

That has occurred on one occasion during this session.

In view of this fact I think that the private members' day does not last for very long in a session before it is suspended by a motion similar to the one we are now debating. Perhaps the Government could consider placing the third readings after the private members' business. There is not all that much urgency for them to go through, and if they went through the next day I do not think that would delay Government business.

They have, on occasions, made great inroads into the time available to private members on private members' day, and this could also occur in the future.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.1 p.m.]: As my leader has said, there is no objection to this usual motion. However, I rise to emphasise the extreme difficulty confronting a private member. Since I have been in this House I have endeavoured to take my parliamentary duties seriously and, therefore, if I be the author of a Bill or a motion I desire to have it finalised in the same way as the Government would finalise its own Bills. Of course, we are all conscious of which party is in Government and which party is not, but we all play a part.

On the day that Parliament opened, the 31st July, I gave notice of a Bill. It was not possible to move the second reading of that Bill until after the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, which was the 28th August. The first day available to me for the introduction of my Bill was the 10th September.

To this day, neither I nor any other member of this Parliament is aware of the attitude of the Government. Having regard to the number of Orders of the Day in front of my Bill—an amendment to the Local Government Act—on the notice paper there is not much prospect of its being debated today.

I am mentioning this constructively rather than critically. A member cannot do more than give his intimation on the day that Parliament opens, and yet there will not be a chance of my proposition being debated during the normal time available to private members. That seems an extraordinary state of affairs. There are reasons, of course, and one was mentioned by the member for Pilbara when he spoke. Also we lost a week on account of the Royal Show—a situation which I appreciate and about which I am not complaining.

The Minister who will be handling my Bill on behalf of the Minister directly responsible in another place asked if I minded the matter being postponed. Of

course, I did not mind because we want to play fair in connection with these matters. However, I now face the prospect of my Bill being somehow dealt with in, perhaps, the final day of this session.

My Bill was the very first of which notice was given when the session opened and if it is not discussed until the day before we conclude this session, that will be an inordinately long period of time. I am wondering, therefore—appreciating the position of the Government—whether there could not be some intermingling of private members' business with Government business from now on in order to give members an opportunity of having their measures discussed.

I have been in this House long enough to realise that towards the very end of a session, when we inevitably sit a bit later than usual, the interest of members in particular matters tends to disappear. Because of that, those of us who, as private members, have submitted Bills or motions do not receive the consideration that we feel our particular matters warrant.

I therefore hope it will be possible to devise some method or arrangement under which a little fairer treatment will apply to private members' business. When I use the word "fairer," I want to say that this circumstance has applied irrespective of which party has been sitting on the Government side. The situation has applied in general principle and I think something should be done to improve the position I have outlined.

**SIR DAVID BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) [5.5 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, since we have been in Government we have followed the traditional lines in Western Australia. As far as this State Parliament is concerned I think private members get more consideration than private members receive in any other House with regard to legislation and motions. In fact, I think that if a closer study is made of the other States it will be found that a great deal is left to the discretion of the Government in drawing up the Orders of the Day for a much longer period than we are moving for at the present time.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggested that we allow private members' business to be integrated earlier into the Government programme. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows—and knows very clearly—the problems which would face the Government in this regard. One day has been set aside for private members' business, and we seem to be getting along with that business. It certainly has been taken in priority except where the Government has asked, on one or two occasions, for co-operation from the Opposition. I undertake to see that private members are given a fair opportunity to have their business debated.

The member for Pilbara mentioned third readings, and it seems to me that the problem he refers to is a matter for the Opposition. The only reason we have third readings on a Wednesday is to save a few days in getting the business through the Legislative Council.

It takes a long time to put legislation through even if the normal course is taken on the first, second, and third reading stages. I cannot agree with the suggestion. In the main I think we have had very few third reading debates; and, the honourable member's own words were that the third readings are not that important and do not take up that much time. For that reason I feel we should not change what, to me, has been the basic system—and an important system from the point of view of the Government—for getting legislation through, and for the overall programme of the session.

Question put and passed.

## **BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

### **1. Appropriation Bill (General Loan Fund).**

Bill introduced, on motion by Sir David Brand (Treasurer), and read a first time.

### **2. District Court of Western Australia Bill.**

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

## **BILLS (2): THIRD READING**

### **1. Fremantle Port Authority Act Amendment Bill.**

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and transmitted to the Council.

### **2. Alumina Refinery (Pinjarra) Agreement Bill.**

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and transmitted to the Council.

## **ONE-PARENT FAMILIES**

### ***Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion***

Debate resumed, from the 10th September, on the following motion by Mr. Harman:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon one-parent families in so far as State legislation and administrative practice is involved, or is likely to be involved, and to make recommendations for any changes apparent from such inquiry.

**MR. LAPHAM** (Karrinyup) [5.12 p.m.]: I speak in support of this motion moved by the member for Maylands for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into

and report upon one-parent families in so far as State legislation and administrative practice is involved, or is likely to be involved, and to make recommendations for any changes apparent from such inquiry.

At the outset, I must indicate my regret to the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare because, in reply to this motion, he has already completely and finally rejected it. That is unfortunate, indeed, because the Minister's rejection has curtailed the possibility of the motion being carried in this House.

Mr. Craig: That is not necessarily so.

Mr. LAPHAM: The members who support the Government would, through sheer loyalty, and like true and faithful followers, follow the Minister.

Mr. Craig: That did not apply last evening.

Mr. LAPHAM: Last evening, of course, was a little unusual. On that occasion only one member was involved and he did not upset the Government's opportunity of carrying its measure. Unfortunately in this instance as the Minister has indicated, the motion is not in accordance with Government thinking and, consequently, there is not a hope in the world of its being carried. As a matter of fact, its fate is imminent and its rejection is complete.

However, despite that fact I intend to debate the motion; and I hope other members on this side of the House will have something to say on the plight of one-parent families. There is not the slightest doubt that these people are in a dire plight.

The member for Maylands, when he was addressing the House, specifically asked that this matter be discussed as a non-party issue. He stated he did not wish to secure political kudos, and indicated he was most concerned with the plight of the people with whom the motion dealt. He sought the co-operation of the House so that members could seek a greater knowledge by way of inquiry, and so that recommendations could be made to the Government where a solution to the problem was apparent. The outlook of the member for Maylands, in moving the motion, is humanitarian, to say the least, and I candidly think his objectives deserve better treatment.

It is true the motion has fairly wide implications. Those appointed to a Select Committee would have a wide scope to inquire into the many aspects of one-parent families. Surely this aspect alone should not deter the Government from giving the motion favourable consideration. The Government must realise that a wealth of information could be obtained from an inquiry into this social question. Does the Government not know that the little people who are the subject of the motion are crying out for a helping hand? Many

back-benchers in the House are ready and willing to give their time and capacity to an inquiry into the needs of one-parent families to see what might be done to alleviate their distress.

When the Government rejects a motion of this nature I consider it is out of harmony with its back-benchers; because, in effect, the Government has said to them, "We do not need your assistance, advice, or knowledge, because we know all there is to know about this problem." I do not consider that is the right attitude for the Government to adopt. The Government should utilise the many back-benchers who would volunteer to inquire into this problem. They would look at the question fairly in terms of the present, and possibly the future, situation. The Government could be assured that members would inquire into the problem irrespective of party allegiance, with the result that the knowledge obtained would be of advantage to the Government today as well as to Governments in the future.

The question of one-parent families is a difficult one. There is no easy solution, because so many factors are involved. Those who are concerned with this problem at the moment are by no means unanimous that the method which is applied at present to care for those affected is the right one or the only one that could be devised; or that the current social legislation is perfection itself and needs no change. On the contrary, I consider there is almost unanimity of thought that the current situation is not right; that what is being done is not good enough in many instances and could be improved; and that an inquiry could benefit all of the people affected with subsequent benefit to the State. A Select Committee would look at the overall situation, and the results of the finding could bring about a revision in thinking so far as this unfortunate social question is concerned.

I support the motion because an inquiry into one-parent families is called for. In effect the member for Maylands has asked members to seek out all possible information on this subject from knowledgeable people; that is, from people who are interested in, and concerned with, the welfare of one-parent families. He has asked members to sift their ideas and ultimately to collate and present those ideas to the Government so that the Government can act on the matter. Candidly I cannot see anything wrong with that request.

When the member for Maylands introduced the motion it was obvious that he had put a great deal of thought into all the interrelated facets of this social problem, because he used the term "one-parent families." However, in his address the honourable member dealt mainly with the question of unmarried mothers and deserted wives. I am able to appreciate his reasons, because the problems confronting

these two categories of people may not have been as apparent to members of this House as the problems which confront civilian widows and which, generally, are known by all members. In all probability members have a much fuller knowledge of the question of widows and dependent children than of the question of unmarried mothers and deserted wives. This fact was appreciated by the member for Maylands when he dealt with the two categories mentioned.

The Chief Secretary, who was acting for a Minister in another place, confined himself almost entirely to those two categories when he replied to the motion. Consequently he made me wonder whether the full import of the motion had escaped him. To my mind the key to the whole motion is the desire to appoint certain keen members and clothe them with Select Committee powers so that they may seek evidence from members of the community who are interested in, and concerned with, this subject—from those with knowledge of the subject—and to place before the Government the results of their inquiry.

Surely members should realise that this is a laudable objective and one which, I consider, should be supported. Does the Minister assume that the Government is so well versed in all the interrelated factors of this problem that it does not need advice on some aspect or another of any one of them?

This matter must have been considered in the Government party room at some time or another. I consider that members who support the Government have been a little remiss in their duty; they should have requested the Minister who is dealing with the matter in this House not to act with such undue haste but to give the matter proper care, regard, and consideration before rejecting the motion, which has as its aim the alleviation of the needs of the underprivileged women and children in the community.

As I mentioned earlier the motion was moved with no political malice and the mover hoped it would not be dealt with on party lines. If the Minister had felt that something was wrong with the motion, he certainly had the opportunity to amend it. To reject the motion completely was not a fair proposition to my way of thinking. However, the Minister did reject it with complete finality, in the knowledge that his attitude would be supported by the majority who constitute the other side of the House. He did this, although he knew full-well that he might be acting to the detriment of the unfortunate people in the community who are very concerned with this problem of social legislation.

I will not accuse the Minister of playing politics in this regard, but I feel he came very close to it, because he was prepared

to use the Government majority to defeat something which is needed. An inquiry is needed because it would provide further information to members who could then decide what to do about the problems which beset so many people in this State today. The little people are crying out for a helping hand. They are not asking for a great deal, but they are beset with very real problems. However, apparently because of the rejection of this motion, they will not receive any help. I wonder whether the Minister feels they should be truly thankful. Perhaps, even at this late stage the Minister may change his mind himself or be induced by some members on the other side of the House to change his mind; because this matter is a very serious one to all of those who are closely concerned with it.

As a first step towards trying to persuade the Minister to change his attitude, I would like to introduce a new line of thought. I will not concern myself with the two categories that have been dealt with already—namely, unmarried mothers and deserted wives—but with widows and their children. I am referring to the normal civilian widows about whom members know so much and whom we meet so frequently.

The civilian widows and their children have problems which every member in this House has attended to, or has attempted to rectify, at some time or other. They are widows through no fault of their own, but because of the ever-present factor of death which has struck down the husband—the breadwinner; the father—on whom reliance was placed. As a consequence they have been forced suddenly to grapple with all the realities of life. They not only suffer the pangs of bereavement but are forced to grapple with all sorts of financial and other problems.

A woman who becomes a widow is suddenly thrown from the protection of a homelife to which she has been accustomed and is forced to face up to the myriad problems which are foreign to her without guidance or help and with little or no training at a time when she is, in all probability, mentally distressed. All the planning that has gone into her family life and all the hopes and aspirations for the future have been dissipated by the death of the breadwinner.

Is it any wonder that a widow is confused, hesitant and not sure what to do? It is not long before she realises she is out on her own. That fact soon becomes a reality. It is true, of course, that both the State and Commonwealth Governments provide some degree of subsistence, to which tags are attached. A meagre amount is provided on which the widow and her children can scrimp and scrape and to some extent she gets by. She is

also given a concession here and a concession there and is permitted to earn a small amount to supplement what she receives as Government aid.

However, I do not think it is necessary for me to outline these facts for the information of members, because they have come up against the problem themselves at first hand. Each and every member knows what a soul-destroying effect such an existence has on widows. We know that they merely exist; they are just getting by, and that is all. If they seek to gain an explanation as to why they are faced with such a situation, they soon learn the plain truth; it has happened; it is life; it is reality.

I have attended a funeral service of the father of a family with whom I am acquainted, and heard the minister say, "Oh death, where is thy sting?", and I have wondered if he was fully aware of the problems that would be faced by the widow and her children when she returned home. She would know where the sting was. Candidly, I think we can do better than we have done with this problem. We have not given it the thought it deserves. That is why I am supporting the move for this inquiry. I am asking the Minister to have second thoughts in regard to it, because I think it could provide some benefit to these one-parent families.

I now want to say something that is a new idea; an idea which the inquiry could investigate. I refer to the subject of assurance. As members know, life assurance has been in existence for generations, and is almost as old as marine insurance. However, we have not used it to the advantage of widows. We know that we could apply assurance to the principle of providing for a contingency that will arise in some instances, but to date, as far as I know, no attempt has been made on a national basis, or even on a State basis, to provide for benefits to be granted to a widow and her children by means of assurance.

Frankly I cannot understand why this has not been done, because I think that to put it into operation would be simple and cheap. As I said before, I do not think sufficient thought has been given to the plight of the widow and her children.

Mr. Graham: How would the policy be taken out; on whom; and at what stage?

Mr. LAPHAM: It would be a diminishing assurance policy. This means that initially the policy would be large, but would diminish as the children became older, finished their education, and went out to work. As the life of the widow progressed there would be little left at the tail end of the policy, but, as I have said, the amount would be fairly large when it was first taken out. When the husband dies the widow is often left to face life with young children.

Mr. Graham: Would you compel the husband or father to take out a policy?

Mr. LAPHAM: No; I can suggest something better than that. I will deal with it as I go along. Each and every one of us has faced this problem. I took out a diminishing assurance policy myself early in my married life, because I was not in the best of health at the time. It has not proved to be a very good financial arrangement, because I have lived; but I have at least that consoling thought.

Mr. Graham: What bad luck!

Mr. LAPHAM: It is bad luck from the financial point of view, but good luck from the point of view that I am still alive. I think I was wise to take out this assurance policy, because it was not very costly and, if such a policy were taken out on a national basis, the cost would be very small. We could get it for a few cents a week, deductible at the source. As young men, all of us, at some time or another, have looked at the idea of what might happen to us, and how our children would fare in the event of our death. It is possible, of course, that we could die on the road, and no doubt substantial compensation would be paid to our widows. However, if one dies of a heart attack the widow is not entitled to any compensation unless the deceased has made provision accordingly.

Providence has been kind to most of us inasmuch as our wives and children have not had to face the problems of widowhood. However, there are many women who have not been quite so fortunate. There are many respectable and decent women with lovely children who have had a real struggle as a result of the death of the husbands and fathers.

Actuarially it is known that a certain percentage of breadwinners will die prematurely. Actually it is known—or it could easily be known—at what particular age each section of premature deaths will take place.

Therefore surely, by simple calculation, we can devise a national scheme of diminishing assurance to provide for the needs of the widows and children. Surely a policy could be taken out, varying with the age groups, so that when the death of the breadwinner occurs early in life there is provision for the rehabilitation of the widow to assist her to regain her place in the commercial sphere, where she was no doubt employed before marriage.

As I said earlier, to my way of thinking, the cost would be a few cents a week, deductible at the source. However, if the widow is to be assisted to earn her living in the field of commerce, child-minding centres will be required. When this matter was raised the other evening I felt that,

when he spoke to the motion, the Minister was quite sympathetic towards the principle of establishing child-minding centres. He is aware that there is not enough of them, but he seemed to feel that it was the responsibility of local government to provide them. I am not saying it is not the responsibility of local government, but the fact remains there is not a sufficient number of child-minding centres in this State. Nevertheless I am sure the problem could be solved quite easily. A concentrated effort should be made to this end which would assist greatly in relieving the problem faced by one-parent families.

I would now like to deal with the question of the appointment of home economists. As the training of home economists is part of our education system, the Minister for Education would know all about them. Girls used to start their training as domestic science teachers. They now complete a three-year course involving a fairly comprehensive curriculum covering various subjects. After going out into the field they take a further three years' training course to qualify as home economists, on completion of which they are fully qualified not only to deal with food preparation, but also home management and many other subjects.

At present there is not a great number of home economists in this State, but under our system of education their numbers are growing, and I am enthusiastic over this aspect of educational training for young people. I am of the opinion that a home economist should be attached to the Child Welfare Department so that she can give assistance and advice to deserted wives, widows with young children, and those about to marry. It is these people who really need the help of a home economist, because she is so well equipped to deal with all aspects of the problems that are faced by them. Under the heading of "Budgetary Control" she can give advice on the following:—

- How to live within the family income.
- How to spend it wisely to gain financial security.
- How to make a division of the wage into designated portions to provide for all contingencies.
- What cost is involved in the food structure and how to avoid monotony without extravagance.
- The need for health and insurance provision.
- The types of insurance and the need to plan in relation thereto.
- The provision for fares and fees.
- Whether a motor vehicle is necessary and, if so, what cost is involved in its purchase, especially hire purchase.

Its cost of running and its replacement.

Whether the wage structure is sufficient.

The function of a vehicle in relation to a home or for income earning, and its utilitarian value as opposed to its social value.

The home economist can also give advice on how to deal with the question of psychology; how to live in a home and to plan the family income satisfactorily; and how to carry out all the home functions. If attached to the Child Welfare Department a home economist could also give advice to any young couples about to marry. The department could make her services available to such couples so that, with the benefit of her knowledge, they could enjoy a happy married life.

On the home aspect, the home economist is capable of advising people on where to live and how to live; on the locality; on whether to acquire a home through rental or through purchase; on whether a couple should be socially conscious as to where they live; on the cost structure involved in the purchase of a home; on mortgages and interest thereon; and on what is involved in second mortgages.

As a matter of fact the home economist is capable of explaining all the financial arrangements connected with the home from the aspect of income to the aspect of purchase. The home economist is capable of advising on furnishings for the home; on the cost structure involved in the purchase of a home; and on the additional commitments involved in hire purchase, land tax, water rates, local authority rates, insurance, and so on.

She can advise from where finance can be obtained to acquire a home—from insurance companies, building societies, banks, and so on. This person is trained in basic psychology and is well qualified to deal with the problem of child delinquency. Today this problem is serious but I do not think that there is a greater degree of child delinquency now than in years gone by, but this question seems to be highlighted to a greater extent. Probably the youngsters of today have more money to spend than the youngsters of previous times, and as a consequence they get into more trouble. I feel that basically the youngsters of today are quite good in their behaviour. It is just a matter of training to reduce the incidence of child delinquency.

In one-parent families the training in this regard becomes a difficult task for the one parent. If it happens to be the mother she has to take on not only her own responsibility but also the responsibility of her husband. In this connection the home economist can be most helpful. She can advise the mother on food planning

for the home; and on the cost of food, furnishings, the acquisition of a home, and the running of a motor vehicle. There is no aspect of home management which the home economist cannot deal with.

As the home economist is qualified to advise on child delinquency, she should be attached to the Child Welfare Department. I admit there are very few of these people in the State, and the Government should avail itself of the services of one if one is available. If it did it would be able to utilise her knowledge to the fullest capacity.

In respect of family planning, the home economist can advise couples whether they can afford to have children. She can give advice on the medical fees, on the equipment required for babies, and on the peculiar problems which are associated with the introduction of a baby into a home.

The home economist will even take into calculation the loss in the earning capacity of the mother in the bearing of a child, and will be able to advise whether the financial structure of the home can be altered so as to allow the mother to have a child. She is capable of indicating whether there is work available to the young wife, where additional income is required; perhaps in some cases two jobs have to be held if the couple concerned are heavily involved in hire purchase, as I am aware a number of young people are. In these circumstances the home economist can deal with the problem and put the young people on the right track.

I have advocated two new factors in the debate on this motion to which consideration should be given; and they concern one-parent families. Firstly, we should have a national assurance scheme for the purpose of providing financial security for widows and their children. This should be a diminishing type of insurance so that in the early stages of need a greater amount will be provided.

I have also advocated that a home economist should be attached to the Child Welfare Department so that the splendid services of this person, who would possess a great deal of knowledge in these matters, could be made available for the benefit of the community generally. That is why I am supporting the move for an inquiry into the needs of one-parent families.

The Government could do many things to assist these people. I have made a contribution by putting forward my thoughts. All these ideas could be moulded together so that some worth-while results could be achieved. By not agreeing to an inquiry we are implying that we know everything; that there is not a need for an inquiry; and that the inquiry will be a waste of time. I do not think it will be a waste of time.

The Government should ask for volunteers to serve on this committee of inquiry, and I for one will be prepared to volunteer. I would be quite happy to devote my time, and I am sure other members will do the same. All the evidence could be sifted and collated so that the committee of inquiry could put before the Government its findings and recommendations. Some of the suggestions which have been put forward are very good, and, moulded with others, they may prove to be the answer. By so doing we would alleviate the plight of many people in the community who are in difficulties because they are members of one-parent families. I support the motion.

**MR. BRADY (Swan)** [5.53 p.m.]: I support the motion. I believe that we owe it to widows, deserted wives, single women, pensioners, sick and unemployed women, and unmarried mothers to conduct an inquiry into all the different facets of the problem referred to in the motion. One could speak for hours on this problem, particularly if one dealt with all the views which have been expressed in this debate.

I remind the House that when the mover of the motion spoke he said he hoped it would be dealt with on a non-party basis. I think that is a wise suggestion, because I am sure that members from both sides of the House have had experience of these difficult cases. For my part I have dealt with many such cases over the last 10 years; in recent weeks and even in the last 24 hours difficult cases have been brought to my notice.

To make it known to members that despite the fact the Commonwealth Government is doing a little more than it used to, there is room for it to do more, I shall refer to a case which was brought to my notice very forcibly in the last 24 hours.

We are told from all sides that we are living in an affluent society. If we are, I ask: Who is better entitled to be given a greater amount of assistance than the underprivileged section of the community? As I see the position today, the underprivileged are mostly members of one-parent families.

I am sure the Minister who represents the Minister for Child Welfare in this House will be the first to agree that Legacy children do not receive more than they are entitled to; in fact, some of them do not receive as much as they are entitled to. If the Legacy children are not receiving as much as they are entitled to, then the children of some civilian widows are receiving less, and they are the children who should be given more assistance.

Most members will agree that war widows are not receiving more than they are entitled to, but I would point out the war has been over for 20-odd years. Many women have become widows in the last 10 to 15 years, but their deceased husbands did not have a chance to fight in wars. They were killed as a result of accidents

in industry or on the roads, or they died because of tragedies at sea; yet their widows are denied the same degree of justice as is meted out to widows whose husbands were killed in the war.

Believe it or not, some people have come to my home to discuss their financial problems, although they were not out of employment. These people were in full-time employment, but, because of special circumstances, they could not meet their commitments. I recall the case of one person whose wife was more or less hospitalised permanently at the Royal Perth Hospital. This person worked in the railway workshops at Midland, and he called in somebody to look after his children. This was virtually a one-parent family. This man called on me to advise him how he could improve his position. He got into difficulties, but he was not a drinker or a gambler. This man had a number of children, and he had to pay a house-keeper to mind the children. In addition, he had to pay the hospital charges. Cases such as this are in desperate need of assistance.

Many deserving cases come to mind. I can think of civilian widows who have now formed an organisation, although some such widows are not members of it; and I can think of pensioners who, in addition to keeping themselves, have to help maintain widowed daughters, or sons whose wives have deserted them.

There are various institutions in this city, and there are the churches, which are prepared to give evidence before the committee proposed in the motion, and they will show there is need for assistance to be provided to one-parent families. We could even obtain evidence from natives who have come to the city but who have found there is no accommodation available. Even if these natives intend to live in the city temporarily there is no accommodation for them; there is no Allawah Grove now and there is no native reserve here. Yet these people are human beings, and they are entitled to receive assistance if they happen to be members of one-parent families.

In conversation with a man recently, I was told that if people were prepared to go to Collie they would find a solution to their problems. The Government has sent widows with three, four, and five children to live at Collie, under the pretext that they would pay lower rentals. These people might pay low rentals, but they have to pay more for food, clothing, fuel, and the other requirements of the family. It is estimated that 40 of these families have been sent from the metropolitan area to live at Collie.

Is it fair that because some people happen to be widows they should be placed in this situation? I say they should not be; I say they should be treated on an

equal basis with war widows, Legacy children, and others who receive special consideration.

It has been suggested that more child-minding centres should be established in the metropolitan area. I say that more home aid should be provided to needy families. I do not think the Government and the Minister concerned should wait until they are pushed into providing these things before they act. The initiative should be taken by the Government to see what can be done.

Having listened to the speeches of members on the Government side, it is evident that they know there is a shortcoming in the overall administration of the child welfare position and, particularly, the one-parent families.

Let me again refer to the honourable member's motion. He has moved—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon one-parent families insofar as State legislation and administrative practice is involved, or is likely to be involved, and to make recommendations for any changes apparent from such inquiry.

I believe an inquiry would reveal the many anomalies and difficulties these one-parent families are experiencing. From his own personal experience in Fremantle the member for Fremantle has knowledge of many difficult cases. The member for Victoria Park was able to refer to many cases known personally to him; and even the member for Mirrabooka said that a council of social services rendered assistance. The member for Belmont referred to the many cases in Sister Kate's Children's Home.

Two years ago in this House, because I was concerned about the situation, I referred to Parkerville Children's Home. At that time I had just visited the home to present some prizes won in connection with a Labor Day function. The home had over 100 children whose ages ranged from three or four to 16 years. They were lovely children, and were bright with plenty of go in them.

I asked the man in charge of the home how many of the children were orphans and he said to me, "None." I said, "Don't give me that." He said, "Mr. Brady, there are no orphans." I then asked him whence the children came and he said they were mostly from broken families.

On the next evening I went to the Salvation Army Hollywood children's home for the same purpose I had visited Parkerville Children's Home. I related to the captain the conversation between myself and the man in charge at Parkerville and immediately he informed me that the situation was exactly the same at the Hollywood children's home. He said that the home had 50 or 60 children and not one of them was an orphan; they were all from broken homes.



Is it not time the Government or someone sat up and took notice and ascertained how this situation has arisen? Is it because the permissive society is responsible for these problems, and the unfortunate children are the ones who are suffering? Is it because of excessive gambling that the unfortunate children are suffering? Or are the unfortunate children suffering because of liquor problems?

The fact remains that a problem does exist and it is increasing. Looking through the Child Welfare Department's annual report for the year ended the 30th June, 1968, I find some interesting figures. The report reveals that in the year ended the 30th June, 1968, 820 families were assisted, this figure being made up as follows:—

Deserted wives	375
Widows	46
Foster mothers	74
Husbands in gaol	50
Divorced	6
Aged pensioners	3
Special	2
Invalid pensioners	107
Sick and unemployed	102
Unmarried mothers	55

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820

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I venture the opinion that many cases were not assisted, but nevertheless they should also be the subject of an inquiry to see what could be done for them.

Let me not be unfair. By that I mean that the Commonwealth Government in certain cases is prepared to train civilian widows to try to help them get on top of their problems; and some widows have taken advantage of this. However, they are mostly those who have a mother or sister who can look after their children. What about those widows, of whom there are hundreds, who do not have a mother or sister to help in this way? Are they not entitled to some special consideration and are they not entitled to take advantage of this extra Commonwealth assistance?

Members will recall that last year a widow was prosecuted because she had the temerity to go out and earn over \$10 a week. This case was given a considerable amount of publicity and the following headlines appeared in *The West Australian*:—

Widows Hear From Ms. P. On Pension  
Job-Aid Centre on Widows' Agenda  
Training Scheme For Widows  
Better Deal Sought For Widows  
Widows Make Plea To Mrs. Gorton  
Widows Object to Restriction On  
Earnings.

I was talking to a widow a fortnight ago and discovered she is having quite a struggle. She said to me, "Mr. Brady, I cannot go to work because no-one wants

me to work on a part-time basis. However I must work part-time because I can earn only \$10. I could get a full-time job, but I cannot get a part-time one. If I take a full-time job, I lose my pension."

If this committee inquired into the reasons why widows cannot take a full-time job, it would be doing something to help the widows. It should be possible for these widows to work full time for three, six, or nine months. The articles, the headings of which I have just read, appeared in the paper as a result of widows being prosecuted. Many hundreds of people also rang to inquire about the position. Mrs. Picton-King, Secretary of the Association of Civilian Widows, has this to say—

Widows have pride. They should not have to depend on charity, though people are kind and their help is appreciated.

Women who sacrifice everything to give their children the best possible upbringing and education spend hours waiting at public hospitals and dental clinics to take advantage of free medical and dental treatment.

They take advantage of free medical and dental treatment because they cannot afford to pay for it. I am one of those unfortunate people who does not have a free dental clinic in my area. If anyone in Midland requires dental treatment, he must either pay through the nose for it at Midland or come into Perth and wait for hours for treatment.

The other day I went to a dentist and I spent a quarter of an hour in the dentist's chair, and for that time I had to pay \$10. I read in the paper yesterday an article concerning one man who paid \$12.50, but the dentist informed him that he could spend \$950 in treatment! What chance would a widow with children have of spending up to one-tenth of that amount—not a half, or a quarter, but one-tenth of it?

These widows certainly deserve to have their problem studied. After all, they are raising the children who will be mothers and fathers of the future. We talk of an affluent society, but at the same time women are going through hell.

As I said, I had a case brought to my notice some time ago. A widow, receiving \$30, has had her rent increased three times in the last four or five years and she is expecting another increase any time now. I have asked the State Housing Commission at least three or four times to look at this case, but nothing has been done by way of providing another house. A fortnight ago the Child Welfare Department was asked to look at the case. I rang the department today and was told that nothing had been done, but certain forms had to be signed.

I could go on for hours, but I do not want to do so. I think I have made my points. Previous speakers have more than demonstrated to this House that these widows are deserving of something special. As Mrs. Picton-King said, these people have pride. These widows should not have to bare their souls to every civil servant who is involved with their problems. Take the case to which I have just referred. At least six civil servants have reviewed it. It has been on their plate for a fortnight, but, despite this, no reduction has been made in the rent, no State Housing Commission home has been supplied, and nothing further has been done by the Child Welfare Department. This has involved six civil servants each of whom is getting his \$25 to \$60 a week; but the civilian widow who wants immediate and urgent assistance gets nothing.

So I support the motion because an early inquiry should be made into this matter. The inquiry is long overdue, and should be made immediately.

**MR. HARMAN** (Maylands) [6.11 p.m.]: Firstly, I would like to thank all those members who have contributed to the debate on this motion. They have added to the information which I had previously given to the House, and they have strengthened the argument I submitted when I moved the motion.

However, I am very disappointed in the attitude of the Minister, which is of course the attitude of the Government, towards my motion. The Minister has seen fit to reject it out of hand. He introduced a number of points into the debate, and I will go through these to demonstrate that he glossed over many of the points I had raised. To many of the points he failed to provide an answer at all.

The Minister also said something to which I took great exception. He implied that this particular motion was framed in such a manner that it reflected a lack of confidence in the officers of the Child Welfare Department. I can assure the Minister I had no intention at all of discrediting the officers of that department, many of whom I have known for a great number of years. I, too, was a welfare officer for some 15 years, and I therefore know the type of work, hardships, and frustrations with which these people must contend.

It has never been my wish to get up in this House and discredit the officers of that department, and I took great exception to the remarks of the Minister. His argument was the type I have seen introduced on several occasions in this House and one that does little for the members responsible.

**Mr. Davies:** It is a well-used argument, that one.

**Mr. HARMAN:** With regard to the points I raised in my motion, one concerned the number of cases coming before the Summary Relief Court. When I introduced the motion I mentioned that in 1966 the number of complaints under section 10, heard in the court, was 716, while in 1967 it was 771. The Minister stated that this was merely a reflection of the increase in population. So I thought I would take this up.

I found that in 1966 the increase in population was 3.49 per cent. However, the increase in the number of complaints heard before the court was 7.6 per cent. In 1968 the number of complaints rose from 771 to 1,056. The population increase for that particular year was 4.26 per cent., but the increase in the number of complaints heard before the Summary Relief Court was 36 per cent. Therefore, it is useless for the Minister to argue that the increase in the number of people coming before the Summary Relief Court is a reflection of the increase in population; because the figures I have quoted refute that argument completely!

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

**Mr. HARMAN:** Before tea I had demonstrated that the increase in the number of complainants before the Summary Relief Court in 1968 did not reflect the increase in the population for that year. For the period to the 30th June, 1969—that is to say, the six months of this year—the number of complainants before the Summary Relief Court totalled 579. This is more than half the figure for the previous year, 1968. So it suggests to me that this year we will see a further increase in the number of complainants before that court.

I think it is as well that we have a look at the significance of these figures. They have already been reflected in an increase in the amount of expenditure by the Child Welfare Department in its relief payments to these needy cases. For the financial year ended June, 1968, the total expenditure was \$387,181; and for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1969, the expenditure had risen to \$527,612. So there is a need for concern in this connection because of the rising cost of relief to people in need.

Moreover, if we look at page 14 of the report of the Child Welfare Department for the year ended the 30th June, 1968, we find, under the paragraph headed "Longmore," that that institution caters for 60 children and, during the year to which I have just referred, 764 children were admitted. Of the inmates of that institution over 60 per cent. came from homes where there is only one parent. Also, I think it is reasonable to assume that this high figure—over 50 per cent.—would prevail at the other institutions of the Child Welfare Department. During

the debate members made mention of the fact that quite a proportion of delinquents came from one-parent homes.

If the situation has reached the stage where, in one institution alone, 60 per cent. of the inmates come from homes where there is only one parent, surely members should be concerned. If we intend to take no action, or if we do not intend to look at the situation, all we will do is perpetuate the present position so that for all time we will have delinquents in our community. If we intend to do nothing about it the number of delinquents must increase. However, the passing of this motion will give us an opportunity to look at this particular aspect of the problem and to suggest ways of overcoming it.

I now pass on to the next point raised by the Minister, and I refer to the procedure in respect of deserted wives. I made mention of the fact that it was difficult for a deserted wife to go to the various departments concerned to seek aid and relief, and to carry out the statutory requirements necessary in order to obtain maintenance. At the time I suggested that a Select Committee might look at the possibility of having a central bureau where all these things could be arranged at the one time.

The Minister had no counter to that, but what he did say was that he is decentralising his services in the metropolitan area and this would solve the particular problem to which I have referred. However, it does not solve the case to which I shall now refer—and there are a number of people in this category. If a woman lives in Belmont and has been deserted by her husband she has to go to the Child Welfare Department Office at Victoria Park. To do this she requires transport, and from the Victoria Park office she has to go to the Summary Relief Court in Perth. Therefore, I cannot see how the Minister can say that such a situation will be relieved by the very desirable practice of having decentralised welfare agencies throughout the metropolitan area.

I then made the point that it was difficult for deserted wives to obtain relief over the weekend, or during holiday periods. The Minister came back on that point and said that the position was covered because recently he had introduced a scheme under which a social worker was in attendance during those periods at the Child Welfare reception home in Walcott Street, Mt. Lawley, and that the telephone number had been placed in the telephone directory so that people seeking aid could contact the welfare officer by phone.

I took the trouble to look up this information in the telephone directory and the words "Child Welfare Department" appear in black print. As one looks down the list of telephone numbers one sees reference to the reception home at 3 Walcott Street, Mt. Lawley and the telephone

number of that institution for "after hours" service is the same as the one the Minister gave me for a woman to ring when she was in such circumstances that she did not know where to turn. So I fail to see that the point I made was countered in any way by the Minister.

In my submission I did not play too heavily on the financial assistance granted to these people because I realised that in many ways the assistance was tied to the Commonwealth social service payments. However, I did stress that in a number of instances additional relief is required. In answer, the Minister made the point that under the Welfare and Assistance Act he has the discretionary power to grant assistance, and it can be above the scale laid down for use by the department. But, in this regard, the Minister failed to indicate how many cases were covered by the over-scale payments; also, he did not indicate how many are being considered.

As regards the Welfare and Assistance Act, the Child Welfare Department report indicates that as at the 30th June, 1967, six special cases were being dealt with. In 1968 there were two cases, and so I feel that again the Minister failed to answer the points I raised because he did not indicate the number of over-scale payments that are being made.

Members who have any association at all with unmarried mothers, or deserted wives, who have children in minding centres, or are endeavouring to place them in those centres, will confirm that no over-scale payments are being made to those women by the Child Welfare Department to make it easier for them, financially, to place their children in the child-minding centres so that they can go to work and get back into community life generally.

On the question of clothing the Minister did not say a word, and as regards fares and concessions generally he said that these people can apply under the Welfare and Assistance Act. However, I have made extensive inquiries and I know of no case where this particular assistance is being granted.

The next point I raised was the question of a rental subsidy where it may be desirable to move a family in a particular suburb if the husband has been placed in gaol or has deserted the family, so that they can maintain their social contact in that particular environment. I thought it desirable that a Select Committee should look at the possibility of a rental subsidy, but the Minister did not say a word about it.

I want to cite a case which I think is most pertinent to this particular point. This case involves a young married girl with two children; in addition, she is pregnant. Her husband was sentenced to

12 months' imprisonment for offences relating to motor vehicles. Prior to his conviction he was employed at a brickworks in Midland and the family lived within close walking distance of his place of employment. The husband went to gaol and the woman qualified for monetary assistance from the Child Welfare Department. However, because no additional assistance in the way of a rental subsidy was forthcoming she was forced to leave her home and return to live with her parents in my electorate. I might add, too, that this young woman applied to the State Housing Commission for assistance, but this was refused.

When the husband comes out of gaol in a month or so his job will be waiting for him at the brickworks, which will give him the chance to rehabilitate himself in his former employment. However, because this family has lost their home in Midland it will be necessary for the husband to live with his mother and father-in-law, and we all know the problems associated with that sort of living. In addition, his driving license has been suspended and, although the family has a car, it will be impossible for the husband to drive to work at Midland. It certainly would have been better and less costly if some sort of rental subsidy had been paid in this case so that the family could have maintained their contacts in the Midland area by continuing to live in the home they had. Also, the opportunities for rehabilitation would have been far greater than they will be when this man subsequently comes out of prison.

There was another aspect of this case which is rather alarming. Apparently the woman was involved in an accident some two or three years ago and while her husband was in prison she received a large payment of money—a sum of \$1,000. Of course, as soon as the Child Welfare Department learnt of this it suspended her weekly sustenance payments. Members might say that that is fair enough as she had \$1,000 and could live on that. However, if that woman were a widow receiving a pension from the Social Services Department, and she received an award of \$1,000—assuming she had no other assets—she would not lose her social service pension, because under the Social Services Act she would be allowed to have \$1,000. But because this payment was being made under the state legislation—which, incidentally, is supported by 50 per cent. Commonwealth money—the Child Welfare Department cut her off. I found out about the matter, and following representations which I made to the department, the pension was reinstated. This is an indication of what is happening today in our community and it is only one of the reasons—and there are many—why a committee of this Parliament should look at the plight of these people.

I covered the aspects of maintenance. The Minister's reply to this matter was quite puerile. The maintenance legislation in this State is inferior to that of every other State in the Commonwealth; and it is evident from a short study I made that the maintenance legislation in the Commonwealth is inferior to the legislation in New Zealand. So there is ample opportunity to look into maintenance proceedings and the Acts of the other States of the Commonwealth and of New Zealand. I am told that the New Zealand Act is to be looked upon with a great deal of respect, and that it would provide the answer to many of the problems in this State.

I also covered the question of child-minding centres. In our community today such centres are an important facility at which unmarried mothers and deserted wives can leave their children. This enables the mothers to go out to work. I do not think it is desirable that young mothers should have to place their children—particularly very young children—in these institutions; however in the present situation it is necessary for people to use these facilities. I pointed out previously that there are only three public child-minding centres in this State, and there are 28 operated by private people. The private centres are obviously operated in order to make a profit, or at least to clear expenses, and for that reason up to \$12 per child per week is charged, and certain restrictions regarding the age and number of children are imposed.

The Minister said we could come to an agreement on this matter and possibly arrange for a certain amount to be paid under the Welfare and Assistance Act. However, this has not been publicised and the people to whom I spoke have no knowledge at all that the opportunity is available for them to obtain additional relief under the Welfare and Assistance Act. If the people concerned had children in child-minding centres, this assistance might overcome one of their problems; but I think there is a need for the Government to look at the overall question of child-minding centres to see whether it should encourage local authorities to erect such centres in the metropolitan area. I believe local authorities in New South Wales have taken up the issue and have established a large number of child-minding centres. Again, this is an area of inquiry for a Select Committee.

Fortunately for the Minister, the matters I raised concerning hospital expenses were covered by a recent announcement by the Prime Minister. Perhaps he saved the day for the Minister, because the Prime Minister, as members know, has agreed to make arrangements for people in the category referred to in this motion to have access to hospital benefit funds. I suppose

it is significant that this very matter was pressed forward by members of the Australian Labor Party in the Federal Government, and it is significant, too, that the announcement came shortly before an event which will take place on the 25th October.

When speaking to this motion, members made mention of the fact that this group of people is hidden in our community. I think it would be fair to say that the people are not only hidden in our community but are hidden in certain areas of it. For instance, I feel not many of these people would be living in, say, Floreat, Nedlands, Dianella, or some of the other plush, affluent suburbs. However, in other areas we find quite large pockets of these people; for instance, Maniana is one and North Beach another. A number of these people are in my electorate, and when we come closer to the city in the electorate of Perth we find them standing out.

Mr. Cash: State Housing assistance is being given in some of those areas to help the people with their problems.

Mr. HARMAN: That could be so.

Mr. Cash: That is so.

Mr. HARMAN: I wish to refer to the attitude which I hope the House will adopt towards this motion. Firstly, I want to say that during the parliamentary recess last summer, this building was inundated by members of other Parliaments in Australia. In fact I think on one day two parliamentary inquiries were being held at the same time, and members of Parliament from here, there, and everywhere were scattered around the building—some from Victoria, some from the Federal Parliament, and some from other States. I made inquiries and I found that other State Parliaments in this country—and this has been well illustrated by the member for Pilbara—conduct a number of inquiries. The members of other State Parliaments are given the opportunity to look into some of the matters which affect not only their particular electorates, but the States as a whole.

I derive a great deal of satisfaction from working in my electorate—getting things done and helping people out. But I do not obtain any satisfaction at all from being in this House and not being able to look into some of the problems of our State as a whole. We are denied the opportunity to visit areas of our State unless we travel by rail. We are not allowed to fly and we do not receive any recompense for accommodation when we travel to look at some of the problems in the country areas where there is no train service.

To me, this is one of the frustrating aspects of being a member of Parliament; and it is one of the reasons why I hope the members of this House will welcome the opportunity to conduct an inquiry such

as this so that they may play a more effective role in the matters which affect our State. No political gain will be achieved by inquiring into the position of these 10,000-odd people. I do not think anyone could gain politically from this.

I hoped the Premier would forget where this motion originated and that rather than fall into the party politics business he would be big enough to give the members of this House a chance to look into the question of these families and to obtain evidence from people who know something about the subject—people who have studied it for some time academically as well as out in the field; people who could provide a Select Committee with means by which to overcome the problems which currently beset the people of this State.

However, the members of this House are apparently to be denied the opportunity of doing something for those unfortunate families. The member for Belmont pointed out that in the six years from 1953 to 1958, 10 inquiries were instituted by the Hawke Government.

Mr. Cash: What did they all find out?

Mr. HARMAN: Under the Brand Government, only four inquiries have been instituted from 1959 to this day. One of those four was an inquiry into the gold-mining industry, and the Government knew very well that nothing could be done until the people in America decided what to do. So there it is: in six years the Hawke Government had 10 inquiries, and in 10 years the Brand Government has had four.

Mr. Cash: You were in a far greater mess than we were in. Why didn't you hold an inquiry into education?

Mr. HARMAN: Finally, I refer to the remarks made by the Premier at the opening of an Aboriginal art show two or three weeks ago. I was present at the opening and the Premier said that if we have problems in this community, we should get together and find the solution to them.

Mr. Graham: Fine words!

Mr. HARMAN: Those were fine words, because evidently the Premier, as leader of the Government, together with his Ministers, has decided, "Well, I may have said those words, but I did not really mean them." So the members of this Parliament will be denied the opportunity to look into the plight of one-parent families.

I have tried to present a reasonable case in an attempt to persuade the House that we should be prepared to spend \$2,000 or \$3,000—whatever it costs to hold a Select Committee—in order to give members a chance to look at this problem. The Minister countered the arguments in an unsatisfactory and unconvincing manner. He did not cover the immediate problems which I raised. I have made out my case

tonight in the hope that members might relent at the last minute and decide to support the motion.

Mr. Graham: It would wipe the floor with the Government.

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

## Ayes—19

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Jameson
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Molr
Mr. Brady	Mr. Norton
Mr. Burke	Mr. Sewell
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Taylor
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Toms
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Graham	Mr. Davies
Mr. Harman	

(Teller)

## Noes—22

Mr. Bovell	Mr. McPharlin
Sir David Brand	Mr. Mensaros
Mr. Cash	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Runciman
Dr. Henn	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Stewart
Mr. Kitney	Mr. Williams
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Young
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. Dunn

(Teller)

## Pairs

## Ayes

Mr. May  
Mr. Hall  
Mr. McIver  
Mr. Jones

## Noes

Mr. Burt  
Mr. O'Neill  
Mr. Gayfer  
Mr. O'Connor

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

## TRANSFER OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

### Second Reading

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [8.3 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to introduce four additional words to the Transfer of Land Act. Those members whose experience has been the same as mine will have been called upon in ever-increasing numbers to make recommendations for the appointment of people as commissioners for declarations for the purpose principally of witnessing documents associated with land and property transactions.

Running roughly through my records I have had to perform this duty of making recommendations and setting out particulars and personal details in no less than 31 different cases in the last 12 months. The necessity for this derives from the wording in the Transfer of Land Act wherein it is set out in section 145 that—

Instruments and powers of attorney under this Act signed by any person and attested by one witness other than a party to the instrument or

power of attorney shall be held to be duly executed, and such witness may be—

(a) Within the limits of Western Australia—

Then it outlines a whole host of persons including commissioner for declarations, clerk of a local court, clerk of petty sessions, town clerk, secretary to a road board, electoral registrar, postmaster, classified officer of the State or Commonwealth Public Service, classified school teacher, or member of the police force, bank manager, bank accountant, and the secretary of a building society. It is at this stage that I desire to insert the words, "land agent, land salesman." It will then go on to say that the witness may be a minister of religion authorised to celebrate marriages within the State, or any other person authorised by the Governor to be an attesting witness within the State for the purposes of the Act.

The provisions in connection with those who witness papers outside the confines of Western Australia are a little more stringent and, therefore, it is not my intention to interfere with them. There are so many of these transactions, and it is virtually impossible to obtain witnesses where and when they are wanted.

There is no way of identifying a commissioner for declarations. It is possible that the person who lives next door or who works in the same office is a commissioner for declarations but one would be unaware of this, generally speaking. If, however, a land agent or a land salesman calls on a person who is a prospective purchaser and who decides he will conclude matters at that time, the documents could be signed on the spot and that would be that.

I repeat there is a whole host of people at the present moment who are qualified to do this. It is appreciated that those who attest these documents should be persons of reasonable repute, but it will be seen that a whole lot of people merely because of the positions they occupy are accepted as eligible witnesses.

If members care to refer to the Land Agents Act they will see that there are certain requirements and penalties provided. For example, no person can carry on the business of a land agent unless he is the holder of a license, and there are provisions in the Land Agents Act for disqualification.

I repeat, therefore, that there is some control or some standard in respect of land agents. Then again we find that land salesmen must hold a certificate of registration issued by the Land Agents Advisory Committee. Here again we have some check so far as these people are concerned.

I do not want to appear egotistical but I can state very definitely that I have far more work to do than to be writing references and personal details or making submissions in respect of people whom I have never seen in my life. Whether by good luck or by coincidence I know not, but every recommendation I have made has been approved and therefore it would appear it is virtually automatic.

Accordingly the simple inclusion of the words "land agent, land salesman" as defined in the Land Agents Act will mean that these people will be automatically entitled to witness signatures to documents, and this will save members a whole lot of time and avoid a great deal of frustration to the people concerned; because the time that elapses from the time a recommendation is made by the parliamentary member for the district until after the checks have been undertaken and the case is received back indicating that approval of the appointment has been granted averages about two months.

As I have said, this will save members of Parliament no end of time and it will facilitate matters for the estate agents. Apart from this it will, of course, save the time of the officers of the Crown Law Department, the Police Department, and others concerned in the matter of making the inquiries.

To me it is perfectly obvious that this is something that should be done. I concede that perchance the object of the grandfather portion of the provision which says, "or any other person authorised by the Governor to be an attesting witness," could be achieved by regulation or by ministerial instruction through the Governor.

Perhaps, however, if there is to be a whole group to be included, it is proper that Parliament should determine this as it did many long years ago when it set down the specific persons who, because of the positions they occupy, should automatically qualify as approved witnesses.

I hope and trust that the Minister and the House will agree with me and that members of Parliament, accordingly, will be saved a whole host of unnecessary work which has become routine and which is inevitably approved. This legislation, therefore, could do nothing but good to facilitate the business of the State.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Court.

## FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), read a first time.

## BILLS (5): RETURNED

1. The Perpetual Executors Trustees and Agency Company (W.A.) Limited Act Amendment Bill.
2. The West Australian Trustee Executor and Agency Company Limited Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
3. Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
4. Timber Industry Regulation Act Amendment Bill.
5. Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

## SHARK BAY SALT PTY. LTD.

### *Disallowance of Approval to Occupy Temporary Reserves: Motion*

Debate resumed from the 17th September, on the following motion by Mr. Norton:—

That the approval of renewal for a period of twelve months to the 31st March, 1970, of the authority granted to Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. to temporarily occupy Temporary Reserves Nos. 4172H, 4173H and 4174H situated at Useless Inlet, Brown Inlet and Depuch Inlet respectively, in the Gascoyne Goldfield, as published in the *Government Gazette* on 22nd August, 1969, and laid upon the Table of the House on 19th August, 1969, be and is hereby disallowed.

**MR. BOVELL** (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [8.14 p.m.]: I have conferred with my colleague, the Minister for Mines, in this matter and in replying to the motion of the member for Gascoyne to disallow temporary reserves 4172H to 4174H for salt I submit that the honourable member was not correct when he referred to these reserves as leases.

I would like to correct any misapprehension there may be regarding this matter. Temporary reserves do not give any mining rights; they are merely for the purpose of exploration and the testing of mineral deposits and therefore must not be confused with mining leases upon which actual mining operations take place.

Temporary reserves created by the Minister for Mines must be confirmed by the Governor-in-Executive-Council if they continue for more than 12 months, and may be extended for periods of not more than 12 months at a time.

Rights of occupancy of temporary reserves must be confirmed by the Governor as must each renewal. The papers in connection with such confirmations of the right of occupancy and its subsequent renewals, must be laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament within 14 days; and this is what has been done in the present renewal of temporary reserves 4172H to

4174H. On behalf of the Minister for Mines I am continually submitting papers of this nature to this Assembly.

Perhaps I might give some history of these temporary reserves. On the 30th November, 1966, the Minister for Industrial Development wrote to the Minister for Mines asking whether Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. might be granted temporary reserves over the three areas now included in temporary reserves 4172H to 4174H so that these areas could be tested for the purpose of producing solar salt after Useless Loop had been sealed.

In his memorandum, the Minister stated that he had referred the request to the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna who indicated that he had no objection to the company's proposals, having referred them to his technical officers for their advice. I want to emphasise this: The matter had been referred to the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, as well as his technical officers, yet it is the contention of the member for Gascoyne that the fishing industry is going to be placed in jeopardy.

No objections having been raised by the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, these temporary reserves were approved by the Acting Minister for Mines on the 31st March, 1967, for two years, and the papers were tabled when Parliament assembled in July of that year.

The following condition suggested by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna was imposed in addition to the normal conditions in regard to temporary reserves:—

The removal by the company of any dam constructed by it to seal inlets or alternatively bulldozing reasonably wide openings through the dams to enable the waters concerned to resume their normal function as nursery areas for young fish.

The papers now under discussion refer to the renewal of temporary reserves 4172H to 4174H for a further 12 months to the 31st March, 1970. Renewal was confirmed in Executive Council on the 13th August, 1969, and the papers were tabled in Parliament on the 17th August, 1969.

As stated before, temporary reserves under the Mining Act are granted for the purpose of exploring and testing areas before mining operations are undertaken. This would apply in the case of temporary reserves 4172H to 4174H; hence, the only operations which may be carried on by the company are exploration and testing. It is, therefore, most unlikely that there will be any serious damage to these areas as nursery grounds for fish during the term of the temporary reserves.

The member for Gascoyne mentioned several other temporary reserves in the Shark Bay area. Of these, two are entirely land areas; namely, temporary reserves 4186H and 4187H, held by Continental Oil

for potash in connection with its drilling operations. The former is on the mainland—no doubt the member for Gascoyne knows this, but other members do not—and the latter over part of Peron Peninsula.

Temporary reserve 4691H is a ministerial reserve over the water area between Peron Peninsula and the mainland. Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. has applied for temporary reserve 4849H of an area including Dirk Hartog Island and Denham Sound, but this has not yet been considered by my colleague, the Minister for Mines.

A further application has been received from R. Kagi and Party for an area which includes the southern portion of the area applied for by Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. as temporary reserve 4849H. This, too, has not been considered by the Minister for Mines.

The member for Gascoyne will note that before temporary reserves 4172H to 4174H were granted, the Department of Fisheries and Fauna had been consulted and had raised no objections. The large area of water between Peron Peninsula and the mainland is a ministerial reserve and no rights of occupancy have been granted.

Before the applications for temporary reserves over the Denham Sound area are finally considered, the honourable member is assured—I am informed by my colleague, the Minister for Mines—that consultation will take place with the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.

The latest report concerning temporary reserves 4172H to 4174H contains information showing that an asbestos flume has been completed and brine from Useless Inlet—temporary reserve 4172H—is now being transferred via the flume to Shark Bay Salt's crystallising area. Tide and brine behaviour are being studied continually at present in this area. Laboratory analyses in connection with brine and tidal behaviour continue to be carried out.

The development and specific research of the Brown and Depuch Inlets—temporary reserves 4173H and 4174H—will be delayed pending further investigations at Useless Inlet. In the meantime tidal and density studies are continuing.

Should the company, as a result of its investigations of these temporary reserves, make application for leases in connection with operations for the production of salt, consultations will be held between the Mines Department and the Department of Fisheries and Fauna regarding the conditions which should be imposed if the leases are granted.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the House will not agree to the motion moved by the member for Gascoyne. As I have already said, these temporary reserves were granted nearly three years ago and to me it seems completely unrealistic to think that after



the passage of three years the member for the district would seek to have the right of occupancy granted to this company removed by the passing of a motion of this nature.

The member for Gascoyne must remember that this is another industry in the area; that the Department of Fisheries and Fauna has been consulted and has raised no objections; and that the Minister for Mines has undertaken to continue liaison with the department. Therefore I do not think any good purpose would be served by the passing of this motion and I recommend that the House reject it.

**MR. GRAYDEN** (South Perth) [8.25 p.m.]: I am horrified to learn from the Minister for Lands that the Department of Fisheries and Fauna raised no objection to the granting of these reserves to Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. I visited Shark Bay about 18 months ago and went out in a fisheries vessel to have a good look at this project and without exception the fishermen at Shark Bay deplored the fact that this Shark Bay fishery was being seriously and adversely affected by the closure of these loops.

**Mr. Bovell**: That, from the information I have already stated, is not the opinion of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.

**Mr. GRAYDEN**: Every officer of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna to whom I have spoken deplores the fact; and a most cursory examination of the situation would reveal the position to be as I have stated. If what the Minister has said is correct, then, as far as I am concerned, we should scrap the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.

Some years ago a committee was set up to examine the question in respect of the closure of the loops, and I quote as follows:—

The Committee found opinion unanimous—

This was amongst fisherman, officers of the department, and others. Continuing—

—that the closing of Useless Loop and Useless Inlet for the production of salt was harmful to the fishery. These were nursery areas for prawns and fish.

Three years after the closing of Useless Loop there was a big drop (60,000 lbs.) in the whiting catch. This period represents approximately the time it takes for whiting to grow from spawning to catchable size.

The Committee formed the opinion that the shallow water areas of Shark Bay are inhabited by juveniles of the dominant species in the catch. They felt that there is little doubt that further closing off of these nursery areas can only lead to the continued decline of the fishery.

This will mean a lower take of fish and a lesser supply of fish available to the local processing works.

This report on the Shark Bay fishery was submitted to the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna by the General Fisheries Advisory Committee and was laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly on the 17th November, 1967. I am not going to give an outline as to who comprised this advisory committee; but to say that the Department of Fisheries and Fauna does not feel the closure of these loops is going to affect the Shark Bay fishery seriously and adversely, is absolutely beyond my comprehension. I would like to hear an officer from the Department of Fisheries and Fauna make a statement along those lines! That is the point I want to make.

**Mr. Graham**: The Minister has misled the House.

**Mr. GRAYDEN**: My objection to the proposal and the reason I support the views expressed by the member for Gascoyne is that we are going to affect a huge fishery adversely—a most important fishery—in order to produce salt, which we do not actually want. That is the situation. We do not want the salt, yet we are going to spoil a fishery in order to produce it.

Let me deal with the situation that exists at Texada. There we have Lake McLeod which is possibly 80 miles long, comprising 800 square miles. At this place there is a salt industry and a potash industry. When the Minister introduced his Bill which gave the company the right to produce potash at Lake McLeod, he emphasised that salt would be a by-product of the production of potash.

The Minister for Industrial Development said that it was likely that Texada would produce 3,000,000 tons of salt a year as a by-product. I repeat: 3,000,000 tons! However, Texada is not to be permitted to sell that 3,000,000 tons unless the company can find a market somewhere in the world which will not affect the sale of salt by the other companies in Western Australia.

In this case we have salt being produced as a by-product in an area where it certainly cannot affect the fishing industry, and cannot affect the pastoral industry. We are telling the Texada company that it cannot sell the salt if such sales interferes with the activities of the other salt industries. Whilst doing that on the one hand, the Government on the other hand is blithely going ahead and encouraging Shark Bay Salt to close up a huge area of Shark Bay, thereby damaging the fishery in order to produce salt.

Only a couple of days ago an article appeared in the *Weekend News* stating that Texada would produce about 3,000,000 tons of common salt a year as a by-product. The article stated that the salt

would only be sold if it did not depress the market for other companies of which common salt would be the principal product.

During the last few months we have heard the statement over and over again that the huge quantity of salt to be produced as a by-product by Texada will have to remain in a stockpile if the sale of that salt is going to depress the market for other producers. The Minister, when he introduced the Bill setting up the Texada Company, made it clear that the geologists had established that there was 2,000,000,000 tons of salt in Lake McLeod. I repeat: In an area where no other industry can be affected, a company is producing salt as a by-product but that company is told it cannot sell the salt.

Whilst doing that we are telling the Shark Bay company—which is not nearly so economically viable—that it will receive all the encouragement in the world. Roads will be constructed at a tremendous cost to the State and the company will be allowed to close off huge areas of Shark Bay—spoiling the fishery—in order that it might produce salt.

I find that hard to believe. As far as I am concerned that emphasises to me the need for some sort of commission to be set up to assess the resources of this State and develop them in a way which will be to the greatest value of this State.

Mr. Graham: I think we need a change of Government.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I would not agree with that, but I agree entirely with the statement made on this particular matter by the member for Gascoyne. Shark Bay Salt went to the area in approximately 1963. The company closed off Useless Loop within, say, 18 months or so. Useless Loop covered eight square miles of water, which is a lot of water. When the area was closed off and the water evaporated, the remaining water became more saline and the fish were jumping out of the water trying to get across the dams. The fish were throwing themselves up the banks, and crabs which are present in the inlet in thousands were attempting to crawl out of the area. This was the result of the high salinity of the water.

The loop was closed off so that the water would evaporate. In the process the remaining water became very saline and tens of millions of fish perished. That is no exaggeration—tens of millions of fish perished in that eight square miles of water!

We talk about conservation and we often read where amateur fishermen are fined for catching fish under the minimum length. Even the spear fishermen who belong to the spear fishing association limit their catch to one of each species

each day. That is what those people are doing to conserve the fisheries. But what are we doing?

The inlets at Shark Bay have a very high saline content, although they are open to the sea. Apparently, the high salinity is extremely suitable to the young fish and those young fish flock to the Shark Bay estuaries in their millions. The area is, therefore, known as a nursery area. The young fish go there because of the high saline content of the water, and also because they are relatively safe from their larger predators.

That was the situation at Useless Loop when it was closed. An area of eight square miles of water was involved and millions of fish were killed. Within three years the whiting catch by professional fishermen at Shark Bay dropped by 60,000 pounds. That was the effect of that particular closure.

Then the company began closing off Useless Inlet which is approximately 20 miles from Useless Loop. Useless Inlet comprises an area of 6,000 acres; in other words, approximately 10 square miles. What occurred at Useless Loop will be duplicated at Useless Inlet and the young fish will die in their tens of millions. The young snapper, the whiting, and all those highly sought-after fish will be killed in their tens of millions; and that, of course, is not an exaggeration.

Useless Loop has already been ruined. It has been closed off and destroyed forever from the point of view of the fishing industry. Now we are to go much further and give the company the right to close off Brown Inlet and Depuch Inlet. Depuch Inlet is possibly 40 miles from Useless Loop and Brown Inlet is approximately 20 miles away. The company intends to close off the area with a relatively short bar. The entrances to the inlets are narrow and the inlets extend, possibly, over 10 miles. The bar required to close them off is relatively short. The company will simply erect a bar across the entrance to the inlets and as the salinity increases, because of evaporation, the water will be pumped to the evaporation tanks at Useless Loop.

The company will not commence to harvest the salt immediately. It will put a bar across the inlets, but once that is done, it will, of course, kill tens of millions of fish which exist in each of the inlets. The nurseries will be destroyed forever because, as was pointed out by the member for Gascoyne, gypsum will settle on the bottom of the inlets.

As the member for Gascoyne mentioned, the areas become completely barren of the microscopic life necessary to support young fish. That is the situation. With the granting of the temporary reserves we are enabling the company to do just that.

I listened intently to the Minister's speech because I wanted to hear comments which would cause me to support his stand and oppose the motion moved by the member for Gascoyne. I wanted to hear the Minister state that when Shark Bay Salt was permitted to go to Shark Bay to establish an industry it was assured of specific areas, including two we are talking about. Had it been assured of those areas, it would have been able to close off the two loops—Brown Inlet and Depuch Inlet—and the whole matter would have been different because we would have obligated ourselves and we could not, under any circumstance, have gone back on that obligation.

However, the Minister did not mention that any such arrangements had been agreed upon. There is no suggestion that when Shark Bay Salt went to Shark Bay, it would later on be granted these two additional inlets. I wanted to be assured on that point, but that assurance was not forthcoming.

The second point I wanted to be assured on was that the closure of these two inlets was absolutely vital to Shark Bay Salt. I wanted to learn from the Minister if it is absolutely necessary to permit the company to close the two inlets to make its proposition workable. Again, the Minister made no reference to that matter at all.

Obviously the company is having some success with the closure of Useless Loop and the 10 square miles which comprise Useless Inlet. Having had some success the company has now decided to extend its operation to the detriment of the fishing industry in Shark Bay.

As far as I am concerned that is not good enough. I think it is criminal that we should be adversely affecting the fishing industry in this way. I would also mention that the closure of the two inlets, besides affecting the actual fishing industry, will adversely affect the township of Denham. Eventually the salt works will employ only 25 to 30 men whereas I understand that 60 men are employed at times in the fish processing works at Denham. These figures were quoted by the member for Gascoyne and he should know.

A tremendous number of tourists visit Shark Bay and the money which is poured into the town by them is certainly a contributing factor to the continued existence of Denham as a township. As pointed out by the member for Gascoyne, one of the inlets concerned is Brown Inlet, which is almost 10 miles long and like a river running through a great gorge because of the hills on either side of it. It is an extraordinarily picturesque place and, without question, will be a tourist mecca in the near future.

However, this is one of the inlets which it is proposed to close. I ask members to imagine 10 miles of water which is relatively narrow and protected from the prevailing winds. This is a most scenic place and teems with fish life. Should we enable a salt company to put a bar across that inlet? Further, at this stage, we are not actually giving the company permission to harvest salt there. The Minister for Mines has pointed this out. What we are saying, in effect, is that the company can put a bar across, dry up the lake which is thus created, kill tens of millions of fish, and ruin the inlet for ever so far as fish are concerned. In addition, we are saying that if the company does not find the area satisfactory and decides to leave the inlet, it must, at least, open the bar and allow some more water to flow in. That is precisely what we are saying in the conditions imposed on the company under the regulation.

Mr. Bovell: This condition was recommended by a very eminent authority.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Yes; but I think the advisory committee is also a very eminent authority. After all it comprises representatives of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna. Since the Minister has made that point, I would like to outline the members of the committee.

Mr. Graham: I can detect the dead hand of the Minister for Industrial Development.

Mr. Court: The good old Minister for Industrial Development!

Mr. Graham: Another sellout.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Most members will know Mr. Slack Smith who gave a talk on the prawning industry in Shark Bay to the members who went, at the kind invitation of the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, to inspect the aquarium which has been established for research purposes on the sea-front at Waterman's Bay. Mr. Slack Smith was very qualified to give this talk because he had been in Shark Bay for the previous few years carrying out research on the prawning and fishing industries generally. Mr. Slack Smith is one man in the Department of Fisheries and Fauna who is conversant with the situation at Shark Bay. What other officer in the same department would be equally conversant, or has been stationed at Shark Bay for the purpose of undertaking research? He is the only one.

Mr. Norton: Mr. McLaughlan was also stationed in Shark Bay. He was the senior fisheries inspector.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I am sorry; I stand corrected on that point. The point I make, however, is that, as far as I am concerned, Mr. Slack Smith would be the most qualified man in the department to express an opinion on the fishery in Shark Bay. He was a member of the committee.

I have already read the summary of the committee, but I will repeat it for the benefit of the Minister for Lands. It says—

The committee found opinion unanimous that the closing of Useless Loop and Useless Inlet for the production of salt was harmful to the fishery. These were nursery areas for prawns and fish.

I have digressed for a moment but I wish to refer again to the conditions imposed on the company when it was granted the additional temporary reserves. Condition No. 14 reads—

The removal by the company of any dam constructed by it to seal inlets or, alternatively, bulldozing reasonably wide openings through the dams to enable the waters concerned to resume their normal functions as nursery areas for young fish.

As I have said, this means, in effect, that the company can take Brown Inlet, which is a picturesque spot 10 miles long, and put a bar across the opening. It can destroy tens of millions of fish which inhabit the inlet but, when the water has evaporated, if the company decides not to go on and pump the brine 40 miles to its evaporation tanks at Useless Loop, it has simply to bulldoze an opening through the bar to let the water back in.

Precisely the same thing can happen in respect of Depuch Inlet which, again, is several miles long. The company is empowered to put a bar across the inlet and ruin it for ever as a nursery ground for fish. Further, at the conclusion of its activities, all the company has to do is to make a small cut in the bar and allow the seawater to go back into the inlet. However, this would take place after tens of millions of fish had perished. It should be realised that we enforce minimum length regulations in respect of the catch on the Western Australian coastline.

Mr. Tonkin: We limit the catch.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Yes; the catch is limited to prevent individuals from taking fish below a certain minimum size. To my mind this is an extraordinary situation.

The main point I make is that it would be a different matter if the closure was absolutely necessary to ensure that Shark Bay Salt continued its operations in the area on an economic and viable basis. However, there is no suggestion of that. It is simply a case of a company which has gone to the area and which has already closed off two inlets—Useless Loop and Useless Inlet—deciding that it wants to expand its activities.

Again, it would be a different matter if the Government had entered into an agreement when Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. was established in the area. It would be different because we would have honoured any commitment entered into by the Government if it had said, "If you establish an industry in the area, later on we

will allow you to go to these two additional inlets." However, no such situation occurred. The position simply is that the company wants to extend its activities, and in doing so it will seriously affect the fishery and all the people in the Denham and Shark Bay area who are dependent on that fishery, as well as future tourists to the area.

Yet, we are going to do this in order to produce salt when, only 30 miles from Carnarvon at Lake MacLeod, which is an area of 800 square miles, the Minister has told us that a quantity of 2,000,000 tons of salt has been proven and has also said that 3,000,000 tons a year will be produced as a by-product of potash. Nevertheless, the company concerned at Lake MacLeod, Texada Mines Pty. Ltd., will not be permitted to sell its salt if the sale of that salt would have a detrimental effect on other salt producers in Western Australia.

Mr. Graham: In Shark Bay—and, I suppose, in Western Australia, generally.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Under these circumstances I have no option but to support the motion moved by the member for Gascoyne. So that there will be no misapprehension I would like to clarify the effect of his action. If we disallow the renewal of the temporary reserves, the Minister will be able to delete the reserves so far as Brown Inlet and Depuch Inlet are concerned, but he will be able, immediately, to grant a lease in respect of Useless Inlet. The company is established at Useless Loop, which it already holds as a lease granted under the Land Act. Consequently, nothing can be done about that and, indeed, nobody would want to do anything about it, because the industry has been established. The inlet has been closed off and is ruined forever as a nursery for fish. Therefore, we do not have to worry about Useless Loop.

Also, we do not have to worry about Useless Inlet, which is on the other side of the peninsula and possibly 20 miles from Useless Loop. Useless Inlet, too, has already been sealed off and is ruined forever as a nursery for fish. These two areas combined, however, are sufficient for the company. Altogether there are 4,888 acres in Useless Loop and 6,000 acres in Useless Inlet; in other words, about 18 square miles of water. This is a huge area of water and is adequate for the company's purposes. There should be no thought of the company going further afield to Brown Inlet and Depuch Inlet.

I simply say that if Parliament disallows the temporary reserves, the Minister can immediately grant a lease to the company for Useless Inlet and the interest of Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. will be fully protected. At the same time, through the disallowance of the reserves, temporary reserves would not be granted at Brown Inlet or Depuch Inlet. This

will mean that the fishery at Shark Bay will be preserved. This is the meaning of the motion moved by the member for Gascoyne.

If Parliament does not agree to the motion the company will undoubtedly close off Depuch Inlet and Brown Inlet within the next 12 months and a very valuable fishery will be seriously and adversely affected. It is as simple as that.

Western Australia does not have a commission which evaluates natural resources and suggests ways in which they can be developed with maximum benefit to the State. Consequently we cannot refer this matter to such a body; we can only bring the matter up in Parliament, and the member for Gascoyne has done precisely that. It is up to Parliament, on such an occasion, to step in and do something about the issue. It is simply a matter of agreeing to the motion which has been moved by the member for Gascoyne.

All that will happen if the renewal of the temporary reserves is disallowed is that the Minister will be able to go straight to Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. and grant it a lease at Useless Inlet. The company has done a great deal of work at Useless Loop but it already has a lease of that inlet. The interests of the company will be completely protected but, at the same time, through the disallowance of the renewal of the temporary reserves, the fishing industry at Shark Bay will be saved and, also, the value of Shark Bay as a tourist spot will be preserved.

I could touch upon many other points but they are only details and, as such, I do not think there is any real need for me to do so, because the member for Gascoyne, in his reply, will undoubtedly mention many points which have not yet been raised, as well as those which have been raised by the Minister.

In the circumstances, I sincerely hope the House will agree to the disallowance of the approval of the renewal of this temporary reserve. If it does not, a serious situation will arise in Shark Bay which will be regretted for many years to come.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) (9.1 p.m.): I think I should say a word or two on this particular project because a great deal of incorrect information has been displayed out of all proportion to the actual problem. Firstly, let me say that Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. is a wholly-Australian company.

**Mr. Tonkin:** Are not fishermen Australians?

**Mr. COURT:** We will come to that in a moment. We hear so much talk from those on the other side about overseas ownership and management of these companies, but I would point out to them that this wholly Australian company was the

pioneer of this industry. It had the courage to go in and establish an industry ahead of all others. Whether it was well advised technically, is another issue. The company was induced to go to the area originally by Garrick Agnew, and subsequently the Adelaide Steamship Company took up this project, as an Australian industry, to produce salt on a substantial basis and to capture for Australia some of the Japanese salt export market.

The original target of the company was about 500,000 tons; not for a start, but to build up to that figure. It then hoped, progressively, to produce 750,000 tons, then 1,000,000 tons, and maybe more.

Subsequent to that, the very experienced Leslie Salt Company came in and conducted a technical and feasibility study at Port Hedland, to be followed by the Dampier Company. Subsequent again to that, the Texada Company entered the industry at Lake McLeod. This is the point I want to emphasise because the member for South Perth has gone round and round the question of the salt produced by Texada. That company came into the picture a long time after the Australian company entered the industry and it was a condition of the agreement which was brought to the State Parliament that it was, first and foremost, a potash project.

I can tell the House—and the company knows this full well—that one of the conditions of its agreement, which had to be ratified by the State Parliament, was that it had to produce potash. The fact that it produces salt as a by-product is another matter altogether. No Government in its right mind would deny a company the right to export salt as a by-product, provided it did not interfere unreasonably with the *bona fide* salt producers; that is, the Leslie Salt Company, Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd., the Dampier Company, and the Lake Lefroy salt company near Widgiemooltha. All of these companies, with the exception of Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd., are the subject of ratified agreements.

**Mr. Tonkin:** Is it not the normal policy that competition is the soul of trade?

**Mr. COURT:** There is competition, and we believe in it. I will make this point again, if the Leader of the Opposition did not hear me properly the first time. The Texada Company obtained its agreement because its object was to produce primarily potash. I made this very clear to the people of Carnarvon, some of whom want us to ignore the production of potash and allow the company to export more salt.

**Mr. Tonkin:** I thought the Government did not believe in putting shackles on industry.

**Mr. COURT:** The Leader of the Opposition should be consistent. He is always talking about obeying the law, and placing emphasis on the law. The

fact is that this agreement was presented to Parliament by me and accepted on the basis that primarily the company's purpose was to produce potash. I am not being anti-TeXada; I am merely laying the facts on the line. Texada is getting all the salt on the market it can at the moment, and exporting all it can through its port, and we do not intend to prevent it exporting salt if there is a market for it and if the company can provide it.

In view of the fact that it was negotiated as a potash industry, I entered the debate this evening only to make it clear that I for one would feel we had been negligent if we had not made it clear to the Texada company and to the public at large that the original concept of its agreement was the production of potash and that this could be a great industry. The investment in potash, to give us the industry for which provision has been made, would be a minimum of about \$13,000,000. This is three, or maybe four, times the amount necessary to conduct it as a salt industry. When it meets its potash commitment the company can then enter the salt market free of the restrictions we have imposed at the moment. We approve of its exporting salt provided it can get a market and can negotiate with the Government in a fair and reasonable manner, and the heads of the Texada company could not deny for a moment that they have been treated fairly when they have come along with a firm proposition.

However, we did say to the company, "You are a potash project but we realise that you have to get a stockpile of bitterns for your production. We will let you sell some salt in the meantime to generate some cash flow to assist your project."

The other point I want to make about Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. is that it has not, for technical reasons, been able to bring its tonnage up in order to make it an economic proposition. For years it struggled to survive on low tonnages and it was a losing proposition. In spite of the fact that it had laid down a polyethylene base in these areas it became apparent that the company would be faced with extreme difficulties due to technical problems. It will have an almost impossible task to reach economical tonnages.

In the light of that, and following a study by experts in the Fisheries Department, and consultations between them and the Minister for Mines, a temporary reserve was granted. The company has not been given a lease, but a renewal of its temporary reserve. The original reserve was before Parliament a long time ago, and to the best of my knowledge apparently this point was not raised, but now that this renewal has come up after this two-year period, the question has been raised.

The member for South Perth sought information on the question of economic necessity. If the company continues in the salt business it will have to increase its tonnage if it is to become economically viable. That is as obvious as the sun rising in the morning. Therefore it was given the right to undertake these studies subject to very strict conditions, and on the best advice the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna could obtain. Just in case there is any misunderstanding about this, or any suggestion that this is detrimental to the fishing industry, I hasten to say that the man who advised the Government is an expert on whiting and his services have been sought by F.A.O. to advise it on the development of fisheries and their conservation in other countries. This man is no amateur weekend fisherman and is not an ordinary administrative officer within the department; he is a man with a world-wide reputation. It was he who drafted the conditions which are attached to the temporary reserve.

Because of that, the Minister for Mines could grant the company this opportunity, and I believe the Australian company was entitled to it to try to demonstrate to the Minister for Mines that it was economically possible for it to produce tonnages of salt of sufficient volume to make it an economic proposition.

I deplore the advocacy of the member for South Perth that the Texada company should virtually be allowed to export limitless tonnages; a company that entered the scene for the purpose of developing potash; that came in after the pioneer Australian company had entered the industry. We have the extraordinary situation of individuals wanting to kick the Australian company in the teeth to clear the way for the overseas companies, with which I negotiated very strict conditions. These conditions were imposed in the agreement I brought to this Parliament for ratification.

Therefore I hope the House will reject the motion and leave it to the good sense of the Minister for Mines and also the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, who is vitally interested. In fact, he has taken a very close interest in all these salt matters following the initial experience of the Shark Bay project.

**MR. GRAHAM** (Balcatta — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.11 p.m.]: I had no intention whatsoever of participating in this debate, and, indeed, had the Minister for Industrial Development been able to produce anything to rebut the remarks made by the member for South Perth I would not have risen to my feet.

Some little while ago the member for Gascoyne, in reasoned terms, introduced this motion. This evening we heard the

Minister for Lands speak on behalf of the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna.

Mr. Bovell: I was speaking on behalf of the Minister for Mines.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am sorry; the Minister for Mines. The Minister for Lands endeavoured to cope with the situation, but he scarcely touched the subject. He was followed by the member for South Perth whose remarks were completely devastating. If there is a tittle of substance in them—and he has not only quoted authority, but has also given instances of what has happened before, and, inevitably, there would be a recurrence over a greater area—any member of Parliament who has a sense of responsibility should pause and think seriously before casting his vote.

Members will have noticed that the Minister for Industrial Development is usually pretty well briefed and meticulous in his statements. On this occasion he made no attempt whatsoever to cope with the remarks made by the member for South Perth—

Mr. Court: I answered the points he raised.

Mr. GRAHAM: —but in his usual way he made some slighting reference to emotionalism, and then he endeavoured, finding himself in the spot in which he was placed, to tell the member for South Perth and the members of the Opposition that they derive a certain amount of satisfaction from hindering the local company and they should be strongly behind it in reference to overseas companies. This is not a case of a local company *versus* other companies. This is a matter concerning the despoliation of a portion of the State; it is a matter of a considerable portion of the State, where fish are nurtured, being ruined. The Minister has made no attempt whatsoever to answer this. Does it mean that there is a prospect of millions of fish being sent to a salty grave? Is this of no consequence at all?

Mr. Court: You are up to your usual histrionics.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am not familiar with the area. I have been there only once. I do not know from my own experience whether the dire consequences outlined by the member for South Perth will come to pass. If these are to be the consequences, then all of us should pause and think. Are we to crucify a part of Western Australia and a supply of food in tremendous quantity merely to satisfy the ego of a Minister or two who fear they will be losing face in some manner if this motion is passed?

Mr. Court: You want to look into the subject before you speak like this.

Mr. GRAHAM: This matter is of sufficient seriousness for the Government to be prepared to have another look at the situation.

Mr. Court: It has got the situation under control, and it has obtained the best advice possible.

Mr. GRAHAM: It has the position so much under control that the fish life is ruined! Is there any denial of the case put up by the member for South Perth? The Minister has not made any attempt to deny it.

Mr. Court: The best advice which the State has got is that this will not be detrimental to the area in question. What more can we do?

Mr. GRAHAM: Has not this certainty on the Minister's part been a little disturbed and ruffled because of the speech which was delivered earlier this evening—and delivered with some authority?

Mr. Court: It did not take the member for Gascoyne or the member for South Perth to bring this matter to the notice of the Government. It was brought to the notice of the Government ages ago.

Mr. GRAHAM: It seems the Government is prepared to ride roughshod over any and all interests, so that a certain company operating there may do a little better irrespective of the consequences or the damage it causes to the fishing industry, the tourist potential, or the township of Denham. Apparently all that matters is that the Government lies prone before certain business concerns.

Mr. Court: You obviously did not listen when the original Bills were introduced, because at the time all the information was given and all the conditions were laid down by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am 600 miles away from the scene of activity, and I repeat that I do not know the area very well. That would be the case with regard to the majority of members. When serious doubts are raised by somebody who speaks with some authority and who is able to quote the views of authorities on the subject, then surely we should stop and count to 10; we should require the Government to bring to us proof that there is no possibility that what the member for South Perth says is inevitable, based on earlier experience, will occur at Shark Bay.

Mr. Court: If you accept the word of the member for Gascoyne and the member for South Perth without question, you are not being fair, because I have put forward the views of two acknowledged authorities—acknowledged not only here but internationally.

Mr. GRAHAM: The colossal ego of the Minister! He says we must accept what he puts forward and what authority he

quotes, but we should dismiss what anybody else puts forward. After all, the member for Gascoyne is the member for the district concerned. He is a person who has spent very many years in that locality, and he has had a close association with those who have been affected or are likely to be affected. The Minister is only a Minister of the Crown for the time being, and he is relying on the voice and the views of somebody else.

Mr. Court: I have put forward the opinion of a man who is a world authority.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, and he can make mistakes. Having had some appreciation of the activities of the Minister for Industrial Development, I am not too certain in my own mind how much pressure has been applied.

Mr. Court: None at all. This is a matter which lies with the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna and the Minister for Mines; it does not lie with me.

Mr. GRAHAM: I was a Minister of the Crown for some years and I am aware of what takes place. There is no secrecy about it. Many departmental officers will endeavour to bend to their utmost to the wishes of Ministers.

Mr. Court: You are reflecting on the integrity of a very competent body of men.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am not. It is obvious the Minister has not a leg to stand on in respect of this matter, and he should not tip the mire over anybody and everybody.

Mr. Court: Why do you not have some regard, even a partial regard, for a person who is a recognised international authority on this subject?

Mr. GRAHAM: I repeat that I am not in a position to know, but sufficient doubt has been created in my mind in regard the possibility of tremendous and irreparable damage being done in this area to entitle us to make a check on the position. If it can be substantiated that there is no possibility of havoc besetting the area, then I, and perhaps the member for Gascoyne, will be satisfied. I repeat that the member for Gascoyne represents the district, and he undertook some investigation and research before he brought this resolution before the House. Does the Minister consider that the member for Gascoyne is completely irresponsible and has moved the motion for the purpose of twisting the tail of the Government?

Outside a comparative handful of those who reside in that area, the people of Western Australia would not know anything about the reserves in question; they would not know whether somebody has been given the right to occupy these reserves and to carry on certain activities on them over a period. I suppose that would

be the position with regard to the overwhelming majority of members in this House.

Mr. Court: Why has this become urgent all of a sudden, when these operations went on for two years before the renewal?

Mr. GRAHAM: I do not know what that has to do with what I am saying.

Mr. Court: I say it has everything to do with it.

Mr. Tonkin: The member for Gascoyne will answer that one.

Mr. GRAHAM: As far as I am concerned, my attention was drawn to it in recent days. I was unaware of the circumstances before that. Will the Minister allow a further examination to be made? Suppose what the member for South Perth has said proves to be right.

Mr. Court: I have told you that this is nothing new.

Mr. GRAHAM: Are those members sitting behind the Government supporting it blindly, out of some misguided loyalty to the Minister for Industrial Development or the Minister for Mines? Are they prepared to go along blithely and desecrate a part of Western Australia?

Mr. Cash: We accept the fact that the authority quoted by the Minister knows something about the subject.

Mr. GRAHAM: Does the honourable member deny that the member for South Perth or the member for Gascoyne, who initiated the resolution, know something about it?

Mr. Cash: I have only heard you so far, and I have not been impressed.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is the duty of the honourable member to be present in the Chamber when something important is being discussed. If he has something to say on this motion he should first of all listen to the debate so that he will know something about the subject, and then stand up, instead of sniping at members on this side. I do not know what school he has been through, although I am aware that for one short term he was a member of the Commonwealth Parliament.

This matter is of sufficient importance to warrant further examination. If it can be established that there is no ground or substance in the motion, or no occasion for us to be worried, then I am sure even the member for Gascoyne will be prepared to apologise and admit that he has made a mistake. He will say, "I have been assured, and it has been established, that there is no possibility of any damage being done to the area in the several respects mentioned."

Mr. Grayden: The advisory committee has already made it clear that the damage has been done.



**Mr. GRAHAM:** That is so. The Minister for Industrial Development has made no reference to that, and he has made no endeavour to refute that. He has put forward an authority, and he is hanging his hat on that authority. I hope that members will realise this is not a matter of life and death to the Government.

The passage of this motion will not mean the defeat of the Government; it will only provide an opportunity for us to look into what could be a very serious situation. In such circumstances I do not think that members who sit behind the Government should be led blindly to vote on a matter which is fraught with the severe consequences that have been outlined by those who are more familiar with the area than I am.

**MR. FLETCHER** (Fremantle) [9.26 p.m.]: Like the previous speaker, I did not intend to become involved in this debate; but after hearing the splendid case presented by the member for Gascoyne and supported by the member for South Perth, and the views of the expert quoted by the Minister for Industrial Development, I felt I should add to the debate.

The Minister for Industrial Development made this point: that a highly competent overseas expert has given advice in respect of this particular issue. He has said that the granting of the reserves in question to the company would not be detrimental to the fishing industry. May I quote by way of illustration that about two years ago an expert from Scandinavia came here to advise the fishing industry on the building of a special type of craft, but the fishing industry in this State rejected that expert advice. I draw that illustration to show that some overseas expert who has said that the granting of these reserves to the company will not be detrimental to the fishing industry might be just as wrong as the Scandinavian expert who gave advice to our fishermen on how to build boats.

**Mr. Grayden:** There is not an authority which has said that this is not detrimental to Shark Bay.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I accept the contention of the member for South Perth. What I want to indicate is that an expert may be an expert only in his own country or his own locality. To get back to this issue, it is a case of priority: either we have salt or we have fish. It has been demonstrated that in this State there is a superabundance of salt along our coastline. The member for South Perth made reference to the fact that we are already embarrassed with the overproduction of this commodity.

To illustrate my point, let me use a local scene; that is, the deterioration in fishing in the vicinity of the electorate I represent. As a child I remember being able to catch jewfish, snapper, and other

types of fish in the vicinity of Fremantle within one mile of the shore. The fish have been depleted, and this could be as a consequence of the interference with the river, of over-fishing, or of interference with the waters at Cockburn Sound.

When the Minister for Works was the Minister for Fisheries he received two deputations from the people of Fremantle who took exception to the activities that were taking place in Cockburn Sound, which was a nursery for the young fish that populated the waters in the vicinity of Fremantle and the contiguous coastline.

If there has been despoliation of fish in the vicinity of Fremantle, is it not conceivable that the diminution of young fish in the nursery mentioned by the member for South Perth and the member for Gascoyne will impinge on, and will prove to be detrimental to, the fishing industry in that locality?

The small fish and small prawns born in the shallow waters have the habit of going out to sea when they become adult fish or adult prawns; and they return to spawn, to repeat the cycle again and again as they have done over the centuries.

Yet we, the members of the human population, will isolate this breeding area; and what for? For the purpose of obtaining salt! As I say, it is a case of priorities. Is it to be salt, or is it to be fish? That is why I rose to my feet. Another reason is that the Minister said the existing area of salt exploitation in the reserve area mentioned is inadequate to satisfy the demands of the company; that the company finds it an uneconomic proposition and wants to increase the area of exploitation.

If this is done, I am convinced that it will be at the expense of fishing. I say this, as I have had a lifetime of association with fishing, only, admittedly, on an amateur basis. However, I have taken a vital interest in the industry because it is of importance to my constituency. That is why I say I know enough about the situation to be confident that if there is any further intrusion into this area it will be at the expense of fishing.

This gets me back to my original remark, which was that I support the member for Gascoyne and other members who have spoken in connection with this motion, and I do so for the reasons I have outlined.

**MR. NORTON** (Gascoyne) [9.32 p.m.]: Firstly, I would like to thank those who spoke in support of my motion, and congratulate them on the case they submitted.

Next I must deal with the Minister's reply to my remarks. From the outset it was obvious the Minister for Lands had not read or listened to what I had to say when I introduced the motion; and, what is more, it was obvious he knew very little about what he was trying to explain.

The Minister said that the temporary reserves gave no right whatever to mining. However, as I understand it, mining has a very broad application. Under the Act the gathering of salt off an area is an act of mining. Whilst the company is not actually gathering salt off Useless Inlet, which has been closed off, it is gathering a highly salty solution and passing it into a crystallisation base for the formation of salt. Therefore, I take it that this would be an act of mining; and a temporary reserve does not allow such an action.

Also I understand that under the Act temporary reserves must be reduced by 50 per cent. each year, but no reduction has been made in this reserve.

The Minister said that the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna had no objection whatsoever to these areas being closed off. How the Minister came to make that statement, I do not know unless he was misleading the House quite a bit, because the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna in July, 1967, sent a committee to Shark Bay to investigate the position. I have that committee's report, which was tabled in this House on the 23rd November, 1967. The introduction to it is as follows:—

In July 1967 the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna referred to the General Fisheries Advisory Committee for inquiry a report that there had been a serious decline in the amount of fish available for processing at the fish processing works at Shark Bay.

In August 1967 the General Fisheries Advisory Committee visited Shark Bay, held a public meeting with fishermen; interviewed individual fishermen, a representative of the fish processing works at Denham, fish buyers and the Shire Clerk; and inspected fishing facilities and the fish processing works.

Subsequent to their visit to Shark Bay the Committee held two further meetings in Perth, held further interviews with representatives of the fishing industry and considered statistical reports and reports submitted by research officers of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.

The committee comprised Mr. A. J. Mearns, acting chairman and one of the officers of the Fisheries and Fauna Department; Mr. T. W. Doak, representing the deep-sea fishermen, and a person whom I know very well. He originally came from Queensland and was with the North-West Pearl Company. Then there was Mr. N. K. Swarbrick, representing inshore and estuarine fishermen. He is a person well known in the fishing industry in the south. Next were Mr. K. L. Watson, representing amateur fishermen; Mr. R. F. Boylen, an economist with, I understand, the Department of Industrial Development; Mr. R. J.

Slack Smith, a research officer who has been referred to here several times tonight, and who carried out quite a considerable amount of research into the whiting behaviour in Shark Bay, and did quite a lot of tagging in that respect; Mr. K. J. Ammerer, secretary; and Mr. N. E. McLaughlan, a senior inspector, who was stationed at Shark Bay for three or four years as an inspector and who carried out considerable research into whiting in that area.

We can see that it was an expert committee which presented the report to the Minister, and when I was submitting my case I quoted from this document. Therefore, I was not speaking from hearsay. The final recommendation of the committee was as follows:—

As the fishery can only decline with the closing of nursery areas for salt production no further leases for this purpose should be granted in Shark Bay, without reference to the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.

How the Minister can say that the Department of Fisheries and Fauna supports the closure of these areas I do not know. I think he has been very misleading. It may have been supported by the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, but certainly not by the department.

Mr. Graham: No wonder the Minister for Industrial Development left the Chamber!

Mr. NORTON: I wonder whether the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna takes the advice of these statutory committees, which, of course, are established under the Act. In this case it appears he has overlooked this particular report or has taken no cognisance of it.

Mr. Bovell: As the Minister for Industrial Development said, the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna took the advice of an officer who has gained wide experience not only here, but elsewhere.

Mr. NORTON: Yes, and when I interjected and asked the name of the officer, the Minister declined to give it.

The Minister asked why I had not objected before this, and the Minister for Industrial Development asked the same question. The reason is that in 1967, although I was well aware of the decline in the fishing industry, Useless Inlet had not been closed. I waited to see the reaction to the closure; and now, having seen the effect of the closure in two separate sections of Useless Inlet, I am satisfied of the damage being done, and I am further satisfied that if the inlet were reopened it would not return to its former productivity.

To make perfectly sure of this, I contacted a geologist who is probably one of the top geologists in Western Australia, and

I ascertained that he is of the same opinion; that is, that once these areas are closed, a deposition of gypsum occurs which causes the seabed to become barren, and once that has occurred, it is impossible to get the gypsum off the seabed and thus all the vegetation and sea life upon which small fish feed is lost.

Another reason I had not submitted this motion before was that I had not had an opportunity to object because the relevant document had not previously been tabled.

Do we want to kill the fishing industry at Shark Bay and close that town down? Do we want to force the residents to leave the town when some of them are members of families that have been earning their living there for four or five generations? With the new processing works being established there, I can visualise the residents obtaining far more in wages and income than they could ever obtain from the production of salt.

When replying to my motion, the Minister said that reserve No. 4849H had not yet been proved. However, a map which had been supplied to me showed that particular area with the lease number, and also the other leases which the Minister mentioned in his speech. I knew all about them and referred to them. I referred to the ministerial reserve and also to the reserve which has been granted now to Shark Bay Salt, over and above the others it already holds. I did not know who held them as they were merely numbers on a map, and so on the 11th September I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines the following question:—

Who holds temporary reserves Nos. 4849H, 4691H, 4187H and 4186H?

In respect of reserve No. 4849H, the Minister representing the Minister for Mines replied that this was held by Shark Bay Salt as the applicant, but that as yet no occupancy rights had been granted pending the reserve being reduced in area. However, it has still been issued in its name and its name is on the map. It is approximately 2,500 square miles.

Members can see that we have not been given the full facts at all, not by the Minister for Lands anyway, and he certainly proved he knew nothing whatever about the case I submitted.

The Minister for Industrial Development referred to a lot of misinformation. I do not know what he meant by that because he did not make himself very clear. He started talking about Lake McLeod and Texada, but that has nothing to do with my motion and I did not mention them. What is the misinformation? The Minister did not say.

He stressed that this is an all-Australian company. That is very true, but I wonder whether it is an all-Australian company today. I wonder how many shares have been sold perhaps to a Japanese company over the last six or eight months.

The Minister for Industrial Development kept emphasising that the Department of Fisheries and Fauna had the best information possible because it had engaged an expert from overseas to advise it; but who was that expert?

The Minister for Industrial Development would not reply to that nor would he name the person. He is supposed to be a world authority so surely his name is not a secret. We have our own statutory committee made up of fishermen and persons trained in the Department of Fisheries and Fauna. Surely they know the conditions that exist and what is best for the industry.

Both the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Industrial Development kept harping on the point and saying that we have only to open these dams across the narrow necks of the inlets and the fish will come in and the breeding will continue.

From the information I have received on very good authority the fish will not enter these inlets. It is not possible to get the salinity out by letting in the sea water, because the sea water will certainly not flush it out. These inlets ebb and flow. The fish, however, like water with an average salinity, and that is where they breed.

Another point is that the gypsum will have denuded these estuaries of marine life; it will have made them barren for all time. I have no objection to the company whatever and I made that quite clear when I introduced the motion. I admire the company for its tenacity of purpose and the manner in which it has overcome its difficulties. As the Minister for Industrial Development explained, it was necessary for the company to put down large acreages of polyethylene to stop the soakage of water. As a matter of fact in the first instance the company put down about 300 acres of this material. I wonder whether these areas that have been closed off since will be as porous as those at Useless Loop. There is no reason why this should not be the case, because it is all limestone country.

The company's main harvest time is during the summer; it virtually does no harvesting of salt in the winter months. The company has considerable reserves of gypsum on which it relies to carry it through, and last year it was exporting gypsum.

As I have said I do not want to cruel the company or its activities in any way but I certainly do want to see that what is best for the district is done. The reason I have not moved in this direction before is because I wanted to make certain of what was going to happen in relation to the fishermen and also in connection with the salt.

I gave this matter a lot of thought and I eventually moved this motion. I do not want it to be treated lightly nor do I want this situation to be repeated in other

places. I am sure it is the desire of everybody that we should ensure that this fishing industry which has maintained itself in these remote places will continue in its prosperity for as long as is possible. The fishing industry can continue with its activities and the company can continue to win its salt. I am certain that the operations in connection with salt can continue in the area in question and that if no more inlets are closed the fishing industry at Shark Bay will also be able to continue its operations.

I trust the House will look favourably on this motion and will vote accordingly.

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

#### Ayes—19

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Harman
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Blackerton	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Burke	Mr. Norton
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Sewell
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Graham	Mr. Davies
Mr. Grayden	

(Teller)

#### Noes—21

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Mensaros
Sir David Brand	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Cash	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Court	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Craig	Mr. Runciman
Dr. Henn	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Stewart
Mr. Kitney	Mr. Williams
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Young
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. Dunn
Mr. McPharlin	

(Teller)

#### Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. May	Mr. Burt
Mr. Hall	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. McIver	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Jones	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Toms	Mr. I. W. Manning

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

*House adjourned at 9.53 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Thursday, the 9th October, 1969

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

### QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE

#### 1. WATER SUPPLIES

##### *Increase in Rates at Esperance*

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What are the average increases in water rates in—
  - (a) State Housing;
  - (b) business; and
  - (c) other residential areas; at Esperance?

- (2) If the reply to (1) is to the effect that increases have not yet occurred—

- (a) is it anticipated that the rates will be increased; and
- (b) if so, when?

- (3) Will State Housing rentals be affected by such increases?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) No increase since inception.
- (2) (a) Yes, due to revaluation.  
(b) The 1st January, 1970.
- (3) Any increase of rates must eventually be reflected in rents to keep these on an economic basis.

2 to 4. *These questions were postponed.*

#### 5. EDUCATION

##### *Meekatharra Junior High School*

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Will the Minister advise the House if any progress has been made with respect to the supply of further school rooms at the Meekatharra Junior High School?
- (2) Has this matter been discussed by the Minister with the Parents and Citizens' Association of Meekatharra?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) and (2) Finance is not available for additions to Meekatharra primary school this financial year.

#### 6. EDUCATION

##### *Refrigerators at Outback Schools*

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What is the policy of the Government with respect to the supply of kerosene operated refrigerators to outback schools where electric current is not available?
- (2) (a) Is this type of refrigerator acceptable;  
(b) if not, why not?
- (3) Does the Education Department supply refrigeration other than water coolers?
- (4) If not, where one is considered to be necessary for the storage of milk and perishables, whose prerogative is it to arrange for the supply and payment of same?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) and (2) The department provides refrigerators on a subsidy basis only to home economics centres. Kleen-heat gas operated refrigerators are recommended by the