

and the response was overwhelming. This article further stimulated the anxiety of parents to ensure their children are fully protected.

Staff at the National Safety Council handle, on an average, some twenty to forty phone calls each day from parents enquiring about child restraint devices. These parents also visit the Safety Instructional on occasion to examine child restraints in the demonstration room at the Centre and discuss in detail their particular need.

In addition the National Safety Council also distributes two brochures entitled "How you Should Wear your Seatbelt" (advice on child restraints) and "Car Care for the Young".

Approximately 40,000 copies of these publications have been distributed. Copies are available to the Hon. Member if he desires them.

*House adjourned at 5.18 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 16th March, 1972

The SPEAKER (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS

#### *Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Norton): Questions will be taken after 3.00 p.m.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY

#### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 15th March, on the following motion by Mr. Brown:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

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

MR. BERTRAM (Mt. Hawthorn) [11.05 a.m.]: I rise to speak in support of the motion so well presented by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn on Tuesday afternoon last, and formally seconded by the member for Karrinyup. I desire to speak briefly on a few matters.

Listening to the debate so far it seems that in respect of this motion the Government will have a reasonably smooth passage.

Mr. O'Neill: Thank you for the hint.

Mr. BERTRAM: The Leader of the Opposition indicated that many facets of the Governor's Speech would have been similar had he been leading the Government.

Sir David Brand: They were in the previous Speeches.

Mr. Bickerton: Do not stir them up.

Mr. Court: That is the point—not a single new proposal was advanced.

Mr. BERTRAM: If I correctly heard the comment made by the Leader of the Opposition, I am entitled to draw the inference that matters are progressing fairly smoothly and there will not be much attack from the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned quite clearly there had been an increase in the number of unemployed since the Government took office about March of last year.

Sir David Brand: That is a statement of fact.

Mr. BERTRAM: That is a fair comment—statistically there are more people unemployed now than at the time the Government took office. I understood that there was no suggestion that the present Government is in any way to blame for this.

Mr. Rushton: You will hear about that fairly quickly.

Sir David Brand: I said it was the responsibility of a Government.

Mr. BERTRAM: I do not feel we will hear about it, as the member for Dale said. If this assertion was to have been made it would have been stated loudly and clearly and not referred to obliquely.

Sir David Brand: I thought I made it clear enough.

Mr. BERTRAM: It was not said that unemployment had increased by misadventure or default on the part of the Government. If this was the allegation it should have been spelt out precisely and clearly. I am not saying it was the allegation. However, it is true that people reading the Press unfortunately sometimes receive the wrong impression, and I think a number of people reading today's Press would believe this had been said—that the Government had been instrumental in increasing unemployment.

Mr. O'Connor: That would be true.

Mr. BERTRAM: That was not said! Having now made that observation and having put the record straight I can proceed to other matters.

Unemployment is a tragedy for those who suffer it. Unemployment brings trouble and humiliation and it should not be indirectly referred to with a view to scoring points. It is a very real and pressing problem. The task is to put up positive propositions to relieve unemployment and not to make accusations and innuendoes. We must attempt to ameliorate its effect on human life.

The member for Ascot made the point a few months ago that the States have only limited control over unemployment. Now that the world is shrinking and we are so tightly involved on a world plane, employment is affected by Commonwealth and world-wide trends.

Mr. O'Connor: That is a case of passing the buck.

Mr. BERTRAM: It is not a case of passing the buck; there is no buck to pass. I have already demonstrated to those who were listening that no accusation has been made as yet against the Government.

Mr. Court: Plenty have been made.

Mr. BERTRAM: In the matter of unemployment, because of its importance and its impact on the community, quite frankly I should have thought that any accusation—if any were forthcoming—would have come from the Leader of the Opposition and not from further down the line.

Mr. Graham: I think the Leader of the Opposition has been resumed.

Mr. BERTRAM: I think when one has regard for the efforts of the Tonkin Government during 1971, and the difficulties which confronted it; the legislation which it has already presented to this Parliament, more particularly last year; its performance as expressed by His Excellency in his Speech; and also the proposals for legislation during this year, one realises that the Government is well into its stride and, given time, it will fulfil all the undertakings it gave late in 1970 and early 1971.

Looking briefly through the Speech to which I have referred, I notice the following is stated:—

State legislative action on any future Commonwealth proposal for dairy industry control will be taken care of in proposed legislation to replace the Milk Board with a Dairy Industry Authority.

I must confess that I do not know a great deal about the activities of the Milk Board or the detail of the relevant Act. However, down through the years I have from time to time heard comments from people here and there that the quality of milk is not what it ought to be. Others say that the quality of milk in cartons is different from, and maybe superior to, the quality of milk which is delivered to consumers in

bottles. I do not know whether or not those assertions are accurate; but they do occur from time to time and milk happens to be a most important commodity which affects the entire population.

Therefore, I would seek to encourage the Minister, when introducing the proposed Bill, to give an assurance that, as a matter of fact, the quality of milk delivered to consumers is as high as it should be. We know that technological advances are being made constantly, and that there are improved methods of farming and so forth. I do not know when the present quality of milk standard was set—it may have been set many years ago—but it would be good to assure the populace through this House that the milk which is distributed to consumers is of a good enough quality, having due regard for all the circumstances.

Mr. I. W. Manning: I think that assurance could be given.

Mr. BERTRAM: I am pleased to hear that. Maybe the Minister will give an assurance. However, I have heard from other sources that people would be most reluctant to give an assurance. It is by reason of those conflicting views that I raise the matter, because it is a most important one and with few exceptions affects every Western Australian.

I notice also—and I am very pleased to observe this because of its great importance—that the Government proposes to pursue and not retreat from its policy in the matter of education. His Excellency pointed out that it is the most rewarding investment an Administration can make. I think that is probably a very accurate statement.

It is also good to observe that the Government is giving attention and consideration to a general review of the Workers' Compensation Act, and that amending legislation will be recommended. Once again, so many people are affected by this Act that any delay in bringing forward amendments, and any inefficiency in the Act, can bring very great hardship not to just a few but to a great number of people. So it is pleasing to observe that special and prompt attention is being given to that question.

Something like 10 years ago the Third Party Claims Tribunal was brought into being by amendment to the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act. Members will recall that the tribunal was designed to deal with cases arising out of motor vehicle third party claims. It was contended at the time that the conventional courts could no longer deal with cases of that nature because there was a desire to achieve uniformity in the quantum of damages being awarded in third party cases. The idea was to set up one tribunal and by that process to ensure uniformity of decision.

It is understood that the Law Society still believes that the conventional courts—whether it be the District Court or the Supreme Court, or both—should deal with cases of this kind. I think the society has always adopted that attitude. I understand that for some time now a significant delay has occurred in the proceedings before the tribunal, and also that one tribunal principle has had to be departed from by reason of the great volume of litigation and other difficulties which have arisen. So it is most interesting to observe that something is afoot and that an attempt will be made to terminate the existence of the Third Party Claims Tribunal and to allow that jurisdiction to be returned to the ordinary courts. I feel it is also worthy of mention that when the tribunal was created the District Court was not in existence.

When a change of Government occurs many people seem to take the attitude that the whole scheme of things will change and that it will all happen overnight. Of course, this is an attitude which, having been expressed, is supported and given momentum by the Opposition. But all those who know anything also know that just is not possible. Governments of this State are elected for a term of three years, and quite obviously this means that their efforts to put forward their policies and to do the job they undertook to do will require a three-year span. If it can be done in less time, well and good.

I think it is worth while mentioning that when Governments have attended to routine administrative activities, dealt with a tremendous and never-ceasing flow of routine amendments to legislation, and attended to the other multifarious activities which Governments these days must pursue, there simply is not much time available to get on to policy and reform and, more particularly, to achieve a position in which their activities as Governments are keeping pace with the activities in other spheres of life.

This has become very apparent in recent years. Also, I think it has been aggravated to a point by the great liaison that goes on between States, because it is now found that all States are more or less geared to the slowest State and there is a tendency for others, instead of taking the initiative to work out their own destinies, to wait for a few years until another State has taken the initiative to a certain point, and then something is done about the matter. I think, sooner or later—I do not know when—this will happen, but a move will have to be made to allow Governments to have more free time to get down to the business of offering leadership through legislation—not legislation for legislation's sake—so that we are keeping fairly close to the progress of the rest of human activity.

Mr. Rushton: When is the Government going to make some move in regard to the Gouldham case?

Mr. BERTRAM: I can only say that it will no doubt make some effort in a fairly short while. It is unfortunate that certain circumstances come to pass.

Sir David Brand: Will it be favourably finished?

Mr. BERTRAM: Some members have matters nearer and dearer to them than others, but I would suggest that the member for Dale should direct his question to the Attorney-General, where it belongs, and I have no doubt he will give a satisfactory answer. I am a little surprised that the interjection should be forthcoming at all, because I was of the opinion that the honourable member had not shown any sympathy in that direction.

Mr. Rushton: I merely made the interjection because the Government has been in office for some time now and nothing has been done.

Mr. BERTRAM: As I have just been explaining, if the honourable member has been taking notice, the Government cannot do everything overnight, and I would point out that the member for Dale was the member of a Government that did nothing over a period of 10 years in regard to that case, notwithstanding overwhelming public opinion on it.

Mr. Court: You considered it to be a matter of great urgency whilst you were on this side of the House, yet the Government has been in office for 12 months and has done nothing about it.

Mr. BERTRAM: If I did treat the matter as urgent, that was the obvious way to treat it, because a man had been in prison for 47 weeks and two days when he was not guilty. That was what happened to him and the previous Government was not prepared to do anything about it and gave no real reasons.

Mr. Rushton: But your Government said it would redress these problems. Why has it not done so?

Mr. BERTRAM: As I stated before, I do not propose to explain, because there is no point in explaining the matter again if the explanation does not sink in after the first and second occasion. There is nothing to suggest that I will get through to the honourable member if I try to make a further explanation, having pointed out that Governments have very little time to spare to attend to business relating to policy and to introduce completely new thoughts of Government or whatever else consistent with the pace of society. Nevertheless I am a little disappointed that nowhere in his Speech did His Excellency make any mention of the intention to abolish capital punishment. No doubt the Government will, in the fullness of time, get around to that question, and it cannot do it overnight. Therefore, I am not particularly worried; but, as I have said, I am just a little disappointed.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Reference to that question was made in the Governor's Speech last session.

Mr. O'Neill: And will probably be made next session.

Mr. BERTRAM: I cannot recall whether reference was made to it or not, but, as I have said, the previous Government did not get around to it. However, the matter is coming up. Of recent times, the Senate, in the Commonwealth Parliament—

Sir David Brand: A Bill of two lines.

Mr. BERTRAM:—decided in favour of abolition of the capital penalty and it has legislated to that effect within that House, as far as it is competent to do so within the Constitution and its jurisdiction. What the fate of that measure will be when it gets to the House of Representatives remains to be seen. However, if the legislation becomes law—and there is at least the possibility that it shall—we would have the odd situation where a person committing an offence whilst in the services would not be subject to capital punishment, but on the other hand, in Western Australia, a person committing an appropriate offence could find himself punishable in that way. To me that seems to be an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Mr. Rushton: Would you like everything centralised in Canberra?

Mr. BERTRAM: I do not know what that has to do with it, but perhaps the honourable member understands what is meant by his interjection. There are other opinions on this matter, and one is entitled to one's own opinion. It is just a question that one does not always agree with those opinions. Some people are in favour of capital punishment because a convicted person who does not suffer the supreme penalty may subsequently be released and perpetrate a similar offence again.

Of course, there never has been, and never will be, legislation that is foolproof. No matter what legislation is enacted, to some extent all Statutes, somewhere along the line, impose hardship on certain people by reason of the complexity of human existence. But whilst we realise there is the possibility of that type of thing happening, what we have to remind ourselves of at least is that these happenings rarely occur, and Governments do not usually legislate for outside possibilities. Of course, we can also have the reverse type of situation where, by reason of the final act of taking a man's life by hanging or by some other means, occasionally we hear of cases where the person who was hanged was, in fact, not guilty at all.

That seems to me to be an equal tragedy. Recently, in *The West Australian* I read a report of such a case under the heading of "New Doubt on 1954 Hanging." This report was from London and it concerned a man who was convicted but who, right throughout the trial, pleaded innocence.

As was stated in this newspaper report, the convicted man completely denied having anything to do with the child's death, but a jury of 10 men and two women brought in a verdict of guilty after a retirement lasting 6½ hours. In another part of this newspaper report it was mentioned that Scotland Yard detectives were investigating a confession by a man that he had committed the murder for which Hall—the convicted person—was hanged.

So there we have a reference to such a situation occurring. Quite obviously, this newspaper report does not state that the man who is now admitting the guilt was in fact the man who committed the crime, but investigations are taking place and it will be interesting to see what the result will be. As the leader of the Labor Party in the Senate pointed out, there are problems with legislation of this nature, as there are with all legislation, but they have to be tackled in an attempt to solve them.

As I have expressed on so many other occasions, I would very much like to see this State taking the lead on this type of legislation and on other worth-while legislation.

Mr. McPharlin: What about the deterrent factor?

Mr. BERTRAM: The deterrent factor is a matter which has been spoken of on very many occasions, but for which there is absolutely no evidence—if not no evidence, then very little evidence—that forms the basis for justifying capital punishment; because the deterrent does not operate.

Mr. Graham: The British Royal Commission inquiring into capital punishment found that in no part of the world at any time of its history has there been a single example of capital punishment proving to be a deterrent.

Mr. BERTRAM: The deterrent factor seems to be a popular proposition, and on the face of it it seems to be one which would be justified, but under research it has not lived up to the claim. As the Deputy Premier has just said, capital punishment cannot be supported on that ground.

We may say there are not very many certainties at all in life, but I am prepared to say there is one certainty; that is, in the course of time capital punishment in this State will be abolished. The only thing that is not certain is the actual date when it will be abolished. When one is able to satisfy oneself of a certainty in this regard then surely it puts the acid on legislators to get down to the business of legislating.

In the past we have seen very many reforms occurring after years of rejection, refusal, and lengthy debate. The issues having been made are kept afloat; and very rarely is the clock turned back. What

I want to see is the removal of the procrastination and the unnecessary delay. If there is a case for reform what I would like to see is the case worked on promptly and the reform given effect to, so that the people may reap the benefits of such reforms now and not at some far distant future time.

Mr. McPharlin: The Executive Council has power now not to proceed with a sentence of hanging. What are your comments on this?

Mr. BERTRAM: That is correct. Whilst I am not one who believes in legislating at the drop of a hat, there are occasions when legislation is necessary where the public—whatever be the question, and whether it be one involving capital punishment—say, irrespective of the Government which is for the time being in office, "This is what we want done. We do not want any discretion to be left in the hands of a few men, a few women, or a mixture of both sexes. We are telling our Government this, and we are telling the world where we stand." This is a good move, and this is a step towards gearing ourselves to 1970 progress, rather than wobbling around doing things very slowly. That is the answer to the interjection by the member for Mt. Marshall, which interjection I appreciate.

Members of this Chamber who were here a few years ago would remember that I had a few words to say on several occasions touching on the question of cigarette smoking. I was, therefore, a little disappointed to observe there was nothing in His Excellency's Speech which touched on this question. I take the same view as a certain Mr. Hamer, a member of the Legislature of another State, took. Recently he said that about 3,600 Australians were expected to die of lung cancer this year. He went on to say that he was not proposing to stop people from smoking, but he was proposing to stop young people from starting. That is precisely my attitude. For those who may have any doubts on the nature of this great problem and the terrible impact which it has on health and on life itself—what has been referred to as the probable causes brought about by cigarette smoking—they may care to delve into some back volumes of *Hansard* in which they will find ample particulars of what is involved in this question.

They may also like to read a publication by way of a report of the Royal College of Physicians entitled, *Smoking and Health Now* which recently came into my possession. In the introduction, among other things, this is stated—

The total number of deaths attributable to cigarette smoking rises year by year and is likely to continue to do so unless there are radical changes in smoking habits.

The suffering and shortening of life resulting from smoking cigarettes have become increasingly clear as the evidence accumulates. Cigarette smoking is now as important a cause of death as were the great epidemic diseases such as typhoid, cholera, and tuberculosis that affected previous generations in this country.

Mr. Bickerton: How do you reconcile the fact that sex stops one from having a heart attack!

Mr. BERTRAM: I think the Minister should look in other directions for expert advice on a rather complex question. I am a little flattered he should have directed the inquiry to me.

Sir George Godber, the chief medical officer of the British Department of Health and Social Security, gave a lecture in Sydney in 1970. In it he said that cigarette smoking causes the premature death of 100,000 people each year in Britain. I imagine the pattern that obtains in England is near enough to the pattern which we are experiencing in Australia.

In or about July, 1969, the previous Government intimated it was going to do something about this matter, but I was not very greatly impressed with the proposal and said so. Subsequently—I imagine by reason of the fact that perhaps only one State stood out—the Government of the day was frustrated and could not do anything. It was either for that reason or the reason that we have a 1900-model Federal Constitution which throws certain difficulties in the path, or it may be a mixture of both, that nothing was done.

What I say is this: The Governments of Australia are culpable on this question of cigarette smoking by reason of their neglect to give some leadership and to do something about the matter. Strangely enough it is terrible and reprehensible to push drugs which injure health but which in Australia do not very often bring about death, but it is not an offence—and as a matter of fact it is wholly acceptable—to push cigarettes.

The bombardment and the bludgeoning of our young people through advertising of cigarettes is grossly unfair. It is very difficult, and it is totally unacceptable to say to teenagers and to school children, "You should not smoke" if the leaders of our society are not prepared to give some leadership in this direction. They regard that as hypocrisy, and are justified in taking that stand. If they are urged not to smoke cigarettes and not to become hooked, surely we at the head should do something about the matter. At this stage I am slightly disappointed, although the present Government has barely settled into office; but I certainly look forward to some action, which is at all humanly possible for this State to take, to make an impact on this question by acting on its own initiative. This would be a wonderful thing.

Mr. Hutchinson: Stir the Government up!

Mr. Bickerton: Thank goodness I am a pipe smoker!

Mr. BERTRAM: As such the Minister is immune from the evil influence that flows from smoking cigarettes.

Of recent times it was good to notice the comment by the Attorney-General that he has taken some initiatives to determine the presently existing right of final appeal to the Privy Council.

As I understand it, some years ago the Canadians took appropriate measures to determine that right of appeal so far as it affected Canadians; and a year or so ago, once again in my belief so belatedly, the Federal Parliament gave some leadership in the matter because it similarly put an end to appeals to the Privy Council; but the States have not yet done so. However, it is good to observe that something is being done; because it seems to me to be a classic anachronism for a tribunal situated 12,000 miles away and comprising members some, or perhaps all, of whom could conceivably never have been, for example, into the State of Western Australia, to be over there determining issues concerning the State of Western Australia or its citizens. It seems to me to be amongst other things, something of an adverse reflection upon the judiciary of Australia and this in itself is a bad thing.

I believe that if the truth were known there would be an overwhelming number of Australians who take the view that the High Court of Australia should be the final court of appeal for Australians. Therefore, as I have said, it pleases me to observe that action is under way and the Attorney-General in this State is giving it some momentum; because once again this is a reform which need not be played around and fiddled with until 1980. It is an inevitable reform and once we are satisfied on that point—and I think we should be satisfied on that point—we should take all necessary and proper steps and not delay, in this case, to determine the right of appeal which does currently exist for Western Australians to the Privy Council.

A few years ago, I think in a debate similar to this one, I drew the attention of the appropriate Minister at that time to the matter of sewerage in the Mt. Hawthorn electorate. That electorate is a relatively old, built-up area, a point which I made at that time. A little building is still in progress but a large portion of the area is old whilst other portions, I suppose, have been built up on an average for maybe 20 years, more or less.

This being so it is an electorate which so far as I can observe has not for some years made very significant demands upon the public purse for works of one sort and another. Therefore, because of that, and because people are entitled to the best sewerage services which can be obtained,

I urge the Minister for Works to give real consideration to sewerage works being done in the Mt. Hawthorn electorate.

I think I should indicate that there are a couple of substantial areas requiring attention, one roughly bounded by Sasse Avenue, Scarborough Beach Road, and Harborne Street, and the other larger area bounded roughly by Stoneham, Hector, Charles, and Green Streets. A number of residences are situated on fairly low ground and in many cases the blocks are quite small and the backyards are of a very limited area. For these two reasons, and the fact that the homes have been there and in use for many years, it is evident that a real problem, sewerage-wise, exists in connection with the maintenance of the septic tank system.

I certainly hope the Minister will look at this matter at a very early date and treat it with the priority it deserves.

In or about 1958 or 1959 the Tuart Hill Senior High School was told that a hall/gymnasium would be built at that school.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. BERTRAM: Since then 13 years or thereabouts have elapsed and that school still does not have a hall/gymnasium whilst, on the other hand, certain schools which were not in the forefront of allocations, so far as I can gather, do have their halls or gymnasiums as the case may be.

I am very pleased to state that in recent times the Minister intimated that the hall/gymnasium for the Tuart Hill Senior High School will shortly be constructed. I think it is not inappropriate at this juncture to compliment the officers and members of that particular parents and citizens' association for their persistence in this matter, and—

Mr. Lewis: Has there been a revision of priorities?

Mr. BERTRAM: —for their efforts in order to obtain this hall which is really an essential part of a modern high school.

I am unable to deal with the position of priorities at the moment because I do not know the answer to that interjection.

It is also worth while observing that although the parents and citizens' association has been so energetic in the pursuit of what it believes it is entitled to obtain, it is a very live-wire body and does not confine itself to efforts and asking for help in connection with a hall/gymnasium. It does a sterling job and amongst other things it has planned for, had constructed, and has now paid for a swimming pool. Amongst other achievements it has produced some great swimmers, one of recent time being John Kulasalua who has had his opportunity largely, as I say, as a result of the efforts of that particular association.

Mr. Bickerton: They are having Hall trouble in South Australia, too.

Mr. BERTRAM: Certain members were in South Australia only a few days or weeks ago and it seems they threw a spanner or two into the hall of fame over there. Having said those things, and as I have already intimated, I support the motion.

**MR. MENSAROS (Floreat) [11.48 a.m.]:** I welcome the opportunity which this debate affords me and wish to use it to try to demolish in this House the recently built-up shaky case against the Legislative Council. I shall contradict, indeed tear to pieces, the false, hypocritical, and biased arguments which are used for party political expediency only. They are supported by minor members of the Labor Party and, unfortunately, aided by the media against our balanced democratic system of the legislative and executive branches of Government.

It is the easy but unfair way out to show blatantly only one side of the argument, in a complex issue, to a relatively ignorant audience and so try to achieve an initial cheap but undeserved victory; for only one side of the argument was used and reported on this vitally important subject trying to project a wrong as a right to the public. Hence my endeavour to show the other side and then allow thinking and intelligent people to decide for themselves where the truth and the real interest of our community lie within the framework of democracy as opposed to dictatorship.

There are three broad categories of criticism and attack against our second Chamber which are used from time to time—always as political expediency demands—separately, or cumulatively as a package deal.

The first line of attack is based on the so-called "one-vote one-value" principle and deplores the unequal weighting of provinces and accuses the Council of being politically unrepresentative, thus lacking the ethical authority to be an equal partner of the Legislative Assembly. In the past, proponents of this line used to attack only the franchise of the Legislative Council, but having achieved a general franchise without furthering their political aim, they now combat the distribution of provinces.

The second category comprises the abolitionists who completely reject the bicameral system and advocate a single Chamber of legislation, representation, and Executive power. The latter, although seldom emphasised, is consequential as one-quarter of the Executive usually sits in the Council.

The third category of criticism complains about the constitutional rights and composition of the Upper House, and merely considers it to be too powerful. Their nebulous, undefined aim is to trans-

fer the Legislative Council into a non-party—perhaps, non-elective—Chamber possessing advisory power only. I will deal with these three categories of attack separately.

To combat the first line of attack intelligently is very hard indeed, if not impossible, as there does not seem to be an accepted definition of the mythic principle of one-vote one-value. The present self-endorsed crusaders in the campaign against the Legislative Council have not even attempted to define the principle. Those crusaders state that the electoral system of the Council does not comply with the one-vote one-value democratic principle, but they then do not explain what that principle means. This argument is used as a red herring and they themselves do not know what it means or, if they do know, they conveniently conceal the meaning from the public whom they wish to deceive.

Mr. Taylor: In which category would you put the situation where the majority of people vote for a party and that party cannot gain representation? Would that be one-vote one-value?

Mr. MENSAROS: I will come to that in the course of my speech.

Mr. Taylor: Would you cover the point under one of your three categories?

Mr. MENSAROS: It will come up under the first category. The only avenue open to me is to indulge in a guessing game in an attempt to cover all the systems which might apply to the one-vote one-value principle.

The frequently quoted allegation that the Australian Labor Party received almost half the votes cast in the last Legislative Council election—yet it gained only 27 per cent. of the seats—would indicate to me that the crusaders wish to do away with the regional electoral system and treat the whole of the State as one electorate. This has never been advocated officially by the Labor Party, and to the best of my knowledge it is not Labor policy. Besides that, it is a system which does not exist anywhere else, and rightly so because such a system of overall representation would deny absolutely the principle of personal representation.

If the whole of the State were to be treated as one electorate the people would have to vote for lists of representatives presented by each party or group participating in the election, and would not be able to vote for any individual person. Consequently, the representative role of members of Parliament—so important in Australia—would disappear entirely.

If, for argument's sake, we accepted this overall voting system a further question arises as to whether or not the elected Chamber—in our case, the Legislative Council—would have proportional representation. In other words, would the

various parties and groups taking part in the election have the same percentage of candidates elected as was their percentage of primary votes?

Using the 1971 Legislative Council election as an example, would Labor have gained seven seats out of 15 because it received 47 per cent. of the total primary vote? Would the Democratic Labor Party have been represented by two members, as it received approximately 14½ per cent. of the vote? Such a suggestion—undemocratic and unrepresentative as it is—might at first sight appeal to the present-day crusaders because it would appear to bring them closer to their only aim—to gain and retain power.

On the surface an even more convenient solution would appear to be, of course, that the party with the majority of votes would have all the members elected to Parliament. It could be argued with a twisted logic that this was quite democratic because it complies with the principle of the majority rule. This is no hypothetical joke; Hitler once achieved a scant majority before he assumed power and with that majority he made sure that no opposition party could ever sit in the Reichstag. However, I reject this possibility because not even the most biased crusaders could claim that such a system would satisfy the one-vote one-value principle.

Reverting to the possibility of overall proportional representation, one wonders why this was never officially advocated by the Labor Party. The reason is very simple: because it would not suit the party's political expediency.

The socialists who are represented only by the Labor Party, and possibly by the Communist Party, never achieve an absolute majority of the votes cast in the State. In an overall vote the Labor Party could not even come near the magic figure of 47 per cent. In fact, to quote the figure of 47 per cent. is intellectually dishonest. It is only quoted to mislead the public.

This figure completely ignores the fact that the Liberal Party did not take part in the elections for the South-East Province, the North-East Metropolitan Province, and the South Metropolitan Province. Those three large provinces comprise 160,000 of the 537,000 electors in the State. There was also a lack of other nonsocialist party candidates in a great number of provinces.

With the introduction of proportional overall representation the nonsocialist parties would obviously combine against the socialist parties. They would either combine on a joint list before the election, or form a coalition after their majority had been elected. As a consequence, and basing my argument upon the past performance of the Labor Party, Labor would remain permanently in the minority. As

such a State-wide overall proportional electoral system obviously would not suit Labor's political expediency I have to revert to the accepted system of group representation and examine it to see whether this system could conform with the one-vote one-value principle.

At every election—even if the election is obviously rigged and is a gimmick to be able to use the much abused word "democracy" as in the Soviet Union and its satellites—people vote within some grouping. Consequently, the value of their vote prevails within the group, and the groups are called electorates, as they have some common interest. The majority voters of each elect usually one, but sometimes more than one, candidate to the Legislature. These groups can be constituted in various ways.

An examination of the merits and demerits of the various ways, such as the corporate system, the method whereby there is an overall proportionate vote within an electorate, and the mixture of occupational and regional representation would lend itself to an interesting separate study. As none of these were even mentioned, let alone advocated by the crusaders, I shall be concerned only with the most widely-accepted method of regional grouping of electorates.

Mr. Taylor: The Federal electorates are one-man one-value. Would you accept the same situation in Western Australia for the Assembly: namely, one-man one-value as in the Commonwealth?

Mr. MENSAROS: I will come to this. The Minister means "one-man one-value" as expressed in terms of electorates of equal number.

Mr. Taylor: In equally sized electorates.

Mr. MENSAROS: I will suggest that under certain circumstances other aspects are more important than this.

Mr. Taylor: More important than what the Commonwealth does?

Mr. MENSAROS: More important than the numerical system; I will not be drawn into verbal play.

Elections under the Westminster system, which we have adopted, and under the United States system are decided on a regionally constituted seat-by-seat basis. When the boundaries of these seats develop or are designed the primary aims, in answer to the Minister for Labour, are to give adequate representation to every part of the country, to consider community interests, to take notice of the size of the region, to observe the interests of minorities—which is a very important democratic principle—and to look at the number of voters. The number of voters, however, is not the first and only consideration.



To cry "gerrymander" is justified only if any one of these considerations is deliberately applied against one particular party or group. The fact that this is not the case in Western Australia has been indicated repeatedly and clearly by the Labor Party itself.

When the major amendments to the Electoral Districts Act providing for the present system of the Legislative Council provinces were introduced in 1963-64 they were unanimously accepted by both Houses of Parliament. In fact, there was not one single vote against them and, therefore, not one single vote against the present setup.

Secondly, when electoral boundaries were recently redistributed by the Electoral Commissioners, the Leader of the Labor Party, the Premier himself, commended the fair and objective way in which the Act was being implemented. Consequently neither the Act nor its application has been criticised officially by the Labor Party.

If our Electoral Districts Act were such a monstrous gerrymander, as stated by the new crusaders, why is it that the Province of Manitoba in Canada accepted most of its principles and almost even its wording, a fact which I discovered some two years ago when I was there?

There is no cry of "gerrymander" in the United States of America where Alaska has the same number of senators as California, although the latter has approximately 40 times the population and, consequently, 40 times as many voters.

Mr. Davies: The representation has been under review for years.

Mr. MENSAROS: The representation of senators of each State in the United States? I have never heard of this. I am speaking of the Upper House, which is a most important and powerful Upper House, and I am drawing a comparison between that Upper House and our own.

Similarly, Tasmania has 10 senators, the same as New South Wales, although it has a much smaller population. If Senate representation in the Australian Commonwealth were determined on the basis of numerically-equal electorates, as the Minister for Labour suggests, Western Australia would have scarcely any representation, whether Labor or Liberal.

Mr. Taylor: Would you repeat that point as I could not quite hear it.

Mr. MENSAROS: To further illustrate that equality of numbers is not the prevailing factor one has only to look at the example of the House of Commons. At the 1970 general election the seat of Birmingham-Ladywood was won by Labour with 11,600 electors voting, while another seat, Billericay, in Essex, was won by a Conservative member with nearly 100,000 electors voting. This is as marked as any

numerical discrepancy in our Legislative Council. Also in the House of Commons, Scotland is deliberately over-represented with its 70 seats averaging half the size of the 12 Ulster seats. This is justified since Northern Ireland has its own Parliament whereas the Scots are an important minority who need special protection. There is no cry of "gerrymander" despite the fact that Ulster is Tory and Scotland predominantly Labour.

Mr. Taylor: I understand the U.K. electorates are equal in numbers, except when they get out of proportion.

Mr. MENSAROS: The fact remains that 100,000 voters elected a Conservative member while only 11,600 voters elected a Labour member.

Mr. Taylor: This would have applied in the metropolitan area before the redistribution.

Mr. MENSAROS: The figures I have given were taken from the last general election in 1970.

It is obvious in a vast State like ours, which is so sporadically populated, that the geographical size of an electorate and the interests of people in remote areas have to be of primary consideration. Not only do the vast distances make representation in some sparsely-populated areas more difficult but the problems of the people are more difficult and more time-consuming to resolve.

A city dweller, within half an hour at the most, can reach the highest deciding authority in the Minister's office. Consequently a city dweller, or his representative, is able to look after his own case within a very short space of time. In country areas similar action would take sometimes two days and would entail the person concerned losing time which he normally would spend in his occupation, as well as considerable expense.

These are but a few of the difficulties which also confront members who represent constituents in remote areas. Mr. Speaker, we have yet to hear from you or from the Minister for Housing, the member for Pilbara, that you find your electorates too small or over-represented, and that you could easily take care of the other three north-west seats which, incidentally, in aggregate take in 90 per cent. of Western Australia's land area. Contrary to the member for Mirrabooka and the member for Ascot, I consider, Sir, that you both have a big enough job as it is.

However, let us look at the question of whether this numerically unequal distribution of seats really and permanently favours, or is against, a single political party, whether it be the Labor Party or any other party.

The two territorially largest, yet numerically smallest north-west provinces in the Legislative Council returned one Labor and

one Liberal member at the last election, as well as the one before. Of the five territorially smallest but numerically largest metropolitan seats, three elected Liberal members and two returned Labor members at the last election. There cannot be any claim of "gerrymander."

The simple reason is that Labor did not have candidates good enough to be elected. This is most obvious when we look at the figures of the Canning electoral district within the South-East Metropolitan Province. Provided the preferences had gone the same way in Canning as in the rest of the province, which is only fair to presume, on the counts of the Upper House the Liberals would have won. Yet in the Lower House Canning returned a Labor member.

Exactly the same applies to the Albany electorate, if anyone would like to check the figures. On the Upper House figures the Liberal candidate would have been returned provided the preferences went the same way as in the aggregate for the South Province.

Another proof of the fact that the present situation is not a gerrymander is that with the proposed new boundaries for the provinces one can fairly say that of the total 15, equal numbers of five, five, and five safely belong to the Labor Party, the Liberal Party-Country Party Coalition, and are doubtful provinces, respectively. I can go through a mathematical exercise and easily prove that even if we were to have numerically absolutely equal electorates there would be a possibility of gerrymander if people wanted to do it.

Let us suppose we have 10 electorates each with 10 voters and each electing one representative. It could easily happen that in six of those electorates six people in each voted for Labor; therefore 36 people would have elected six Labor members. It could further happen that in each of the other four electorates 10 people voted for Liberal and that the remaining four people in each of the first six electorates also voted for Liberal. In this case 36 votes would have produced six Labor members and 64 votes only four Liberal members. This is a hypothetical example which shows that the equal distribution of electorates does not solve the problem of gerrymander.

Mr. Taylor: How do you explain the situation where in the Upper House last session the representatives of the majority of the people voted for daylight saving but the vote was lost as the representatives of a minority of the electors had greater numbers and defeated the legislation? This is a cross party vote.

Mr. MENSAROS: Where did the people vote for daylight saving?

Mr. Taylor: The representatives of the people were in the minority in the Upper House.

Mr. Fletcher: Answer that!

Mr. Jamieson: He has not researched that one.

Mr. MENSAROS: I have tried to prove that under the generally accepted system of regional electorates, which has worked satisfactorily, the principle of one-vote one-value cannot apply equitably in a pure numerical sense.

I would now like to show that my contention has been supported by the Labor Party in the past, and only recently has it been argued to the contrary.

As most members know, up to and including the 1962 election there was a qualification relating to the Legislative Council franchise which was often termed—not quite correctly—"the property franchise." During all that time there was not a single Labor voice demanding an equal number of votes in the provinces. The reason for that was very simple, and I would like the Minister for Labour to listen to this.

Before 1962, when there were 10 provinces in the Legislative Council, each electing three members, numerically the provinces were weighted very heavily against the Liberal and Country Parties. There were 13 Labor members in the Legislative Council, 12 of whom were returned from four provinces having an aggregate of 85,000 potential voters. The thirteenth Labor member was elected in the Suburban Province, which also had two Liberal members. The 17 Liberal and Country Party members were returned from provinces representing a total of 246,000 potential voters. Therefore, 85,000 electors returned 12 Labor representatives, and 246,000 voters returned 17 Liberal and Country Party members. That was the position until 1965; and, of course, there had been no cry for equal numbers for each province.

When The Hon. Ruby Hutchison presented one of her several Bills for general franchise, one of the members for the Metropolitan Province (The Hon. Dr. Hislop) stated in his speech that he would support the Bill provided the boundaries were equitably redistributed and provided also that there would be a compulsory vote. At that time the Labor Party was very happy about that. Dr. Hislop was as good as his word. Within a week or two he promptly introduced a motion incorporating those principles. Because the motion was passed in the Council without a dissentient voice, the Brand Government subsequently decided to implement its provisions.

As a consequence, the three major Acts—the Constitution Act, the Electoral Act, and the Electoral Districts Act—were amended. The amendments were passed without a dissentient voice. In many cases the presiding officer remarked that there was not a dissentient voice, and at that time not a single Labor voice was raised

against the very same Electoral Districts Act, the implementation of which was called "a shoddy farce" by the member for Mirrabooka in his article in a newspaper on the 20th February, 1972.

At that time the Labor Party was rejoicing and thought it would win a majority in the Council with a sweep. However, the Labor Party fared worse than ever before; hence the sudden change and the abuse for the Act which the Labor Party itself voted in in its present form in relation to the Legislative Council. Can anyone condemn me when I say repeatedly that the high principles of the present-day crusaders are motivated only by political expediency?

Let us go a step further. Let us suppose the critics want numerically equal provinces to satisfy their "one-vote, one-value" slogan; and let us suppose they achieve it. Provided there were an equitable redistribution of boundaries, this in itself would by no means guarantee that one party or the other would automatically obtain a majority in the Upper House.

If the Labor Party did not obtain a majority, what would be the next line of attack? It would be an attack against preferential voting—the unique and most democratic system which gives the greatest consideration for the minority. However, as I said before in regard to the possibility of proportional overall representation, that would not do any good, either, because in the absence of preferential voting the anti-socialist parties would combine in certain provinces and obtain a majority against the single socialist party—the Labor Party.

Therefore, the ultimate endeavour would have to be the abolition of the Upper House. This is the second main line of attack, as I mentioned before, which deserves special attention in discussing the merits and demerits of the bicameral Legislature. This I shall do, paying special regard to our British system whereby Parliament, in addition to its legislative power, also provides the Executive, and members of both Houses have also a very important representative role for the benefit of the electors.

I notice that the abolitionists, for lack of more serious sources of reasoning, use the cheap argument that if the Council agrees with the Assembly it is superfluous; if it does not agree with the Assembly it is not democratic and there is therefore no justification for its existence. This I dismiss as a cynical sophism. It is similar to the syllogistic sophism about democracy which states that as there are more ignorant people than informed, intelligent people, and as democracy is the rule of the majority, consequently democracy is the rule of stupidity. This reasoning can be dismissed; it is very convenient to use it as one side of an argument.

Natural historical development in older countries has proved the importance of and democratic necessity for the checks and balances of the bicameral legislative system. This has also been recognised by responsible framers of newer constitutions. Similarly, every individual or group with dictatorial ambitions always endeavours first to abolish the second Chamber in order to perpetuate its own power.

It is no coincidence that most democratic countries have a bicameral system, and even more significant that most of those countries which have abolished it later reverted to it.

Most of us know John Stuart Mill's reasoning, which I shall read with your indulgence, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. A. R. Tonkin), as it is still relevant and has not lost any of its importance being based on human nature, which has not changed. The passage reads—

The consideration which tells most in my judgment in favour of two Chambers is the evil effect produced upon the mind of any holder of power, whether an individual or an assembly, by the consciousness of having only themselves to consult.

A majority in a single assembly, when it has assumed a permanent character, when composed of the same persons, habitually acting together, and always assured of a victory in their own House, easily becomes despotic and overweening, if released from the necessity of considering whether its Act will be concurred in by another constituent authority.

Mr. Taylor: Mill was talking before party politics and in a situation where there were two distinct groups in two Houses. We have a completely different situation.

Mr. MENSAROS: This is still applicable. One might propose—without being irreverent—an additional thought to this, which Mill could hardly have imagined in his gentlemanly world. This thought is that a single House can, without any obstruction, perpetuate its ruling majority by so gerrymandering electoral boundaries that no Opposition can ever obtain a majority.

Even the Romans had two consuls—although they were elected yearly—to counteract the corruptive influence of undivided power. Recent events have best shown to the Western Australian public the justification and fundamental importance of the Council's legislative role. In the Executive-dominated Legislative Assembly last year, the Government was carried away with enthusiasm and would not even have considered a prior investigation and reports of its own Environmental Protection Authority before signing the agreement to establish the Upper Swan refinery. Had it not been for the more

objective, wiser advice of the Council, we would now have a huge pollution generator at the fringe of our city.

The importance and democratic necessity in the legislative field of the second Chamber is not only to guard against corruptive influence of undivided power and to restrain excesses but also in everyday routine legislation to provide a much needed review, check, and safeguard against hurried, faulty legislation, or temporary fancies. This check works just as much, indeed more often, to the benefit of the Government as to the advantage of the Opposition.

We all know that sometimes, and especially towards the end of the session, Bills are drafted hurriedly and introduced. However good the draftsman is there can be errors and omissions. If there is only one Chamber, these errors could result in a difficult implementation of the Act. There would be a necessity for further amending legislation and this would unnecessarily tax Parliament's time. With a second reviewing Chamber there is time and opportunity to remedy most of these faults. Indeed, the Government uses this device itself.

In the last sessions of our State Parliament the amendments initiated or accepted by the Government in the Council far exceeded the few which the Opposition forced upon the Government.

Our Legislative Council has additional justification in that not all second Chambers of Parliament play such a representative role as our Council. The two-tier Parliament in Western Australia offers and discharges full representation. Each constituent is represented by two members of the Legislative Council as well as an Assembly member. This incorporates an important principle of democracy as a constituent can choose between parties for a solution of personal grievances. For example, an elector in Albany is represented in the Assembly by a Labor member and in the Council by a Country Party and a Liberal member.

When an Assembly member is unable to give proper attention to electors owing to ministerial commitments or prolonged absence or illness, the elector can turn to the members of the Legislative Council.

It is no solution simply to say that the abolition of the Council can be balanced by the provision of 30 additional Assembly seats. This would not make John Citizen's life any easier because he would be represented by one member instead of the three he can now call upon.

Finally, one cannot overlook the Executive function of the Council, which has long provided one-quarter of the Executive. If all Ministers were in the Assembly it would be top heavy and there would be even less chance to achieve a healthy bal-

ance and offer influence on the Executive by the members with legislative power only.

The present Labor Government seems to support entirely this important aspect by maintaining three Ministers in the Council. Had it supported the view of the crusading abolitionists, it could easily have used its constitutional power by appointing one Minister only in the Council.

The third and final line of attack against the Legislative Council is only concerned with—what is termed—its excessive power. Having regard for what I have said so far, I cannot see any earthly reason why the Legislative Council, whose members have been elected on general franchise according to Labor's wishes, have stood accountable to their particular electorates, larger and different from those in the Assembly, and who have received a definite and personal vote of approval from their constituents, should not be able to initiate, amend, or reject legislation as it sees fit.

The sole aspect to be considered—whether the powers of the Council are based on popular mandate—is that only half of its members were elected at the time the whole of the Assembly was last elected. It has never yet occurred in our State, although it could also happen, that the Council election is held at a different time from the Assembly election. Of course, this is the case with the election for the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia.

**THE SPEAKER:** The honourable member has five minutes more.

**MR. MENSAROS:** The overlapping elections in the second Chamber are deliberately designed to ensure balance and to curb excessive fancies. Nevertheless, because of the possibility that the overlapping election of Council members may mean that the Council does not entirely represent the present popular view, it is agreed that vital and paramount issues which are part of Government policy, should not be rejected outright by the Council.

It is untrue to say that the Council entirely governs the State. I would like to give a few examples from the two sessions last year. Of 10 Bills to which amendments were proposed, in six cases the Government initiated or concurred in the amendments or dropped the Bill, realising its grave error and sometimes that it had insulted members' intelligence.

Of the remaining four Bills, amendments to the Parliamentary Commissioner Bill were proposed by both sides. One significant issue initiated by the Opposition was supported by the Minister for Police.

In the Vermin Act Amendment Bill—not even mentioned in the policy speech—the Opposition prevented the Government from executing a bushranger action by retrospectively compelling people to pay taxes.

Amendments moved by the Opposition to the Marketing of Linseed Bill provided that before any seed can be subject to compulsory pool, a ballot of producers must be taken. To pool the seed compulsorily would have been a most undemocratic action.

I have already mentioned the insistence of the Council to have the site of the proposed Upper Swan alumina refinery examined by the Environmental Protection Authority. In fact, supporters of the Labor Party ought to be very grateful to the Legislative Council on this and many other occasions for having cut the rope with which their Government intended to hang itself.

Mr. Taylor: Did you say we should be grateful to the Legislative Council?

Mr. MENSAROS: Yes. The Council insisted on the report of the Environmental Protection Authority. The Government has the report now. Everybody would have blamed the Government if it had gone ahead without waiting for the report, which is what the Minister wanted to do.

The only Bill initiated in the Lower House and rejected in the Upper House was the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill. The Government promised in its policy speech to abolish road maintenance tax, but then tied it up with enormous increases in license fees for commercial vehicles—a most undesirable and unpopular action.

So this is the history of the much-abused Council and it speaks loudly and clearly to its credit.

I know that I was not able to convince or convert the biased crusaders, despite the fact that I have shown clearly that some of their suggestions, if implemented, could hardly benefit their only aim of political expediency.

This, however, was not my task. If I have helped by showing facts and vital arguments to those objective thinkers whose minds were muddled by the one-sided reports, I have done my duty to help retain true democracy in our State.

#### *Point of Order*

Sir DAVID BRAND: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, could I ask you whether there has been a change of policy regarding television cameras in this Chamber?

The SPEAKER: Television cameras have been allowed in this Chamber before. This morning I gave permission to Channel 7 to take a short film of the Chamber in session.

Mr. Bickerton: Didn't you have your makeup on?

Mr. Court: There is usually some prior announcement.

Sir David Brand: There might be a shot of the empty Government benches.

#### *Debate (on motion) Resumed*

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [12.33 p.m.]: Before I direct myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, I would like to compliment the member for Floreat on the sound speech he has just delivered.

Mr. Lapham: Did you understand it?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Yes, I understood it thoroughly, and it was certainly firmly based. I think it is time these matters were brought to the notice of the community at large. I will not attempt to add to what the member for Floreat said in his well-considered speech. However, I would like to say that now we have in office a Government which is determined to deprive, and has announced its intention of depriving, the country areas of half of their voting power, it is time the community realised what is going on. It is time the people woke up to the fact that this Government seeks to deprive the people in vast, sparsely-settled areas of this State of some of their voting power. Under the new set-up I will have 10 local authorities within my boundaries. What a difficult electorate I would have if I had been allocated 20 local authorities.

Mr. Gayfer: I have none.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I am concerned that the people are being misled on this subject and it is time it was brought to light. I will not comment any further on that aspect because if I did I would be covering ground that the previous speaker has already covered so well.

I have read the Governor's Speech to find out what major legislation is to be brought forward. One would expect that at this time legislation would be produced to boost this State, which needs it so much. However, I defy anybody to go through that Speech and find anything which will provide for a boost to the economy of the State or provide for employment or do anything else to alleviate the difficulties in which we find ourselves. It is time the Government gave thought to some of these points.

I think the most important legislation mooted is that proposed in connection with natives, and a considerable amount of new legislation is involved. But I would suggest that we already have enough legislation to accomplish anything we desire. Statutes have no effect unless they are applied to the people at whom they are directed. I feel that probably we already have enough social welfare measures in regard to natives. I would not deprive them of social welfare in cases where they are in need of it; but the situation is that so much social welfare is available to natives that they have no desire to work and they are prepared to sit back and live on these payments.

This applies to natives of all ages, including the young people who have one or two children. They seem to think that whilst they are on social services they can live quite comfortably on the reserves and they do not worry about anything else. That is their attitude, and that is why they are on the streets.

Mr. Harman: Would not their payments be stopped if they were offered work by the Commonwealth Employment Service?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Yes, that is correct. However, it does not work that way because even if their unemployment benefits are stopped, the social welfare people come in to aid them and their families. So there is no way in which these natives can really be deprived.

I noticed recently that local authorities employed a number of natives when moneys were advanced to them from the Commonwealth contribution directed at providing employment. This is a good move because the natives have an occupation with which to fill in their time thus preventing them from being idle on the streets. This has also had the effect of reducing the number of court cases in which natives are involved.

I believe this is the way it should be. If the natives are to receive social service benefits, they should work for them. It is time we took control of the situation and prevented some of the terrible instances where the police are forced to deal with these people.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I never heard the honourable member making the same comments when he sat behind the previous Government in which his own colleague was the Minister concerned.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I have made similar comments during the 16 years I have been in this House. I have been critical of the conditions of the natives, even though I may not have used the same words. I realise that this is a problem for which nobody has a ready answer, and so I am making some suggestions which may help at the present time.

One glaring instance is in relation to aged people. If they are admitted to a hospital they are entitled to free treatment; but if they are in receipt of a pension, that pension continues to be paid to them. Whilst they are in hospital they have no need of that pension, apart from a few cents of it. In some cases the pension is saved for them, but in the case of natives it is not saved and the family of the patient finds ways and means of spending it.

Mr. McIver: That does not apply only to natives.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I did not say it does; however, I am directing my remarks to natives in particular. With regard to white people, it is a fact that they do not need the pension whilst they are in hospital because they have nothing to spend it on.

They receive free treatment. In most cases the matter is dealt with correctly and the pension is placed in the patient's account. If they are hospitalised for a long period we find that they accumulate so much funds that their pensions are reduced.

Mr. Harman: Do you want to take away the pension from a person who is in hospital?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I am suggesting that they should not receive free hospital treatment and the pension at the same time.

Mr. Harman: So you want to take it away from them?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It could be offset against the hospital charges; I do not care which way it is handled. But there is no reason why they should be given free hospital treatment and also a pension to enable them to live whilst their living is provided free of charge. We are paying for this expense, and surely it is unnecessary. In the case I have mentioned it is not doing any good.

Mr. Fletcher: What about the dependants?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: How many would there be of pensioners? I suggest that all this is creating trouble among the natives in the towns and on the reserves, because not only are they receiving their own social service benefits but they are also receiving the pensions of elderly people who are in hospital, and as a result they have too much money to spend, most of which is spent by them to fill in their idle time. So I emphasise that they have too much idle time.

One of the matters I am concerned about in the proposed legislation—in fact, it seems it does not come within the legislation but is an administrative arrangement—is that the housing of natives is to be taken over by the State Housing Commission. As the Native Welfare Department has performed such a wonderful job in this regard I have some reservations about the State Housing Commission bringing native housing within its jurisdiction.

Mr. Bertram: Do the natives prefer it?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I do not know whether the natives prefer it, but I am quite sure the natives were all satisfied with the way the Native Welfare Department was handling their housing problems, because they have been treated extremely well by that department. It has encouraged the natives to care for their homes and this proved to be an ideal situation. In fact, I cannot see how it could be improved. I suggest that although the provision of houses for natives is important it is not the end-all of the overall problem. A native may be allocated a house but after a while he may have to be evicted because

he does not look after it properly. This often results from the lack of understanding of the people in authority.

I can cite an example in my own district where an organisation of women help natives in their own houses by teaching them home-making practices which assist them to care for their homes. The District Native Council has a scheme operating whereby natives are encouraged to look after their houses. The district committee has purchased a lawnmower which it lends to natives for \$1 a time; this covers the fuel and maintenance of the mower. By this means members of the committee encourage natives to improve their own lawns. This has been a popular move, and there is no doubt that it encourages natives to take an interest in their houses. It may be considered that these are only small matters, but they are extremely important.

In the last few years a course has been in operation at the Pingelly Junior High School in which boys who are non-academics are taught manual arts. At the school there is a specialist who trains the boys in stonework, woodwork, and other manual work, and it is indeed a pleasure to pay a visit to that school to see the work the boys have done in the school grounds. They, of course, make up a class in which white students are also included. I would suggest, therefore, that it would be more profitable to the community if the Press and other news media would publish reports on matters such as this that are going on throughout the State, instead of publishing reports of the dirty spots that are frequented by natives, and the wrongful acts that may be committed by them.

Such action by the Press is very wrong. I know of a recent case of a native from Narrogin who came to Perth and made a statement to the Press. Evidently the Press will listen to foolish statements made by natives and is prepared to publish them. This case happened only a few weeks ago, and the facts are that this man has been in and out of jobs quite frequently. Jobs have been found for him over and over again, but he will not stay in Narrogin. He is more interested in coming to Perth and talking to the Press and to his friends in the city.

Mr. T. D. Evans: He might want to become a politician.

W. A. MANNING: This is the sort of thing that is occurring in Narrogin. Money has been spent on homes for girls and boys who are students at high school, and also for those who are working. Thousands of dollars have been directed to this end. If Governments worked along these lines to a greater extent more benefit would result. In my opinion this is the sort of action that should be taken to assist natives.

There is another item in the Governor's Speech that refers to traffic control and local government.

*Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.*

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Before the suspension for lunch I was about to deal with one or two points concerning local government, which is often referred to as the third arm of Government. However, at different times when I look around and see the way local government is conducted I wonder whether it is not the second arm of Government, with the State coming third.

I believe very firmly in local government, and we should give local governing bodies every opportunity to use the local knowledge they possess and to accept responsibility for a large measure of the amenities that are provided in their particular areas. Their responsibilities should be commensurate with the importance of local government. I do not believe local government should have to lean on the State Government to ask for many things; and it should not have to lean on the State Government to seek permission to do certain things. There is too much of this. Local government should be given more responsibilities than it is given at the present time.

Mr. Graham: There is a lot of leaning going on in other directions. State Governments have to ask the Commonwealth Government for many things, and the Legislative Assembly sometimes has to ask the Legislative Council for certain things.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: We all have to lean on each other, and sometimes on the Minister for Development and Decentralisation.

Mr. Graham: I stand on my own feet.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I notice that the Government intends to take from local government traffic control in country districts. This is not a move in the right direction, and it is not in accordance with the opinion of the people in the country areas.

Mr. Fletcher: There would be fewer traffic accidents.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I would like the honourable member to prove there would be fewer accidents, because I find that the efficiency of local government control can hardly be surpassed. I suggest the Government would be very wise to drop this legislation. I have been doing all I can to prevent its coming into force, and this may be one occasion when the Legislative Council will be able to do what the people throughout the country areas want it to do.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You should refer to that Chamber as "another place."

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The Minister can please himself. One matter which was brought to my notice recently—and the scheme has been in operation for a long time—is the control of fruit fly. Many people have suggested that this be taken over as a State responsibility. I say that God forbid the State should take it over

and be charged with looking after fruit-fly control throughout the wide areas of the State. These control schemes have been adopted by many local governing authorities and they have certainly proved to be outstanding successes. There is no reason for similar schemes not being encouraged and, if necessary, enforced in areas which are hesitating on their introduction.

I have before me an assessment which I received this year. It is the same as the ones I have received for the past two or three years. The assessment shows the amount it costs to have a local fruit-fly baiting scheme administered by a local government body. Each person with fruit trees on his property pays a certain amount into the scheme. Such schemes have proved to be very efficient and they could not be bettered. The rates are exceedingly low; it costs me \$3.60 a year for the nine fruit trees I have, and this works out at 40c a tree. If a person has 100 fruit trees the cost is reduced to 11c a tree per annum. The implementation of this scheme has eradicated fruit fly in a district which prior to the introduction of the scheme was full of fruit fly.

I notice some people are afraid of taking on these schemes. I can assure anybody who is concerned that he will not get a more efficient scheme than those which are operating in some areas, particularly the area where I live. I know their value.

I notice that in the Speech of His Excellency no mention is made of the reduction of country water rates. This is not surprising. It will be recalled that a few years ago a new system of rating was introduced in country areas under which a rate was charged, but this gave no right to the consumption of water free of charge. The water consumed was charged for separately. At the time this seemed to be a good basis for the metropolitan area also. When the system was introduced in the country districts the rate was halved so the people paid half of what they paid previously and they also paid for the water they consumed.

The understanding was that as time went on this rate would be reduced continuously, so that in due course only a nominal rate would be charged and the income of the Water Board would come from the charges imposed for water. Three years ago the then Government reduced the rate by 2½c, in accordance with the planned idea of effecting a steady reduction. However, no other reduction has been effected since. I am interested to know how soon the present Government will introduce another 2½c reduction in the rate in accordance with the original idea.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You know this deprives the ratepayer who pays rates to the Water Board of the right to claim a reduction in his taxable income.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: That is correct, but I would sooner have a reduction in the water rate than a deduction for income tax purposes.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You had better do your sums again.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I hope that when the concession is granted it will not be the same sort of concession as was granted in respect of electricity charges. During the election we were promised that the country rate for electricity would be reduced to that of the metropolitan area; but what happened? The metropolitan area rate was put up to that of the country.

Sir David Brand: It was mixed up.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I hope there will not be a repetition of that action in regard to our water supplies.

Regarding decentralisation, we know we have a Minister in charge of the department, but that department now has a new name. It sounds grandiose, but I hope that more action is taken, other than merely changing a name, because that will not bring about decentralisation.

Mr. O'Neil: It needs another change of Minister!

Mr. W. A. MANNING: We have had no evidence of any other action up to date.

Mr. T. D. Evans: We did not see much in the 12 years of your Government.

Mr. Court: It was the period of the greatest decentralisation in the nation's history!

Mr. Hutchinson: How can a Minister make such a remark!

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Recently the Minister promised he would purchase land in country areas for future use. I know of only one case when an area of 25 acres in a very good position was offered to him, but he was not interested in it. Therefore, I would like more details concerning how the Minister intends to purchase the land, where, and for what use it is intended. It is no good the Minister making the statement that he intends to purchase land to bring about decentralised industry unless we know what he has in mind.

Mr. Graham: You know perfectly well that if the towns in question were proclaimed the price of the land would double and quadruple as was the case in Bunbury with regard to a certain alumina refinery.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The Minister is avoiding the point I have raised.

Still on decentralisation, I wish to raise the difficult question of the provision of market gardens in country areas. Our system of marketing vegetables is atrocious. The produce comes in from the gardens to the markets where it is handled by people who act as buyers on behalf of country sellers, and then the produce is sent to the country.



However, if anyone desires to establish a market garden in a country area he cannot do so because he is refused water. I realise the difficulty of providing water for everything under the sun, especially for market gardens. Nevertheless, something must be done about the problem. Last year I asked a question regarding the provision of water for market gardens by using a desalination process on our underground water. However, I was given no suitable information. The answer to my question reads—

An economic method of desalination of groundwater for irrigation, in the quantity and in the context implied by the question, is unknown to officers of the Public Works Department.

This could well be correct. I am not suggesting otherwise, but we must find some means of providing fresh vegetables in country areas. A market gardener in Narrogin applied for a permit to use water and because of that he is now not able even to water his personal vegetable garden. If he starts to water it, the water is turned off. However, if he planted the whole of the garden with roses he would be able to use the water and pay for any excess; but because he wants to grow cauliflowers, he cannot do so.

I suggest there must be some way of overcoming the difficulty. I wish I could suggest an easy one.

Mr. Gayfer: What about Kalgoorlie?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The member for Avon has referred to Kalgoorlie. The water used in that town travels many more miles than is the case in other country areas.

Mr. T. D. Evans: They are on a quota, nevertheless.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It is a matter of precedence. Perhaps the member for Kalgoorlie can tell us all about that.

Still on the subject of decentralisation, a small industry involving the use of mallet for tool handles has been established. We know that a great deal of doubt is expressed concerning anything from Western Australia and great problems were met when the Government departments involved were being persuaded to recognise the value of this timber. It is only in recent years that such steps have been successful and the department has accepted the product. A toughness test has been carried out on mallet and this should be made known. The following is an extract from "Properties of Australian Timbers—Part 2—'Brown Mallet'" by Ian Langlands and published by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. I will make brief quotations of the essential points as follows:—

For the green mallet, the unit of toughness was 323 inch lbs. For dry mallet it was 372 inch lbs. No other

Australian timber, including karri, N.S.W. and Queensland spotted gum, gave anywhere near this result.

The toughness of brown mallet increases in drying, the toughness of the dry wood being about 16 per cent. greater than that of the green wood. This is very satisfactory, as many species decrease in toughness on drying. The static bending work values (work to maximum load and total work), which measures shock resistance, also increases with seasoning. American and English ash tend to become less shock-resistant on seasoning, as also does American hickory to a slight extent.

In static bending, brown mallet has about the same strength as Queensland spotted gum and is over 30 per cent. stronger than hickory. When green, it is also 46 per cent. stronger than karri.

I have read that information to indicate we have possibly the best timber in the world when we compare it with hickory, but a great battle has been necessary to secure any recognition of the timber. When attempts were made to establish the industry in the first place the Forests Department looked askance and suggested that it could not provide sufficient mallet. Now it is the other way round and the department has said that something must be done about it to use more mallet or the timber could be exported. The industry is growing and orders are coming in profusely. I thought that such a worthwhile industry should be referred to in this House.

Again on decentralisation, it is important that we retain our country storekeepers. As members know, in the recent rural downfall they were hit very hard and some have even had to go out of business. Others are struggling, and are going through a difficult period. It is hard to evolve the means by which to assist these people in the same way as we can assist agriculture. This is because of the nature of their businesses. However, I have one remedy I wish to suggest to the Department of Development and Decentralisation. This is apart from the obvious major remedy of building up rural communities. If the farming communities are prosperous, the storekeepers will also presumably be prosperous.

Why could not the Government make some contribution itself in the way of placing orders in country towns? I believe some departments give their officers authority to make small purchases and undertake small repairs in the town in which the work is required to be done. Other departments give no authority whatsoever. The result is that if a screw has to be placed in the hinges of a door an inspector must come to see what is required. He returns and sends a man to do the job. This man does the job and

the inspector must return to see that it has been done properly. I suggest it would be much better if authority were given by departments to those responsible to use facilities which already exist in a town. The work may be of a carpentry, plumbing, or electrical nature. Such authority, even if discretionary, would help decentralisation in rural areas. Perhaps the Government could consider purchasing cars in country areas. Agents in country towns have a franchise direct from the manufacturers.

Mr. Jamieson: They are receiving special concessions now.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: What about car repairs? Perhaps more use could be made of people who repair cars in country areas. If something is being done at the present time I suggest to the Minister that perhaps more can be done because there should be no limit. There is no reason for bringing work or business of this nature continuously to the city. I certainly hope more will be done in future.

Mr. Graham: More is being done now than was done under the previous Government.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: As I have said, I hope that more will be done.

Mr. Graham: A great deal is being done.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I wish to touch upon rural reconstruction. I would not decry what has been done in this sphere because I have a high regard for the officers who are concerned with this. Indeed, much has been accomplished. Where claims have been refused the officers have been most ready to meet the claimant and discuss his problems with him. I know this has been very helpful in many cases. However, there are still some inexplicable rejections of claims. I could quote many instances but I will mention one which cropped up only last week. It concerns a farm of 1,250 acres at Narrogin. This is not a large area on a State basis but considering the way the world is situated, from a production point of view it can be viable and well worth farming. Surely the family concerned should have some prospects for the future. The figures which have been supplied to me appear to be quite satisfactory. The farmer has asked for only \$5,000 assistance but if he is refused what will he do? Will he and his family be forced to leave the farm? What is the alternative? He is a man who knows nothing other than farming; he has no other job to go to. Surely there should be some basis for assisting a farmer like this.

Some members may recall I had something to say on chickens last year. I read a piece in an airlines paper as follows:—

Crocodiles ranging in length from 10 inches to three feet and day-old pheasant chicks have few things in common but one is that both were carried recently by Ansett Airlines.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Ansett will carry anything!

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The article rang a bell and I wrote to Ansett Airlines to find out whether these were carried in passenger planes. I received a reply yesterday which says—

Following receipt of your letter of March 7th I contacted our freight department which inform me that both day-old pheasant chicks and baby crocodiles were carried on passenger aircraft.

I thought I would bring that item to the notice of the House because we are afraid to carry day-old chicks on passenger buses.

Mr. Graham: I hope you will not lay the crocodiles on the Table of the House.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I expected the chicks would be carried on passenger aircraft but I was surprised about the crocodiles.

Mr. Moiler: Drop a tear!

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I shall refer to another matter which concerns decentralisation. At one stage the District Registrar, or his representative, in district towns such as Narrogin was able to issue a death certificate after somebody died. With the use of computers and certain ideas on efficiency the system was changed.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Does the honourable member know when it was changed?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It was about five or six years ago. I am not talking about Governments all the time but of efficiency.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It was more recent than that; in fact, about three years ago.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I thought it was three years but somebody said it was five and I contented myself with that. I am told that previously a solicitor could receive a death certificate within five days. Doubtless if it was urgent this meant he would have to see that the undertaker put in his returns quickly because the undertaker is allowed 14 days to do this although he does not always take this long. However, I am told it was possible to get the death certificate through in about five days. I ascertained this information recently prior to writing to the Chief Secretary about a case where the certificate was outstanding for five weeks. There is a big difference between four or five days and five weeks.

Mr. Bertram: What was the reason?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: There was no reason. It was the simplest case under the sun and not complicated by difficulties.

Mr. Bertram: It would be an exceptional case.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Strangely enough, the Chief Secretary tells me in his reply that if the case were urgent he could get it back in a few days.

Mr. McPharlin: Is there an extra cost involved?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: No. If the case is urgent it can be dealt with completely in a few days.

Mr. Bertram: It inevitably is.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Solicitors tell me that the example I have given is not the worst.

Mr. Bertram: There may be rare exceptions.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I am told that five weeks, and more, is the regular time.

Mr. Bertram: Not in my time.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The one I am quoting involved a five-week delay.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It was inordinately long, then.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It seems this is the usual time for returning it to Narrogin.

Mr. Bertram: Where is Narrogin?

Mr. T. D. Evans: This was not my experience at Kalgoorlie.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: This is the situation because I have checked it. Further, the Chief Secretary admits this in his letter. He said the department is satisfied. I state quite definitely that I am not satisfied. If we are to aim for efficiency we should aim for true efficiency. In many cases this matter is most important because if the death certificate is not returned it is not possible to apply for probate and the whole estate is held up. Although it is a small matter it can be very important. In this day and age of computers, speed, and accuracy surely the results should be beneficial and not involve delays.

Yesterday I placed on the notice paper a question concerned with synthetic meats. I am quite concerned over reports which call some protein substance "synthetic meat." What right do those responsible have to call this a meat? I shall direct a question to the Minister for Health on Tuesday, because in answer to my question yesterday the Minister for Agriculture referred to misleading advertising but did not say the word "meat" could not be used.

I think we should take immediate action because we do not want the people to be deceived by this kind of thing. Perhaps the Consumer Protection Department could take this up. If something is called meat surely it should contain meat as we normally know it; namely, beef or sheep meat. In my view it is wrong to call a manufactured protein substance "meat" and deceive the public. If we do not take action now a product called "meat" will be on the market when, in fact, it should be

called something else. I suggest the manufacturers give it a trade name which does not include the word "meat." As I have said, I am concerned about this and I think action should be taken immediately.

MR. McIVER (Northam) [2.40 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, we enter the third session of the Twenty-seventh Parliament and the stage is set for the Government to continue its legislative policy for the benefit of the people of the State. I have no hesitation in congratulating the Government for all aspects of the work accomplished in 1971.

With the failure of the power, we commenced the opening of Parliament last year practically in complete darkness. However, it did not take the Government long to emerge from the darkness to implement policies outlined by the Premier in his various addresses during the election campaign.

Mr. Blaikie: When did that take place?

Mr. O'Connor: You had to change your Minister to get the power back on.

Mr. Blaikie: You must enlighten us a little more.

Mr. McIVER: Opposition members will have an opportunity to make their own speeches.

I would like to review the Government's accomplishments in 1971 with particular emphasis on the rural areas. At the time this Government took office farming throughout the State was in a very critical situation. I would like to record the achievements of the Minister for Agriculture and his department.

Firstly, special loans of up to \$2,000 were made available to allow farmers to plant crops on crop loan guarantee. The number of stock coming to the Midland salesyards was regulated in an effort to maintain prices. We certainly heard about this during the last session. The guaranteed income for subsidised veterinary practices has been increased from \$2,000 to \$4,500. A meat industry advisory committee was set up to study the problems of abattoirs and the meat industry. A committee was set up to make a thorough investigation into all aspects of the apple industry. A checkpoint was established on Eyre Highway by the Department of Agriculture to control vermin and plants coming into Western Australia. A payment of freight subsidy was made on wool carted to Albany for wool sales, and an increased subsidy on wheat being road carted to sidings.

Farmers in this State have been crying out for these measures for many years, and although this Government has been operating for 12 months only, and despite many frustrations, it quickly and efficiently took steps to relieve the situation in rural areas of the State.

Legislation passed in 1971 to assist the farmers included the setting up of a statutory lamb marketing authority, the establishment of a rural reconstruction authority, and the prior provision of powers to enable reconstruction to proceed without delay until legislation was passed. An amendment was passed to the Abattoirs Act to allow the Midland Junction Abattoir the power to trade. Restrictions were removed from the Land Act to give full timber royalties to all farmers in January, 1972. Amendments to the Land Act provided for (a) rent relief to pastoralists on economic grounds, and (b) relief to pastoral agents by the introduction of machinery to establish a compulsory rape-seed and linseed pool.

These are just some of the measures taken by the present Government as a practical approach to the situation in the rural areas.

It was emphasised by my colleague, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, when moving the Address-in-Reply, that we are gaining a better understanding of the situation of the farmers throughout the State. The honourable member speaks with authority as he represents a very large rural area. He stressed the farmers' willingness to co-operate with the Government. I feel an important aspect is the respect which the Minister for Agriculture has gained right throughout the State.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blaikie: You have missed out on the point that the Government lost a lot of respect over road maintenance tax.

Mr. Rushton: It was not very popular over daylight saving.

Mr. McIVER: Opposition members can make their speeches later. We must look at things in perspective and remember that the situation in rural areas was chronic when this Government came to power.

Mr. Gayfer: Are you claiming that your Government instituted all the items you read out, or do you agree you just happened to be in power when they were brought into being?

Mr. McIVER: We implemented them as quickly as possible.

Mr. Gayfer: Do you claim they were your ideas?

Mr. McIVER: Not all of them. However, the Government did not sit around and talk, it got down to business.

Mr. Stephens: You forgot to take credit for the improved weather conditions also.

Mr. Graham: I wish we could take credit for the standards of certain members of Parliament.

Mr. McIVER: If I am allowed to continue, I want to make a plea to the Minister for Education. I know the Government has done a great deal in this field, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to mention

a project which I feel should have top priority—that is stage 3 of the Northam Primary School.

I must state, in fairness to the former Minister for Education, the Northam Primary School was constructed on the old site as there was no alternative land available close to the town. After many discussions it was decided to build a new school on the original site. Nine classrooms were constructed and three classrooms of the old building remained.

No further work has taken place, and I would like to point out to the Minister and to the House the seriousness of the condition of the three classrooms of the old Northam school. Parents of the children attending the school are most concerned at the state of repair of the building, and the Public Works Department has assured me that no money will be made available to continue maintenance of these classrooms.

The classrooms are of brick construction and were damaged in the earthquake of 1968. I would also like members to bear in mind that we are experiencing earth tremors once a week in Northam. Parents of the primary school children are most concerned for the children's safety.

I know the Education Department has a vast programme, and that only so much money can be allocated to schools. Probably the department's programme is already drawn up, but I feel this aspect of the children's safety should be brought to the notice of the Minister.

Just a few years ago, when the West Northam School was comparatively new, it was struck by a cock-eyed bob. But for the fact that this happened on a holiday and there was no-one there, tragedy could have resulted. A comparatively new building was badly damaged. With the continual earth tremors in the Northam district, I am most concerned for the safety of these children. The demolition of these classrooms is on the agenda, but I would prefer the children to be taken out of them immediately, and demountable classrooms provided to tide us over to the end of this financial year. I am not an alarmist, but I know the state of the building and I would not like it on my conscience if I had not brought this matter to the attention of those concerned. I sincerely trust that top priority will be given stage 3 at this school and that the children will immediately be taken from this old building and housed in demountable classrooms.

Already, during this session, we have heard remarks from various members on unemployment in Western Australia. It is obvious, at the outset, that the Opposition intends to make great play on this and to attack the Government whenever possible on the unemployment situation in this State. We have to look at this problem because I feel that, to some degree, it has been greatly exaggerated.

Sir David Brand: Not for the people who are unemployed.

Mr. McIVER: A short time ago Northam hit the headlines as being the town with the greatest number of unemployed in Western Australia. This statement was made by an irresponsible member of the Northam Chamber of Commerce. He did not know what he was talking about, but he released the statement to the Press. In various towns throughout the State there are branches of the Commonwealth Department of Labour. Northam has one of these branches which is responsible for an area of 22,000 square miles. Therefore, when statements are made specifically on unemployment in Northam, the reference is being made to an area of over 22,000 square miles and not to the town proper. The Northam branch of the Commonwealth Department of Labour is responsible for an area running to the south near Hyden, east to the Tammin Shire boundary, and as far north as Wubin and Payne's Find. In all, this area embraces 48,000 people. So when the unemployment figures for Northam were released they applied not to the Northam townsite and district only, but to the 48,000 people spread over an area of 22,000 square miles.

Only a fortnight ago the officer in charge of the Northam branch of the Department of Labour telephoned me and asked me whether I knew where 22 unemployed people could be found. I also had a telephone call from a departmental head of a Government instrumentality who sought my assistance along similar lines, and to my knowledge those vacancies are still waiting to be filled.

Mr. Gayfer: In Northam?

Mr. McIVER: Yes.

Mr. Gayfer: During the last 12 months has the population of Northam decreased by 25 per cent., which is commensurate with the towns surrounding it?

Mr. McIVER: I could not state what the actual decrease in population is, but the population of Northam has dropped. Nevertheless this Government instrumentality has been endeavouring to engage carpenters and other tradesmen during the last three months and it has been unable to obtain one. Let any honourable member go to a country district and try to obtain a carpenter to carry out minor repairs! Let him have a talk with a supervisor of the State Housing Commission about the position!

Mr. W. G. Young: Because they will not leave Perth.

Mr. McIVER: Despite this we still hear all this rubbish about unemployment in Western Australia. I have just mentioned that today jobs are available for 20 men.

Sir David Brand: Did you find the position to be the same when our Government was in office?

Mr. McIVER: No, definitely not.

Mr. Hutchinson: Why didn't you complain when our Government was in office?

Mr. McIVER: In addition to this there is a great deal of interest in the electorate of Northam over the proposals of the T.L.C. and U.F.G.A. to establish an abattoir at Northam. I understand that following a feasibility study recommendations were made to the Government for an abattoir to be constructed at that centre. This will be readily accepted by the people of Northam which certainly needs an industry in the district. The farmers of the Northam district, of course, are right behind the project.

Despite the few statements that have been made that it is not a viable proposition and it is this and it is that, I consider this abattoir will certainly assist in lowering the present price of meat to the consumer.

Mr. McPharlin: Did you say that they intend to build the abattoir at Northam?

Mr. McIVER: Three towns have been nominated: Geraldton, Northam, and Boyup Brook.

Sir David Brand: What is the cost of erecting the abattoir at Northam?

Mr. McIVER: I have not seen the actual figure relating to the project at Northam, but I understand the overall concept will be in the vicinity of \$20,000,000.

Mr. Gayfer: There has been a great deal going on with U.F.G.A.

Mr. McIVER: I am not concerned as to who will build the abattoir, as long as it gets built. One benefit that will arise as a result of the joint venture by T.L.C. and U.F.G.A. is that once the abattoir becomes fully operational people will be able to put the trade union movement in its proper perspective and appreciate the way it operates. Over the years many farmers have been under a misapprehension about the trade union movement, and no doubt both parties will benefit from the industry they intend to establish. I certainly hope it will be established.

Mr. McPharlin: What do you mean by "both parties"?

Mr. McIVER: The parties of T.L.C. and U.F.G.A.

Mr. Gayfer: What about the farmers?

Mr. McIVER: If the honourable member had been listening he would have realised that I mentioned the farmers.

Mr. Bertram: Has the Northam proposition been found to be feasible?

Mr. McIVER: I have not seen any reports on the results of the Civil and Civic feasibility survey, but I understand they are very acceptable indeed.

Mr. Rushton: Who paid for the survey?

**Mr. McIVER:** The farmers of Western Australia.

**Mr. Lewis:** Can you visualise a situation where there may be too many abattoirs and a lot of unemployed?

**Mr. McIVER:** This could be so. I do know that Civil and Civic is a very reputable firm in regard to the conducting of feasibility studies, not only into the establishment of abattoirs but also in other fields as well.

I feel certain that this abattoir will prove to be of great benefit not only to the people of Northam and the surrounding districts, but also to the primary producers.

**Mr. O'Neil:** If you cannot obtain plumbers and carpenters now, where will you be able to obtain slaughtermen?

**Mr. McIVER:** All these factors, I feel quite sure, have been considered. The survey has followed a rigid pattern for months, including the question of price. When the final recommendation is placed before the Government I feel sure that all these factors will be carefully considered.

**Mr. Gayfer:** I quite agree with you there. The U.F.G.A. has a tremendous amount of knowledge of commercial and other enterprises!

**Mr. McIVER:** I am not concerned about U.F.G.A. I am concerned only with what it is attempting to do with regard to the construction of an abattoir.

**Mr. O'Neil:** It will be charging ½ a pound without taking into consideration any capital construction.

**Mr. McIVER:** That is all right. I suppose the T.L.C. and the U.F.G.A. will benefit financially from this project.

**Mr. O'Neil:** You could build your own abattoir if the Government gave you a guarantee.

**Mr. Court:** I think you are looking forward to receiving some of that money from the T.L.C. for your election campaign.

**Mr. McIVER:** I will not knock it back. Last session many statements were made about the trade union movement in this State; and, unfortunately, the member for Bunbury is not present this afternoon, because I would have liked to direct my remarks to him. However, I will direct them to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who was very critical in regard to this subject and both he and the member for Bunbury proved that they were certainly out of touch with the principles, objectives, and achievements of the trade union movement in Western Australia.

The member for Bunbury gave a discourse on one of his constituents who would not join a union, and as a consequence was intimidated by his workmates and other people with whom he was associated. That is quite natural.

**Mr. Rushton:** Is that acceptable to you?

**Mr. McIVER:** It is acceptable to me that a person who receives the benefits from a trade union, who receives the results of its representations, and who receives salary increases through its efforts should contribute to the funds of the union.

**Mr. Rushton:** You think it is right he should be intimidated?

**Mr. McIVER:** What the honourable member would like to create in opposing the trade union movement is a pool of unemployed, so that the workers can be dictated to—

**Mr. Rushton:** That is just as false as the comments made by Mr. Bob Hawke.

**Mr. McIVER:** —and so that they can be told how long they are to work and the amount of money they are to receive. Many other injustices could be inflicted on them and that would cause chaos. What the Opposition would like to do is to revert to the feudal system under which the employer cracked the whip and everybody jumped, and if a worker did not jump he was made to stop at home.

**Mr. O'Neil:** How is it that the figures of unemployment in this State today are as high as they were in the early 1950s when your party was in Government previously?

**Mr. McIVER:** During the last month especially the fact of how very important the trade unions are to Western Australia for the purpose of obtaining redress for the workers has been brought home. It was only last week that I received a submission from a worker who had worked for a particular firm for 43 years. I want to emphasise that in all those 43 years he had not lost one day through sickness. That fact should be kept in mind. Owing to a bout of arthritis he had to cease work. He went to see a doctor, and the doctor told him he would have to stop away from work for two weeks. That worker was paid four days' sick leave.

Similar instances have occurred time and time again not only in private enterprise but also in Government instrumentalities. We find that sometimes bush lawyers are required to interpret industrial awards and to pass judgment on the worker as to what he should and should not receive. The particular firm concerned was most adamant that this worker should receive only four days' sick leave. I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, fairly and squarely, that a servant who has worked conscientiously for a firm for 43 years and has not lost one day through sickness in all that time should not be denied a fortnight's wages. This is not a small firm, and it could certainly stand paying a fortnight's wages to this man.

I come back to the point I have raised: If we did not have trade unions and representation for the worker, where would the worker be? He would not get one cent of what he is entitled to. Further than that, there seems to be a feeling among the large private establishments that when a worker is due for long service leave or sick leave some sort of challenge should be raised to deprive the worker of a few cents or a few dollars from the amount which he has so rightly and justly earned. This absolutely sickens me.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Would you name the concern where this incident happened?

Mr. McIVER: I will not embarrass the firm by naming it in this House, but if the honourable member sees me afterwards I am prepared to give him further details.

Sir David Brand: I suppose you could quote many instances where firms have been very fair in this regard.

Mr. McIVER: I could. I go further than that and say that I know of several private enterprise firms in my electorate which will not hesitate to pay three months' wages if a worker is off work through sickness.

Sir David Brand: That is a balanced story.

Mr. McIVER: If these workers were not able to obtain redress through their unions they would receive absolutely nothing. From time to time we have heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition references to disorganisation in the unions. I say without fear that the worst opponents of trade unionism at the present time are the rank and file union members. Although this is a great State and Australia is a great nation, unfortunately we cannot combat this barrier of apathy; and we find only the sincere workers attending the union meetings, whether they be held monthly or fortnightly, in an endeavour to improve conditions.

On the other hand we also find those union members who sit back and are prepared to accept everything that comes their way. Unionists can only expect the representation that they get, if they allow people, whom they know to be perhaps not worthy citizens, to be appointed to the head positions of the unions. If they appoint such people to these positions then the fault lies with the workers themselves, because under a democratic system they have the power to appoint whom they want. Some of the workers will take everything they can get, but contribute nothing. How we are to overcome this barrier of selfishness and apathy I do not know. However, I do know this from personal experience: If it ever came to pass, through the means I have stated, that a large pool of unemployed is created and the worker is deprived of his right of redress, it would be a very sorry day for this State and for Australia generally.

Although the Minister for Transport is not a member of this House I want to bring this matter to the attention of the Minister representing him: it is the need for providing some form of public transport for the apprentices in my electorate. Northam is only 60 miles from Perth, and in our district there are 44 apprentices who are receiving tuition through correspondence. By the provision of a bus they could be taken to a technical school for half a day or for a day each week, and thus be able to receive additional instruction in the various courses they are undertaking. We all know of the situation in regard to tuition through correspondence. Many apprentices cannot express themselves on paper, or comprehend the things they are taught through correspondence. If they attended a technical school they could see models and receive technical advice which must benefit them and their employers in the future.

This is not a great request; it is only a question of running an additional bus to take these 44 apprentices to a technical school. I intend to follow this matter up with correspondence to the Minister, but I am emphasising it today because we all know that in doing these things by correspondence time elapses very quickly.

Mr. O'Neil: The member for Collie knows how to solve the problem of taking apprentices to a centre to receive tuition! Has he ever solved the problem?

Mr. McIVER: Collie is further from Perth than is Northam.

Mr. O'Neil: Did the member for Collie ever solve the problem?

Mr. McIVER: Northam could be made into a great tourist attraction. In this regard I refer specifically to the Avon River. This is one of the few rivers that exist in the State, and I would say it is one of the greatest assets of our community.

Mr. Lewis: Are there any swans on it?

Mr. McIVER: Our swans were recently brought to notice because of Sonia and Billy. Following the recent upheaval, and publicity in the Press, it was surprising to see the number of people who journeyed to Northam to look at Sonia and Billy. Because of the interest taken in the area the Apex Club, in conjunction with the Rotary Club, commenced a project to clean up the river and beautify the banks.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Do they intend to get rid of Billy and Sonia?

Mr. McIVER: I think Billy and Sonia are there to stay. The main problem is the present weir, and it is beyond the financial capacity of the local authority to replace it. The river cannot be further beautified until a new weir, with sluice gates, is constructed. I do not know whether the Minister for Tourism could allocate some tourism funds, together with a Government

grant, for the project. The local governing authority has borrowing powers but the amount of money involved in the weir project would certainly be beyond those powers.

Mr. Gayfer: In 1962 it was estimated that the job would cost \$500,000. Some of the shires further upstream are not convinced that the construction of a weir would be the answer. The member for Northam might have to take into consideration what those shires think at some time in the future.

Mr. McIVER: That does not enter into the argument. However, irrespective of that angle I will still press for a new weir in an attempt to beautify the Avon because, as is well known, we certainly lack rivers in this State.

Sir David Brand: I suppose it is a matter of priorities.

Mr. McIVER: Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, respectfully I wish to say that I find myself at variance with the ruling you gave regarding the wearing of ties and coats in this Chamber. I request that you reconsider your decision, and look at the matter in a practical and common-sense manner. I feel that the dignity about which we speak from time to time in this House would not be lowered.

Mr. Gayfer: The member for Northam will have to attend the Speakers' conference in London.

Mr. McIVER: We must approach this in a practical manner. I know it is important for Parliament to stick to tradition, but I also feel we should progress in parallel with modern times. I do not think the dignity of this Parliament would be lowered if members attended without coats. Bank officers and Government officers have always been very well attired, and since they have been allowed to remove their coats while working they have not in any way whatsoever lowered the dignity of their establishments.

Mr. W. A. Manning: They also wear shorts.

Mr. Blaikie: And long hair.

Mr. McIVER: Regarding shorts, I think the majority of members would not be able to stop a pig in a passage.

Mr. O'Neil: Just as well your leader is away.

Sir David Brand: Send the Premier a telegram.

Mr. McIVER: If we could just remove our coats it would be a big advantage. If we accepted the modern trend of dress we would improve as legislators. The men's fashions of today, with their fine styling, would not degrade this House in any way. I respectfully request, Mr. Speaker, that you give some further thought to this matter.

Mr. Lewis: The member for Northam would not object to Mr. Speaker taking off his coat?

Mr. McIVER: Certainly not.

Mr. Lewis: A very good idea.

Mr. McIVER: I conclude by saying that if our temperatures are still very high when I return from overseas I hope I can look forward to seeing the members of this House attending in their shirts, without their coats.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr. Harman.

(Continued on page 107)

## QUESTIONS (52): ON NOTICE

### 1. SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT

#### *Banning of Flights*

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it true that both the United States and Britain have banned the flight of supersonic aircraft such as the Concorde over their territory?
- (2) If "Yes" what is the rationale for such a decision?
- (3) What steps are open to the State Government to take similar action?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) This information is not readily available but further enquiries are being made.
- (2) Answered by (1) above.
- (3) The power to ban or permit the flight of supersonic aircraft lies with the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government has set up an advisory committee to study the effects of supersonic flight, and their report is expected shortly.

### 2. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

#### *Street Lighting: Increased Cost*

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Is there any proposal to further increase the cost to local authorities of electricity for street lighting?
- (2) If so, when can it be expected?
- (3) If not, what is the significance of the words "As a first step in reducing this loss, the Commission decided to increase incandescent light tariffs . . ." in the Minister's 8th March, 1972 letter on the subject?



Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. May) replied:

- (1) Not at present.
- (2) See (1).
- (3) There is a considerable difference between the present tariff for incandescent lamps and present day costs. The tariff increase to apply from the 1st July, 1972, will partly remove this difference and is therefore a first step.

After the tariff increase of 1st July, 1972 has been applied the Commission will make another review of street light costs and revenue.

### 3. ROADS

#### *Blast Furnace Slag: Use*

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What research and experimental work has been done on the use of blast furnace slag for road and similar works?
- (2) Are these tests being done solely by the Main Roads Department or are others including local authorities and private concerns involved?
- (3) What are the results and findings to date?
- (4) What further tests and studies are proposed?
- (5) Is it expected to be able to make full use of the blast furnace slag, as is done in most iron and steel producing communities?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The Main Roads Department has conducted laboratory tests on the slag from Kwinana and an experimental section of bituminous concrete using slag has been laid by the Readymix Company.
- (2) It is known that at least one local authority and two private concerns are using the slag.
- (3) A study of the literature from overseas and Main Roads Department investigations to date indicate that provided blast furnace slag is produced to comply with British Standard Specifications it should be satisfactory for use as a base course material or as an aggregate in bituminous concrete.
- (4) Further tests to determine that locally produced slag complies with the specifications required, and that it is an economic material for use in road construction, would be necessary. The performance of roads where slag has been used is being observed.

- (5) This will depend on the results of further tests and the economics of using slag compared with other materials.

### 4. WATER SUPPLIES *Moochalabra Dam*

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) When was the Moochalabra dam completed?
- (2) At what cost was the dam constructed?
- (3) When did it fill with water?
- (4) Is it correct that there is a significant leakage of water from the structure?
- (5) Has flooding caused distortion of the dam wall?
- (6) If answers to (4) and/or (5) are "Yes" will he advise what steps are being taken to rectify the faults?
- (7) At whose expense will repairs be undertaken?
- (8) Will any proposed action interfere with the supply of water to Wyndham from that source?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) December, 1971.
- (2) \$570,000.
- (3) It filled and overflowed on 25th February, 1972.
- (4) No. This dam was designed to allow overflow water to pass through the top section of rockfill. Water emerging from the dam was overflow—not leakage.
- (5) On the downstream face, some minor settlement of rock has occurred as was expected. This does not affect the performance or stability of the structure.
- (6) Certain maintenance will be required on the crest of the dam.
- (7) The maintenance at the crest is at departmental cost.
- (8) No.

### 5. ORD RIVER DAM *Increased Costs*

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is there any substance in a rumour that the contractors for the Ord River Dam (Dravo Pty. Ltd.) have made claim against the State for the recovery of costs which were considerably in excess of the original contract price?
- (2) If "Yes" will he provide details?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) There are three matters in dispute and the contractor has asked that these be referred to an arbitrator under the terms of the contract.

#### 6. ORD RIVER DAM

##### *Hydro-electric Turbines*

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Did the contractors for the Ord River Dam (Dravo Pty. Ltd.) approach the State Government for permission to invest in the installation of hydro-electric turbines at the dam with a view to recouping the capital investment from the sale of electricity in the Ord Valley and surrounding areas?
- (2) If "Yes" will he provide details of the offer and indicate why it was not an acceptable proposition?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

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

#### 7. ORD RIVER DAM

##### *Contractor's Settlement: Feature Walls and Roads*

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) For what reason were the stone feature walls and service roads in the contractors settlement at the Ord River Dam destroyed?
- (2) Was the State given the opportunity of acquiring these improvements?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The walls and service roads were removed as part of the site clearance required by the contract.
- (2) Yes. However they conflicted with plans for future development of the area.

#### 8. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

##### *Stern Report: Recommendations*

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) When did he receive the Stern Report on Agricultural Education?
- (2) Has he conferred with his colleague the Minister for Agriculture on the recommendations?
- (3) Could he give the House some indication of his reactions to the report, especially the reference that an appointment of a Superintendent of Agricultural Education be made immediately?

- (4) As it is recommended that no further agricultural high school wings should be contemplated, what action does he propose where such "wings" are partly established?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 10th February, 1972.
- (2) No. I understand the report is being examined by the Department of Agriculture and discussion with my colleague, the Minister for Agriculture is not anticipated until he has received the views of his department.
- (3) and (4) Responses from the public have been invited.  
The Government will allow a reasonable period for public reaction to be known before considering the implementation of any parts considered desirable in the report.

#### 9. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

##### *Stern Report: Action*

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he received a copy of the Stern Report on Agricultural Education?
- (2) If so, what action has he or his Department taken regarding the recommendations?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Consultations will be arranged with the Education Department and the Western Australian Institute of Technology to consider the extent to which the recommendations can be implemented.

#### 10. MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON

##### *Selection of Site*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Which sites were considered in selecting the site for the maximum security prison?
- (2) Will he advise the House the reasons for and against each site considered?
- (3) Will he table the file relating to the maximum security prison?
- (4) Who were the members of the committee which was responsible for recommending the prison site?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) (a) Reserve 26998 Cockburn (existing site set aside for prison purposes).  
(b) Garden Island.  
(c) Areas to the north of the city.

- (d) Jandakot AA408.
  - (e) Jandakot AA 118 part 150, 151 (site recommended).
  - (f) Several areas of private land offered for sale in various locations.
- (2) (a) Land required for housing purposes necessary to complement industrial development planned.
- (b) No land available.
- (c) As the majority of officers now working at Fremantle and who could be expected to provide the bulk of the work force for the new institution, at present live in areas to the south of the river, there would undoubtedly be problems if they and their families were to be shifted to an area to the north.
- (d) Due to the presence of a high water table, was not considered suitable for the erection of the type of structure planned.
- (e) (1) Land held by Government and therefore available for by exchange.
- (2) Land high and well drained and therefore suitable for the type of construction planned.
- (3) It is relatively close to the law courts (considered essential by the Department of Corrections).
- (4) It is well situated in regard to the present Fremantle Prison and the existing work force.
- (5) It is on a location which would cause minimum controversy.
- (6) The land is within a Rural Zone.
- (f) Private land offered was either in an unsuitable location, was unsuitable for the type of construction or prices asked excessive.
- (3) No, but the Member can arrange to inspect the committee report at the Department of Corrections.
- (4) (a) Director of the Department of Corrections (Mr. C. W. Campbell).
- (b) Chief Planner, Town Planning Department (Dr. I. D. Carr).
- (c) Principal Architect, Public Works Department (Mr. S. B. Cann).
- (d) Divisional Surveyor, Lands and Surveys (Mr. R. K. Morland).

11.

## LAND

*Kelmscott Sublots 2108 and 2109*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has the Department committed itself to exchange or sell Kelmscott sub-lots 2108 (7 acres and 21 perches) and 2109 (8 acres 2 roods and 6 perches) to any person or organisation?
- (2) If so, what are the details of any inquiry or move in this regard?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) and (2) Reserves 2108 and 2109, being Kelmscott suburban lots 114 and 115, were committed in March 1968 for the purposes of "Girls College (Loreto Roman Catholic)". Convent authorities anticipated using the land in 5 to 10 years. Reservation was confirmed by Ex Co Minute dated 14th January, 1970, published in *Government Gazette* of 23rd January, 1970 and in February, 1972 a letter was sent enquiring whether the same expectations were held.

12.

## EDUCATION

*State Needs: Survey*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Will he table a copy of the Australian Educational Council's survey which shows the States' needs for the period 1971 to 1975?
- (2) Will he provide me with a copy of the Western Australian segment of the survey?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) The Australian Education Council has only published a summary of the survey of needs for the period 1971-1975. A copy of the publication is presented for tabling.
- (2) 125 copies of the Western Australian segment of the survey were printed and distributed. A copy is included in the Parliamentary Library but further supplies are not available.

*The publication was tabled.*

13.

## HOUSING

*Rentals, 1968 to 1971*

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

- (1) What was the total rental charged by the State Housing Commission in the four years ended 30th June, 1968 to 1971 in—
  - (a) the metropolitan area;
  - (b) country areas?
- (2) What proportion of the amount charged was received in the same years and in each area?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) The total rental charged by the State Housing Commission on commission properties in the four years ended 30th June, 1968 to 1971 are:—

|         |      | \$        |
|---------|------|-----------|
| 1967-68 | .... | 6,655,475 |
| 1968-69 | .... | 6,979,877 |
| 1969-70 | .... | 7,546,322 |
| 1970-71 | .... | 8,774,469 |

- (2) The proportions of the amount charged that was received are:—

|         |      | %        |
|---------|------|----------|
| 1967-68 | .... | 99.439   |
| 1968-69 | .... | 100.0003 |
| 1969-70 | .... | 99.343   |
| 1970-71 | .... | 99.563   |

- NOTE (a) The separate figures for metropolitan area and country areas is not readily obtainable as a division between metropolitan and country is not provided for in the commission's accounting.

The figures requested in 1(a) and 1(b) are being extracted and will be advised by letter within a few days.

- (b) The figures shown do not include rentals administered for other authorities.

14. *This question was postponed.*

# 15. KWINANA-BALGA POWER LINE

## *Construction, and Appeal Against Route*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Has the S.E.C. started construction of the 330 kV line linking Kwinana, Bibra Lake and Balga installations?
- (2) If so, what section is under construction?
- (3) Is the work being done by day labour or has a contract been let?
- (4) If the work is being done by contract—
  - (a) who is the contractor;
  - (b) what is the contract price; and
  - (c) what does the contract include?
- (5) Has the appeal submitted by the Kalamunda Shire Council against the Commission's proposals been considered by him?

- (6) Will he table a copy of the shire's submission, and his decision?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. May) replied:

- (1) Yes. A section of the whole project which is independently necessary for supply to southern districts is in course of construction.
- (2) Kwinana to southern terminal only.
- (3) A contract was let to an experienced firm specialising in this type of construction on 6th April, 1971.
- (4) (a) Electric Power Transmission Pty. Ltd.  
(b) \$924,765.  
(c) Survey; location of towers, supply erection and testing of towers; supply and installation of foundations; provision of access roads; supply of some line materials, erection of all line materials and stringing of conductors.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Arrangements will be made to table the submission and decision.

*The paper was tabled.*

## 16. CONSUMER PROTECTION

### *Housing Construction: Bricks on Edge*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Consumer Protection:

- (1) Is he aware that many people connected with the building trade, including some shire building surveyors, consider the practice of "brick on edge" in home building to be an unsatisfactory method of construction?
- (2) Will he satisfy himself that savings in building costs, resulting from this practice, are being passed on to the home owner?
- (3) Will he have this type of construction investigated and table a report of such investigation?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) No; however, I am informed that this practice is permitted by the Uniform Building By-laws, subject to certain conditions.
- (2) and (3) On the passage of legislation for a Prevention of Excessive Prices Act—which, in view of the Member's interest, I assume has his full support—inquiries will be made.

17. *This question was postponed.*

## 18. FRUIT-FLY CONTROL

*Transfer to Local Authorities*

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he received objections from local authorities to the proposal to amend the Plant Diseases Act and transfer the responsibility for fruit fly control to local authorities?
- (2) Is it still the Government's intention to introduce legislation to transfer responsibility to local authorities?
- (3) If so, what are the reasons for so doing?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Yes. The Department of Agriculture is, however, not responsible for the control of fruit fly. This responsibility rests with the individual owner of fruit trees.

The new proposals are aimed at encouraging the widespread adoption of fruit fly baiting schemes by enabling municipal or shire councils to introduce schemes if they wish to do so.

- (2) Legislation will be introduced with no compulsion on local authorities.
- (3) The purpose and details of the Bills will be fully explained when they are introduced to Parliament.

## 19. COMMONWEALTH CONSTITUTION

*Review: Discussions between States*

Mr. COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he please summarise the basis of discussions that have taken place between the several State Governments at the invitation of the Premier of Victoria on the question of an all-States convention to review the Commonwealth Constitution and what is currently planned for further talks?
- (2) Has any decision been made on the procedure to be followed in further meetings of State Government representatives and are there any current intentions of going beyond drafting an agenda for the main conferences of the representatives of the several State Parliaments?
- (3) Is it possible to indicate in a general way the main points in the Commonwealth Constitution which will be under study?

- (4) Will all political parties be invited to send representatives to the later conferences after the agenda is drafted?

- (5) Will there be all-party consultations on the final form of the agenda?

- (6) (a) Is it currently proposed that delegates will attend later conferences as State Parliament groups or as independent party groups;

- (b) If as State Parliament groups, does he think it practicable to reconcile conflicting party approaches to the question of the Federal system and its workings under the Constitution?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) to (6) A copy of the transcript of proceedings at the meeting of State Attorneys-General which was held at Melbourne on 25th February, 1972, has been made available to the leaders of the Liberal and Country Parties by the Premier.

Details of requirements and the form of the Western Australian delegation to the convention have also been provided to both party leaders and a press statement giving further details appeared in today's edition of *The West Australian*.

*The document was tabled.*

## 20. BUILDING SOCIETIES

*Housing Funds: Allocation*

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What was the allocation to each of the permanent and terminating building societies of funds made available under the new financial arrangements for housing funds this year?
- (2) What percentage of such funds were allocated to—
  - (a) permanent societies; and
  - (b) terminating societies,
 for each of the last five years?
- (3) How many terminating societies could be regarded as supporting the interests of trade union members and what are the names of those societies?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) The allocation of State home builders funds for 1971-72 was as follows:—

| Permanent Building Societies:    |         | \$                 |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Bunbury .....                    | 77,000  |                    |
| City .....                       | 66,000  |                    |
| Home Building .....              | 160,000 |                    |
| Perth .....                      | 750,000 |                    |
| Town and Country Permanent ..... | 300,000 |                    |
| Swan .....                       | 66,000  |                    |
| West Australian Savings .....    | 155,000 |                    |
| First Federal .....              | 44,000  |                    |
| Park .....                       | 44,000  |                    |
| Permanent Investment .....       | 44,000  |                    |
| Statewide .....                  | 44,000  |                    |
|                                  |         | <b>\$1,750,000</b> |

Terminating Building Societies:

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Community .....   | 77,000  |
| Westminster (Kwinana) .....                               | 154,000 |
| Northern .....  | 77,000  |
| Westland .....  | 77,000  |
| Security .....  | 232,000 |
| Postal .....  | 77,000  |
| Provincial .....  | 77,000  |
| Renown .....  | 209,000 |
| Yugostral .....   | 66,000  |
| Steelworkers (A.I.S.) ..                                  | 154,000 |
| Albany .....  | 55,000  |
| A.E.K. ....   | 55,000  |
| South West (Bunbury) ..                                   | 78,000  |
| Champion Bay<br>(Geraldton) .....                         | 110,000 |
| Esperance Districts .....                                 | 66,000  |
| Cull Island<br>(Esperance) .....                          | 66,000  |
| Westminster (Kalgoorlie) ..                               | 176,000 |
| Narrogin and Districts ..                                 | 44,000  |
| Carnarvon and Districts ..                                | 75,000  |
| Port Hedland and<br>Districts .....                       | 105,000 |
| Roebourne and District ..                                 | 105,000 |
| Kimberley and District ..                                 | 125,000 |
| Trades and Labor<br>Council of Western<br>Australia ..... | 300,000 |

Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia

|                   |      |      |             |
|-------------------|------|------|-------------|
| Bank of Australia | .... | .... | 300,000     |
| Unallocated       | .... | .... | 390,000     |
|                   |      |      | <hr/>       |
|                   |      |      | \$5,000,000 |

(2)

|                | Permanent | Terminating | R. & I. Bank |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
|                | %         | %           | %            |
| 1967/68 .....  | 42.4      | 54.7        | 2.9          |
| 1968/69 .....  | 47.7      | 51.0        | 1.3          |
| 1969/70 .....  | 47.7      | 51.0        | 1.3          |
| 1970/71 .....  | 49.9      | 48.6        | 1.6          |
| 1971/72* ..... | 35.0      | 51.2        | 6.0          |

\* Unallocated 7.8%

|   |    |
|---|----|
| (3) The Postal Employees .....                      | 7  |
| The Railway Employees .....                         | 7  |
| The W.A. Carpenters .....                           | 14 |
| Trades and Labor Council of Western Australia ..... | 1  |
| The Police Union .....                              | 8  |
| The Teachers .....                                  | 12 |
| Westminster (Kwinana-Kalgoorlie) .....              | 9  |
| Steelworkers .....                                  | 7  |

I should mention that to the best of my knowledge this answer provides the information requested by the honourable member. I notice that the list includes the "Steelworkers", which, I understand, is A.I.S. It may be that people in that one are not necessarily connected with trade unions.

21. T.L.C. HOUSING LOANS

*Management Fee and Interest*

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Did he read the article headed "T.L.C. Loans for Housing Ready Soon" in *The West Australian* of 14th March, 1972?
- (2) Is the management fee of 5 cents per \$100 borrowed a single payment, or an annual charge per \$100 of loan, and, if neither, what is it?
- (3) Adding this management fee to the interest rate charged what is the effective interest (and other charges) rate to the borrower?
- (4) What is the interest rate charged to societies by the Government in respect of these advances?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Continuing charge payable monthly.
- (3) The management fee approximately equals an interest charge of 4% per annum reducible.
- (4) 4% below the long term bond rate ruling at time advances are drawn.

22. T.L.C. HOUSING LOANS

*Comparison of Terms*

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

Referring to the article relating to T.L.C. loans for housing appearing in *The West Australian* of 14th March, 1972—

- (1) Is it not a fact that tenants of State Housing Commission homes, except in some limited cases, may elect to purchase the homes they occupy at any time?
- (2) What interest rate is charged on the loan advanced and what is the term of repayment?

- (3) How does this rate and term compare with loans made by terminating societies from funds made available by the State?
- (4) What is meant by the statement "Half the money (referring to the \$300,000 advance by the Government to the T.L.C.) would be lent to people wanting to buy State Housing Commission Homes?"

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 5½% on terms up to 45 years.
- (3) Terminating Societies will be advancing State Homes Builders' Account funds at the long term bond rate for a term not exceeding 30 years.
- (4) A condition of the State Home Builders' Account advances for 1971-72 is that 50% of the allocation to each society is to be applied to finance the purchase of State Housing Commission group built new homes by mutually accepted State Housing Commission applicants.

23.

### TRAFFIC BRIDGE

*Eric Street, Cottesloe*

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has he received any complaints within the last six months regarding a deterioration in the condition of the Eric Street bridge over the railway at Cottesloe?
- (2) If so, would he indicate whether the condition of the bridge or its surfacing gives cause for concern?
- (3) Has the department any plans to service the existing structure?
- (4) What plans, if any, has the department for replacing the existing structure with a bridge more in keeping with the traffic demand?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No. However, the Main Roads Department has had correspondence from the Cottesloe Town Council regarding the condition of the Eric Street bridge.
- (2) The structural condition of the bridge is satisfactory. However, there has been a deterioration in the surface which has been attended to by the Department's maintenance gang.
- (3) Re-surfacing is not proposed at present. However, the condition of the surface will be kept under observation.
- (4) At this stage the Main Roads Department has no plans for replacing this bridge.

### 24. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

*Name and Constitution: Effect of Change*

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he advise what steps, if any, have been taken to change the name and constitution of the Cultural Development Council (Inc.) W.A. in order that it might become the W.A. Division of the Arts Council of Australia?
- (2) Can he explain if there is any opposition to the proposed change?
- (3) If this change comes about will it have any effect on the status or work of the W.A. Arts Advisory Board?
- (4) What is the view of the W.A. Arts Advisory Board on the proposed change?
- (5) Will he name the chairman and members of the W.A. Arts Advisory Board?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) The Government is aware of negotiations that are taking place between the steering committee of a proposed Arts Council of Australia (W.A. Division) and the Cultural Development Council, with a view to forming a W.A. Division of the Arts Council of Australia.
- (2) It is understood that the views of the members of the Cultural Development Council are being ascertained by the organisation. This is entirely an internal matter for the Cultural Development Council and the Government is not aware of any opposition or otherwise.
- (3) No.
- (4) The Arts Advisory Board supports in principle any organisation that might improve the cultural activity throughout the State.
- (5) Yes. Professor F. Callaway (Chairman), Mr. H. Bluck, Mr. S. Box, Mr. J. A. B. Campbell, Mr. J. Griffith, Miss J. Patman, Mrs. E. Underwood.  
The Deputy Chairmanship was held by Mr. P. Masel until his recent death.

25.

### EDUCATION

*Bonded Teachers*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many teachers still under bond to the department have not been placed in teaching positions?
- (2) Will he list the teachers in this situation?

- (3) What is the legal obligation of the department to employ these bonded teachers under the usual teachers' employment agreement?
- (4) Will the department advise the teachers so placed that they will be released from their bonds or re-employed within a given time to enable teachers to find employment elsewhere within their qualification?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) This question could embrace teachers who have left the department over the last five years as bonds could extend over that period. To provide such information would require major research. If the question is restricted to those who completed training at the end of 1971 the number involved is four.
- (2) to (4) As this is confidential information affecting individual teachers, the list is not being published but will be supplied personally to the Member.

Since these questions are at present a matter of legal discussion between the Crown Law Department and the solicitors of a teacher concerned, it would not be proper to make any comment.

26. **KELMSCOTT HIGH SCHOOL**  
*Construction, and Inclusion of Primary School*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why have tenders not been called earlier so that the construction of the Kelmscott High School could have commenced and brought relief to the unemployed building tradesmen?
- (2) When this school is under construction how many jobs will be created?
- (3) When is it estimated building will—  
(a) commence; and  
(b) be ready for students?
- (4) Is stage one, as in Rockingham and Thornlie High Schools, to be included in first contract now out for tender?
- (5) If (4) is "No" what significant changes are to be made?
- (6) Is it still the intention to include a primary school on the same site?
- (7) If "Yes" to (6) what is the acreage of the combined site?
- (8) If acreage is limited to 25 acres or less, will the department now act to acquire adjoining land to conform with recent practice of providing 25 acres for high schools and 10 acres for primary schools?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Since the school is not planned to open until February 1973 and as construction is to be undertaken by the Public Works Department day labour force, no acceleration of the project was necessary. Tenders will not be called.
- (2) It is not possible to estimate the number of jobs that might be created.
- (3) (a) Within four weeks.  
(b) February, 1973.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Answered by (4).
- (6) Yes.
- (7) 25 acres approximately.
- (8) The areas mentioned are recommended when the schools are on separate sites. An acreage equal to the sum of these is not necessary when a combined site is used.

27.

**STATE FINANCE**

*Wages and Salaries Increase*

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Treasurer:

What has been the cost to the Government of increased wages and salaries since assuming office last year?

Mr. T. D. EVANS (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

The cost to the Government in a full year of wage and salary award increases granted since the Government assumed office is \$28,226,000.

28. **NAVAL BASE AT COCKBURN SOUND**

*Garden Island: Use*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Premier:

Adverting to my question without notice on 14th March regarding Garden Island—as it would inhibit my right to fully discuss this issue if I were to avail myself of the invitation to view the file in the Premier's Department, as it is inconceivable to believe the Government does not wish to take the public of Western Australia into its confidence on this public issue, and I cannot imagine why the Government would want to be secret about its endeavours and views on Garden Island, will he reconsider his decision and table the file or explain to the House why he will not?



Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

As this was a decision of the Premier, it would be a matter for him to reconsider the question. Meanwhile I am not prepared to reverse this decision.

29. *This question was postponed.*

### 30. DAIRYING

#### *Price of Milk*

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) When did the Milk Board submit recommendations regarding the price of milk?
- (2) Is it his intention to act on the recommendations?
- (3) If so, when can an announcement be expected?
- (4) If the board has recommended an increase will he have the reasons tabled?
- (5) As the price of milk is mainly based on costs of production will he give consideration to having a regular review of the situation made instead of the present unsatisfactory system?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) 21st December, 1971.
- (2) to (4) The Milk Board's recommendations are under consideration by the Minister for Consumer Protection and an announcement is expected shortly.
- (5) Proposed legislation may have an ultimate bearing on this matter.

### 31. DAIRYING

#### *Brucellosis*

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many cows were affected with brucellosis in 1969, 1970, 1971?
- (2) Does the department consider the situation to be serious?
- (3) Is it satisfied with the progress being made to eradicate the disease?
- (4) If not, what additional measures does the veterinary department advocate to improve the situation?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Six herd outbreaks and a number of sporadic abortions occurred in 1969-70. In 1970-71 surveys indicated an overall prevalence of brucellosis of 1.8% in 12,685 breeders in the

south west and Esperance districts; a Nil prevalence in the Kimberleys, and less than 1% in the remainder of the State.

- (2) The overall incidence is low.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Answered by (3).

### 32. STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

#### *Additional Unit-load Ships*

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the estimated cost of the third unit-load ship for the State Shipping Service and what arrangements will be made to finance this ship?
- (2) As the case to the Commonwealth presented by our deputation emphasised that a fourth unit-load ship must be available if the service is to be maintained to Darwin, when will this ship be purchased and when can it be expected to go into service?
- (3) As the Commonwealth has undertaken to provide a grant of \$2.5 million to provide this ship, were any conditions laid down regarding Commonwealth money?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Between \$2,500,000 and \$3,000,000. A suitable vessel has yet to be located. It is proposed to finance the purchase of this vessel from depreciation funds, private borrowings and proceeds from the sale of vessels.
- (2) This will depend upon the availability of a suitable vessel within the price range.
- (3) As yet no advice has been received from the Commonwealth regarding the availability of funds or any conditions attaching to their use.

### 33. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

#### *Applications, and Allocation of Finance*

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the latest number of applications for assistance under the rural reconstruction scheme?
- (2) What are the numbers that have been—
  - (a) assisted;
  - (b) rejected?
- (3) How many applications are held pending further inquiries?

- (4) What amount of finance has been allocated involving special interest rates?
- (5) What amount of finance has been allocated for farm build-up?
- (6) What is the total amount allocated?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) 1,053
- (2) (a) 328  
(b) 599
- (3) 132
- (4) \$59,500
- (5) \$1,440,090
- (6) \$7,600,053

- (3) Could the loss of this contract, important to Western Australia, be in any way attributable to the Government's frequently expressed disapproval of the South African Government apartheid policy?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. Special concessions were offered in respect of rail freights and royalties to enable the industry tender to be competitive with previously accepted tenders.
- (3) Not so far as is known.

36.

## TRANSPORT

### PERTS Report

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he advise the names and positions of members working on the committee with Mr. Knox to report to the Cabinet sub-committee on the PERTS Report?
- (2) How long has this committee been working?
- (3) When did they or are they expected to report to the Cabinet sub-committee?
- (4) Will he advise the names and positions of members who prepared and submitted special recommendations to Cabinet in late 1970 or early 1971 on the PERTS report?
- (5) Will he table a copy of the report?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) Mr. D. H. Aitken, Commissioner of Main Roads;  
Mr. J. E. Lloyd, Town Planning Commissioner;  
Mr. R. J. Pascoe, Commissioner of Railways;  
Mr. J. Shea, Chairman, Metropolitan Transport Trust;  
Mr. L. E. McCarrey, Assistant Under Treasurer;  
The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Perth;  
Mr. W. B. Kelliher, Study Director, Perth Regional Transport Study;  
Mr. J. E. Knox, Director General of Transport, who chairs the Committee.

The Committee was established by the previous Government as a steering committee for the Perth Regional Transport Study during 1969 under the Chairmanship of the then Minister for Transport, Dr. Nielsen, the Study Director, ceased to be a member of it when he completed his work in January, 1971. He was replaced by

## 34. WHEAT QUOTA COMMITTEE

### Report

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) With regard to the report by the wheat quota committee of review, was he correctly reported in *The West Australian* on 9th March, when replying to criticism by the Farmers' Union, that among others a copy had been made available to the Country Party, because neither the office of the Country Party of Western Australia nor myself as Leader of the Parliamentary Country Party has yet received the report?
- (2) Will he table the report?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) In January I rang the Secretary of the Parliamentary Country Party and inquired if he desired a copy of the report of the Committee of Enquiry into Wheat Quotas. As far as I am aware a copy of the Report was subsequently forwarded.
- (2) and (3) A copy will be tabled after discussions with farmers' organisations are concluded

35.

## TIMBER

### Railway Sleepers Contract

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that despite a determined effort by the Western Australian timber industry it was unsuccessful in gaining a contract for the supply of 600,000 sleepers to the South African Government Railways?
- (2) Did the Government use its best endeavours to ensure the winning of this contract?

Mr. Kelliher. Mr. Pascoe and Mr. Shea were invited to join the committee shortly after the present Government took office.

- (2) Continuously since its establishment in 1969.
- (3) Committee has reported to the Cabinet Sub Committee on a number of occasions in 1972, and the last occasion being Thursday, 2nd March. The Committee will be providing the Cabinet Sub Committee with additional information tomorrow afternoon.
- (4) Mr. J. E. Knox, Director General of Transport;  
Mr. D. H. Aitken, Commissioner of Main Roads;  
Mr. J. E. Lloyd, Town Planning Commissioner;  
Mr. J. B. Horrigan, the then Commissioner of Railways;  
Mr. I. E. Thomas, the then Chairman of the Metropolitan Transport Trust.
- (5) The Report will be tabled.

### 37. CYCLONES

#### *Damage*

Mr. RIDGE, to the Premier:

- (1) What was the estimate of damage caused by cyclone "Sally" in December 1971 at—  
(a) La Grange Mission;  
(b) Port Smith (Morgan & Co. Pty. Ltd.)?
- (2) What was the estimate of damage caused by cyclone "Vicki" in March 1972 at—  
(a) Cockatoo Island;  
(b) Koolan Island;  
(c) Kuri Bay?
- (3) Following the cyclones in question what amount of State aid was extended to each of the centres enumerated in (1) and (2) above?
- (4) Is it anticipated that any additional aid will be offered to these centres?
- (5) What was the value of—  
(a) State Government contributions;  
(b) public contributions, towards the Queensland cyclone relief fund, following cyclone "Althea" in December 1971?
- (6) How does the Government determine eligibility for financial assistance to cyclone affected areas?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) (a) Plant, crops and livestock, \$57,000. Damage to buildings not advised.  
(b) Not known.

- (2) No details are available as to the value of damage caused by cyclone "Vicki".
- (3) La Grange Mission, \$15,000.
- (4) No.
- (5) (a) \$20,000.  
(b) \$37,500 to date.
- (6) It has been the policy of successive Governments to provide assistance for the relief of personal hardship and distress where a disaster is of such magnitude as to warrant the declaration of a national disaster area.

### 38. RURAL UNEMPLOYMENT

#### *Commonwealth Grant*

Mr. REID, to the Acting Treasurer:

- (1) Of the initial Commonwealth grant of \$1.18 million for rural unemployment, how much was—  
(a) allocated to Government departments, and what were the actual allocations to the respective departments;  
(b) allocated to country local authorities?
- (2) How many employees were engaged by each Government department?
- (3) Would he give details of the number of workers engaged from the respective country areas from which the recruitments were made for the Government departments?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

|                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
|                                      | \$        |
| (1) (a) Agriculture Department ..... | 22,073    |
| Agriculture Protection Board .....   | 85,344    |
| Forests Department .....             | 105,265   |
| Public Works Department .....        | 344,025   |
| W.A. Government Railways .....       | 317,000   |
| State Electricity Commission .....   | 11,780    |
| Total .....                          | \$885,487 |

- (b) \$294,513.
- (2) Agriculture Department .. 25  
Agriculture Protection Board .. 28  
Forests Department .. 77  
Public Works Department .. 155  
W.A. Government Railways .. 229  
State Electricity Commission .. 9
- (3) Details of the centres in which work was located and numbers employed in each area are as follows. In a number of cases labour was recruited from a wide area around the centre named.

## District; No. of men employed 40.

|                |    |
|----------------|----|
| Albany         | 40 |
| Badgingarra    | 2  |
| Bencubbin      | 10 |
| Beverley       | 1  |
| Bunbury        | 28 |
| Brunswick      | 4  |
| Capel          | 3  |
| Collie         | 46 |
| Cranbrook      | 3  |
| Cue            | 10 |
| Denmark        | 2  |
| Esperance      | 1  |
| Geraldton      | 28 |
| Harvey         | 24 |
| Kellerberrin   | 5  |
| Lake Grace     | 1  |
| Merredin       | 7  |
| Mount Barker   | 3  |
| Mount Magnet   | 10 |
| Moora          | 1  |
| Morawa         | 6  |
| Mullewa        | 11 |
| Nabawa         | 2  |
| Norseman       | 22 |
| Northam        | 32 |
| Pinjarra       | 3  |
| Quairading     | 8  |
| Salmon Gums    | 2  |
| Southern Cross | 15 |
| Toodyay        | 30 |
| Wagin          | 10 |
| Warooka        | 16 |
| Wokalup        | 2  |
| Wongan Hills   | 2  |
| Wyalkatchem    | 10 |
| York           | 34 |

In addition the Agriculture Protection Board engaged 28 men from various districts throughout the agricultural and pastoral areas and the Forests Department employed 63 men on forestry work centred on Bunbury and the lower south-west.

## 39. NEDLANDS TEACHERS' COLLEGE

*Amalgamation with Education Department*

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Education:

What is the Government's view and attitude towards the alleged endeavour by the University of Western Australia to amalgamate the Nedlands secondary teachers college into its department of education?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

The Government is awaiting a report and recommendation from the Tertiary Education Commission on the future of teacher education in general. It is anticipated this advice will be available to the Government early in May of this year.

## SELBY STREET

*Dual Carriageway*

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has the Main Roads Department recommended to have Selby Street reconstructed as a dual carriageway from Hay Street to The Boulevard, Floreat Park?
- (2) If so, will this work be provided for in the 1972-73 budget?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No, but some negotiations have taken place with the Perth City Council on proposals prepared by them.
- (2) Provision of funds for this work is the responsibility of the Perth City Council.

## 41. TRAFFIC LIGHTS

*Cambridge-Selby Streets Intersection*

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

Has the Perth City Council approached him recommending that traffic lights be installed at the intersection of Cambridge and Selby Streets, Floreat Park?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

No record of any such approach can be located.

## 42. POULTRY FARMING

*Hen Licenses: Numbers*

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

How many poultry farmers hold a license for the following numbers of hens—

- (a) less than 200;
- (b) from 200 to 500;
- (c) from 500 to 700;
- (d) from 700 to 800;
- (e) from 800 to 900?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (a) 195
- (b) 74
- (c) 29
- (d) 7
- (e) 11

43. *This question was postponed.*

44. *This question was postponed until the 28th March.*

## 45. ABATTOIRS

*Outer Metropolitan Area: Site*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

(1) Was consideration given to the selection of a suitable site for meatworks outside the metropolitan area by the Town Planning Department and Department of Industrial Development prior to the selection of a site at Baldavis?

(2) If not, why not?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

(1) No.

(2) The committee appointed to examine this matter confined its examination to the metropolitan abattoir district, in view of the provisions of the Abattoirs Act.

## 46. ABATTOIRS

*Existing and Proposed Facilities*

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) In view of extensions to Midland and Robb Jetty abattoirs, the provision of modern abattoirs at Katanning, sheep killing facilities at Beverley Beef Exports together with the present killing capacity of existing abattoirs, both in metropolitan and country areas, is it considered that—

- (a) the present facilities; or
- (b) present and contemplated facilities,

will be sufficient to meet the State's slaughtering requirements?

- (2) (a) What new abattoir facilities are expected to be in operation during the next 18 months;
- (b) by whom will they be operated;
- (c) what is the location of each;
- (d) which of these will be for—
- (i) local market;
  - (ii) export;
  - (iii) combination of both?
- (3) What numbers of live sheep have been exported for slaughter from Western Australia in each of the last five years and the ports of destination?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Present facilities together with the completion of all contemplated facilities should be sufficient to meet the State's immediate sheep slaughtering requirements.

## (2) (a) to (d) (i) to (iii)

| Operator                  | Location  | Market           |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Southern Meat Packers     | Katanning | Export and Local |
| Linley Valley Meats ....  | Wooroloo  | Export           |
| Bunbury beef exports .... | Bunbury   | Export           |

Export abattoir projects are under consideration by four other groups but no firm dates of construction are known.

## (3) 1966-67—198,681

Destinations: Christmas Island, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, and Singapore.

## 1967-68—248,988

Destinations: Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia and Singapore.

## 1968-69—316,165

Destinations: Bahrain, Burma, India, Iran, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia and Singapore.

## 1969-70—299,334

Destinations: Bahrain, India, Iran, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia and Singapore.

## 1970-71—410,533

Destinations: Bahrain, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Singapore.

## 47. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

*Upgrading*

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Education:

As it was recently announced in *The West Australian* that a number of junior high schools in country areas would become district high schools, will he advise—

- (1) What is the approximate number of schools which come within the requirements?
- (2) Will immediate action be taken to upgrade the selected schools?
- (3) Will these upgraded schools become equivalent of what is now known as a three year high or will they progress towards a five year high school standard?
- (4) What is the anticipated expenditure from—
- (a) State funds;
  - (b) Commonwealth funds?
- (5) Will science blocks and libraries be added to existing buildings?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 49.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No. The aim is for these schools to offer to students in rural areas the same facilities and educational programmes as are available in three year high schools.
- (4) (a) Approximately \$330,000.  
(b) Approximately \$50,000.
- (5) Such facilities will be provided in a programme commencing in 1972.

48. MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY

*Trust Funds*

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What interest is being allowed to ex-employees of the Midland Railway Company now working for the Government on trust funds invested in Western Australian Government Railways?
- (2) What rate of interest was arranged at the commencement of the trust fund?
- (3) Has any alteration been made to interest rates since the fund was set up?
- (4) Is it intended to adjust upwards the current interest rate?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1)  $4\frac{1}{2}\%$  per annum.
- (2)  $4\frac{1}{2}\%$  per annum.
- (3) No.
- (4) This matter is being examined and the Member will be advised of the outcome in due course.

49. LIONEL ARTHUR BROCKMAN

*Police Charges: Dropping*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

In view of the difficulties encountered by the C.I.B. in apprehending Lionel Brockman, did the C.I.B. agree with the Government's action in not proceeding with charges against Brockman?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

The Commissioner of Police alone is the ultimate deciding authority as to whether or not prosecutions are to be brought.

Before making the decision not to proceed with the whole of the outstanding charges, the Commissioner discussed the issue with the Criminal Investigation Branch Chief and principal officers in the investigation and advised them of his decision.

50.

LIONEL ARTHUR BROCKMAN

*Police Charges: Favoured Treatment*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it the Government's policy to show to others the preferential treatment shown to Lionel Brockman by dropping so many charges against him?
- (2) Will he explain to Parliament the reasons why Brockman received such favourable treatment?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) and (2) It would not be proper for the Government to formulate a policy in advance concerning offenders. It is not conceded that the prisoner to whom reference has been made, received undue favourable treatment.
- It is the Government's view that in the said case not only was justice done, but in the eyes of most right thinking people it was seen to be done.

51.

TRANSPORT

*PERTS Report*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) On what occasions have the Cabinet sub-committee met regarding the PERTS Report?
- (2) When is it expected their report will be submitted to Cabinet?

Mr. GRAHAM (for Mr. J. T. Tonkin) replied:

- (1) On—  
22nd March, 1971  
29th March, 1971  
29th April, 1971  
6th May, 1971  
7th May, 1971  
10th May, 1971  
2nd March, 1972.

- (2) Within the next week or two.

52.

LASH-TYPE SHIPS

*Price*

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

What were the prices tendered for the LASH-type ships in 1971—

- (a) in Australia;
- (b) outside Australia?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (a) In Australia—A\$9,243,600.
- (b) Outside Australia—

A\$12,177,521.

A\$13,681,592.

All bids were subject to escalation clauses.

*Sitting suspended from 3.48 to 4.06 p.m.*

**QUESTIONS (5): WITHOUT NOTICE****1. GRAIN ALCOHOL INDUSTRY***Progress Report*

Sir DAVID BRAND, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

In view of a number of meetings in the country being addressed on the subject of the production of grain alcohol, could the Minister give an up-to-date report, in broad general terms, of what progress has been made in this industry?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

I wish to advise that, as is probably known by members, grain alcohol was produced in the Plaimar factory at Toodyay and when I made an inspection some six weeks ago there had been a degree of success. Indeed, the alcohol ignited in my presence.

There was some question as to whether the industry would continue in Toodyay, but the firm—Graincol—has not exercised its option to purchase the building in that town; in other words, it has allowed it to lapse. I understand that currently the company is looking for a site elsewhere.

I am afraid I am unable to give any further information, but the experimental work is continuing.

**2. FREMANTLE PORT***Outer-harbour Development*

Mr. COURT, to the Acting Premier:

- (1) Has the full revised plan by the Fremantle Port Authority for outer-harbour development in Cockburn Sound been made public?
- (2) If not, will it be made public and when?
- (3) Will he table full details showing changes from the earlier plan?
- (4) Was the deletion of the major ship docking, survey and repair facility (with a potential for ship building) dropped after consultation with the Commonwealth?
- (5) What are the Government's reasons for expecting the Commonwealth to incorporate these facilities in its naval base plans when earlier Commonwealth announcements did not encourage the thought that full docking facilities were part of the Navy's Garden Island scheme?
- (6) In view of its revision of the F.P.A. plan to delete docking facilities, does the Government assume that naval docking facilities, if established, will be on Garden Island?

(7) If not to be on Garden Island, where can they be located in Cockburn Sound?

(8) Where would the Government plan to locate commercial docking etc. facilities if the Navy eventually installs dry or floating docks suitable for and available only to naval vessels?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

I appreciate the fact that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition gave some notice of this question but, unfortunately, the nature of it will entail inquiries and the gathering of information. It was not possible to compile this in the time available. I regret this is the position and I would be obliged if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would place the question on the notice paper.

The only comment I shall make now is that the whole question is currently before the Government and is being studied. I hope and trust there is no suggestion anywhere of secrecy. Certainly the details of the plan will be made available and will be publicised as soon as a final decision has been made.

**3. T.L.C. HOUSING LOANS***Comparison of Terms*

Mr. O'NEIL, to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the answer given to question 22 on today's notice paper. Relating to the policy that 50 per cent. of the \$300,000 allocated from the home builders' account to the new T.L.C. building society will be made available under certain terms and conditions, I ask—

Does his answer imply that provided a mutually acceptable State Housing Commission applicant is prepared to purchase a new State Housing Commission home at an interest rate of 1.58 per cent. higher than the State Housing Commission rate and for a repayment term of at least 15 years shorter than the State Housing Commission repayment term he will receive priority for the allocation of a home ahead of those people who are currently on the list?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

I have always been a great believer in the principle that when an intelligent question is directed

towards one, one should reply in an intelligent way. To enable me to do this I suggest the honourable member should place his question on the notice paper.

4.

**TIMBER***Railway Sleepers Contract*

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Acting Premier: I refer to question 35 which stands on the notice paper in my name and, in particular, to part (3) of the question.

- (1) Would the Government ascertain why the sleeper contract was not accepted?
- (2) Could the reasons for non-acceptance of the contract be made available to the House?
- (3) Does the Government or the timber industry think that it will be necessary to amend their policies so far as future tenders for South Africa are concerned?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

(1) to (3) As indicated in my earlier reply I am unaware of the reason for Western Australia not being the successful tenderer. I can only assume it is because the price was not low enough; in other words, our price was beaten by tenders from elsewhere.

I answer in the affirmative when I say that inquiries will be made in an endeavour to ascertain the exact circumstances which resulted, unfortunately, in the contract not being awarded to Western Australia.

5.

**FREMANTLE PORT***Outer-harbour Development*

Mr. COURT, to the Acting Premier: I understand that under the procedures we follow it will not be possible for me to place the question I asked about the naval base and docking facilities on the notice paper for Tuesday.

Would the Acting Premier be good enough to undertake to answer the question on Tuesday, whether it is with or without notice?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

The answer to the question is "Yes."

**COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION***Council Personnel*

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees elected by that House.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY***Motion*

Debate resumed, from an earlier stage of the sitting, on the following motion by Mr. Brown:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

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

MR. R. L. YOUNG (Wembley) [4.20 p.m.]: Before I get down to the task of discussing the main subject of my speech in some detail I would like firstly to say that I agree with the comments made by the member for Northam in regard to the dress that members wear in this Chamber. It is more than a little strange to me that towards the end of the 20th century we are sitting in a rather ornate Chamber and dressing in the way fellows did when the Parliament of Western Australia originated. It would be unreasonable, or perhaps unfeasible, to air-condition a Chamber of such a large cubic capacity.

Mr. Graham: They were not fellows but honourable members.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: They were certainly honourable members. It is a proven fact a person will function better, think more clearly, and be less inclined to lose his temper if he is not on his feet or sitting in a chair for hours on end in the weather we must suffer in this part of the world and in the parliamentary atmosphere in which we must suffer it. I agree with the member for Northam and I hope the day will come when we will take a more enlightened look at this situation.

A number of statements concerned with building society interest rates have been made by the Premier in the past few months. I would like to consider those statements at some depth. It is obvious that the Premier wishes he could have withdrawn some of the statements. All of his statements lead up to the final one made in answer to a question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the 14th March. The answer did the Premier some credit because the final decision he has arrived at is that the legislation he foreshadowed will not be proceeded with at this time. However, it is to his great credit that he has seen the light at this stage and will at least postpone introducing the legislation. It is a pity that we cannot get a stronger guarantee than that. Two words prompt me to rise to speak today—the words "at present" with



which he finished his answer to the question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the 14th March. In his last sentence the Premier said, "The Government does not propose to proceed with legislation already foreshadowed at present." If it were not for the words "at present" I would have left it at that. However, we could well see this legislation introduced at some time.

The Premier who, at the time, was Leader of the Opposition, said in his policy speech on the 3rd February, 1971—

We shall introduce legislation to control interest rates as has been done in Queensland and New South Wales and this will result in a saving of thousands of dollars to every home buyer who has obtained his loan from a Building Society.

He also said in his policy speech that he intended to reduce interest rates by from  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. or thereabouts. He planned to introduce controls which would have the effect of reducing interest rates to that extent. Such a reduction certainly would not have the effect of producing a saving of thousands of dollars to the average borrower from a building society. For this to happen one would need to have a loan for over 40 years.

The question of reducing interest rates was given a great deal of publicity before the elections. I refer in particular to a letter to *The West Australian* dated the 19th February, 1971—the day before the elections—by the present Premier who was the then Leader of the Opposition. He said—

I am sure that the 150,000 West Australians of modest means and small budgets referred to . . . will not mind a reduction of five cents a week on their investment in building societies in order that home buyers may save \$5 a week. Especially is this likely to be so because many of the investors are themselves borrowers from building societies.

That statement made by the Premier, on behalf of the Labor Party, is one of the most incredible I have seen prior to any election. It was impossible, and the Premier knew it at the time, that any foreshadowed reduction in interest rates could bring about a reduction of \$5 a week. A reduction of \$5 a week means a reduction of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the societies' rates on a \$10,000 loan. In his election speech the Premier referred to a reduction of  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The Premier knew it could not be done but nevertheless he went ahead and delivered the statement. I can only assume he meant \$5 a month, which is more likely on the figures given. This must have been apparent to him over the weeks and months prior to the elections. Certainly it must have been apparent after the elections. Either he

wantonly and deliberately misled the voting public by not correcting the statement or, which is even worse, he made the statement knowing he would mislead the public.

There have been a few statements since then. One appeared in *The West Australian* on the 28th February, 1972. The Premier was answering criticism by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in connection with the foreshadowed legislation. In referring to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Premier said—

Does he imagine that because those who lend money at interest must be satisfied with a smaller return they will withdraw their funds from circulation and put them down the well?

That is one of the most naive and simplistic statements that could come from a man who holds himself up to be a Premier putting forward legislation he considers feasible and responsible.

It is obvious to anyone who knows anything about economics that if it is possible for a person to receive a better rate of interest at similar security he will seek that higher rate. He will not be putting his savings down the well. Certainly a person will not leave them in one place if he can obtain a better rate of interest, with the same type of security, down the road. The answer is that people will invest their money elsewhere and I am sure this is what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition meant. The Premier should have known it and have been aware of the simple economic facts of life that people will withdraw their money to seek a better yield.

Mr. Graham: If your argument is valid the savings banks will not receive any deposits at all.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: That is not entirely the position.

Mr. Graham: The savings banks offer a much lower rate of interest.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: People put their money into savings banks for many reasons, not all connected with housing economics. I agree there is some point in the comment that has been made, but if the Acting Premier cares to look at the amount of money that has been withdrawn from savings banks and deposited into building societies over the last three or four years, he will see that the tendency is exactly as I say. In the same statement on the 28th February the Premier went on to say—

One might just as well convincingly argue that cheaper money will stimulate a greater demand, resulting in more home construction and employment.

We did not need a greater demand; the demand was sufficient. What we needed was money. It is no good having a demand if there is not the money to back

it up. That is what the argument is all about; namely, demand and supply of money. There is a certain amount of pushing and pulling and certain guidelines which building societies in this State must follow.

This idea has pervaded the Premier's thoughts on every statement and utterance he has made since. This is the kind of thinking that led him to commit himself verbally to legislation which he now finds he cannot bring forward. One must wonder why he cannot do this. Personally I wonder whether statements made by members on this side of the House have had some effect or, perhaps, the skilful and reasonable solicitations made by the permanent building societies' association members to the Premier have had an effect. I am sure they must have. As I said at the commencement of my speech, it is to the Premier's credit that he has at least changed his mind to the point that he is not prepared to introduce the legislation "at present." Perhaps some pressure, too, has been applied by trade union leaders. These men do not take long to become aware of the fact that if this is allowed to happen very shortly the people whom they represent will be out of work or their jobs will be threatened.

In a letter to *The West Australian* of the 22nd February, 1972, the Premier said—

The fact is that since 1970—when the bank rate rose by 1 per cent. and building societies increased their interest rate by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.—the clients of such organisations in Western Australia have been saddled with the highest rate in the Commonwealth . . . and that is the position at present.

That is another false statement because that is not the situation at present. Western Australians are not saddled with the highest interest rate in the Commonwealth. In fact, Victoria has the highest rate and New South Wales and Queensland have rates only fractionally lower than those in Western Australia. It is of more than passing interest to note also that the New South Wales building societies, whose interest rates are pegged by legislation, lend only half the amount per head of population of that loaned by the Western Australian building societies. The Premier went on to say—

Is it not very strange that legislation welcomed in Queensland—and which has had no harmful effects whatever there—should in Western Australia be regarded as an "unwarranted interference" in the affairs of the societies?

The Premier claims that the legislation fixing home lending rates had no harmful effect whatever in Queensland. The Queensland building societies lend only 40 per cent. of the amount loaned in Western Australia per head of population. This

represents \$60,000,000 a year less to the borrowers, and this is 115 loans a week. If that is not a harmful effect, I would like to know what is!

I would now like to examine some of the economic considerations of building society interest rates. The building societies association is competent to comment on this aspect. The association can see the problems involved in the type of legislation the Premier has foreshadowed.

Firstly we must have regard for the demand and supply of money. If rates are pegged below the bond or market rate, investors will withdraw their funds and place them in higher-yielding investments. That is a clear fact of life. If that happens the building societies' source of money will dry up. The effect of this will be that the one-shot mortgage of up to 95 per cent. of the valuation of a house will disappear.

The person affected by this will be the little man—the man the people on the opposite side of the Chamber claim to represent. They do not represent the little man or they would not consider introducing this type of legislation.

The second effect is that the building industry will be placed in jeopardy and unemployment will follow. Whom will that affect? It will affect the 7,000 people employed in the building industry and, once again, these are the people the Government claims to represent. In fact these people are more represented by members of this side of the Chamber.

I would like to appeal to those members on the Government benches who have some knowledge of economics—and there is a considerable number of them—to consider some of the effects of the control of interest rates. If the bond rate moves up, the first thing to happen is that the investor will seek higher interest rates and will withdraw his money from the building societies. It does not matter if the investor works on the floor of the Midland Workshops or the floor of the Stock Exchange—he is motivated by the same desires. If he can get a higher interest rate somewhere else he will do so.

Housing loans will be more difficult to obtain because building societies can lend only what they can borrow. The Premier has overlooked this point. One would think there is an unlimited amount of money to be loaned at any one time.

When there is no money available, the person who needs to borrow to build a home for his family cannot do so without becoming involved in second and third mortgages. I wonder whether these are the silvertails to whom Mr. Coleman referred when he said the building societies cater for these people. This is not so. The building societies cater for people in the lower and middle-income groups. These are the people who need this assistance.

I would like to point out that 60 per cent. of the borrowers from building societies are skilled and semi-skilled trade workers—tradesmen and the like. There are 40,000 borrowers in all so that means 24,000 borrowers are skilled and semi-skilled workers. If money is not available for these people to build homes, the skilled and semi-skilled workers employed in the building industry are in danger of losing their jobs. As I commented earlier, there are 7,000 people employed in the building industry and I will quote figures at a later stage which will indicate how many are likely to be out of work if the legislation foreshadowed by the Premier is passed.

I will now refer to the interest rates of building societies over the last four years. This will indicate to members what happens when the building societies do not keep their rates in parity with the bond rate. In 1966-67 the bond rate was  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and the building societies' rates were  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 per cent.—in other words below the bond rate. Building societies in Western Australia loaned \$10,000,000 to borrowers in that year. In 1968-69 the bond rate was 6 per cent.

Mr. Bickerton: It is not the Reg Bond rate is it?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: It is not even the Alan Bond rate.

When the societies' rate moved from  $5\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 per cent. towards the end of the year, the amount of loans increased to \$40,000,000.

Mr. Lapham: You can also see what happens: We have a competitive field chasing one type of finance.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: That is exactly the point I made. If it is made attractive people will invest.

Mr. Lapham: People have to pay  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to borrow it.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: The whole point is that people in other States are not paying  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. as the Premier said. They are paying 10 per cent. and more for a second mortgage.

Mr. Lapham: Are you saying people can pay 10 per cent.?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: This is what I am saying—I would not like to see borrowers forced into the situation where they have to pay 10 per cent.

In 1969-70, when the bond rate was  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and the societies matched it, \$90,000,000 was loaned.

In 1971, when the bond rate was 7 per cent. and the building society rate was in parity with it, \$90,000,000 was again loaned. That is an increase of \$80,000,000 per year through building societies alone. This represents 150 homes a week. This is possible when the interest rate of the building societies is in parity with the bond rate.

The building societies are non-profit-making organisations and there is no need for them to cut each other's throats. They do the best job they can for the people they represent. There must be a blending of interest between the person who wants to borrow money and the person who wishes to invest it. This is what we should aim for. We have one man with money to lend at a reasonable rate of interest and another who wishes to build a house and borrow money at a reasonable rate of interest. Building societies are managed by expert administrative staff to protect both borrowers and lenders. These men know what pushes and pulls housing finance and what is good for the housing industry.

Mr. Jamieson: How much money does not go into housing? What about Lombard House—it is financed by building societies?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: If the Minister knows anything about building societies he must know the money cannot all go into housing. For example, a great deal of money has to be kept on short-term deposit, and more money at call. This money earns no interest. Some money must be held, which actually costs money to hold.

Mr. Jamieson: This is not homes.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Money must be invested in different securities to earn interest and maintain liquidity. This does not change the basic concept.

Mr. Jamieson: Your method does not balance one against the other.

Mr. Hutchinson: He is doing pretty well.

Mr. Jamieson: Not really. He is not telling us about the amount loaned by the banks in the Eastern States.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Let us consider the facts, and perhaps the Minister can learn something and comment later.

Economics is monetary psychology. Investors look for the best return. It is an economic fact that if the building societies' interest is pegged below the bond rate fewer will invest in building societies. Many people are quite happy to invest in building societies. They know that 40,000 people borrow the money to buy houses at reasonable rates of interest over a long period.

To illustrate my point, in 1970 the bond rate moved ahead of the societies' rate by 1 per cent. Investment fell from \$20,000,000 a quarter to \$5,000,000 a quarter—that is 115 houses a week. Incidentally, that represents 672 individual applications in one quarter.

Mr. Jamieson: But you are not equating them with other lending societies.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: I am talking about building societies.

Mr. Jamieson: I know you are: this is where your figures are false.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Perhaps the Minister would tell me where my figures are false.

Mr. Jamieson: You have to equate them to the overall financing for houses through banking, insurance, and other institutions.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: The Minister is saying that these 672 individuals who were refused loans in that quarter could then go around the corner and obtain money from banks and insurance companies—and obtain 90 to 95 per cent. of the value of their property.

Mr. Court: They would not get 95 per cent. loans.

Mr. Jamieson: I am merely saying the other organisations would have increased their loans when the societies' loans were being decreased.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: It is a fact that most of these borrowers could not obtain loans from other institutions.

Mr. Jamieson: They could not get 95 per cent.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Is the Minister saying they could borrow the money from somewhere else? I have told the Minister where borrowers could not get the money. Can he tell me where they could have obtained it?

Mr. Jamieson: Certainly they could not borrow 95 per cent. of valuation.

Mr. Hutchinson: The Minister should use up some of his time on this debate.

Mr. Graham: The member for Cottesloe is wasting some time now.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wembley.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: I also point out that when the societies' rates moved back up to the bond rate the societies could immediately lend money at the previous rate.

Mr. Lapham: What is the interest charged to the borrower?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: In Western Australia?

Mr. Lapham: Yes.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: The average rate is 8½ per cent.

Mr. Lapham: the building society lifted its borrowing rate.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: It went up to 8½ per cent.

Mr. Lapham: From what?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: From 7 per cent.

Mr. Lapham: This proves the argument. There was only limited finance available so the building societies decided to raise their interest rate to the bond rate. In consequence the borrowers had to be charged an additional 1½ per cent.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: The honourable member is quite right. He would also know that if the interest rates had not gone up there would have been no funds to lend.

The building societies' rates are pegged in Queensland and members know that new home buyers have to borrow money at 12 and 13 per cent. to bridge the gap between the deposit and the amount the building societies can lend. The Government claims to represent the little man, and it should be interested in providing the little man with a chance to pay off his house.

Mr. Lapham: He hasn't a very good chance of owning it.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: Does the honourable member mean that a man who borrows \$5,000 at 7 per cent. and another \$4,500 at 13 per cent. has a better chance of owning his house than the man who borrows \$9,500 at 8½ per cent.? That appears to be what the honourable member is saying.

Mr. Lapham: That was a stupid question. You are now referring to second mortgages.

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: I am making this speech in an endeavour to eliminate second mortgages.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): May I suggest the member for Wembley address the Chair?

Mr. R. L. YOUNG: I will do that. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, for your kind guidance.

It is also an economic fact of life that if there were no investors there would be no lending. It is an economic fact that if there is no lending there is very little building. It is an economic fact that if there is a downturn in building there will be widespread unemployment. Many building trade workers in this State are becoming increasingly aware of this, and I am sure trade union leaders have at least warned the present Government that this danger is apparent. The building industry is the first to be hit. We cannot treat the people *en masse*—they are individuals. The 672 applications which were refused in the quarter I referred to represented individual people with individual aspirations and dreams of owning a house. They could not achieve their dream because of the economic situation, and this situation will become worse if the foreshadowed legislation is passed.

Finally, I would like to refer to the question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the 14th March and the answer to it by the Premier. I would like to take the Premier to task in regard to the first part of his reply. The suggestion contained in the question asked by the

Deputy Leader of the Opposition was that since the Premier had commenced to talk about controlling the interest rates charged by building societies there had been a downturn in the flow of deposit money into the building societies. The Premier replied that there was no evidence that the announcement by the Government of its intention to control the rate of interest which building societies may charge on loans to home buyers has had an adverse effect on the flow of deposit money.

In normal circumstances, when the building societies, interest rate is higher than the bond rate a greater flow of investment money into the building societies can be expected. That position did obtain for two months when the building societies were offering 7 per cent. interest and the bond rate was 6½ per cent. Yet, despite the fact that the offer by the building societies was more attractive, and it would have been expected, on pragmatic consideration, that people would have poured money into the building societies—because that is the way the graph has always gone—the amount of money flowing into the building societies was considerably less than that received by them in previous months. Therefore, all I can say about the answer given by the Premier is that it is inaccurate.

For the first time in living memory the little man is considered to be a good risk by large lending authorities, which the building societies are. For the first time in his life the little man can enter a place such as a building society or an insurance corporation and apply for, and be granted, a mortgage for up to 95 per cent. of the valuation of his home without having to enter into a second and third mortgage and place himself in the situation that I made clear to the member for Karrinyup, and in which the little man in other States is placed when he tries to borrow large sums of money. For the first time in his life he is in the situation where, for a reasonable length of time—because 20 years in a man's life is not long—he can borrow a large sum of money to build a house at a reasonable rate of interest and so realise his life's ambition.

All I ask is that members opposite consider very seriously the words "at present" contained in the Premier's answer to the question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, to ensure that these words are deleted, and that the Government will not introduce this legislation "at any time," because I think I have demonstrated to some degree that if it were introduced it would be catastrophic for the type of people whom members on the Government side of the House get so het up about. They claim that they honourably defend this class of people and represent them to the last ditch, but when it comes

to the crunch and to putting forward a socialistic piece of dogma, knowing full well what effect it will have on the little man, on his employment and his future, suddenly the proper representation for him is not evident any more.

I put it to members that if the legislation is introduced in this place I will certainly be against it 100 per cent., and I will also say that if the Government is successful in having such legislation passed it will reap what it sows.

**MR. LEWIS (Moore) [4.49 p.m.]:** I would like to join other members from both sides of the House in advocating some reform in the dress worn by members in this Chamber, particularly if we are to continue to have autumn sittings such as the one we are having now, and when we find there are many torrid days experienced in the month of March. I hope, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. A. R. Tonkin), you will use your undoubted influence with the Speaker in an endeavour to change his attitude on the question of members' dress.

**Mr. Lapham:** Have you not been a farmer for most of your life? Have you not been accustomed to a little heat?

**Mr. LEWIS:** I am accustomed to a great deal of heat in the place where I come from, but that is dry heat and not this sort of heat.

**Mr. Lapham:** Surely you are not saying that our climate is bad. I thought it was a good climate.

**Mr. LEWIS:** I want to address myself briefly to what the Governor, in his Speech, has so aptly described as "the most rewarding investment an administration can make." I am referring, of course, to education.

I am pleased the Minister for Education has resumed his seat in the Chamber. It is not that I intend to be over-critical of him and his department, but I hope that any helpful suggestions I make might register with him at least to the point of his giving them some sympathetic consideration, and perhaps he might make some comment or two along the way.

The first aspect of education I want to refer to is the upgrading of country schools. I point firstly to the statement published in *The West Australian* dated the 6th March. That statement reads as follows:—

**Country schools to be upgraded**

State junior high schools would be upgraded to full high school status, the Minister for Education, Mr. Evans told the A.L.P. electoral conference in Kambalda yesterday.

He said that this would make them eligible for Commonwealth assistance for libraries and science blocks.

In Perth last night the Director-General of Education, Mr. H. W. Dettman, gave more details of the Government's education plans.

He said that junior high schools would be brought more into line with senior high schools in terms of staff, curricula and facilities.  
2 in charge

They would be known as district high schools and would have two deputy principals, one responsible for the primary department and the other for the secondary.

The improvements were suggested after a departmental committee looked at rural education.

The upgrading would provide an incentive for more highly qualified teachers to take positions in the country.

More staff would be provided for the district high schools so that students could study under the achievement certificate scheme.

The schools would offer an enlarged curriculum.  
Behind

Mr. Dettman said: "It was apparent when we looked at education in rural areas that, with the introduction of the achievement certificate, country schools were falling behind.

That is very pleasing to know, and I congratulate the Minister on being a member of a Government which is enjoying wealth that was not possessed by any previous Government, and I am indeed glad he is the Minister, as a consequence, who is having a greater allocation which he can direct to this most rewarding investment.

I am sure the Minister will use this increased allocation to good purpose. I am extremely pleased that the 49 junior high schools referred to in the answer given to the question asked by the member for Mt. Marshall this afternoon are to be upgraded. I hope this will not mean merely a change of name. One can call it a junior high school, a senior high school, or whatever name one likes, but it is not the name, but what takes place inside it that I am concerned about.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I can assure you that this means much more than a change in name.

Mr. LEWIS: I accept the Minister's reply to the second question asked by the member for Mt. Marshall which was as follows:—

Will immediate action be taken to upgrade the selected schools?

The Minister replied "Yes." That is fair enough.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I think you are aware that this will require substantial changes to the existing regulations, the staffing of schools, and also variations in promotions.

Mr. LEWIS: I am. The Minister, more or less, has taken the words out of my mouth, because I am coming to that point. The next question asked by the member for Mt. Marshall was—

Will these upgraded schools become equivalent of what is now known as a three year high or will they progress towards a five year high school standard?

The Minister's answer to that question was—

No. The aim is for these schools to offer to students in rural areas the same facilities and educational programmes as are available in three year high schools.

At this point may I return to what Mr. Dettman had to say on the 6th March. He said—

... junior high schools would be brought more into line with senior high schools, in terms of staff, curricula and facilities.

Many country people accepted that statement literally and said to themselves, "Now our local junior high school will become a senior high school and our youngster will get his full five-year secondary education at the local school." Many people have been clamouring for many years for this improvement in their high schools, as both the Minister and I know. There are very real difficulties in providing this facility in those places where there are junior high schools.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I think it would be fair to say that what Mr. Dettman has said is the ultimate aim, but what I am referring to is the immediate aim.

Mr. LEWIS: I think Mr. Dettman did mean what he said, and I am not suggesting that he would go out of his way to mislead anyone; I know him too well for that. However, it is unfortunate that many people have misinterpreted this statement, because the words "would be brought more into line" have led them to believe that these junior high schools would be changed to senior high schools. Mr. Dettman's statement, in part, was as follows:—

... would be brought more into line with senior high schools, in terms of staff, curricula and facilities.

That, more or less, means everything. The next question asked by the member for Mt. Marshall was—

What is the anticipated expenditure from—

- (a) State funds;
- (b) Commonwealth funds?

This obviously refers to the previous question; that is, "Will these upgraded schools become the equivalent of what is now known as a three year high?" The Minister's reply to this question was that the anticipated expenditure from State funds was approximately \$330,000 and from Commonwealth funds, approximately \$50,000. That is a total of \$380,000, and if we divide that amount by 49, being the number of junior high schools to be upgraded, we get a sum of \$7,755 which, to my way of thinking, would pay for the extra equipment needed in the upgraded schools, perhaps the extra staffing, and so on, to enrich the junior high schools to the same standard as the high schools, without the provision of science blocks and libraries.

The next question asked by the member for Mt. Marshall was—

Will science blocks and libraries be added to existings buildings?

The Minister's reply was—

Such facilities will be provided in a programme commencing in 1972.

This means that, as from 1972, the local junior high schools will be equipped with science blocks and libraries. However, as the Minister and I know—and, in fact, he knows more about the finances the Education Department has at its disposal than I do—it would be many years before the existing 49 junior high schools would be equipped with science blocks and libraries.

When the Commonwealth entered this field some years ago we knew that a start had to be made with senior high schools that were then lacking in these facilities. Gradually we have been able to provide these facilities in senior high schools, and the next priority would be to provide the junior high schools with them. There are not many of these but there are enough. I gathered from my discussions with the Director-General of Education that eventually we would get down to the junior high schools. However, the answer was that because the Commonwealth is entering the field with the provision of finance to enable us to provide these facilities in senior high schools, the State will thus have more money to be able to provide such facilities in junior high schools.

So in the ordinary course of events we would have been able to provide these facilities in junior high schools without a change of name. However, it is good to know that an upgrading is forecast—some of it in the short term—even though we may have to wait several years for the provision of some of the facilities.

One feature that rather surprises me—and I would like to have the Minister's assurance on this—is that the provision of staffing in secondary schools has now reached the stage that will enable junior

high schools to be staffed with more qualified teachers; those teachers who will bring the junior high schools up to the present high school status, at any rate.

The answer I had, even up to a little over 12 months ago, was that we did not have the specialist teachers in the secondary field, particularly the science teachers and mathematicians, in sufficient numbers to be able to spread them around the countryside as we would have liked. We had to economise with the available talent. This meant that a country child in order to receive anything near equality of education—a subject that has been bandied around freely but not always understood—would have to be sent to a senior high school where a higher standard of education is available, which standard cannot be made available at the smaller junior high schools.

In order to get over this problem we discussed the question of providing mobile science vans and mathematics specialists to move around the junior high schools in some areas of the State. This discussion progressed to the point where, having investigated the situation, the department felt that the north-eastern agricultural area was the field where this experiment could be tried out as a commencement. I am not putting in a plug for my electorate when I say this, because this has not been tried out in my electorate. It was the view of the department that there was a potential for this sort of education. I would ask the Minister to look into this proposal and discuss it further with the Education Department. I feel that in some areas of the State we could be doing something to enrich the standard of education at very little cost by adopting this proposal.

Mr. McPharlin: The north-eastern agricultural area takes in my electorate.

Mr. LEWIS: Yes. I think everyone is aware of the fact that the north-eastern agricultural area, being the second best part of the State, lies in the electorate of Mt. Marshall.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Don't you two start fighting over this!

Mr. LEWIS: I am very pleased the Minister has been able to increase the boarding allowance. I note that a regulation was tabled yesterday giving effect to this increase. I trust the Minister is also aware of the unfortunate increase in hostel fees. From my inquiries I found that an increase in fees had been necessary in order to meet the demands of increased award rates, which have resulted in an increase in the cost of running these establishments.

I think that a little over 12 months ago the highest fee charged at any country high school hostel established by the Government authority was \$480 a year.

This charge was much higher than the others which went down to \$440. I have a list of the latest fees which are charged by the country high school hostels, and they range from the lowest of \$444 a year to the highest of \$630 at Port Hedland. I mention Port Hedland, because we must appreciate that costs there are much higher than in other centres. Let us not be unfair about this. In some country centres they range from \$500 to \$544; such as Narrogin \$552, Katanning \$549, Carnarvon \$540, and Bunbury \$544. The fees have been increased. Despite the increased boarding allowance, a heavy burden is still placed on some parents in having to meet the difference between the cost imposed by the hostel and the boarding allowance they receive.

I worked out some examples this morning, and I shall mention one or two to illustrate the point I make. The parents of a child receiving primary education or in the first three years of secondary education, who attends the Port Hedland hostel, will have to find over and above the boarding allowance and the hostel subsidy of \$40 a year, a sum of \$329. That is a burden of \$8.22 per school week, taking the school year at 40 weeks. That is a fairly heavy burden on parents whose children board at the cheapest hostel and attend a school or a high school where no tuition fees have to be paid. This is in a hostel which is a non-profit-making concern. The parents will still be liable for \$329 a year for the child. I would also like to be fair and say that this is the highest cost to any parent placed in such a position. So far as I am aware there is no upper secondary education available at Port Hedland, nor do I think it is available at Carnarvon.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You realise this is still less than \$7 a week in a full year.

Mr. LEWIS: It works out at \$8.22 per school week. That is a fairly high cost. There are many variations and anomalies. I now refer to girls who are receiving upper secondary education. I mention girls because they can get cheaper board at Geraldton. As far as I am aware this district is the furthest north where a senior high school is established. I see that you, Mr. Speaker, are shaking your head. Let me take Carnarvon; I find the cost will be slightly greater than that at Geraldton.

Since I worked out the figures for Geraldton I have found that the parents of a girl, receiving upper secondary education and living above the 26th parallel but attending the Geraldton Senior High School, will have to find \$143 a year. This works out at \$3.57 per school week. I mention this to show the great variation in the two instances I have mentioned between the child at Port Hedland and the child at Geraldton, whose parents live in the same area of the State. These are some of the anomalies. Now that the Minister has got

over the crunch and has been relieved of most of the financial burden he may be able to give attention to these anomalies with a view to ironing them out.

Getting back to the burden which is still placed on some people, which in some cases amounts to \$8 a week, my experience has revealed that towards the end of 1970, despite the boarding allowance, some parents could not find the money for the fee imposed by the hostel. They were placed in the situation where many of them gave notice that they would have to withdraw their children from secondary education. This was a tragic state of affairs. We set up a fund, but it was not a very large one. I think the department estimated it at \$10,000.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The amount was \$10,000.

Mr. LEWIS: This fund was set up to meet cases of hardship which under a means test indicated that despite the boarding allowance the parents were unable to send their children away to receive secondary education, and therefore those children would be deprived of their right to education.

The fund was set up, and a number of people were assisted, though not a great number. I understand that this fund has now been abolished, probably in the belief that the increased boarding allowance would take care of the situation.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Could I point out the fund became exhausted, and that within the estimates of the Education Department no provision was made for the replacement of that fund. However, a like amount has now been made available, and this money is drawn from another source and not from the Education Department to meet the very cases to which you are making reference. This information has been supplied in a letter to Mr. Munns of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association who raised this question.

Mr. LEWIS: Does this relate to parents in any part of the State?

Mr. T. D. Evans: Necessitous cases will be examined, and if found justified they will be assisted.

Mr. LEWIS: I am pleased to know that. One parent in my electorate has experienced great difficulty, and he faced the prospect of withdrawing his children from school because of the difference between the hostel fee and the boarding allowance. I am glad of the Minister's assurance that provision can be made to cover such cases.

I am also pleased to know that what used to be known as the supervisor's allowance has been increased. This is the allowance paid to supervisors in charge of children receiving tuition by correspondence and through the help of radio transceivers.



Mr. T. D. Evans: It is still called a supervisor's allowance.

Mr. LEWIS: We as a Government increased this from \$100 per child to \$200 per family. In some cases this has been referred to as a decrease in the allowance. Perhaps it was, but to increase it from \$100 per child to \$200 per family will in the majority of cases result in an increase. It was an increase of 100 per cent. in the allowance if there was one child; and if there were two children in the family the allowance would still be \$100 per child. I admit that where there were more than two children in a family the allowance was a decrease. I am told that fewer than 100 children were affected by this subsidy.

The Minister has now been able to increase this allowance. In saying this I am not taking anything away from him. Good luck to him, for he has been able to enjoy a greater amount of money in a Government which has received more money than any previous Government. He has increased the allowance to \$300 for one child, and to \$400 for two or more children. This is a very good move.

It is too much to expect the parents of a six to eight-year-old child to board that child 1,000 miles away from home. This is bad enough for teenagers who attend school. For parents who have small children it is too much to expect of them. I believe it is in the interests of the children themselves and education generally to have small children at home at least for a few years. The only danger I see in this is that no age limit is imposed. I hope the allowance does not become so great that parents might be tempted to keep their children at home right through the full range of primary education.

A child would undoubtedly benefit in later years, say from 10 years of age onwards, by being able to associate with other youngsters.

Mr. T. D. Evans: There is some danger in the amount of \$400. The honourable member will appreciate this and one had to make a decision whether to increase the amount or not, at the risk of providing the incentive to which you have referred.

Mr. LEWIS: Yes, I realise the Minister had to consider those aspects. Some progress has been made—although I do not approve of it—with the provision of free school books for children. However, the provision of free school books is part of the Government's policy, and it is already having partial effect.

I again ask the Minister to give earnest consideration to the granting of a greater subsidy for secondary school books, particularly for those children going into their fourth year. I have not heard the Minister comment on this point. I have argued this matter previously and I will not dwell on it now.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The honourable member's argument is appreciated, and the point is conceded. It becomes a question of when we can give attention to that matter.

Mr. LEWIS: I also notice that the Minister has approached the Commonwealth Government for some assistance in the conversion of 120 radio transceivers for those youngsters undergoing correspondence courses. The cost has been estimated at \$800 for each set, which amounts to \$96,000.

In my view the radio transceivers are essential for correspondence education. It is essential for a pupil to have daily contact with his teacher and with other youngsters and for that reason I hope the representation from the Minister is successful. The conversion, of course, is to change the transceivers from a double-side band to a single-side band, which has to be done by 1975.

I make a plea to the Minister to increase the driving allowance to parents of country school children. I made a similar plea to the Premier when he was the Minister for Education. The problem which exists in country areas seems to have increased because of the exodus from many parts of the country. Many bus services have ceased to operate because of an insufficient number of children, and the parents who are affected have to drive their children a considerable distance, either to a school bus or to a school. The allowance for that travelling is 3½c per mile on one return trip.

It has to be remembered that a child has to live five miles from a school, or four miles from a school bus in order to qualify for the allowance. In most cases the parent has to make two return trips a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The parent is recompensed to the extent of 1½c per mile, and in many cases this allowance is not sufficient. This applies particularly in developing areas where the only vehicle is usually a farm truck. That would mean that a 3-ton truck might have to be used to transport one child to a school or a school bus and the parent would be recompensed at the rate of 1½c per mile.

I made representations to the Premier, the then Minister for Education, but my request was declined. I asked for the allowance to be doubled but the Premier said that to double the allowance would cost an extra \$30,000. That is a very small amount when compared with the total budget available to the Education Department, but it would mean so much more to many parents who are struggling to find the wherewithal to educate their children. I ask the Minister

to look into this matter again. It would not be very costly, but it would be appreciated by so many people in our agricultural areas.

I appreciate that the Governor's Speech has forecast legislation dealing with education and native welfare, and a number of other matters. For that reason I do not intend to speak on those other matters today, but will content myself with what I have already said.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. A. R. Tonkin.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

**MR. GRAHAM** (Balcatta — Deputy Premier) [5.20 p.m.]: Before moving the motion expected of me I wish to inform members that Parliament will not be sitting during the week following the Easter holidays. I refer to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday the 4th, 5th, and 6th April. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.21 p.m.*

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 21st March, 1972

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

## THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON

### Return

**THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE** (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.32 p.m.]: Mr. President, if I may have your indulgence: Before we proceed with today's business I would like to acknowledge the fact that The Hon. Graham MacKinnon is back in his seat. We hope he will be there frequently from now on.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Thank you very much.

## QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

### 1. THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

#### Claims

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) How many claims have been received by the Third Party Claims Tribunal since its inception?
- (2) How many have been finalised?
- (3) How many of those finalised were consent agreements?
- (4) In what degree did the decisions of the Tribunal differ from those by the Trust?

- (5) How many of the Tribunal's decisions were challenged in the Supreme Court?
- (6) To what degree did the decisions of the Supreme Court differ from the Tribunal?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS replied:

- (1) As at 10th March, 1972, 2,690 claims have been filed in the Tribunal.
- (2) As at 10th March, 1972, 2,074 claims have been finalised.
- (3) Of the 2,074 claims finalised, 1,738 were finalised by consent agreements.
- (4) It is not clear what statistical information is required by this question. If information is sought as to the number of times the Tribunal awarded less or more than the sum offered by the Trust the answer is not readily available and would require perusal of all the files mentioned in Answer (1).
- (5) 57 appeals have been filed in the Supreme Court against decisions of the Tribunal.
- (6) Information obtained from the records of the Supreme Court is as follows:—

Appeals upheld—11.

Appeals dismissed—18.

Appeals discontinued—6.

Appeals, result of which unknown—22.

2.

## FIREWORKS DISPLAY

### Fire Hazard

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Was permission granted for the fireworks display on the 14th March, 1972, at the opening of the Carousel Shopping Centre, Cannington?
- (2) If so—
  - (a) who gave such permission; and
  - (b) were any conditions imposed when the permit was granted?
- (3) What was the fire hazard in the area on that day?
- (4) What precautions, if any, were taken to prevent fire?
- (5) Will any compensation be paid to the owners of the fifty acres of grassland burnt out?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS replied:

- (1) Yes. A "Permit for Display of Fireworks" was issued on the 14th December, 1971.