

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Have not these vehicle owners paid the surcharge to date?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: That is the crux of the whole thing. The Minister's final remarks are as follows:—

The remaining paragraphs (g) to (i) were suggested by the Commissioner of Police to legalise the existing practice in exempting vehicles registered by His Excellency the Governor, career consular representatives, local authorities, and the State.

I do not think we gain anything by perpetuating something which is wrong. What has been done since 1962 to the gazettal of this legislation has been wrong; it has not been within the law. Rather than legalise the matter by this Bill it would be better to make these people—who up till now have been getting away with something they should not have got away with—pay the surcharge as does everybody else.

The original people who were not eligible and who are listed will remain as they are. But if we extend the legislation to the field of people listed in the Bill I feel we might well consider removing it from the Statute book altogether, because it constitutes one more crack at the motorist and the individual.

I see no reason for Governments, and local authorities in particular, or the very highly recognised diplomatic service, representing large countries, not paying the small amount of money involved. In these circumstances, I oppose the Bill.

**THE HON. F. J. S. WISE** (North) [5.7 p.m.]: I listened with interest to my leader in his analysis of the effect of this Bill.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Would Mr. Heitman kindly not stand between the speaker and the Chair.

**The Hon. F. J. S. WISE:** I wonder whether there should not be some provision to validate the retrospectivity of the non-collection of a surcharge provided in the law.

We have a case where a Bill was introduced some years ago providing for the collection of a surcharge on all vehicles excepting those specified in section 3 of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance Surcharge) Act.

There have been non-collections from people obliged under that Statute to pay a surcharge. Now we come along with a simple Bill to include in four categories different sorts of people in addition to those who are already exempt under the parent Act.

Are they not liable today for the surcharge for the entire intervening period, from the proclamation of the parent Act until this Bill is proclaimed and becomes an Act? If they are liable, there should be

provision for some retrospectivity in this Bill; because they are not exempt by this measure from dues for which they have been liable for years.

No word of mine or of my leader's can assist in defeating this Bill, the provisions of which in our view are not necessary. I suggest, however, it is very necessary to look at the liability which I feel has been incurred by the people for whom provision is now being made.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.9 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 3rd September.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 28th August, 1968

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

## QUESTIONS (36): ON NOTICE

### CRAYFISHING

#### Boat Licenses

1. **Mr. RUNCIMAN** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) How many crayfish boats were licensed for the years 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968?
- (2) How many of the above boats have been lost at sea or rendered unfit for the industry?
- (3) Were any of the licenses transferred to other boats?
- (4) If so, how many and to whom?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON** replied:

- (1) Maximum number—847 boats. Variation occurs when boats are out of commission or are in course of replacement.
- (2) This information is not available.
- (3) Yes; to authorised replacements for *bona fide* crayfishing boats.
- (4) This information is not available.

*Processing Vessels*

2. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) How many crayfish processing vessels are in operation?
- (2) Who are the registered owners?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) 46 boats.
- (2) Licensed Processing Vessels  
Names of Licensees

G. R. Muir, c/o. Ross Fisheries (Aust.) Pty. Ltd.

R. R. Daniels, 3 Eliot Street, Geraldton.

A. G. Woodcock, 32 Mabel Street, Geraldton.

S. T. Liddon, 38 Crowther Street, Geraldton.

Batavia Fishing Co., 206 Second Street, Wonthella.

C. J. Bass, 23 Williams Road, Melville.

Blue Dolphin Fishing Co. Pty. Ltd., 22 Pembroke Street, Bicton.

A Papparella, 145 South Street, Fremantle.

R. W. Forward and S. Pavlovich, 58A Chadwick Street, Hilton Park. S. Stojanovic, 14 Manning Street, Mosman Park.

C. Wheeler, 14 Hope Road, Applecross.

A. Pittorino, 12 Howard Street, Fremantle.

Eureka Fishing Co. Pty. Ltd., 249 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

M. & M. E. Van Der Oord, 17 Dean Street, Geraldton.

D. Sokol, Lefroy Avenue, Millendon.

R. J. Phillips, 5 Christie Street, Geraldton.

Planet Fisheries Pty. Ltd., 152 High Street, Fremantle.

S. Sousa and Co., c/o. P. G. Morris, 249 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

M. Correia and M. de Jesus Isidora, 86 East Street, East Fremantle.

J. C. & W. M. Van Gelder, P.O. Box 73, Tuart Hill.

Lizbeth Fishing Co., 22 Briston Avenue, Bicton.

Correia's Fishing Co., 10 Fraser Street, East Fremantle.

H. W. & M. K. McCormick, P.O. Box 58, Tuart Hill.

Pacific Fishing Co., Great Northern Highway, Middle Swan.

Tropical Traders Ltd., 96 Queen Victoria Street, Fremantle.

Nor-West Whaling Co. Pty. Ltd., 152 High Street, Fremantle (Planet Fisheries).

T. Pittorini, 30 Clara Road, Hamilton Hill.

N. P. & I. Botica, 426 Canning Highway, Como.

F. Collica, 110 Hampton Road, Spearwood.

Ross Fisheries (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., 7 Cleaver Street, West Perth.

J. de Ceglie, 51 Bellevue Terrace, Fremantle.

G. Maraldi, 85 Alfred Street, Graylands.

F. Vinci, 4 Chambers Street, Fremantle.

M. G. Kallis Gulf Fisheries Pty. Ltd., 196 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

K. Kazimerciak, 115 Marmion Street, East Fremantle.

R. Jokovich, 31 Walker Street, South Fremantle.

N. Ruljancich, 14 Nairn Street, Fremantle.

Western Star Fisheries, 80 Barrack Street, Perth.

*Boat Ownership*

3. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) How many licensed cray boats are owned by companies?
- (2) How many companies are involved?
- (3) How many fishermen own—
  - (a) more than one licensed boat;
  - (b) more than two licensed boats?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) to (3). This information is not available.

*EMU POINT WATERFALLS**Fauna and Flora Reserve*

4. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has he received any requests for setting aside as a reserve 34,000 acres surrounding the Emu Point Waterfalls, off the 36 mile peg Toodyay Road, and adjoining the standard gauge railway?
- (2) If so, what consideration has been given to such request?
- (3) Is he aware that the area will make an outstanding flora and fauna reserve for the preservation of flora and fauna now being rapidly extinguished by weekend shooters, etc.?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Assuming the area in question is the former Avon Valley Army training area containing 34,526 acres, requests have been received for the area to be reserved for various purposes.
- (2) Consideration is being given to the formation of an advisory body which, if formed, will examine this area.

- (3) I am aware of the potential of this area for the purpose stated, but have not received any official report on the extent of damage to flora and fauna by weekend shooters.

### WATER CATCHMENTS

#### *Prohibition of Bush Walkers*

5. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has any recent instruction been issued to prevent "walking clubs" from walking through or over water catchments in the Mundaring-Kalamunda areas?
- (2) If so, what was the reason for such instruction?
- (3) Is it generally insisted that *bona fide* bush walkers and botanists, etc. be prohibited from water catchment areas?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) No, but it is necessary that they apply for permission to enter the areas concerned.

### LARGE AND SLOW MOVING VEHICLES

#### *Banning at Peak Periods*

6. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Police:

In view of the growing problems of peak hour traffic—

- (1) Has any consideration been given to ensure slow and large vehicles—e.g., tractors, rotary hoes, front end loaders, scoops, etc.—are kept off main traffic routes in peak hours?
- (2) Does he agree that these slow and comparatively cumbersome pieces of equipment create bottlenecks and traffic hazards which could be eliminated by keeping them off the roads during morning and evening peak traffic flow?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Oversized movements operating under permits are not allowed during peak hour traffic, but it is not considered there is sufficient justification at this stage to debar the other classes of vehicles mentioned.

### VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

#### *Driving on Right Hand Side of Road*

7. Mr. CASH asked the Minister for Traffic:

With few countries now driving on the left hand side of the road, what consideration has been given by the Government to suggesting to the Australian Transport Advisory Council that an inquiry be held into the advantages of an Australian change to right hand side driving?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Craig) replied:

None. It would be pointless to consider such a change when all our vehicles are fitted with right hand side steering wheels.

### PORT AT WYNDHAM

#### *Improvement of Facilities*

8. Mr. RIDGE asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it intended to establish improved port facilities at Wyndham to accommodate the increased tonnages that will result from an extension of the Ord farming area?
- (2) If "Yes"—
  - (a) will the proposed improvements be an extension of the existing facilities or on a separate location;
  - (b) when is it anticipated that work will commence?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Extension of Wyndham port facilities are at present being actively investigated and a decision has not yet been made whether the present wharf will be extended or a new wharf constructed at another site.
- (b) This will depend on the rate of development of the Ord Irrigation area following the completion of the Ord River Dam in 1972.

### WEST KIMBERLEY RESEARCH STATION

#### *Establishment*

9. Mr. RIDGE asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What progress has been made in relation to the establishment of the proposed West Kimberley research station?

- (2) Has it been determined what work will be undertaken during the current financial year?
- (3) Are any research trials currently being conducted on the property?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Boundary fencing is nearing completion and construction of staff accommodation is about to commence.
- (2) The Budget for the current year provides for construction of cattle yards, some subdivisional fencing, and provision of equipment and water points.
- (3) The main station area will not be stocked until the facilities referred to in (1) and (2) are available. A grazing management trial is being conducted on regenerated country at the Collins Yard experiment area which is now part of the research station establishment.

## PESTS AND DISEASES

### Control

10. Mr. CASH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

What preventive measures are now provided to control the spreading of disease-carrying insects or insect pests through light aircraft operations within the State and between the Northern Territory and Western Australia?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:  
None.

## IRON ORE AND MANGANESE RESERVE

### Application by Nomads Pty. Ltd.

11. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:
  - (1) Was an application for a temporary reserve in the Pilbara made by Nomads Pty. Ltd. during 1962 for iron ore and manganese?
  - (2) If so, what are the details and what was the outcome of the application?
  - (3) If refused, what was the reason?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The application was deferred because the ground was then held as part of a temporary reserve for iron ore by the Goldsworthy Mining Associates and it was also within the overall ministerial reserve on manganese in the Pilbara. Part of the area is still held by the Goldsworthy Mining Associates, but the manganese reserve and restriction on iron ore applications have been lifted.

Nomads Pty. Ltd. has been asked if it would be interested in exploring that portion not held by Goldsworthy and its reply is awaited.

- (3) Answered by (2).

## CHURCH SITES

### Provision in Balga

12. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Have any church sites (including possibly provision for halls and youth centres) been set aside in Balga?
- (2) If so—
  - (a) for what denominations;
  - (b) what is the locality of each;
  - (c) what is the area of each?
- (3) If church sites have not been finalised, what are the reasons for the delay?
- (4) When is it anticipated sites will be available to churches?
- (5) In view of the dire need for facilities for social guidance, will appropriate steps be taken urgently?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) There have been no sites specially set aside for churches. Land has been earmarked for a local hall, kindergarten, and library in the proposed new Balga shopping centre. As part of the Balga Primary School education complex, sites have been designed for a primary school, as well as a convent school and adjoining church.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) The commission is conferring with the World Council of Churches and the Local Government Association as to a future policy for church sites in residential neighbourhoods. It is expected these discussions will conclude in the near future and will be reviewed, together with a recently concluded survey on requirements for youth activities, in the locality.
- (4) As soon as the commission has studied the reports which will be prepared as a result of (3).
- (5) Yes.

## CRANBROOK WATER SUPPLY

### Improvement

13. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What steps have been taken to improve the water supply to Cranbrook?

- (2) Is he aware of the very unsatisfactory nature of the alternative supply which had to be used during last summer?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) An additional five acres of bitumen catchment was constructed to the stage that it could be used prior to the main winter rains. Investigations into an additional source are proceeding.
- (2) Yes. Perhaps I might give some additional information in regard to this question. Water was obtained from the railway dam and it was slightly discoloured; but before this action was taken the local authority was consulted, and it expressed the preference that there should be augmentation from this source rather than that there should be restrictions.

### BUILDING BLOCKS

#### *Kalgoorlie*

14. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Lands:

How many building allotments are available within the township of Kalgoorlie for acquisition—

- (a) by purchase by auction;  
(b) by Crown lease?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

There was no demand for residential sites in the Kalgoorlie district for many years until the recent activity resulting from nickel discoveries.

The Lands Department is currently proceeding to release a number of sites for sale by public auction. I might add that in regard to leases, the policy up until a few years ago was that most of the residential sites were leased on a 99-year lease, or thereabouts; but I took action to have this converted to freehold, and I think most of the residential sites which were formerly leasehold are now freehold. Any future sales will, where possible, be made as freehold.

### PESTS AND DISEASES

#### *Control*

15. Mr. KITNEY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What action has been taken to prevent the entry into this State of pests and diseases likely to affect agricultural production?
- (2) With the advent of the standard gauge railway and the increase of passenger and goods traffic entering the State, what added precautions are being taken?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Regulations prohibit the importation of stocks, cuttings of apple trees, grape vines, etc., and such fruits as apples, pears, quinces and grapes, also second-hand fruit cases and soil.

In addition, all plants from States where phylloxera exists, must be accompanied by a declaration that the plants have not been grown in an area where the pest exists or within 50 yards of any grape vines. Similar requirements are required with regard to European red mite and bacterial blight of lucerne. All bananas imported are required to be fumigated, or otherwise treated. Restrictions also apply to the importation of banana suckers, plants of cotton or tobacco, unmilled rice or rice plants, and potatoes and onions.

Regulations also provide protection against the entry of weeds. Health certificates are required to accompany all livestock brought into Western Australia. Overseas quarantine is handled by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

- (2) Provision is being made to provide an inspection shed at the Kewdale marshalling yards to handle expected increased goods traffic on the standard gauge railway. It may be necessary to provide additional inspection at Kalgoorlie to cater for the expected increase in passenger and goods traffic.

### PERTH CONCERT HALL

#### *Financing*

16. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

Having regard to the most acute shortage of accommodation existing in the State which calls for the expenditure of the maximum amount of money which the Government can make available, from what source and at what rate of provision will the money be found to meet his promise to finance on a dollar for dollar basis up to \$1,000,000 the erection of a concert hall for Perth?

Mr. BRAND replied:

It is planned to provide these funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund over two or three years. However, no finality has yet been reached regarding the total cost or period of construction of the building.

I should like to add that, as a result of consistent approaches from various people interested in

culture and from people, generally, interested in a decision being made to provide a concert hall, the Government decided to play its part in the commitment. I believe the Government's action will have the effect of getting this very important project under way. If by any chance there has been any sacrifice in respect of other building programmes, the action we are taking seems to me to be the least we could do at this time.

### RENT CONTROL

#### *Introduction of Legislation*

17. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has he read the article in *The West Australian* on the 26th August, captioned "Rent Investigators"?
- (2) Is he aware that in this State because of the acute shortage of accommodation some landlords are enabled to charge excessive rents?
- (3) Will he give consideration to the need for rent control legislation in Western Australia with a view to protecting tenants against rapacious landlords?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The Government does not believe that rent control legislation provides a satisfactory solution to problems caused by shortage of accommodation as it would tend to restrict private investment in additional building. The position will be kept under review.

### STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

#### *Toodyay Service*

18. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Why should the coming of the standard gauge railway make such a difference to Toodyay, which has been deprived of its parcels office, goods shed, and toilets, and has been left with an unattended siding without even a platform?
- (2) Have there been complaints about the passenger service because of persons being overcarried or not picked up?
- (3) Where are the nearest stockloading facilities for farmers of the Toodyay district?
- (4) What proposals has he for restoring reasonable facilities for patrons of the railway service to and from Toodyay?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) The relocation of facilities at Toodyay is due to the fact that the previous site of Toodyay Station was not amenable to standard gauge. A modern parcels and freight shed has been provided at West Toodyay.

In the town itself a low level platform and shelter for passengers and parcels has been provided. It is not departmental policy to provide elevated platforms or public toilets at railway stations. It is considered that patrons are adequately catered for at Toodyay.

- (2) There have been two reported instances of persons not being picked up. No record is held of passengers being overcarried. Toodyay is not a regular stopping place, and intending passengers should be visible on the platform as the train approaches.
- (3) East Northam and Wattening. A portable stockrace for sheep loading is available at West Toodyay.
- (4) Answered by (1).

### MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE

#### *Relevance of Driver's License*

19. Mr. LAPHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Since possession of a current driver's license has no relevance to the question of whether a person has driven negligently, why is the owner of a vehicle required to warrant in the policy issued under the Motor Vehicle (Third Party) Insurance Act that his vehicle will not be driven by or in charge of himself or any other person who is unlicensed to drive?

Mr. NALDER replied:

To ensure that the vehicle will be driven or in the charge of a person who is qualified and competent to drive a motor vehicle.

### FRUIT CANNING

#### *Industry in South-West*

20. Mr. KITNEY asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) What negotiations have taken place regarding the possibility of establishing a canning industry in the south-west?
- (2) What centres have been considered as a possible site if such an industry is established?

*Imports*

- (3) What is the annual quantity and value of the following imports from the Eastern States and Tasmania for each of the last five years—

- (a) apples;
  - (b) pears;
  - (c) peaches;
  - (d) plums;
  - (e) apricots,
- preserved in containers?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) In addition to local interests there have been protracted negotiations with several of the large Eastern States based canning companies that have been approached with a view to establishing a canning industry in the south-west. Discussions are still continuing, although recent prob-

lems in the Australian canning industry make such discussions more difficult.

The principal difficulty as far as economic viability is concerned is the inward freight on sugar and tinsplate to a decentralised factory, together with the outgoing freight on the canned fruit. Tinsplate and sugar enjoy capital city prices but there is still the question of getting these commodities to the decentralised factory from the metropolitan area.

Discussions have also taken place with overseas canning companies with a view to attracting them to Western Australia.

- (2) The principal locations that have been considered are: Albany, Bunbury, Donnybrook, Harvey, and Manjimup.
- (3) The attached statistics show the annual imports of canned fruit from the other States of Australia for the last five years.

*Fruit Preserved in Containers**Imports into Western Australia from other Australian States*

Description	1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67		1967-68	
	'000 lb.	\$'000	'000 lb.	\$'000	'000 lb.	\$'000	'000 lb.	\$'000	'000 lb.	\$'000
Apples	358	46	461	63	514	70	1,016	119	918	115
Apricots	1,607	202	1,426	192	1,452	200	1,716	240	2,102	283
Peaches	3,747	462	3,618	467	4,147	584	3,213	452	3,156	427
Pears	2,749	325	2,902	398	2,180	308	2,144	293	2,338	329
Other (a)	4,345	692	4,467	755	5,983	1,015	6,478	1,098	6,325	1,063
Total	12,806	1,727	12,874	1,875	14,276	2,177	14,567	2,202	14,839	2,217

(a) Includes plums.

Source: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics.

**RAIL FREIGHT REDUCTIONS***Benefits to North*

21. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is the full benefit of the special reductions in rail freights which have been made to assist persons in the north of this State being passed on by road operators hauling goods ex Meekatharra?
- (2) If "No," is the action of the Railways Department in reducing freights resulting in enlarging the profits of hauliers?
- (3) Is there evidence that road operators may be deliberately pricing the Meekatharra-Port Hedland haul in order to make rail/road transport show to a lesser advantage over road?
- (4) What does he propose to do to ensure that the benefit which was intended for residents of the north is made available to them?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Freight charges for goods transported by rail/road ex Meekatharra to points north of the 26th parallel are \$10 per ton less than by road transport.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (1).

**MT. HAWTHORN FLATS***Renovation*

22. Mr. BERTRAM asked the Minister for Housing:

Will he arrange for the State Housing Commission flats situated at the corner of East and Ashby Streets, Mt. Hawthorn, to be inspected internally and externally and to advise me by letter as to when it is proposed to repaint them or parts of them and stating which flats and what parts?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

The maintenance officer, State Housing Commission, visited the seven tenants of the flats referred to this morning and reports that with the exception of two, all tenants expressed themselves as completely satisfied and had no outstanding complaints. Two tenants expressed the view that their lounge-kitchens should be repainted. These rooms are finished in gloss oil and would respond to washing.

The flats were fully renovated in the early part of 1965 and are generally in good condition. About three months ago the complete water service to all of these flats was renewed with copper piping.

It is not considered that any special action is justified at present and in accordance with usual practice the flats will be subject to review for periodic renovation in 1970-71.

In view of this answer it is not considered necessary to reply by letter as requested.

## AUTOMATION

### Introduction

23. Mr. BERTRAM asked the Premier: What research planning and organisation has been undertaken with a view to—

- (a) expediting the introduction of automation; and
- (b) coping with the adverse side effects of automation?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (a) The Government is continuously researching and planning to effect technological change. The new centralised Government computer system is a good example of forward planning.
- (b) There have been no adverse side effects in the Western Australian Government from automation.

## MANJIMUP PLAYING FIELDS

### Reticulation

24. Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is he aware—
  - (a) that the source of Manjimup's water supply until recently was the Deanmill Dam of approximately 62,000,000 gallons capacity;
  - (b) at no stage of any summer did the capacity of this dam fall below 15,000,000 gallons;

(c) to the Deanmill supply has been added the Scabby Gully Dam supply of 163,000,000 gallons?

- (2) If so, having regard to the sufficiency of supply, would he agree to scheme water being available for the reticulation of playing fields in that town?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Yes.
- (2) No. The policy applying to water for playing fields was set out in a reply given to question 15 on Thursday, the 15th August, 1968.

## DAIRY FARM RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

### Allocations, Submissions, and Government Policy

25. Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) (a) Has any sum of money been allocated in the recent Federal Budget for the Dairy Farm Reconstruction Scheme proposed earlier this year by the Minister for Primary Industry?
- (b) If so, how much of this amount will be available for use in Western Australia?
- (2) (a) Did the Government receive submissions from a deputation from the dairy industry on the 22nd April, 1968, requesting that the concept of the scheme outlined by Mr. Anthony be broadened to permit not only the amalgamation of properties but also the financing of increased pastures, purchase of stock and other developmental aspects of dairying; if so, does the Government support this submission?
- (b) Was this submission placed before the Federal Government; if so, with what result?
- (3) (a) Is it policy of this Government to encourage dairy farmers out of the industry?
- (b) If so, will any provisions be made to rehabilitate those who leave the industry in any other sphere of life?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) (a) Yes: an initial provision of \$1,000,000 has been made.
- (b) This is not known yet.



- (2) (a) Yes.  
 (b) Yes. No reply has been received yet.
- (3) (a) No.  
 (b) Answered by (3) (a).

### TRADE UNION ADVOCATES

#### *University Scholarships*

26. Mr. MAY asked the Premier:  
 With a view to encouraging improved integrated employer-employee relationships, will he give consideration to granting scholarships or bursaries to selected trade union advocates to study full time at the University of Western Australia?

Mr. BRAND replied:

It is difficult to see how the granting of a bursary or scholarship in this form would assist integrated employer-employee relationships.

In any case there is no specific course at the University designed specifically for the training of industrial advocates. There is, however, a full certificate course in industrial advocacy being currently conducted by the technical education authorities. This is a part-time evening course comprising six units and these are—

Economics.

Industrial Relations.

Industrial Advocacy.

Industrial Law 1.

Industrial Law 2.

Financial Management.

This course is being attended by both employer and employee industrial officers.

27. *This question was postponed.*

### EFFLUENT

#### *Regulations Governing Disposal*

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

- (1) What regulations prohibit the entry of effluent disposal contractors within the boundaries of local authorities?
- (2) In the case of an effluent disposal contractor submitting the lowest tender to remove trade waste from a private factory, can this tender be refused by the local authority concerned?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Health Model By-laws Series 'A'—by-law 11A.
- (2) Yes.

### *Treatment Plants: Installation*

29. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the knowledge that the Canning River is already polluted with raw sewage—

- (1) What objections does the Swan River Conservation Board have to the installation of effluent treatment plants?
- (2) What is the main objection to treated effluent being discharged into the Canning River?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) The Swan River Conservation Board objects to the discharge, within its area of control, of effluent from treatment plants on the ground that it could have a deleterious effect on the river. If chlorinated there would still be the problem of detergents and nutrients. If not chlorinated there would be the additional major problem of human faecal bacteria.

### MIDLAND-MEEKATHARRA ROAD

#### *Sealing*

30. Mr. BURT asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it intended to seal the under-mentioned sections of the Midland-Meekatharra Road—
- (a) between the 368 and 387 mile-posts; and
- (b) between the 440 and 458 mile-posts?
- (2) If so, when will this work be carried out?
- (3) In view of the permanently unsatisfactory state of the sections between the 375 and 386 posts, and the 448 and 450 posts, will special priority be given to sealing these two sections?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) In the Main Roads Department's current programme of works provision has been made for the construction of the section 368-377 mile. In the 1969-70 programme of works favourable consideration will be given to the provision of funds to bring this section to the black top stage with a view to completing the sealing in 1970-71.

It is proposed to construct and prime the section between the 377 and 387 mile pegs in 1969-70 and to seal it in 1970-71.

- (b) Funds have been provided by the Main Roads Department for the construction of the section 440-458 mile. This work will be carried out in the current financial year with a view to the section being primed in the 1969-70 financial year and sealed in 1970-71.

(2) Answered by (1).

- (3) The Main Roads Department does not agree with the view that this section of the highway is permanently unsatisfactory. It is at present in quite good condition. However, in common with many other roads throughout the State it will tend to deteriorate in wet conditions until such time as the road is sealed.

31. *This question was postponed until Tuesday, the 3rd September, 1968.*

### CALISTA SCHOOL

#### *Enrolments and Accommodation*

32. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the anticipated number of new enrolments for 1969 at the Calista School?
- (2) What new construction will be made to accommodate this increase?
- (3) Is it anticipated that in 1969 prefabricated or temporary structures will be used to accommodate students at this school?
- (4) If "Yes," how many such classrooms and how many students?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) 60-70 new enrolments.
- (2) Two rooms are listed in the building programme.
- (3) Not unless an emergency occurs.
- (4) Answered by (3).

### SPEARWOOD SCHOOL

#### *Accommodation*

33. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Education:

Will at least two new classrooms be constructed at the new Spearwood School this year to meet the needs of anticipated new enrolments in 1969?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

No. The present accommodation consists of six rooms on the new site and four on the old, which will be more than ample for the anticipated enrolment.

### CRAYFISHING

#### *Regulations Governing Pots*

34. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Is a crayfisherman with a 30-foot boat and a permissible 90 pots in accordance with the formula of three pots per foot of boat, confined thereafter to 90 pots when, for example, he builds a 50-foot boat for deeper and more distant fishing?
- (2) If confined, why?
- (3) What is the position if a man builds a vessel smaller than 30 feet; is he allowed more or less than the 90 pots?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) to (3) This information was published as follows:—
  - (a) in *Government Gazette* of the 26th July, 1963; and
  - (b) by ministerial directive dated the 17th June, 1968, published in the official publication of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna, "F.I.N.S."

Copies have been supplied to the honourable member for his information.

### HORMONE SPRAYS

#### *Fogging Machines*

35. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Are there any regulations governing the use of fogging machines in agricultural areas when hormone or other injurious chemicals are being employed?
- (2) Have the neighbouring landowners any redress against spray drift from such activity other than through civil action?
- (3) If no regulation or legislation at present covers this type of spray activity, is it the intention of the Government to introduce same?
- (4) If so, when?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) and (4) Regulations are being considered to reduce the risk of spray drift from misting machines affecting susceptible crops such as tomatoes and grape vines.

**SCALDED CREAM***Prohibition of Sale*

36. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has any responsible body considered the prohibition of the sale of scalded cream?
- (2) If so, what are the reasons for prohibition?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) and (2) The Western Australian Milk Board is presently considering the production and sale of scalded cream.

**QUESTIONS (5): WITHOUT NOTICE****WOOL EXPORTERS PTY. LTD.***Royal Commission*

1. Mr. DAVIES asked the Premier:

Is he yet able to announce the name of the Royal Commissioner and the terms of reference of the proposed inquiry into the operations of Wool Exporters Pty. Ltd. and associated companies?

Mr. BRAND replied:

No; we have not made any decision on the appointment of the commissioner, because, having decided to hold a Royal Commission, following the examination which has already taken place, it is clear we must get a man of full capacity, and perhaps with some knowledge of the overall conditions of the industry, and one who is, at least, able to call in some of the experts. Such a man is not readily available; maybe we will have to go outside the State to find one.

There is also the matter of drawing up practical terms of reference on which evidence will be called and from which the Royal Commissioner will possibly be able to answer all the points. Until the terms of reference are clarified—even if we had a man in mind to act as Royal Commissioner—it is difficult to discuss the problem with the appointee.

**ROAD TRAFFIC CODE***Provision of Regulations*

2. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Transport:

Will he please endeavour to obtain a copy of the Road Traffic Code provision applying in each of the other States of Australia, and corresponding with Road Traffic Code 602 of Western Australia; and, if possible, a copy of

the "Give way to the Right" rule that is at present operating in New Zealand, and furnish me with such copies?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

I will inquire if copies of these road traffic rules are available here and, if so, I will provide the honourable member with copies of them. I would also take this opportunity to advise the honourable member that in regard to the question he asked me yesterday, letters have already been forwarded requesting the information he seeks.

**CRAYFISHING***Boat Licenses*

3. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

The reply to a number of questions I asked this afternoon was that the information was not available. Does this mean it is not available to the Fisheries Department, and, if so, can it be made available through other departments?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

I suggest the honourable member discuss this matter with the Minister for Fisheries.

Mr. Tonkin: Tell him it is in the regulations and not in the by-laws!

**PERTH RAILWAY STATION***Lowering: Accreditation of Firm*

4. Mr. BRAND (Premier): Yesterday I was asked a question without notice by the Leader of the Opposition and I gave him certain answers. The matter was relating to a letter to be written to the Western Australia Development Corporation in connection with the sinking of the railway. I simply want to confirm the answers I gave and to advise that in any case, the Crown Law Department, is examining the proposed letter.

**HOUSING***Plight of Subiaco Family*

5. Mr. O'NEIL (Minister for Housing): Yesterday the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked me a question without notice relative to the plight of a family which had spent some time on the roadside in Churchill Avenue, Subiaco. I have made inquiries about this case, and it is evident a number of individuals and organisations

have taken an interest in the plight of the family. The organisations and individuals include the State Housing Commission, the Child Welfare Department, the local police, and the member for the district. It is my understanding that the family is now housed.

### HOUSING

#### *Accommodation Shortage: Grievance*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Balcatta.

**Mr. Brand:** Why don't you let the back-benchers have a go?

**MR. GRAHAM** (Balcatta — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.57 p.m.]: This is surely a historic occasion as I commence to avail myself of the 10 minutes allotted to enable members once a fortnight, in a period set aside, to ventilate what are usually termed grievances. I think members would be surprised if I did not use the time available to me to lay emphasis on a subject that was highlighted by the deliberations made at the Teachers Union conference yesterday.

As everyone will acknowledge, teachers comprise one of the responsible sections of the community. They are entrusted with the care and the education of our children. Yet the housing situation is so desperate that people of this calibre have given 12 months' notice to the Government that unless there is some substantial improvement in the provision of housing they will seriously consider some form of strike action.

If I said no more than that, it would be ample confirmation of what members of Her Majesty's Opposition have been saying to this Government for some years, and the advice put forward by those members has been ignored by the Government, although in recent days it is showing some belated signs of stirring; but, as I have mentioned on previous occasions, it is too little too late.

The housing situation in this State is indeed desperate. A new form of intimidation—if that be the correct word—is being used against luckless families who are renting accommodation. I think there was once a procedure of sport exercised which was known as smoking rabbits out of their burrows. In recent times landlords have devised a new method; that is, instead of approaching the courts to obtain an eviction order they are now removing roofs from houses, which, under the law, they are entitled to do. An owner is entitled to give the required period of notice and remove the roof, and the family occupying the house is left exposed to the elements. There are instances when such acts are *bona fide* and it is intended that the house shall continue to be used as a dwelling, but there are others when it is intended to demolish the properties.

Apart from the cases of which I have learned, I have one before me at the present moment. This relates to a young family in receipt of a humble income of less than \$50 a week. On Monday morning next, workmen will arrive to demolish the house which the family is occupying. At eight minutes past four o'clock this afternoon I was informed by the Housing Commission that it cannot help this family out of its turn, and that the family has sufficient income to make its own arrangements.

In a letter written to me by a member of that family the following appears:—

I would rent another home, but cannot afford the rents that people are asking—\$17 to \$30 for a reasonable home.

Surely that gives emphasis to the acuteness of the problem that confronts us.

**Mr. Lewis:** This tenant would not be a teacher?

**MR. GRAHAM:** No. I am discussing the housing problem which, I pointed out, has been highlighted by the position of the teachers.

Not only are we becoming familiar with the situation which existed in Subiaco, but our attention has been drawn to the plight of families in Fremantle, in Swan View, and in Bayswater, whose furniture has been put out on the footpath. So statesman-like has been the approach of this Government to the housing problem that situations such as those appear to be a common feature of our way of life in the metropolitan area; and scattered around the suburbs are the possessions of people who have been evicted—their clothing, their furniture, and their possessions lying on the verge of the road.

I repeat that this Government has ignored all the requests and urgings that have been made from this side of the House. I became aware this afternoon of a case concerning an owner seeking possession of his house, because he wants it. The poor luckless people who are occupying the house at present have found from inquiries that it will cost \$18 to \$24 a week to get other accommodation which is suitable for them.

I have mentioned this matter on a number of occasions. I have before me a photostat copy of the actual notice which the landlord of certain premises sent to the tenant, who was at the time paying \$13 a week in rent. The notice is as follows:—

I hereby give you notice that as from the sixth day of March of the current year the rental of property will be \$30 per week in advance.

Your continuance in possession after that date will be taken as your acceptance of the new terms of tenancy.

My attention has been drawn to a case—and this was in the last few days—of a tenant who was paying \$14 a week in rent

The rent was increased to \$16; then last month it was increased to \$20; and this month it was further increased to \$30. It is anybody's guess what the figure will be next month!

Cases such as those occur only because there is a lack of action on the part of the Government, and those on the lower rungs of the economic ladder, whose income is below \$50.86, are affected. The new flats and the new buildings which are erected privately are, of course, not available to these people, because they are not able to afford the high rentals which are asked.

It is my intention to take advantage of every possible opportunity to reveal, on behalf of the people who are suffering in this manner, the wilful neglect which has resulted from the policy of this Government in respect of housing. Fifteen years ago, when a Liberal-Country Party Government was kicked out of office because of its neglect of the housing situation, it completed, through the State Housing Commission, more than twice the number of houses that the present Government is building in a year. I repeat: Twice as many as this Government proposes to build under its stepped-up programme—to which considerable prominence has been given over the last couple of weeks—by increasing the output from 1,200 to 1,800 houses in the year.

The housing situation is critical, and every day of the week fresh evidence is coming before members of Parliament concerning the unfortunate lot of so many of our people. Much of the time of members which should be devoted to important matters of concern to the State as a whole is being taken up in listening to the tales of woe from these people. Never in the 25 years that I have been a member of this Parliament, have I felt so hopeless and helpless—as I feel at the present time—in trying to assist people with housing problems. I know full well even before I interview a person seeking assistance that the answer from the State Housing Commission will be in the negative.

The officers of the commission are using any sort of words as a pretext to put off members of Parliament and the many thousands of applicants who approach them. The officers are unable to do anything, because this Government has failed to make funds available to enable sufficient houses to be built to accommodate people who have justifiable claims for houses; whose families are suffering; who have become bankrupt through the actions of this Government; and who have been saving to purchase houses, but whose finances are now being whittled away by having to pay exorbitant rentals because of the shortage of accommodation.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

## HOUSING IN THE COUNTRY

### *Hot Water Systems: Grievance*

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [5.7 p.m.]: I have a grievance, but it is not a State-shattering one, I must confess. However, I would like to bring it before the notice of the Government. I understand that when the State Housing Commission builds houses in the metropolitan area they are fitted with hot water systems. This is not the case with houses built in the country, except perhaps in isolated instances in major country towns.

In my view this is discrimination between the city and the country, and in this respect the commission should change its policy. The commission will, of course, have to take into consideration the availability of a suitable water supply in country towns. We are not asking for something which is impossible to provide. I believe, all things being equal, hot water systems should be installed in the houses built by the commission in country towns.

When the experts in these matters assess the standard of living in towns, cities or countries, they measure the standard by the number of amenities installed in the homes; and they include such things as washing machines, television sets, radios, and hot water systems. It would seem to me that in Western Australia a higher standard is provided in the houses built by the commission in the metropolitan area than in those built in the country, inasmuch as the commission installs hot water systems in the metropolitan houses. I would ask the Government to give consideration to the point I have made.

I have written to the Minister for Housing on this subject, and I merely take this opportunity to emphasise the point I am making, because currently the commission is building a number of houses in the town of Harvey, and I would very much like to see those homes fitted with hot water systems, just as homes in the metropolitan area are fitted.

## POWER STATIONS

### *Coal and Fuel Oil: Grievance*

MR. JONES (Collie) [5.9 p.m.]: I have a grievance to make on behalf of Collie and the coalmining industry. It will be remembered that last year the Government decided to double the capacity of the Kwinana oil burning power station. In doing so it refused to disclose the price it was paying for fuel oil. The West Australian supported the coalmining union and the community of Collie in protesting against the Government's refusal to disclose the price. The Minister for Electricity made the statement that if the coalmining industry was to be competitive it had to be able to meet competition from other types

of fuel. The position is that the coalmining industry was not aware of the competition it had to meet.

During this session of Parliament I asked a number of questions regarding the cost of production per unit of electric power. Before I deal with this point, I would remind members that in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June last year the Premier made an announcement that the new power station at Kwinana would cost \$47,600,000.

In reply to a question I asked on the 31st July last in relation to the cost of production per unit at various power stations, the Minister for Electricity advised that at the South Fremantle power station the cost was 1.06c per unit; at the East Perth power station 2.96c per unit; at the Bunbury power station .65c per unit; at the Collie power station 71c per unit; and at the Muja power station .33c per unit. In regard to the anticipated cost per unit for the Kwinana power station the Minister replied as follows:—

It is anticipated that the Kwinana power station will not be in production until early 1970. It is too early to make a useful estimate of the cost per unit of power.

The situation is that during the controversy on the doubling of the capacity of the Kwinana power station the Government made it quite clear that the question of economics had received very careful consideration.

Following the answer given by the Minister for Electricity to my question, I asked a further question in regard to the price paid by the State Electricity Commission for fuel oil used at the South Fremantle and East Perth power stations. The Minister in reply said that the price of fuel oil was confidential.

On the 22nd August I asked the Minister for Electricity a question in regard to the economics of power generation. My question was—

On Wednesday, the 31st July, 1968, you advised that it was too early to make a useful estimate of the anticipated cost per unit of power that will be produced at the new Kwinana power station. Was not the question of economics and the relevant production costs of electrical power considered when the State Electricity Commission decided to use oil in preference to coal as a fuel?

The reply of the Minister was, "Yes."

The situation is that we have a venture costing millions of dollars. Surely the question of relative production costs must have been considered when the Government made its decision to use an imported fuel, instead of the locally-produced coal. This matter is deserving of some consideration, because we had the spectacle

of the General Manager of the State Electricity Commission refusing to reveal the comparative costs of electricity produced from oil and coal. In *The West Australian* of the 9th June appeared a report in which the general manager was reported as having declined to answer the questions about the comparative costs of production of electricity at the Muja and South Fremantle power stations.

The decision by the Government to use fuel oil was attacked by *The West Australian*, because in the issue of the 16th June appeared the following:—

S.E.C. chairman Sir Alex Reid gave the following replies to questions by *The West Australian*:

Why do all members of the commission not know the price of oil?—They do.

In the *Daily News* of the 17th June appeared a report, following representations made to a number of members of the State Electricity Commission, that some of them did not know the price of the fuel oil used, and some were not present when the decision was made to use oil instead of coal. We consider the coalmining industry has been prejudiced, and that report gives a further indication of the secretiveness of this Government.

If the Government has nothing to hide, why does it not reveal the anticipated price per unit of power from the Kwinana station? Surely with the amount of capital involved—some millions of dollars—the Government should give an indication of the production cost of power from the new station at Kwinana; because this Parliament and the Collie Miners' Union are entitled to know the true situation.

Resolved: That grievances be noted.

#### BILLS (5): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Nickel Refinery (Western Mining Corporation Limited) Agreement Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and read a first time.
2. Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing), and read a first time.
3. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Water Supplies), and read a first time.
4. State Trading Concerns Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.

# 5. Liquid Petroleum Gas Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Electricity), and read a first time.

## SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Third Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough — Premier) [5.17 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [5.18 p.m.]: I regret I did not have the opportunity to say a few words on this Bill during the second reading. I wish to afford myself of the opportunity now, but I give an undertaking to the House not to take the permissible 45 minutes to do so.

I would like the House to know that the funds to be made available per medium of this Bill will not contain any portion of Government finance as they will come exclusively from the contributions of Government employees. In effect, I want it known that the Government is using somebody else's money.

Mr. O'Neill: It is done all the time.

Mr. FLETCHER: That may be so, but the Minister has missed my point in pretending to be obtuse. I distinctly said the finance being used is exclusively made up by contributions of Government employees. If there were included a Government contribution to the finance being provided under this Bill, then the Government would be making a contribution; but I am pointing out that the Civil Service is exclusively responsible for the finance being raised.

In effect, Government employees will provide a roof over their own heads and those of their families. No wonder the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made reference this afternoon to the fact that teachers are concerned about there being insufficient housing in country areas to satisfy their needs. This is a belated attempt by the Government to satisfy that need from the contributions of the Civil Service to the superannuation fund.

This arises, I am sure, as a consequence of the Federal Government's waste of taxpayers' money for less worth-while purposes. Like others, I regret that no \$5,000,000 special grant has been made by the Commonwealth to this State. In desperation the State Government has had to look elsewhere for finance.

My concern is that if this finance which belongs to the superannuation fund were invested in, perhaps, other areas, contributors to the fund could perhaps receive greater value per unit on their retirement. That is elementary. If a higher in-

terest rate were returned on the money borrowed, then each unit of superannuation would have a proportionately greater value and, on retirement, contributors would receive a greater benefit.

However, the contributors may get some small satisfaction from knowing they have provided a house for a teacher or some other Public Service colleague in a country area.

I would point out that this is not the first time the Government has been generous with money from this fund. For example, through the medium of this fund it assisted Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. The Minister for Industrial Development at that time was bending over backwards to woo this company to establish itself in this State. On page 1691 of vol. 2 *Hansard*, 1960, we find the report of a speech by the then Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Hawke). He made reference to the establishment of this company. Members might wonder what connection something said in 1960 has with this Bill; but it is related. Mr. Hawke was making reference to the first extract from an article in *The West Australian* on the 8th July, 1960, and he was taking the Minister to task. He said—

The first portion of the extract from the article I referred to reads—

To induce Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. to establish a mill at Spearwood the Government is offering loans on easy terms which will tie up too much of the State's money for too long.

Another portion of the article states—

In the case of a wealthy concern like A.P.M. these terms seem ridiculous.

The final extract from the article reads—

We want rapid expansion of private enterprise but not by going to extremes of financial aid and freezing large State resources as in the paper mill proposal.

A bit further back in the same *Hansard*, at page 1521, the Minister for Industrial Development (Mr. Court) is on record as having said—

We are not without some imagination and resourcefulness in this matter. There are other avenues available to the Government outside of ordinary loan funds to assist it in ventures of this kind.

That was back in 1960, and I submit that coming events cast their shadows before. The truth of this is further revealed in the *Report of The Auditor-General* for the

year ended the 30th June, 1967. The following appears on page 40 of that report:—

**Payment of Interest on Advances under Guarantee.**—The amount charged against the Revenue Fund in the year, represented the payment of interest as under:—

**Australian Paper Manufacturers Limited.**—The State agreed to make advances to the Company at 5 per cent. interest per annum and an amount of \$206,256 was charged to General Loan Fund during 1962-63. The arrangement was then varied and subsequent advances have been made by the State Superannuation Board.

That is the substance of my concern. To continue—

The Board advanced a total of \$1,200,000 at 5½ per cent. interest during the years 1963-64 and 1964-65 and a further \$1,200,000 at 6½ per cent. interest during the years 1965-66 and 1966-67. The additional interest for the year over the 5 per cent. provided in the agreement, amounted to \$18,606 of which \$5,171 has been allowed as a part set-off against interest payable on the amount borrowed from the State.

That indicates, as I have pointed out, that this fund has been used to assist the company to which reference has been made. My complaint is—now I have the Minister's ear—that it is conceivable that the fund could have been increased by lending money at a better rate of interest elsewhere and as a consequence greater benefit would accrue to those who have contributed to the fund.

However, I do not intend to oppose the measure. I merely wanted to make it known that it is the money of the contributors to this fund which is being used for this purpose, and not the Government's money. I commend the members of the Public Service for being so generous with their money by helping this Government out of its difficulty.

**MR. GAYFER (Avon) [5.26 p.m.]:** I had not intended to weary the House on the third reading of this measure. However, in this morning's paper I noticed an article alluding to remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition last night. The article said, "Tonkin urges country shires to build more housing," or words to that effect. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would be able to quote it word perfect.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that many shires have built accommodation for the teachers in their districts, and the manner in which these houses are being and have been built

is of great interest. Accommodation has already been erected at Wyalkatchem, Kellerberrin, Bruce Rock, and other centres. The local governing authorities elsewhere are at present investigating the matter and drawing up plans for the future expansion of accommodation for teachers or other Government employees. This applies I know to Quairading and Corrigin, in my own electorate.

Up to date the great problem has been that shires have not been willing to erect this type of accommodation unless they have had some guarantee of being able to maintain their amortisation from the rent from the teachers or other Government employees who might occupy the accommodation full time. However, because of negotiations, this problem seems to be solved. The situation is now being reached where the shires are competing against each other, in regard to the quality of the homes erected, in order to attract employees.

Some few weeks ago I was a little intrigued to notice a very fine building in the Bruce Rock Shire. It is a lovely brick and tiled residence and had been opened for female Government employees. It has six single bedrooms and one double bedroom, a corridor, shower, bathroom, washing facilities, hot water, carpets, lounge room, TV room, and a kitchen-dining room. It is a beautiful residence.

**Mr. Dunn:** What, no toilet?

**Mr. GAYFER:** Yes, I think there are two. They are usually part and parcel of a house; and that goes without saying.

**Mr. Dettman,** the Director-General of Education, performed the opening ceremony for this building, and with him was the Chairman of the Government Employees' Housing Authority (Mr. Christie) who, at the time, remarked that Bruce Rock had set a most difficult task—and a high standard to follow—for the Government Employees' Housing Authority in the future.

If shire councils build accommodation of such an order, and at such a cost, they will force other towns to compete with them. They will force the Government Employees' Housing Authority to compete, also, and I feel this could possibly get a little out of hand. Also, some of the units which are being constructed provide accommodation for eight people, and they all have to share the one kitchen and the one lounge room. I do not know that the occupants will always be amiable and content enough to patronise the one kitchen and the one lounge room.

It might be better if individual flats were constructed containing two or three bedrooms and their own kitchen and bathroom. Such units could be used for male accommodation or for female accommodation. In a unit such as the one which has just been built at Bruce Rock, there



could be empty rooms if there was a lack of compatibility amongst the occupiers. If some of the residents could not get on with the others, they would seek alternative accommodation.

I feel that a certain amount of direction should be available to the shire councils in the construction of these buildings, to bring about more or less a set pattern. This would mean there would not be a degree of vying for the services of a better type of employee to go to a particular town. The buildings should be more uniform, and a building in one shire should not include amenities in excess of those in a building in some other shire.

I can quote an illustration concerning one country town where the shire agreed that it would build teacher accommodation, or Government employee family accommodation. The shire was about to proceed with the building, but the teachers said—before they left at the end of the year—not to erect a building for them because when they came back in the following year they intended to rent a house on the outskirts of the town. That house could be rented for the same sum of money that would be paid by one person in the proposed new accommodation. The teachers said that six of them could live in the old house, and they would sooner live there and save the extra rent.

Mr. O'Neil: That is not an uncommon fact.

Mr. GAYFER: That is so.

Mr. Tonkin: Where are all these empty houses?

Mr. GAYFER: On some farms. Some people will put up with anything, provided they can save rent by living collectively. That is happening now.

Mr. Tonkin: The house has to be empty; I am looking for empty houses.

Mr. GAYFER: Well, the Leader of the Opposition was told by the member for Narrogin the other day, that if one likes to go to some of these country towns one may find accommodation to spare. However, the unwillingness of people, by and large, to leave the city is very noticeable.

As I have said, this old house was available in the country town, and rather than spend individual sums of money on accommodation in the proposed new residence, the teachers said that they would sooner rent the house collectively. They would then travel to and from the school by car.

I make this point because there should be some uniformity in buildings constructed for teachers and Government employees. They must also be provided with facilities and amenities so that a dozen or so of them do not have to use the same kitchen and the same lounge room.

I have only spoken to the third reading because of the article which appeared in this morning's paper wherein it was stated

that the Leader of the Opposition urged shires to build more accommodation. He certainly did not say that the shires were not building any accommodation—I will admit that. However, I might add that if local government employees are considered to be Government employees—and I should imagine they are—it must be realised that many shire councils build houses for their employees.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) [5.36 p.m.]: I would like to thank members for their observations. I do wish the member for Fremantle would make an endeavour to be here at the second reading, rather than at the third reading stage. Nevertheless, that is all provided for. I was interested to hear the member for Avon make the point that local authorities are doing quite a good job in the provision of accommodation for Government employees in various towns, and especially for school teachers.

In his second reading speech, the Leader of the Opposition said that local authorities could make a greater effort. He also suggested a campaign, but I would point out that the Chairman of the Government Employees' Housing Authority (Mr. Christie) has done quite a lot of travelling—call it campaigning if one likes—and has had many interviews and discussions with local authorities on this matter. No doubt, the type and standard of house which should be provided was discussed. This would apply particularly to accommodation which would be suitable for the young single people.

When the member for Avon mentioned the people who wished to take up available accommodation of a lesser standard at a lower rent, he simply highlighted a problem which faces Governments. The Leader of the Opposition, who was a former Minister for Education, would know that in providing housing for Government employees, the Government is faced with the difficulty of getting the people concerned to accept a house of a higher standard, at a higher rent. There has been evidence, from every side, that people are prepared to put up with a lower standard house because the rent is less. This has been a difficulty facing all Governments whenever they have tried to do the right thing.

I think the idea of suggesting to local authorities that they follow some standard is a good one. Maybe the shires will do as Bruce Rock did, and provide for a number of single people rather than for married couples or families. I think I mentioned, during my second reading speech, that up to date nine shires have indicated that they would provide 11 houses and eight duplex homes. This will mean an additional 27 units of accommodation will be built during this financial year.

No doubt quite a number of them would be prepared to reconsider the matter in the new financial year. We are experiencing real co-operation in this respect and a campaign is being carried out by the authority to ensure that local authorities know the story, and the actual request is being met. It is an attractive offer, because the local authorities have the gilt-edged security of a Government guarantee. This, again, is something the Government decided upon in order to encourage local authorities to use their borrowing powers to provide more houses for teachers or anyone else.

The member for Fremantle became a little complex towards the end of his speech, but I can only say in respect of what he said that the Superannuation Board considers the expenditure of \$1,100,000 is a gilt-edge investment and that it will pay dividends. In the meantime, we are using this medium to attack a very basic problem in the community.

Whilst on my feet I take advantage of the opportunity to comment on the remark made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who pointed out that the present conference of teachers had decided they would strike if the position was not being eased within 12 months. I believe it would be fair to say that all fair-minded teachers acknowledge that the position has improved at such a rate that in 12 months or two years it will be very much better and there will not be a strike.

I should like to say that I have sufficient faith in people to believe there are enough honest school teachers in the union who know their responsibilities. They are not at all anxious to strike, as circulars regarding housing which were sent out in Western Australia proved. The first circular did not bring any result at all. It was necessary for another circular to be sent to headmasters asking them to remind teachers to send in their answers. That was how urgent they considered the position. By and large, school teachers recognise the problem we have as a Government and, indeed, which Labor Governments have had in the past—even when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Education.

Mr. Davies: When was that?

Mr. BRAND: I meant the Leader of the Opposition; anyhow, I am sure members knew to whom I was referring. Even when he was Minister for Education, and with all his capacity in one direction or another, he was not able to provide houses at the rate they were needed. I am not forgetting it was during the post-war years, which saw a new era in education with the great demand placed upon the Government for better conditions, more teachers, and smaller classes.

Let us get back to the hard cold fact that the Government is making yet another move—a very direct, urgent, and positive one—to provide more accommodation at a reasonable rental for married and single teachers and Government employees generally throughout Western Australia. No matter what is argued on the side, what we want are more houses at a reasonable rental for the teachers and Government officers who go out to serve the community.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

#### **BILLS (3): THIRD READING**

1. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill.

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

2. Road and Air Transport Commission Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. O'Connor (Minister for Transport), and transmitted to the Council.

3. Geraldton Port Authority Bill.

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

#### **BILLS (4): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING**

1. Coal Miners' Welfare Act Amendment Bill.

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

2. Illicit Sale of Liquor Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), read a first time.

3. Cremation Act Amendment Bill.

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

4. Mental Health Act Amendment Bill.

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

#### **PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER (OMBUDSMAN)**

*Appointment: Motion*

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [5.49 p.m.]: Motions similar to the one now on the notice paper were moved from this side of the House in 1963, 1964, and 1965.

Of course, this notice of motion has been on the notice paper for quite some time waiting the opportunity for private members' business to come before the House. That is fortunate in a way, because I have received support from an unexpected source. Had I been able to deal with the motion earlier, the information would not have been available.

A little over a week ago Mr. F. T. P. Burt, Q.C., who is very well and favourably known in this State as a most capable and knowledgeable barrister, was speaking to members of the Western Australian University Convocation. I would ask the members of the House to think carefully—as I have done—about the words I am about to quote, because I cannot fault the ideas that have been advanced. Also, I think what Mr. Burt said was germane to the subject in hand. He said—

The problem of legal control of the exercise of executive power could not be solved within existing law.

There are no qualifications or exceptions about that; it is a straightout declaration from a man well skilled in the law and with wide experience. In continuing the quotation I shall repeat those initial words—

The problem of legal control of the exercise of executive power could not be solved within existing law. New institutions and attitudes would have to be created. Power in the hands of Parliament operated under many assumptions. The assumption that Parliament was wise and just and that its laws would also be wise and just.

You know, Mr. Speaker, as well as I do, how wide of the mark that is; that Parliament will always be wise and just and the laws it makes will be wise and just. I hope to show, as I proceed, quite the opposite. Another assumption made by Mr. Burt upon which the power of Parliament was supposed to operate was—

... the executive was responsible to Parliament and that powers conferred on the executive would be conditioned by fact.

We hope they would, but they rarely are, as I also hope to demonstrate as I proceed.

A good example of how the Executive can operate contrary to proper democratic processes is the matter which has been the subject of many questions in this House and of some discussions already this session. I refer to the Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. agreement, or, as it is more properly termed, the Iron Ore (Hamersley Range) Agreement Act, No. 24 of 1963. In this Act there is provision to make by-laws, and the section in the Interpretation Act dealing with by-laws provides—

In this section the term "regulation" includes rule and by-law.

So there is no distinction. Used in the light of that provision in the Interpretation Act, a by-law is a regulation or a rule. The Interpretation Act also provides—

When by any Act it is provided that regulations may or shall be made, and—

(i) it is provided that such regulations may or shall be made by the Governor; or

(ii) it is not provided by whom such regulations may or shall be made;

any regulation made under, or by virtue of, such provision—

(a) shall be made by the Governor;

(b) shall be published in the *Gazette*.

So if by any Statute, power is given to make a regulation, a rule, or a by-law—and the terms are synonymous—in accordance with the provisions of the Interpretation Act, such regulation, by-law, or rule shall be made by the Governor and shall be published in the *Government Gazette*.

However this Executive does otherwise, and because it does so there is nothing we can do about it. We thus have a situation where, without any power, and without gazettal, the company makes what it purports to call regulations and carries out the very acts which Parliament intended should be done under a by-law; and, when we pointed this out to the Executive, we were told the company has the power, in the absence of the by-laws, provided in clause 10 (2) (f).

In following closely the wording of this paragraph, I cannot, for the life of me, see how anybody with common sense can say it confers upon the company the power to make regulations, other than by-laws, to cover the operations of people who visit the port. I ask members to study the wording of this paragraph very carefully. It reads—

Throughout the continuance of this Agreement the Company shall—

(f) subject to and in accordance with by-laws (which shall include provision for reasonable charges) from time to time to be made and altered as provided in subclause (3) of this clause and subject thereto or if no such by-laws are made or in force then upon reasonable terms and at reasonable charges (having regard to the cost thereof to the Company) allow the State and third parties to use the Company's wharf and harbour installations wharf machinery and equipment and wharf and harbour services and facilities provided that such use shall not unduly prejudice or interfere with the Company's operations hereunder.

In that provision there is not a word—let alone a phrase or a sentence—which confers upon the company the right to draw up rules or regulations in substitution of by-laws. This provision merely says that in the absence of by-laws a company shall allow the State and third parties to use the wharf, and so on, at reasonable charges. But the Executive, in this House, tells us the company is obeying the law and has the power under the law to continue what it purports to call a regulation.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What would an ombudsman do in regard to this matter?

Mr. TONKIN: The ombudsman could look at the file to find out how much notice was taken of the advice given by the Crown Law Department and whether the company had been operating under by-laws.

If the Government did nothing, as has been the case, to make the company issue by-laws, the ombudsman could report the matter to Parliament. That is what the ombudsman could do. Now we have no power at all. We endeavour to show up the situation here, and we are met with subterfuge and evasion.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You mean that as leader you would take this to the ombudsman?

Mr. TONKIN: I certainly would; because here we have a situation where a company makes regulations which affect the rights of individuals; indeed, in effect, the company makes laws. What this company has done is to make laws which cannot be challenged in Parliament; the Government has seen to that.

The Government has provided that even when the company makes by-laws they cannot be disallowed in Parliament. The position now is that this company has made what are, in effect, by-laws, but they have never been presented to Parliament; and under these by-laws the company can take control of vessels which come into the port and direct the masters of those vessels as to what they shall do, whether the masters of the vessels want to do it or not. If the master of a vessel receives the wrong direction and there is an accident, he is responsible.

We are told by the Minister that all that can be done under paragraph (f). Of course it cannot be done at all. All that paragraph states is that the company shall allow these people to use the company's wharves and installations at reasonable charges. It does not say that the company, if it fails to make by-laws, can make other sorts of laws which it can enforce.

But that is what the Executive says, and we have no power to do anything about it. This is an indication of how the Executive can go its own sweet way, particularly when we remember that it was back in 1966 that the Crown Law Department

advised the Government that Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. should be doing what it is doing under by-laws.

This situation has been allowed to continue for two and a half years, despite the fact that the legal advisers of the Government have said it is wrong.

Mr. Court: They have not said it is wrong in the sense that you are saying it.

Mr. TONKIN: Have they said it is right?

Mr. Court: They have said the Act provides for by-laws but they have also pointed out, but you will not accept it, that there is provision for the company to operate in the absence of by-laws.

Mr. TONKIN: Is the Minister prepared to table the file?

Mr. Court: Of course we are not. We are not here to table files at your whim and fancy.

Mr. TONKIN: If there was nothing to hide the Minister would table the file.

Mr. Court: You have been given all the answers.

Mr. TONKIN: We have been given the run-around.

Mr. Court: Your ombudsman would tell you exactly what the Government has told you.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh! Would he?

Mr. Court: We happen to know that is all he can tell you.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister wishes that were so.

Mr. Court: I happen to know.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister had his way he would see there was no ombudsman to tell us anything.

Mr. Court: You are making out the strongest possible case against an ombudsman; you are wanting to put somebody right above Parliament.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the Minister's idea. The idea of any outsider looking at a Government file is a pure anathema to the Minister for Industrial Development.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You have refused to table files in your day.

Mr. Court: We take the verdict of the electors in running the State and to date they happen to think we are the people who should run the State.

Mr. Jamieson: Don't you think the electors would like an ombudsman? Even your own party thinks so.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It was an election issue.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TONKIN: Thank you for your help, Mr. Speaker. Here we have the position that a company, with the knowledge and connivance of the Executive, is exercising powers it has no legal right to exercise,

and being protected by Ministers who give evasive answers in the House. That is why there should be more control over the Executive.

I would like now to continue with some of the wise statements made by Mr. Burt, Q.C. He said—

As often as not, conferred power was not conditioned by objective fact but by opinion. The Minister thought a certain state of affairs existed and had the power to act on this opinion.

That is precisely what I have been illustrating up till now. The Minister forms an opinion and he acts accordingly. His opinion can be completely wide of the mark, but the Executive then will accept that opinion and that will condition its action.

To overcome this problem—and I am not the only one by any means who sees this problem of the growing power of the Executive—Mr. Burt suggested two things; he suggested a Bill of Rights and an ombudsman. It is not unusual to find that some lawyers are opposed to the appointment of an ombudsman.

I suppose we get differences of opinion on most subjects among groups of qualified people; even among experts. Very often one's views are dependent on one's education, one's knowledge, and one's experience; but here is a man who has wide experience and wide knowledge. Let me remind members that he was selected by the Commonwealth Government to assist in the *Voyager* inquiry, which was a top level inquiry, fraught with very serious consequences for quite a number of people. Mr. Burt was regarded as being eminently fitted for such a task; so we cannot lightly disregard the opinion of such a man.

Mr. Burt has said very definitely that there exists this problem of the power of the Executive which cannot be controlled within the existing law, and that we have to create new attitudes. He further suggests we should have an ombudsman and a Bill of Rights.

What we have to consider in this question is the adequacy or otherwise of the guarantees which are at present available to the public against mistake, negligence, or a direct abuse of power by public authorities. I could quote examples of all three of those things which have come to my notice during my period in Parliament: examples of mistake, of negligence, and of direct abuse of power by public authorities. Having regard to those things which need correction, we have to consider the adequacy of the legal remedies which now exist to deal with them, and in the opinion of Mr. Burt, Q.C., the existing law is not adequate for the purpose. I share that view myself.

The problems arising from the exercise of Executive power cannot be solved by the existing law, despite any attempt to

argue that they can. The Minister for Industrial Development has argued on previous occasions that there is no need for an ombudsman, because a member of Parliament can raise matters in this House, or take action through a department, and he can therefore correct these difficulties. I propose to show from my own experience—and quite recent experience—how he cannot do that.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The idea is to bring the searchlight of public opinion on what are the Executive's powers.

Mr. TONKIN: It is not as simple as all that to get public opinion aroused; it takes the expenditure of a lot of money, and then quite often public opinion is slow to be aroused. Eventually it is aroused and then something happens.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Does the Press carry anything of this kind?

Mr. TONKIN: It does when it suits the Press. Sometimes the Press will highlight a matter and when it does something about it something happens; and it happens on occasions because the Government wants to teach the Press a lesson for coming in, as in the case of the T.A.B. inquiry.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You used the Press headlines in the last election.

Mr. TONKIN: Any headlines I got were deserved and I had to work for them.

Mr. Court: I remember some former ones; I wonder if they came into the same category.

Mr. TONKIN: Do not forget I had more adverse headlines when Labor was in Government between 1953 and 1959 than the present Government had at the last election, when every little thing in connection with sewerage was featured in the newspaper. The silliest headline occurred when somebody dropped a drum of tar off a vehicle travelling across the Causeway. It fell into the river and that was featured in the paper as despoiling the river, and the Government was held responsible for it.

Mr. Lewis: You said earlier that you deserved all the headlines you got. Did you deserve that one?

Mr. TONKIN: I did not get the headline on that occasion.

Mr. O'Connor: That shows how fair they were to you.

Mr. TONKIN: I was about to give an illustration of the cases in which a member of Parliament can do very little to correct an injustice arising from some department coming to a conclusion on wrong premises. Both of these matters refer to housing, and I am pleased to see the Minister concerned is in the House. He will recall the first one, because I wrote to him about it.

Along with other members I was endeavouring to obtain accommodation for a family that was threatened with eviction. The State Housing Commission would not agree to help at all, and gave as a reason that this tenant was a very bad payer. In the course of a letter which was sent to me by the State Housing Commission the following appeared:—

This family has had previous assistance by way of rental accommodation at Northam. The period of tenancy being from the 18/9/61 to 10/3/63 at which date Mr. . . . vacated, leaving arrears of \$57.70, and whilst in occupation, proved a most unsatisfactory payer—the collection of the amount owing after the tenant vacated was placed in the hands of the Crown Law Department and it was not until the 8th April, 1968, that the account was cleared when \$46.22 was paid (the account for Crown Law costs has not yet been received).

That was just not true.

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

Mr. TONKIN: I was in the process of illustrating from a file how mistakes can be made in departments and how difficult it is for members of Parliament to get any redress when decisions are made on such mistakes. I have shown where a statement had been made by the Housing Commission that a particular tenant still owed the Crown Law Department for costs involved in connection with the collection of overdue rent.

We are able to prove conclusively that that was not true, because when the matter was referred to the tenant, the tenant was able to supply a receipt from the Housing Commission. This receipt has on the bottom of it, "Paid in full," and the machine receipt is at the top of this letter. I thought I should refer this back to the commission, as I was foolish enough to believe this was a strong point taken into consideration when the commission decided not to help; and I also drew the attention of the Minister to this matter. I wrote the following letter to the Minister:—

I refer to your letter of 21st instant in reply to representations which I made on behalf of—

And I mentioned the name of the person on whose behalf I made these representations. Continuing—

I am unable to understand how you are able to state that the relevant file reveals that the experience of private landlords with respect to . . . tenancy is similar to that of the Commission, when I have information that the . . . have been residing in a privately-owned residence since 2nd May, 1966, and have been regularly paying, one month in advance, a rent of \$14 a week.

Information contained in the letter to me from the General Manager, to the effect that . . . had not paid Crown Law costs incurred in an action to terminate their tenancy of the State house, was quite wrong and most unfair.

It therefore seems to me that you came to your decision in this matter by a consideration of points which were not facts.

I also wrote to the General Manager of the Commission and said—

Certain statements contained in your letter caused me to have enquiries made and information now supplied from an authoritative source proves that your letter contained a serious mis-statement which was most unfair to . . .

The statement referred to is as follows:—

. . . vacated, leaving arrears of \$57.70, and whilst in occupation, proved a most unsatisfactory payer—the collection of the amount owing after the tenant vacated was placed in the hands of the Crown Law Department and it was not until the 8th April, 1968, that the account was cleared when \$46.22 was paid (the account for Crown Law costs has not yet been received).

I went on to say—

The Crown Law Department has advised that so far as it is concerned the file is closed and there are no outstanding costs.

On 25th October, 1967, the Crown Law Department advised that the total amount owing by Mr. . . . was \$46.22 and this amount was paid in full on 8th April, 1968.

In my opinion, fair and proper consideration has not been given to this case. When I received replies, there was no suggestion of any apology; just this letter from the General Manager of the State Housing Commission, which, leaving out the preamble, reads as follows:—

You were quite right in pointing out that my letter of the 16th May contained an error and I have since realised that Mr. . . . payment of \$46.22 made on the 8th April included Crown Law Costs as well as the balance of arrears. This point was conveyed to the Commissioners who did not consider the mis-statement warranted emergent priority being granted.

But it was a fact which was taken into consideration initially. It was quite untrue and therefore was a misrepresentation of the actual situation.

Here is the Minister's reply—

Dear Mr. Tonkin,

I see from the papers of Mr. . . . that the General Manager of the State Housing Commission has conveyed to you the decision of the Board of Commissioners. He has also explained that the payment made on the 8th April, 1968, completely cleared the Crown Law Costs as well as the remainder of the indebtedness incurred in 1963.

What was there to explain? I did the explaining. I demonstrated the proof, but that is all the Minister was prepared to say—it had been explained.

Now I have a further example of the same sort of thing where Ministers come to conclusions and departments come to conclusions on errors. Decisions are made on these errors and so far as members of Parliament are concerned they have no avenue open to them to see that proper redress is obtained. This other case concerns a tenant who was given a verbal notice to quit. The tenant then went to the Housing Commission and informed the commission that she had received a verbal notice to quit the premises and an officer of the commission told her that verbal notices were no good, because anybody could make them up and what she required to substantiate her case was a written notice.

The tenant then went to the landlord and said, "That notice which you have given me verbally I require to have in writing." It was then supplied in writing and submitted to the Housing Commission. When I made representations, I received this letter from the General Manager—

Dear Mr. Tonkin,

I refer to your letter of the 25th July, 1968, enclosing correspondence from Mr. . . . of . . . and making further representations on his behalf.

The circumstances of this case have been investigated—and approval is not granted for emergent assistance to be offered.

Our investigations show that Mr. . . . invited the Notice to Quit—apparently, for the sole purpose of obtaining an emergent priority over applicants with an earlier date of lodgement of application.

Two points are involved here. Firstly, there is an untrue statement that the tenant invited a notice to quit; and, secondly, on the basis of that untrue statement, the general manager makes an assumption that the notice to quit was invited for the sole purpose of achieving an emergent priority.

When I received this letter I just did not believe that was the situation, so I wrote the following letter to the tenant:—

Further to my letter to you of 25th ultimo I forward for your information copy of a letter which I have

received from the General Manager, State Housing Commission, in reply to a protest which I made on your behalf following the receipt of your letter of 24th July.

The information contained in Mr. MacKenzie's letter is very much at variance with the contents of your letter and if you have any comment to make regarding this which would put me in a position to pursue the matter further, I should be pleased to hear from you.

In reply to that I received the full details from the tenant explaining precisely what happened, and I sent that on to the general manager with the following letter, giving him a piece of my mind about it:—

Dear Mr. MacKenzie,

I refer to your letter of 9th instant in reply to representations which I made in support of an application for accommodation by . . .

I am very disturbed over that portion of your letter which reads: "Our investigations show that Mr. . . . invited the Notice to Quit—apparently for the sole purpose of obtaining an emergent priority over applicants with an earlier date of lodgement of application".

When I read this I was of the opinion that there was absolutely no foundation for the statement. However, I forwarded a copy of your letter to Mrs. . . . and have now received from her a reply which is forwarded herewith for your information.

Unfortunately this is not the first time that I have received a letter from you conveying a decision which has been made upon an erroneous conclusion. This kind of thing is most unfair to persons who are at a considerable disadvantage and it seems to me that whatever methods of investigation are being adopted by the Commission are in immediate need of substantial improvement.

If your Commission's refusal to grant emergent priority to the family was because of your opinion that the family had invited the Notice to Quit, I consider that it should now do the right thing and grant emergent accommodation.

Before I had received any reply to that, I received a further communication from the tenant with an enclosure from the landlord. The enclosure from the landlord will indicate whether there was any collusion between the landlord and the tenant, and whether the tenant had really invited the notice to quit. The following is dated the 22nd August:—

I herewith withdraw my notice to quit . . . which I served on you. You may stay as long as you wish.

However, please note that your rent will be \$30.00 (thirty dollars) per week as from the 28th of August, payable in advance as before.

Furthermore either myself or my son Geoffrey or both together will inspect the house every Saturday between 10 and 11 a.m.

Hoping this arrangement will be suitable.

I am Yours etc.,

Now what irks me about this is that the commission should come to a decision on this case on the assumption that the unfortunate tenant invited the notice to quit for the sole purpose of getting a priority.

This is the sort of thing, which, I have no doubt, Mr. Burt, Q.C. had in mind when he referred to the adequacy of the citizen's guarantees against mistakes, negligence or a direct abuse of power by public authorities, and the adequacy of legal remedies which now exist. What legal remedy has this tenant against this sort of thing?

Someone ought to be available for the sole purpose of correcting this type of behaviour, and the very existence of an ombudsman would do this because officers in important positions would be far more careful knowing very well that what they were doing would be open to scrutiny, and that the files could be examined and cases properly investigated. What cases can be properly investigated now? If one asks for a file, one is told one can see it in the Minister's office on a confidential basis which, of course, is completely useless so far as any action is concerned. I submit that these instances which I have given are by no means isolated instances of this sort of thing—

Mr. Brady: I'll say they aren't.

Mr. TONKIN: —and the existence of an ombudsman would be a very strong safeguard. It may not completely obviate behaviour of this kind, but in my viewpoint his existence would certainly reduce the number of occasions on which it would occur.

The first country to appoint an ombudsman was Sweden, in 1809, and it is understandable that the next one to do so would be a country in proximity to the first one, because the knowledge of the success or otherwise of the first experiment would travel across the border; so we find that another Scandinavian country was the second, and this was Finland which appointed an ombudsman in 1919. Following Finland, Denmark appointed an ombudsman in 1953, and the next one, an associate country, was Norway, which appointed an ombudsman in 1962.

So, one after another the Scandinavian countries saw the benefit of appointing an ombudsman; and it is very significant that not a single country, which up to this date

has appointed an ombudsman, has seen fit to discontinue the office. An ombudsman is still operating in Sweden, and has been doing so for 160 years.

After Norway, or almost at the same time, New Zealand appointed an ombudsman. Let me say that it is the policy of the Labor Party, as well as the Conservative Party, to have an ombudsman. It was a Labor Minister who was first interested. In 1959, the then Minister for Justice went to a seminar in Kandy which was held under the auspices of the United Nations. He was so impressed by the paper read by Professor Hurwitz, the Danish ombudsman, that he went back to New Zealand with the firm intention of appointing an ombudsman in that country. However, before he was able to get around to doing so, his Government was defeated; but it is very significant that when the Liberals came into office in New Zealand, they went ahead and appointed an ombudsman, and he has been operating there ever since with outstanding success.

Frequent papers have been written about this by men well up in the law in Australia, who have referred to the outstanding qualities of the ombudsman who was appointed, and to the work he has been able to accomplish. On one occasion a Liberal member of Parliament from New Zealand visited Western Australia. During the social function which had been arranged to entertain this gentleman, there was an opportunity for me to ask him—in the presence of our Minister for Justice—what his opinion was of the Ombudsman in New Zealand.

His answer was that the Ombudsman was absolutely and unequivocally a success. If anyone doubts the accuracy of that statement I suggest he asks the Minister for Justice who was present when that reply was given in this Parliament House, here in Perth—absolutely and unequivocally a success.

The next country to decide to appoint an ombudsman was Great Britain, where one was appointed in 1967. I had an opportunity to speak to the Prime Minister of Great Britain when he was in Australia on the occasion of the funeral of our late Prime Minister (Mr. Holt). I asked the British Prime Minister if the Ombudsman in Great Britain had proved successful so far, and his reply to me was, "Yes, but since he has been operating it has been demonstrated that his powers should be widened in order to improve his efficiency".

There was no suggestion of the curtailment or disbanding of the office; on the contrary, the thought was that it was necessary that the powers should be widened to provide the opportunity for greater efficiency. If one has studied the legislation of different countries, one will appreciate that the Ombudsman in New Zealand, for



example, has much wider powers than the Ombudsman in Great Britain. In Great Britain it was believed, when the Ombudsman was appointed, that complaints should be made through members of Parliament.

The ordinary citizen, who might not be in the habit of approaching his member of Parliament with a complaint, would not be aware of this avenue being open to him. There is a reluctance on the part of some people—not all, as members well know—to approach their member of Parliament. Some people have no reluctance whatever in approaching members of Parliament at any hour of the day or night, but others hesitate. Every now and again somebody rings me and apologises for worrying me, and then explains that he has been unable to find a solution to a problem and as a last resort he is approaching me, and he hopes that I do not mind. There's not a great number of these people, but some of them do view the matter in this way.

That appears to be one of the weaknesses in Great Britain; namely, that the complaints are to be channelled through members of Parliament. That would limit, to a large extent, the efficiency of the work being done. An attempt has already been made in Australia to appoint a person who is not precisely what an ombudsman is, but who comes pretty close to it. This was done in Queensland in 1965. There is a very progressive shire in Queensland called the Albert Shire. I made inquiries and found out that it enjoys a very high reputation for being well to the fore with new ideas which are beneficial to the people in the district, and to its rate-payers.

The Albert Shire thought it would be a very good idea if it appointed a man who could listen to complaints and investigate them, and then satisfy the people who were making the complaints. He did not have any legislative authority, as an ombudsman would have. His job was to investigate complaints and see whether there was any justification for what people thought was going on. The Albert Shire selected a person who had served with the shire and who had a good inside knowledge of its operations.

Only this week I decided to ring the Albert Shire and to inquire if its experiment had proved a success, and whether there was any suggestion of getting rid of the man whom it had appointed. The answer given to me was, "We are particularly pleased with the result. The appointment of this man has removed causes of friction and expedited the work of the shire, and he has been most beneficial generally." That shire is particularly happy with what it has done.

It must be appreciated that there would be a very big difference in the power of such an officer appointed by a shire and

one appointed under legislation by a Parliament. The officer appointed in Queensland would have no power at all to get redress for anybody complaining, if the person responsible for the trouble was not prepared to rectify what was being done. In the case of an ombudsman he is able to point out to a department where a mistake has been made or where there has been negligence or a misinterpretation of the law.

An ombudsman is generally given power to have legal proceedings instituted on behalf of aggrieved persons, and those powers are set out in the law. So, it should be perfectly obvious that if an ombudsman is of value to a shire, he would be of much greater value to a State if he were properly appointed and clothed with full authority.

I have read where there have been inquiries from all over the world to the Ombudsman in Sweden. He has been asked by various countries—particularly from newly-independent Asian countries—to supply information about how he works in Sweden, and what the likely benefits would be. So there is an awakening interest—worldwide—in the desirability of having such an officer appointed.

The Minister for Industrial Development who, on each previous occasion when this motion has been before the House has been the speaker for the Government, has invariably used the argument that members of Parliament can do the job here, and that there is no need for any outsider such as an ombudsman. I want to read an extract from an article which appeared in *The Bulletin* on the 24th August, 1963. I quote—

#### An Ombudsman Lessons from New Zealand From Richard Hall in Sydney

Anyone who has watched the blind and stubborn obstinacy of a Minister's defence of his department has a right to be sceptical about the prospects for the success of any appeal against administrative justice through airing a grievance in Parliament.

It is against this sort of background that there are moves for a study by lawyers in both Victoria and New South Wales for an investigation into the whole question of administrative justice. In Victoria, a committee has already been established and in Sydney a committee within the N.S.W. branch of the Australian section of the International Commission of Jurists is in the process of formation.

Mr. Speaker, you yourself know very well how these remarks could be applied in this State. If you do not, Sir, I do; that is, how time and time again, attempts are made in Parliament to get the correct

thing done but without any success whatever. There are occasions when we are expected to believe that black is white, and we can do nothing about it.

I have an interesting letter here in connection with the Government's attitude to the appointment of an ombudsman. On the 27th June I received the following letter from the President of the South West Regional Council:—

Dear Sir,

re: Appointment of an Ombudsman.

At the Annual South West Regional Council Conference held at Bunbury on the 24th November, 1967, a resolution was carried requesting the Government to appoint an Ombudsman. The resolution had the full support of Conference.

Attached herewith copy of the Hon. The Premier's reply in connection with our proposal, for your information.

The Premier's letter appears to me contradictory. In the second paragraph he states that the appointment of an Ombudsman was put forward by his party at the last election and caused no great interest, and in the last paragraph it is stated that the Government has examined the proposal several times and decided to take no action.

Personally I consider this matter should not rest on the Premier's rejection of it. It is too important a question to be dealt with lightly.

Any information you can supply would be appreciated as we know the interest you have shown in the appointment of an Ombudsman.

When I received that letter, I acted as any other member would; namely, I wrote to the Premier to find out what he meant. Accordingly I wrote this letter—

Dear Mr. Brand,

I have received from the President, South West Regional Council, what is purported to be a copy of a letter sent to him by you under date 26th February, 1968. This letter appears to be in reply to one dated 30th January, 1968, which was written to you urging the appointment of an Ombudsman.

The following statement appears in the letter:

I have to advise that this request has already been debated by Parliament on two occasions and rejected. Indeed it was also a subject put forward by our political party during the last election campaign and aroused no great interest.

As far as my recollection serves me, your government has never at any time shown a disposition to support a

proposal for the appointment of an Ombudsman, but on the contrary, has used its numbers to defeat motions in the Parliament which were directed towards securing the appointment of an Ombudsman. In the circumstances I am unable to reconcile the statement in your letter quoted above with your government's attitude. I should be glad if you would kindly clarify the matter for me.

I received the following reply under date the 24th July, 1968:—

Dear Mr. Tonkin,

Thank you for your letter of 1st July, seeking clarification of a letter written by me to the President of the South West Regional Council in reply to a letter from him seeking support for the appointment of an Ombudsman.

Having read the extract, I realise that one could conclude that our general party had put forward support for the idea of an Ombudsman, but I meant only to convey that certain branches of the lay party had raised this matter with me at meetings which were held during the election campaign and that when I explained the reasons for the Government's opposition the subject was not pressed, and, in fact, did not generate any great interest at all.

As you have drawn my attention to this matter, I will certainly write again to the President and make it quite clear that our attitude has not altered and that when referring to "our political party" I had in mind support for the idea from some branches.

I say in conclusion that I was pleased to read in the newspaper following the last meeting of the branches of the Country Party that that party is in favour of the appointment of an ombudsman. It looks as if we are pretty close to getting one; because if the parliamentary members of the Country Party take any notice of the branches and the resolutions carried by those branches, they are bound to support the motion before the Parliament. The numbers of the Country Party added to our numbers would be sufficient to cause this to be determined in the way we wish.

Mr. Lewis: Don't anticipate.

Mr. TONKIN: It is an excellent opportunity for us to test the sincerity of the parliamentary members of the Country Party to see whether they are in line with the thinking of their branches and are prepared to carry out their wishes. I would assume that the resolution which was carried was an indication of the wishes of the Country Party; that is, the wishes of those who are responsible for the presence of the Country Party members in this Chamber. That is for members of the

Country Party to work out for themselves. I am very glad to provide the opportunity for them to demonstrate—

Mr. Lewis: An interesting exercise.

Mr. TONKIN:—how susceptible they are to suggestions from outside bodies, particularly their own.

There is a growing belief throughout the world that the appointment of ombudsmen is desired. I make the same forecast now as I have made on previous occasions; namely, the day will come when an ombudsman will be appointed in Western Australia and in every other State in the Commonwealth. It is only a question of time and how soon the opposition to it can be broken down. I am as certain as I stand here that an ombudsman will be appointed in Western Australia in due course, and in the other States as well.

Already I have seen indications that the New South Wales Government is giving careful and close consideration to the proposition and I understand the situation is somewhat similar in Victoria. I admit this Government is much more conservative than the Liberal Government of Victoria. For example, this Government will have nothing to do with rent control, but the Liberal Government in Victoria sees virtue in it and operates it in the interests of tenants.

Mr. Lewis: Is there an ombudsman in Tasmania?

Mr. TONKIN: No.

Mr. Jamieson: Steele Hall has a bit of it, too, in South Australia.

Mr. TONKIN: There will be one—make no mistake about that. It takes a long time for new ideas to permeate some strata.

Mr. O'Neill: It took over 100 years for a second one to be appointed.

Mr. TONKIN: When one considers that the countries to follow suit were those in proximity to the one which originally appointed an ombudsman, one realises how the idea commends itself to others who become familiar with what is being done. I daresay if some years ago an ombudsman had been appointed in one of the Australian States we would have had one in Western Australia by now as we will have one eventually; and ombudsmen will be appointed elsewhere, too.

I commend the proposal to members. I do not think this is a party matter. I have already indicated that in New Zealand both parties believe in it and support it, and on the hustings at the last election both parties promised to extend the powers of the New Zealand Ombudsman. As Governments in other States are at present giving consideration to such appointments, and as Labor Governments have already done so, surely it is not a matter to be decided on a party political level.

This question of setting up a man with authority would ensure that his very presence, without his doing anything, would be a safeguard against some of the matters I have mentioned this evening. His appointment would tend to make people more careful with the processes of the law in the same way as drivers on the highway, who are prone to exceed the speed limit, immediately slow down when they see a traffic cop not far behind them. The mere fact that the police officer is just behind them is enough to make drivers obey the law.

The situation would be exactly the same with an ombudsman. His very existence and the knowledge that he has power to report to Parliament if he cannot get redress has proved to be a great deterrent in every country where an ombudsman has been appointed. So I suggest we should appoint one. Western Australia should lead the way for the other States, and I am certain that if an appointment is made, whilst some individuals may regret it, the country at large will not do so—the country in general will applaud it.

The SPEAKER: Did the Leader of the Opposition move the motion?

Mr. TONKIN: No, I did not. I now move—

That the effectiveness and undoubted success of Parliamentary Commissioners (Ombudsmen) having been clearly established in all countries where they have been appointed, it is recommended to the Government that steps be taken, as early as possible, to establish the office in this State so that our citizens may not continue to be denied the benefits which the existence of an ombudsman confers.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development).

## BARRACKS ARCH

*Resiting: Motion*

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [8.14 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House, the Government should use finance and existing material available, for the purpose of more appropriately resiting the Barracks Arch, entirely or in part, at the foot of Barrack Street after which, it is understood, the street is named.

I read that motion to the House carefully in the hope that those present will notice that finance, at least in part, is available, and that material is also available on the present site.

Mr. O'Neill: If a part is removed, what part will be left behind?

Mr. Jamieson: It will be re-erected in part.

Mr. FLETCHER: In *The West Australian* of the 17th August, 1968, the Minister for Works is reported as having said—

The government's plan to restore the Barracks archway was aimed at preserving the character of the structure, Works Minister Hutchinson said yesterday.

He is further reported as follows:—

The restoration proposals, which are expected to cost between \$20,000 and \$25,000, include the planting of trees and shrubs around the archway and flood-lighting.

I am submitting to the House that both materials, and finance, at least in part, are available.

My suggestion is that we dismantle the structure with care, retain the bricks and clean the mortar from them, and resite the arch more properly in the locality I have suggested; namely, at the foot of Barrack Street.

Mr. Nalder: Whereabouts? Between Barrack Street and Mends Street?

Mr. FLETCHER: In that respect I will explain further. Some people have expressed the hope I would move to resite it; not to place it at the foot of Barrack Street, but midway between the South Perth and the Perth foreshores. However, that is not my intention. Others, of course, would have it placed midstream in a horizontal position. I am sincere in the objective of my motion.

I am glad that, on this occasion, the subject of the motion has generated humour instead of the hostility it generated when it was previously before the House. In seeking support for my motion that the arch should be resited at the foot of Barrack Street I asked the Minister for Lands the following question:—

How did Barrack Street, Perth, receive such a name?

The Minister replied—

Barrack Street derived its name from the "Rush Huts" that housed the 21st Regiment and were situated at the junction of what is today Hay and Barrack Streets.

In October, 1835, the area that is today contained within St. George's Terrace, Pier Street, Hay Street and Barrack Street was set aside for "Barrack buildings and ground." However this proposal was not carried out and the area was set aside for "Government Buildings."

A plan setting out the position of the original huts can be inspected in the Lands Department plan room, the number being O.P. 183.

So my suggestion is not ridiculous. The arch could be more appropriately situated on the site I suggest. I ask members

present: Do they consider the Barracks Arch is appropriately situated on its present site? The Premier also does not consider the present site appropriate because he is recorded in *The West Australian* of the 20th August, 1968, as having stated—

Brand: Pitfalls Face Planners

"In the Stephenson-Hepburn plan we have a plan which we can implement and intend to carry out in the best way possible.

"Pressures should not allow us to be pushed off course.

"I am bound to say, however, that if you look for Parliament House from St. George's Terrace, you'll find it behind the Barracks archway. And if you look for the terrace from Parliament House, you'll find that behind the archway."

I agree entirely with the Premier.

In case anyone may think this motion might embarrass me, I will now demonstrate that it will not. Before I travelled to Canada on behalf of this Parliament in 1966 I had the following to say on the Supply Bill, which is recorded in vol. 1 of the 1966 *Parliamentary Debates*, at page 52:—

As I will be absent attending the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference in Canada as from the end of this month for a month or more during this session I have to ensure that the voice of Fremantle is heard when opportunity and you, Sir, permit it. Having this in mind I will refer to a subject that was dealt with briefly by the member for Beeloo—the retention or otherwise of the Barracks entrance.

I feel there is an obligation on the part of members to express an opinion on this matter in order to give some sort of a lead, as it were. I promise to be brief, and will be to this extent: Either what remains of the Barracks is the focal point at the top of St. George's Terrace, or this building is. I admit the Barracks building was there before this building, so the alternative is either to shift that building or to shift this one, and I come down on the side of shifting the entrance to the Old Barracks. I do so even at the risk of offending such a notable citizen as His Worship, the Mayor of Fremantle, who treasures old things. I respect his opinion and attitude and hope that he and other electors within my electorate who may share his views about the Barracks will also respect mine.

When I had that to say in 1966 I did not anticipate the subsequent storm which would blow up on the issue in my absence.

Mr. Hall: It was a case of fallen arches.

Mr. Brady: You nearly lost the Premier over it.

Mr. FLETCHER: Other members will have an opportunity to demonstrate their attitude in relation to what I have to say. The bricks and mortar of the existing building are obviously suffering from the effects of the weather, and if it were rendered with mortar the bricks would be covered and, as a consequence, the building would lose its character.

If my suggestion is implemented it will not be necessary for the building to be rebuilt at its existing height. We could remove one storey, or possibly even two. The Minister said that concrete floors could be used between the two sections of the building for the purpose of strengthening it. One concrete floor could be put in rather than three, and we could restore the Gothic castellated top to its previous form. We could incorporate the castellated top immediately above the iron gates, and retain some of the windows which are there at the moment.

Mr. Rushton: Isn't it considered a fact that the bricks would disintegrate if removed?

Mr. FLETCHER: No; I understand 25,000 to 30,000 bricks from the original building are stored and they are in sufficiently good condition to be relaid. There would be an adequate number of bricks of good quality to carry out what I have suggested.

The issue could be and should be removed from the political arena. The next election I suspect is not due for another 2½ years.

Mr. Gayfer: Are you suggesting it was previously a matter of party politics?

Mr. FLETCHER: I have read *Hansard* in connection with this matter and have found that some of the submissions were amusing while others were quite tragic. There are 17 new members, and as a result the matter now needs reconsideration. We ought to have a free vote on this issue, just as when the Premier introduced his motion. The Premier's motion, which can be found on page 1462 of vol. 2 of *Hansard* for the year 1966, reads as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House, the Barracks Archway should be removed so that Parliament House and its surroundings can become the focal point of the western end of St. George's Terrace.

Had I been here at the time I would have supported that motion. I did, however, support it in effect before its existence became known prior to my trip overseas. I am certain that more people want the archway removed than want it retained; that people want its removal, not its destruction. The archway and the building

would have gone years ago had the building not contained office space which was required at the time.

Mr. Hall: It would have provided accommodation.

Mr. FLETCHER: I notice when the motion was before the House, and during the controversy as to the use to which we could put the limited accommodation which remained, the member for Albany suggested that it could be used to house pensioners. I do, however, think the honourable member was not serious.

Now that Parliament House has been completed, and now that we have this beautiful building, the matter can be decided on this basis. The Parliament House building is something of which the State can be proud. The building was commenced in 1901, and I am sure all members are aware of its historical background. As I have said, the State and its citizens can be proud of this beautiful building. But can they be proud of the other building; the building which smacks of colonial days and the military forces that occupied it?

Mr. Jamieson: They were pensioners of 40 or 45 years of age.

Mr. FLETCHER: I think the edifice certainly belongs to the past, and it should not occupy the dominant position it does today. I have already suggested the general locality of the alternative site. Other members may have different ideas.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Where in Barrack Street do you suggest it be put?

Mr. FLETCHER: I did not suggest Barrack Street, and I hope other members listened more attentively than the honourable member who has just interjected. I suggested it should be placed at the foot of Barrack Street. There is already a memorial in that locality to General Sir Talbot Hobbs, and I suggest that a position adjacent to that memorial would be most appropriate. I hope that answers the member for Kalgoorlie.

I think members will agree that the Barracks Archway does not have the same significance as the Arc de Triomphe or the Menin Gate. It is, of course, certainly not as imposing as those two structures despite the mention that was made of the Gothic architecture when the Premier's motion was before the House.

The sunken freeway is now complete and I would like to show the House a newspaper photograph which other members may possibly have seen in the paper dated the 17th August, 1968. The photograph was taken from a point near the Hay Street overway and shows the various cuttings and the archway in a lonely position—in a very lonely position indeed. I have already suggested that the archway be placed somewhere in the vicinity of the memorial which commemorates a very distinguished gentleman associated with our past history.

In its existing position the arch stands out like a lavatory in a desert.

Mr. Dunn: This is a nice thing to put at the foot of Barrack Street!

Mr. Graham: It would be of some practical use there.

Mr. FLETCHER: I might add to what I have said: standing out like a lavatory in a desert, without even the functional use of such a convenience, however remotely removed. Someone asked me by interjection, which electorate I represented. I represent Fremantle, but I do not want the arch to be erected there.

Mr. Nalder: It would be an addition to the western gateway.

Mr. FLETCHER: I would ask the Minister not to suggest that to Sir Frederick Samson, or we will have it there. In its existing position the arch does encroach on the footpath. It is something against which pedestrians bump their elbows. Those who have walked across the bridge would have had the experience of seeing groups of people walking in Indian file past the point where the arch juts into the footpath, before they regrouped on the other side of it.

The Stephenson-Hepburn Plan provided for the removal of the arch, and Parliament accepted that plan. Under pressure, the Premier deferred the demolition of the arch, so that the position could be looked at again when that portion of the Mitchell Freeway was completed. Surely we can see for ourselves that the arch could be more appropriately placed in the area suggested in my motion; or, alternatively if the members do not like my suggestion, they can propose some other place.

I would like to see the materials and finance which are available used to resite the arch elsewhere. The Premier, instead of asking for departmental advice as to the best method to use to retain the building on a temporary basis, should have told his officers to find the reasons for demolition. I agree with what the Minister for Industrial Development said when he spoke in the debate. I have read his speech, and he did suggest that the Premier should be commended for having given the people an opportunity to reconsider the position. The Premier did just that.

I do think that the finance which has since been spent in bolstering and reinforcing the foundations could have been used to better advantage in resiting. However, I am asking the House to agree to the demolition of the structure with great care, and to the use of the materials and the available finance to re-establish it elsewhere. Such a suggestion should mollify, if not satisfy, the National Trust, the Barracks Arch Defence Committee, the Historical Society, and all those who held polls on the subject, including those who place historical and sentimental value on this now truncated building.

The Freeway and the vehicles now displace the gardens and fountains which were originally planned for the front of Parliament House. In my opinion, and I hope in the opinion of other members, the arch is a poor alternative for the original proposal. The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority—our top planning authority—recommended removal. I would point out to the House that it did not recommend destruction, but merely recommended removal.

That authority is very broadly based, and comprises engineers, the Surveyor-General, the Town Planning Commissioner, and others; but members do not have to be told by this body what they should do. They can, and they should, act for themselves in dealing with my motion. If they support me they will be in the distinguished company of those whom I have already mentioned. Some members might consider that King's Park, for example, would be a more appropriate location for resiting. I would not oppose such a suggestion.

Mr. Dunn: If you had been here when the matter was decided would you have voted for the retention of the archway?

Mr. FLETCHER: I have gone to the trouble of telling the House what I did say in 1966. In short, I said the arch should go; and I still say the same today. Had I been here when the Premier introduced his motion I would have said the same thing.

When the Premier introduced his motion he mentioned that distinguished architects and others were in support of removal. He further said that subject to removal and resiting, the Government would meet half the estimated cost of \$60,000. I was recently informed by a member who was in the House at the time when the debate took place that the figure mentioned was \$60,000.

The estimated cost of restoration—\$25,000—will go a considerable distance, or nearly halfway—to meeting the cost of removal and resiting. I have been critical of expenditure of public moneys on projects which I considered to be not worth while; but as very many people in Western Australia want to retain the arch either in its entirety or in part, I would not be critical of the addition to a limited extent to the finance which has been allocated for restoration, in order to resite the structure in part. I am asking that the funds be spent in accordance with the suggestion in my motion.

When the Premier introduced his motion he suggested that both Houses of Parliament should give an expression of opinion, but members in another place did not get the chance. On this occasion they could, if the House supports my motion.

The untidy heap still sits in grim surroundings, in an area which is too limited to be beautified with flowers and

shrubs. The Parliament House building was planned and conceived by Sir John Forrest, as I discovered in my research into this matter. He, as the Premier of the State, and his contemporaries, intended it to be the focal point at the end of St. George's Terrace. This building should not look down the city, but should look over it—the capital city of the State on behalf of which we legislate.

We should not have a dilapidated heap of ancient bricks and mortar—however sentimentally regarded—superimposed on this end of St. George's Terrace and in front of the beautiful Parliament House building. If the arch was located on the other side of Harvest Terrace at the rear of Parliament House it might be more acceptable, but even there I suggest it would be inappropriately placed.

In speaking to the Premier's motion, the present Leader of the Opposition was most concerned that the Premier had undertaken to leave the archway intact for a reasonable period, so that the Government and the people could weigh its appearance against the modern facade of Parliament House.

My leader took umbrage at the fact that the Government rather than Parliament was mentioned. He was quite justified in being on the theme in support of an ombudsman tonight. I am asking Parliament to make a decision not to destroy but to demolish carefully and resite the arch. As a consequence, I hope my leader can support my motion which goes that much further than that of the Premier. My leader was obviously of the opinion that the Government was deliberately leaving the archway in an untidy condition to influence the public against retention.

Even if that was the Premier's intention, I consider the money—as I have said before—already spent on temporary retention could have been spent to better advantage in resiting.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The Premier said there was no value in tizzying the place up until the landscaping around it had been completed.

Mr. Bickerton: There is no room for landscaping.

Mr. FLETCHER: There is very little room for the suggested flowers and shrubs. However, my leader took the Premier to task for bringing the matter to Parliament after suggesting the public should decide. I am not convinced that the public has decided.

There has been derogatory comment recently in the Press, but little if any favourable Press comment. Whilst not wanting to influence the House—I have read very little in the Press on the subject over a period of some months—on the 21st

August, Mr. N. C. Kneebone, of North Perth, wrote the following letter to the Press:—

The press has reported that \$20,000 to \$25,000 is to be spent on the Barracks archway.

As a person of average intelligence I find it hard to believe that any responsible government would so wantonly waste public money.

The arch has as much aesthetic and architectural beauty and use as a backyard lavatory in the same area.

Instead of showing contempt for public revenue by throwing \$25,000 to the wind, it would be to the Government's credit to give our senior citizens a Christmas bonus or provide additional payment to C-class hospitals to relieve the financial demands on relatives of inmates of these institutions.

Another letter appeared in *The West Australian* of the 23rd August, written by Mr. A. H. Williams of Dalkeith. That is getting close to home.

Mr. Nalder: Closer.

Mr. FLETCHER: The letter reads as follows:—

I see that the government proposes to spend \$20,000 on a face lift for the Barrack's arch.

Surely it would be better to spend a few dollars on a bulldozer and remove the eyesore.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. FLETCHER: Those are the Press comments I have seen lately and, as I said before, they are derogatory. I have seen nothing in the Press in support of retaining the archway.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: A lot of people voted for its retention in the campaign that was waged.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will make reference to that presently. I think more people want the archway to go.

Mr. Bickerton: It shows electors are not always right.

Mr. FLETCHER: There was a non-party vote taken on this issue and a majority voted in favour of the retention of the arch. I missed my opportunity to vote because, as I said before, 22 months ago I was in Canada on behalf of this Parliament. Most of those present tonight listened in 1966 to my comments on the subject; but obviously the member for Darling Range did not.

Mr. Dunn: You are impressing me immensely.

Mr. Graham: That is an achievement.

Mr. FLETCHER: A newspaper poll by coupon netted 9,681 votes for retention, and 1,354 against, or, as my leader said,

7.15 to 1. I am sure my leader, on reflection, would have the same idea as I have: that this illustrates that a tightly-knit enthusiastic band of dedicated supporters had a better organisation of workers on behalf of the "Yes" for retention than did the negative voters, in company with the apathetic and disinterested members of the community.

Since that time I have been made aware that during the currency of the ballot the newspapers of a certain newsagent in, I believe, Floreat Park were bought out by members of the dedicated band I mentioned. The poll coupon was cut from these papers. The newsagent was told by these dedicated people that that was all they wanted and he could give the remainder of the papers to his customers, which, I understand, he did. However, the coupons were used to obtain the figures, in part, which I have just read out. If this occurred at one newsagent's shop, at how many others was it repeated?

Mr. Bickerton: There are funny things going on in voting these days.

A member: From Kimberley to Floreat.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am sure more members of the public would now accept the resiting of the archway than would oppose such a move. It might cost more or even less than the figure I have mentioned; but, if it is only resited in part, then it could be cheaper than the original estimated figure.

In any case, the issue before the House is not a matter of the cost involved, it is whether the archway stands where it is or, in accordance with my motion, is moved to an alternative site. In this motion I want to meet the retentionists and the abolitionists half-way—the retentionists would retain the archway at a different address, and the abolitionists or demolitionists would have it removed from its present site in accordance with my motion. Those who want to see the archway about the place will still be able to see it about the place but at a different address; either at the locality I have suggested, or some alternative site other than the frivolous suggestions that have been made by way of interjection.

Page 1469 of *Hansard*, vol. 2, 1966, shows Mr. Tonkin declaring, amongst other things in connection with the arch, "It is a good thing that we are not all cast in the same mould"; to which Mr. Court immediately declared with enthusiasm by way of interjection, "Hear, hear!" Mr. Hawke interjected, "Some members on the Government side were not moulded at all"; to which Mr. W. Hegney added, "Some are mouldy." This delightful repartee was sharply interrupted by the Speaker who roared, "Order!"

Mr. Graham: Both appropriate.

Mr. FLETCHER: I must say that on that occasion the present Leader of the Opposition resumed on the theme of retention of historical buildings that have links with the past as though nothing had happened.

My motion is not out of step with his idea. I have given the attitudes of the two principal protagonists—the Premier and the present Leader of the Opposition. The member for Wembley had something to say and quoted opinions of overseas V.I.P.s in connection with architecture and the historical value of the arch. However, overseas V.I.P.s do not have to live with the arch, as we at present do. He also quoted a letter from the Town Clerk of the City of Perth.

Dr. Henn: Tonight you are upsetting the member for Perth.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think so. The member for Wembley quoted as follows:—

... demolition of the barracks archway be deferred until the Mitchell Freeway and associated works have been completed.

Surely it is now near enough to completion for this House to assess the situation. I am convinced that the general public can now see the arch standing out like a sore thumb in alien, even hostile surroundings.

I am convinced that many people, previously in favour of the retention of the arch, now wish someone would quietly remove the poor, lonely structure. I hope to do so, with the support of the House and, if necessary, the support of another place.

Mr. Jamieson: Where are you going to resite all the pigeons?

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. I. W. Manning.

## RURAL INDUSTRIES IN THE SOUTH

*Inquiry by Royal Commission: Motion*

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren) [8.51 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of the House a Royal Commission should be appointed to enquire into the rural industries in the South West and Great Southern areas in respect to:—

- (1) The costs, returns and trends in the dairying, apple growing, wool and lamb, and the dairy beef industries of those areas.
- (2) The problems confronting the producers.
- (3) The preservation of the small farmer.
- (4) Make such recommendations which could assist in resolving the problems revealed by the investigation.

No opposition ever lightly takes the step of moving for a Royal Commission, and so it is on this occasion.



The SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much talking in the Chamber.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: On this side of the House considerable concern has been felt for some time about the plight of the rural industries, and the matter has been properly kept under very close surveillance by an appropriate committee.

It will be recalled that almost without exception, every country member during the Address-in-Reply debate drew attention to the situation facing the farmers in his electorate, and the situation in no instance was a very happy one. This Government is well on the way to being regarded by posterity as the "compass government," because it points only in one direction, that direction being the north. The time has just about arrived when it must view the reciprocal bearing and pay attention to the plight of some of the industries in the southern areas.

Mr. Nalder: Have you any idea how much money has been spent by the Government in the southern portion of the State in comparison with the amount spent in the north?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: An insufficiency, as I will endeavour to point out.

Mr. Jamieson: Very well answered!

Mr. H. D. EVANS: A letter in today's issue of *The West Australian* highlights the crux of the situation in these rural industries. It comes from a Bridgetown correspondent, and reads as follows:—

The farmers of Australia are at last beginning to realise that they can no longer continue to use their capital to buy the necessities of life.

Since the period 1948-1951 there has been a rise of 121 per cent in cost of production and a fall of 17 per cent in prices received for farm produce.

As no reference is given for those figures, I cannot vouch for their authenticity, but the same trend is revealed in other figures available at page 216 of the *Quarterly Review of Agricultural Economics*, October, 1967, issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economic Statistics. Taking the base average of the five years ended June, 1950, as 100, the index number of agricultural prices received in 1966-67 would be 188. The index of prices paid for 1967-68 would be 258. This shows an increase of 88 per cent. in prices received and 158 per cent. in prices paid.

I do not claim that these figures give a conclusive and valid indication, but they do suffice to indicate that the trend does exist; and that is the essential point I wish to emphasise. If we examine just what the position of the primary producers is, and endeavour to show how best this position can be improved, the most obvious indication will come from trends in lamb, cotton, and wool returns on a comparative basis over recent years.

The figures of the Bureau of Census and Statistics reveal that in 1966 the average prices for lamb ranged from \$8.12 to \$11.31. In 1967 for lamb the average prices ranged from \$9.13 to \$11.21. For ewes in 1966 the figures were \$5.53 to \$7.46, and for 1967, \$4.77 to \$6.26. For wethers in 1966 the prices were \$6.86 to \$8.54, and for 1967 they were \$6.10 to \$8.28.

Mr. Nalder: Are these average prices?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: These are the averages quoted in the return of the Bureau of Census and Statistics, and indicate the variations in the prices.

It is important to quote the current trends. In the last two weeks of July the prices of lamb showed a variation of \$3.30 to \$8.20 and \$5.30 to \$7.70. Last week the prices of lamb showed a variation of \$3.80 to \$7. Similarly, a downward trend can be seen in the price of ewes. In this case for the last two weeks of July the prices quoted ranged from \$3.80 to \$5.80 and from \$2.70 to \$4.60. In the first two weeks of August the prices were \$2.50 to \$3.60 and \$3.20 to \$4.60; and last week the prices ranged from \$2.90 to \$4.50.

For wethers in the last two weeks of July the prices ranged from \$3.20 to \$8 and from \$3.20 to \$4.80. The prices for the first two weeks in August were \$2.70 to \$5.50 and \$2.50 to \$4.90; and for last week they were \$3.50 to \$5.20.

These prices have indicated a steady deterioration throughout the entire period and I would like the House to remember that the prices quoted are not those received by the farmer. From the amount he received, he has to deduct the cost of commission for selling and also the cost of transport.

A rule of thumb practice with regard to the sale of animals by farmers in Denmark is to allow one lamb for every 10 sold. This covers the transport, which varies with the size of the truck, and also the commission. In other words, for every 100 lambs sold, the farmer receives payment for 90.

These prices and the trend are very clearly reflected in the income-earning capacity of the farmer. I can best show this by reference to the annual report of the Manjimup Farmers' Advisory Club over the last three years.

During the three years from 1966 to 1968 we find that over 28, 23, and 27 farms, respectively—taken at random, purely because they show figures which completed a range of income-earning capacity—the interest on capital ranged from: 1966, minus 14.6 to 23.5 per cent.; 1967, minus 16.5 per cent. to 22 per cent.; and, 1968, minus 8.3 per cent. to 9 per cent.

The average return on capital in those three years was: 1966, 7.1 per cent.; 1967, 8.3 per cent.; and this year, 2.9 per cent. So a farmer is receiving 2.9 per cent. on

his investment capital. I ask members to remember that we are dealing with a farm advisory group.

Generally speaking, these farmers are probably more progressive in their outlook, and that is why they are members of these groups. It necessarily follows that their management ability can be considered a significant cause in a trend of this nature.

I would like to instance two specific cases concerning farmers who are both members of a farm advisory group. They have kept records over the period, and this is one of the reasons why they have been selected. It is difficult to obtain a complete record, but these two men are recognised through the district as being above average farmers, managementwise.

In the case of the first farmer, his average return for lambs in 1966 was \$7.16; in 1967, \$6.11; and in 1968, \$5.73. Three years ago this farmer valued his ewes at \$14.60 each. In 1967-68, he can expect \$4 for the ewe and the lamb.

At the same time, for the four years prior to 1967, the return from his wool was 73c per lb. This year it is 40c per lb. It will be appreciated that that is quite a significant drop. He has his property up for sale, and I do not wonder why. In 1967, he could have reasonably expected \$10,000 as the value of his stock. This year, he would not get \$5,000.

The second farmer is prepared to sell ewes, with lambs at foot—sometimes two lambs at foot—at \$5.50 each. A year ago his ewes, alone, would have been valued at between \$14 and \$16. At this stage, I think I should draw attention to the drop in the value of wool.

Mr. Rushton: What would be the land value of the properties you are quoting?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: The trend of land values has also declined over the same period. The decline has been appreciable and I have the figures for the four years, if any member is interested in them. I was referring to wool, and it was pointed out in *The West Australian*, early in July, that the Australian wool cheque fell in the 1967-68 year by \$69,800,000. However, although the cheque fell by this amount the number of bales sold increased by 122,359. This would be roughly three or four full sales at Fremantle, and this would be a fairly substantial contribution to the economy when looked at in that way. Despite the fact that there was an increase in the number of bales sold, the return was \$69,800,000 less.

A further point is—and it can be readily seen from any graph which I have here—that the price of fine merino wool has steadily increased, although not greatly. The price for the broader types which are generally found in the southern regions has decreased over the past 12 months. While farmers in the

northern areas have remained static, in regard to costs, the farmers in the southern areas have borne the brunt of this falling trend in wool prices.

I was rather surprised to learn some facts from a firm of accountants in one of our south-west towns. The clients of this particular firm will pay, this year, one-tenth of the tax which they paid last year. Last year the aggregate total tax paid by the clients of this firm amounted to \$360,000. Obviously the returns are not completed for this year but the trend shows that it will be surprising if the aggregate tax paid is \$30,000. So the aggregate amount of tax expected to be paid by the clients of this firm is about one-tenth of what it was last year. This not only surprised me, but horrified me.

I turn now to another farm advisory club in the south-west, and its annual report also reveals some interesting facts. The average return to the members of this club for wool, lamb, and baby beef, in the past three years was: wool, 47.5c; 38.5c; and 32c. The return for lamb was \$6.40; \$5.70; and \$4. The price received for baby beef, over the three years, was \$70.30; \$70; and \$58.

I would like to quote two other individual case histories from this particular farm advisory group. The figures supplied by the two farmers are selected for no other reason than that they were the only ones which were complete. The net income of the first farmer over the last four years, was as follows: For the year ended 1965, \$2,300; 1966, \$7,714; 1967, \$5,521; and for 1968, \$362. His interest return for those four years would have been 3.4 per cent.; 10.6 per cent.; 7.6 per cent.; and 0.56 per cent.

This means his net return per acre has been \$4.30; \$14.40; \$10.20; and 69c. For the last three years this same farmer's lamb values, wool values, and baby beef values have been as follows: lamb, \$6.50, \$5.80, and \$3.75; wool, 41.3c, 38.2c, and 36.5c; baby beef, \$73, \$59.50, and \$50.50.

I refer now to the figures of the second farmer during the same period. He was not specifically chosen, but he had a full recording system. His net income in 1965 was \$1,772; in 1966, \$2,700; in 1967, \$2,234; and in 1968, minus \$1,246. His interest return was 3.9 per cent., 5.6 per cent., 4.6 per cent., and minus 2.6 per cent., respectively. Consequently his net return per acre was \$5.50, \$8.40, \$6.70, and minus \$3.85.

The value of lambs for 1966, 1967, and 1968, respectively, was \$6.70, \$5.70, and \$4.90; for wool he received 45.2c, 34c, and 21c, respectively; and the figures for baby beef were \$73, \$72, and \$56, respectively.

The trend of the whole group is in this vein, but the absence of statistics makes it very difficult to present a full picture. As an interesting exercise, an agricultural

economist drew up what the financial returns for a typical farm for the past three years would have been on current-day prices. He has made the farm 700 acres in extent with a carrying capacity of 1,300 ewes and 40 breeding cattle. This would be fairly normal.

It would be reasonable to expect an 80 per cent. drop in lambs to sell, which would give him 1,040 lambs for sale each year. On the same percentage, he would have 38 baby beef to sell. His wool, on an average of 8 lb. per head, would yield him 1,200 lb. Culled sheep at 200 per annum would give a reasonably conservative estimate of the farm income that this type of farm represents.

What would have happened on the figures I have given in the past three years? Precisely this would have occurred; namely, in 1966 he would have sold his wool for \$3,850, his lambs for \$6,150, his sheep for \$600, and his beef for \$2,770, giving a total income of \$13,370 for the year. The next year wool would have brought \$3,100, lambs \$5,500, sheep \$400, and beef \$2,770. For the year ended the 30th June, 1968, the returns would have been \$2,600 for wool, \$3,850 for lambs, \$200 for sheep, and \$2,200 for beef. Therefore, his total income would have fallen in those three years from \$13,370 to \$11,770 to \$8,910, respectively. In general terms, his income per acre would have been \$19, \$16.80, and \$12.70, respectively, and he could have expected on these trends the amount of \$10.12 for the forthcoming year ending June, 1969.

Having regard to the fact that his costs would have risen by \$200 to \$300 in that same period, this man's income earning capacity from the 1966 season to the 1968 season would have fallen by 30 per cent. That is the case of a model farm, based purely on statistics and not actually in existence.

What about the farm that we find in the hard world of reality; that is, of debts and of interest payments? Something quite different happens here, and this could best be demonstrated by the case of a farmer from the Denmark area who took the occasion to visit me last week. I might add this man is a war service land settler and his farm comprises 700 acres of which 350 acres are under pasture and 80 acres are bulldozed and windrowed, and will be cleared for pasture this year.

Let us take wool alone, just to highlight this point, and look at his returns for 1966, 1967 and 1968. His wool fell from 50c to 37.5c to 30c, respectively. His lambs fetched \$7.30, \$6.50, and \$5.50, respectively, and the price this year is probably higher than the average because he sold a considerable proportion of them on the farm itself. He had 800 ewes in 1966, 900 in 1967, and between 1,000 and 1,100 this current year. The total cheque for his

wool income for 1968 was \$3,100, less expenses for commission, handling, transport, insurance, and the rest, which left him \$2,700.

From the entire amount of \$2,700 he has to meet a principal and interest payment on war service land settlement of \$1,450. Due in 1969 is his commitment on the 80 acres of bulldozing which has been carried out through a Development Bank loan. This will be \$1,264. This means he will have to meet a total commitment of \$2,714; yet his total wool cheque for this year is \$2,700. His return will be comparatively less next year, even if the price remains static, because his costs will have risen and so the entirety of his wool cheque, at least, will go out into servicing the loans he has undertaken. This man has to expand to survive. To expand, he has to borrow money which he will have to repay at about 6 per cent.

Mr. Nalder: Not in war service land settlement.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: It is doubtful whether he will get a further war service loan. He will have to go to some other source and pay about 6 per cent.; yet, on his present returns he would be receiving something like 2 per cent. The economics of farming just cannot bear up under this situation. On the present return, he cannot service his loans and his future does not look any brighter. What is he to do? The advice of his banker was short and much to the point; that is, to sell out. If he does this, what becomes of the individual and his family?

I point out that the man is a solid type of farmer and very industrious. He has battled his way to build up a farm to a reasonable standard. A few years ago he would have had the opportunity of a good living, but at this moment he is faced with taking what equity he can from the property; and, obviously, it is not going to be great. The debts he has would not allow him even a considerable deposit on a house if he were to move into a town. That is the situation with which the man is faced! The banker's advice was not given in isolation; the same gentleman had given it in other quarters; and in terms of his banking responsibilities he must do so. That is the trend which is becoming increasingly obvious.

I venture to suggest at this point that the fall in export markets will be cited together with lower prices for returns from overseas. It will be cited to account for prices falling away in this particular section of primary industry and, rightly so, if this is the case.

Overseas lamb prices show a downward trend. The belief anyone may hold that a considerable proportion of our lamb production is exported can be dispelled very rapidly when the figures given by the W.A. Meat Export Board are noted. In

1940, of the 485,000 lambs produced, 305,000 were exported, and 18,000 used on the home market. In 1956, of the 652,000 lambs produced, 211,000 were exported, and 431,000—which is 37.14 per cent.—were used on the home market. Currently, of the 762,000 lambs produced, 678,000, or 91.65 per cent., were used for home consumption.

The British market figures are rather revealing. In 1961, 3,037 tons were sold on the London market, but this year Smithfield took only 202 tons. This is a dramatic decrease. A feature that is affecting the lamb market at present is the trade from New Zealand, and whilst Mr. McEwen claims that this is not a serious problem at the moment, I think any inroads by New Zealand into the Australian market are to be viewed with concern. The figures show that in 1966, five tons of lamb were imported from New Zealand, but in 1967 this had increased to 121 tons, and for the first five months of 1968, 314 tons were imported. Mr. McEwen is reported in an article as having said—

My advisers and those I consulted in the industry, both as producers and butchers, all satisfied me there was no danger in importing lamb.

Further on in the article the following appears:—

These imports were small compared with Australia's average annual production of 220,000 tons and could not be expected to have had any significant effect on prices received by Australian lamb producers.

That statement by Mr. McEwen was viewed with concern by lamb producers, and with some justification.

Likewise, there has been a downward trend in the mutton markets. On the 7th August the secretary of the Australian Meat Board stated that mutton prices had reached an all-time low. The current American restrictions, because of cysticercosis, have made a considerable impact on boned mutton which has been a steady part of the market for mutton used in the manufacturing industry.

The situation is that cysts can result in an entire consignment of meat being condemned and, what is more, cysts of this type are very difficult to locate. A cyst can remain hidden in a quarter-inch cube of meat and therefore, in the boning process, it is very difficult to find. The consequence of this is twofold. Insurance rates become considerably higher, and shippers are reluctant to ship consignments when there is a decline in this trade. Although, on these grounds, Japan imposes no restrictions; the Japanese—astute bargainers that they are—have seized the opportunity to trade on a depressed market and force the prices down still further. On the 7th August, the Japanese offered 8c per lb. f.o.b. This is for carcase mutton, and, in the yard, this would mean a price of about 4c per lb.

In last week's issue of a rural magazine there is a prediction made that there will be a modest improvement in the price of mutton. However, such an improvement would need to be considerable before it would have any impact on the producer. If there is any improvement in the export figures it would need to more than offset the increase in the predicted numbers of sheep.

I think all members received a copy of a publication relating to a meeting of a joint meat industry committee convened by the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. On table 5 of that publication the numbers of sheep for the next decade are predicted, the increase appearing to be almost 2½ times the present number.

So, even having regard for the population increase we can reasonably expect from our immigration policy, with the depressed export market there is still concern felt for the sheep producer.

Another aspect I feel I should touch on is the unseasonal supply of lamb. This is a fact, and in a statement published in *The West Australian* of the 8th August, 1968, the secretary of the Meat & Allied Trades Federation points out that because of the big supplies of lamb, butchers have been able to keep lamb prices down. In the same report he goes on to say—

At present prices, the good-quality lamb being offered by butchers was a good buy.

It is claimed that low prices are a culmination of declining export sales, and that the increasing lamb production at Midland is the reason. This is apparent when it is noted that at the end of June, 1968, the numbers showed that there was an excess of 7,000 over local demand, and that this position was reached a week earlier than the previous year. In recent weeks the numbers have increased by 3,000.

At this time of the year it is unusual to have large numbers of suckers, and it was said this was the reason that they could be offered for sale at reasonable prices. The point here is that no-one can claim that seasonal conditions alone are responsible for this trend, because that is not borne out by fact. The seasonal conditions are unusual, but they certainly do not account for everything that is affecting the wool and sheep industry. This does make one think there is justification for the appointment of a committee, the members being properly constituted as experts in their own right, to inquire into all aspects of trends, seasonal conditions, overseas exports, population, and migration.

Those engaged in the dairying industry are faced with the same problem of costs and prices for produce. In Australia the dairying industry provides direct and indirect employment for 600,000 people, which is 5 per cent. of the nation's work force. Five hundred factories of one kind or another are engaged, in some way, in

the processing of dairy products. These factories employ 12,000 persons and their payroll is in the vicinity of \$50,000,000 per annum.

We find that in Western Australia in the manufacturing line there are 21 factories in existence—seven for butter, six for cheese, four for processed milk, and four for ice cream. In addition there are nine classified pasteurising, chilling, and milk bottling plants in operation.

It is also of interest to note that in Western Australia the total dairy imports from overseas and interstate for the last year totalled 23,895,282 lb. valued at \$7,782,050. So it will be seen that the imports of dairy produce have a fairly considerable effect on the economy of this State. But once again the returns to the grower are by no means rewarding.

We find that currently butterfat is worth 38.5c in cream, and 43.7c in milk; the difference being for the skim milk. The present prices are below the figures received in 1954, and about the same as the figures for 1956. So it will be seen that in that time the increase to the farmer has been virtually negligible. However, even though the returns might have been static, costs certainly were not. As we all know, costs have steadily risen in the last decade without any corresponding rise in butterfat prices.

We find that even with bounties and subsidies the farmer is in the same position today as he was 10 years ago. So dairy farmers have found it necessary to make every use of the technological advances and improvements which have been made. It has been necessary for them to do this in order that they might survive in their particular field of agriculture.

I would like to point out that even so the average annual return of a dairy farmer in Western Australia is about \$1,700. That is the figure supplied by the Bureau of Census and Statistics. The \$34 a week that this represents is a very poor return for the type of life that such a person has to lead.

Mr. Nalder: Is that the butterfat-producing section?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: This is the butterfat-producing section in the dairy industry. We must not lose sight of the fact that \$1,700 a year represents the average. Members will appreciate that if this is the average, quite a number of dairy farmers receive considerably less; and we are told by Mr. Anthony that 40 per cent. of these farmers are below the \$1,000 per annum mark.

Much has been said and written of the need for dairy farmers, and farmers generally for that matter, to become more

efficient. Bearing this in mind the comparison made by the Australian Dairy Produce Board is a most interesting one. I prefer to quote from *Dairy Industries*, which is a semi-technical almost prestige publication in England. In dealing with Australia it makes the following statement:—

The Australian Dairy Produce Board say Australia is one of the most efficient dairying countries in the world. They say comparative figures show that no European country can produce 1 lb. of butter or cheese in anything like the 16 min. required by the average Australian farmer, while only dairy farmers in Denmark, Britain, Luxemburg and Sweden can earn a gallon of milk in a shorter time than Australia's 30 min.

The board issued a highly detailed list to prove their figures and said that, while the Australian retail price for milk was relatively high, only Britain had a cheaper retail price for butter, and no country had a cheaper price for cheese.

To obtain the correct picture it must be appreciated that the more effective States are included in the overall view that has been given. This would improve the picture we would find for a State like Western Australia.

Dairy farmers in this State are firm in their view that given the right amount of assistance and the right kind of assistance they would be able to emulate the Victorian dairy farmers in their production figures. They must, however, be given the right kind of assistance and the right amount of assistance, and not merely an injunction to become more efficient. The attitude which merely advocates more efficiency without aid was deplored by the president of the Albany zone of the Farmers' Union in making his annual report on the 14th July of this year and he expressed strong resentment.

Shortly before his recent retirement the late chief of the dairy division of the Department of Agriculture reviewed the dairy industry at some length in an article in *The West Australian*. He is confident of the butterfat industry in Western Australia and indicates the trends of consolidation which have already taken place. He suggests that this should and will continue, although he does not indicate how assistance in financing to bring it about will be achieved.

At a meeting held at Busselton on Wednesday the 3rd July, about 200 dairy farmers expressed their confidence in the industry in the preamble to a motion which was subsequently passed and which was to be referred to the dairy farmers executive for presentation to the Government.

This has not yet been done, but as there were nine parliamentarians present at that meeting, the Government would at least be aware of the situation. The preamble reads—

This meeting confirms its complete faith in the ability of the high rainfall areas of the lower South West of W.A. to support an efficient dairy industry with an on farm cost figure comparable with the older and fully developed dairying areas of the Eastern States, returning high profit margins to the operator and with a volume of supply sufficient to fully supply our West Australian market.

One of the 11 points of the motion which was passed by that meeting requested an inquiry on the part of the Government in the following terms:—

The State Government appoint a Committee of enquiry with adequate Producer representation to examine in detail the total structure of the Dairy Industry both Whole Milk and Butterfat and covering Productions, Manufacture, Mill Treatment and Distribution, Transport Services and Licences with the object of creating a single authority to fully co-ordinate the whole of the industry. This authority to be clothed with adequate powers so as to exercise control over Licences, Manufacture, Transport, Milk treatment and distribution and to combine the function of the present W.A. Dairy Products Marketing Board and the Milk Board of W.A. An enquiry such as this is at this time in progress in N.S.W.

As I said, it is possible the contents of the motion have not reached the Government at this stage, but at least there is now an awareness of it.

The final point I make in respect of that particular meeting concerns the report which appeared in the Press. The report stated that the industry representatives said that the Busselton meeting was one of the biggest ever held in the south-west; that it lasted four hours; that it was called by the Busselton zone council of the Farmers' Union; and that it was attended by representatives from branches of the Farmers' Union from as far afield as Waroona, Manjimup, Pemberton, and the entire south-west corner, including Margaret River.

Mr. Bovell: That meeting did not ask for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: The request for a Royal Commission stems from the fact that a committee of inquiry would not be able to fulfil its function in the current session of Parliament. As a consequence, the Government would have grounds for refusing a committee of inquiry, and that left the only alternative—the appointment of a Royal Commission. That is the reason such a move is being made.

In August of last year a meeting of a slightly different kind was held at Northcliffe. It was called by a processing company, and it asked three very pertinent questions. The essential one, after breaking the assembled 36 farmers into three groups, was to enumerate, and discuss, the factors which they considered were influencing the dairy farmers in the butterfat areas to relinquish dairying for other types of farming. It is interesting to note that the replies were almost unanimous, and that the suggestions for remedial action were similarly general. They all revolved round the low returns to the farmer, the high cost of production, the difficulty of obtaining ready finance at reasonable rates of interest for developmental work, and the lack of Government interest.

Those views were echoed almost in their entirety by a somewhat similar meeting of processing plant managers in a town in the northern area of the south-west.

The present moment is the propitious one as far as the appointment of an inquiry of some kind is concerned. It is made so by the fact that a dairy industry rehabilitation scheme has been proposed by the Federal Government. The Federal Budget introduced in the current session of Parliament included \$1,000,000 to be used for this purpose—obviously in a pilot manner.

According to the *Weekly Times* of the 14th February last the plan is aimed at assisting 24,000 farmers to quit the land. On the 16th March last a report appeared in *The West Australian* as follows:—

The south-west of Western Australia was one of the country's milk-producing areas most in need of help. Primary Industry Minister Anthony said tonight.

The others were Queensland and the north coast of New South Wales.

Mr. Anthony gave a meeting of dairy farmers at Ipswich, Queensland, an account of the Federal Government's proposed dairy farm reconstruction scheme.

On the 2nd April another report relating to the rehabilitation scheme appeared in *The West Australian* as follows:—

In essence, the scheme is designed to entice uneconomic dairy farmers to quit—and could cost \$25 million in the next four years.

Australia has about 80,000 farmers with incomes of less than \$2,000 a year and 55 per cent. of the country's 62,000 dairy farmers are in this bracket.

In Western Australia, the average net farm income (the key economic yardstick) in the dairying industry is down to \$1,723 a year, and 40 per cent. of the W.A. farms are below the \$1,000-a-year level.

If 24,000 farmers are to be assisted to leave their farms, what will happen? Will some provision be made to rehabilitate them elsewhere? Let us not forget that all sorts of difficulties will arise, because, obviously, the problem is a fairly extensive social one. It becomes undesirable for several reasons, one being the impact on the economy.

It is also significant that the four-year period in which the dairy rehabilitation scheme is to operate coincides with the termination of the present Commonwealth butterfat subsidy agreement. Commencing on the 1st July, 1967, the Commonwealth Government became committed to a bounty of \$27,000,000 on the production of butter and cheese, and of \$800,000 on the export of processed milk products, for a period of five years. The scheme proposed by Mr. Anthony will conclude at the same time as the present bounty scheme.

A deputation, made up of representatives of the dairying industry, which waited on the Premier on the 26th April last sounded a note of warning when it stated: "We consider as the present proposals by the Federal Government had been granted for a period of time which would expire at the time when the subsidy and stabilisation plan would expire, it was necessary for the industry to take steps to create a worth-while industry in this State, as should there be any variation in the subsidy at the end of that time then only the efficient dairy farmers would be able to carry on in production." In the light of this situation I think it becomes increasingly obvious that some form of inquiry is necessary to review all the aspects of dairying in their proper perspective.

I could give details of the many suggestions that have been made to aid the dairying industry, but I feel it is outside the province of the motion. The first step is for the problem as it exists to be evaluated by an authority which is competent to do so.

I do not wish to dwell at length on the prevailing conditions in the apple industry because my colleague from Collie will do so. I content myself by simply reading a rather significant report.

The *Manjimup and Warren Times* published the following comments by Mr. C. R. Moore, a growers' representative on the Apple and Pear Board:—

The Australian apple industry was in dire need of some financial support . . .

Mr. Moore said the fruit industry had never approached the Government before for financial aid, except in 1933 when Mt. Barker growers suffered a bad loss.

Then only 10 growers applied for assistance and were granted it. This time the whole industry needed help.

These remarks were echoed by several of the speakers in the Address-in-Reply debate, particularly by my border brother, the member for Blackwood. A number of manifestations and expressions of concern in the south-west and great southern areas have already been made by producers.

Farmers are a race and are not given to calling or attending meetings, yet, in this particular year, six meetings have already been held. Obviously there must be some cause.

On the 3rd March a meeting was called by the Busselton Zone Council of the Farmers' Union, to which I have already referred. I have indicated the purpose of that motion—the 11 points that were to be presented to the executive for further presentation to this Government. The country newspapers that gave considerable space to a report of this particular meeting were considerable in number, and the reports they gave were fairly detailed. All the papers in the south-west covered that meeting.

At Denmark a three-day dairy farming seminar held for the dairy farmers of the Denmark-Albany district was called by a service club of Albany. An editorial published in *The Albany Advertiser* reads as follows:—

A seminar on the dairy farming industry, held over three days this week, served to highlight many of the problems of this important primary industry: one, which it seems is often seriously misunderstood by the public.

The editorial goes on to say—

It is true that there are some inefficient bricklayers, lawyers and even, say, politicians. It is not because some dairymen are inefficient, however, that the industry is subsidised, but because production exceeds Australian requirements and the surplus must be sold overseas in a highly competitive market.

It is not fair to say that dairy farmers are inefficient. Continuing—

Basically the problem facing dairy farmers is not that they farm inefficiently, but that lack of capital prevents them developing their properties into economic units.

Those were the thoughts of the editorial writer of *The Albany Advertiser* on that occasion.

We also find that as recently as the 19th July, a meeting of fruitgrowers was held at Bridgetown. More than 60 fruitgrowers, representative of most of the fruitgrowers' associations of the south-west, attended that meeting and were

unanimous in their recommendations in regard to Federal Government compensation.

This meeting was specifically called to discuss action that should be taken in regard to the payment of the 50c bounty which was granted by the Federal Government as a devaluation compensation. Initially this amount was granted to Tasmanian growers, but because of the Constitution it had to be granted to the other States. This bounty was to be paid to the shippers and not the growers. The meeting to which I have referred was called for the specific purpose of taking action on that situation. At that same time, much enlightening information was disseminated by the speakers and, indeed, there were a considerable number, as my colleagues who attended on that occasion well know.

A further meeting was reported in the *Manjimup and Warren Times* of the 14th August, 1968. This article refers to the 35 farmers who met at a home in Bridgetown last week and who were unanimous in their support of the proposition that the Federal Government take immediate steps to stabilise the price of all farming products, based on the cost of production, plus an adequate margin.

The farmers were convinced that many farming districts in the south-west faced an economic crisis unless urgent action was taken. A proposal that a public meeting be held at Boyup Brook, possibly on Friday, the 30th August, to which members of State and Federal Governments be invited, was strongly supported.

That meeting at Boyup Brook has become an eventuality for Saturday, the 31st August. It has been advertised in the Press, and fairly extensive invitations have been proffered to members of the public, and also to members of Parliament.

A report of a meeting to be held at Mayanup came over the radio at the end of last week containing motions which it is hoped will be presented to this meeting at Boyup Brook on Saturday next.

I would also like to make reference to a letter from the secretary of the Tingle-dale and districts branch of the Farmers' Union inviting the Minister for Agriculture to address a meeting of the Tingle-dale branch of the union to give information on the following points:—

- (1) Government policy on all types of agriculture which concern the area.
- (2) The future marketing of products.
- (3) Government policy on small farming.

I feel it is quite obvious that this is not just an isolated outburst from individual farmers. When a number of meetings of this type have been called over a diverse

area extending from Busselton, Bridgetown, Boyup Brook, Manjimup, and Mayanup, to Tingle-dale, I feel there is some firm justification for an inquiry to find out the precise nature of the alarm these people are feeling. In addition to this evidence by way of meetings, there has been an increasing appreciation over recent months of the situation.

From the various records two facts plainly emerge: Firstly, there is widespread and continuous concern at the fall in farmers' returns; and, secondly, agricultural economists, editorial writers, and the like, are becoming more vocal in their demands for a small farm policy.

Mr. L. R. Forrester, president of the Farmers' Union, sounds a warning—and indeed a warning it is—on the serious consequences of allowing farming profits to decline further. He said that if the farm economy in Western Australia remained at its present low level, the effect would be felt in every household in a year or two. He had more to say in that vein.

A letter from a Bridgetown correspondent which appeared in several of the south-west newspapers indicates that the country as a whole is still riding on the crest of a wave, but that the farming community is falling back into a state of hopelessness. The correspondent states that the only farmers who at the moment are able to meet costs are those in a few branches of the industry which have a certain amount of Government-sponsored stability in their price structure. That final remark is, I think indicative of the feelings of these people and the sense of urgency is expressed better by that writer than I could express it myself.

A small farm policy is advocated by the senior lecturer in farm management at the Institute of Agriculture. The following is a report in a newspaper of the 18th July:—

Australia should have a national small farms policy to assist people leaving the industry and to help others grow within farming, an Albany farm management conference was told last week.

The idea was outlined by the senior lecturer in farm management at the Institute of Agriculture, Dr. R. G. Mauldon.

He told the conference some low income farmers could not leave the farm.

They would suffer too much capital loss and had no other skills.

Other countries, which are more used to thinking of small farms problem than we are, have developed special policies for the poorer members of the farming community but



these policies have usually been too meagre and have come too late.

We are in the fortunate situation in this country of being able to attack this problem before it ossifies.

In the editorial of *The West Australian* of the 22nd July, this year, the following appeared:—

A nation accustomed to prosperity and expansion can no longer take the well-being of agriculture for granted.

The rural scene is one of light and shadow. Wheat and beef are in good shape—

I do not know whether we would all agree with that reference to wheat. To continue—

—wool, sugar and dairying are depressed and some of the smaller industries face the alternative of withdrawing from the export trade or reducing their surplus . . .

The editorial goes on—

Regrettable as it may be, the day of the small, uneconomic producer is disappearing. In a national sense would it matter much if sales of commodities such as eggs, fruit and honey and even butter were confined to a growing home market, provided manufacturers could be prodded to increase their export earnings? . . .

But the government could take some positive steps.

The editorial is not directing the form the policy should take for these small farms, but it is stating that we should have a policy.

I could give many further illustrations in this same vein, but I think I have already demonstrated the real fear existing with regard to the future of the farmer. The ideas I have outlined are not my own. I have merely expressed them in this House because I felt here they would do most good. An inquiry must be held into a matter as serious as this one is to the State and the economy. The Government should establish first and foremost whether this problem exists, and if it does, to what degree.

It could be that ultimately the Federal Government will have to take action in the matter, but, in my opinion, it is appropriate that a State should give the lead. It must be determined whether the small farms are to be maintained in the present farming set-up. The Government should decide whether some form of bounty or subsidy is necessary or, alternatively, whether the uneconomic units should disappear. If the Government makes the latter decision, the problem immediately becomes a sociological one because the first concern would then be the relocation of the farmers involved.

This problem would indeed be difficult because the farmers to be relocated would be without sufficient capital and would be set in their ways and have no other trade or vocation to which they could turn. In addition to the social and economic aspects of the situation, the policy of decentralisation is involved. It could possibly be asked whether or not we intend to continue with decentralisation as a policy. We do not seem to have done much to encourage it so far.

Mr. Anthony mentioned a figure of 24,000 people in one rural industry alone, so the prospect of people leaving the farms presents a very real problem. Is this to be part of the rural scene, with the consequent depopulation of the countryside to yet a further extent?

An organisation should be established to give guidance to those engaged in primary industries. By virtue of geographical and individual circumstances alone, farmers form a disorganised section of the community; that is, in terms of their activities within the industry. In other words, as soon as the return from one form of farming begins to decline the farmer immediately switches to another form. I could give as an example the switch from dairying to sheep; and many farmers today are expressing regret at having taken that step earlier. Another instance is the current overwhelming trend towards baby beef production for the small home market.

The only effective direction in these matters can come from Government sources. The prerogative of suggesting a remedy lies with a co-ordinated body of experts fully equipped with the necessary facilities to deal with every aspect of this very complex problem. It is for this reason that a Royal Commission has been suggested.

Not one country member is unaware of the circumstances within his own electorate. I remember clearly the way in which the members for Collie, Northam, Avon, Stirling, and Blackwood all spoke on this very matter during the debate on the Address-in-Reply. Each and every member indicated he was fully conversant with the problems of his electorate, and it is because of this fact that I submit the motion to the House with the confidence that it will receive the support of every country member present.

The SPEAKER: Before the honourable member resumes his seat I would point out that if he reads the motion carefully it will be seen that it is not grammatically correct. Nothing can be done now, but the paragraphs should end after paragraph (3); and paragraph (4) should become part of the body of the motion.

I refer the honourable member to chapter 17 of Standing Orders, which sets out the procedure to amend the motion. I must accept it as it is, but it does not read sense in its present form.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: Thank you for your direction, Mr. Speaker.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Nalder (Minister for Agriculture).

*House adjourned at 10.11 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 29th August, 1968

The SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS (30): ON NOTICE

#### HILLS TRANSPORT

##### *Timetable*

1. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the proposed timetable, to be used in the co-ordinated public transport system for servicing the hills area and based on Midland, available for public use and consideration?
- (2) If not, when will it be available so those who are desirous of patronising the service will be able to make suitable arrangements?
- (3) Has a firm date been made for the official opening of the system?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Public rail timetables will be available two weeks prior to introduction of the new service on the 7th October, 1968.
- (3) The official opening ceremony will take place on Tuesday, the 8th October, 1968.

#### MOTOR VEHICLES

##### *Inspections*

2. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) In view of the drastically serious incidence of road accidents, and the high percentage attributable to vehicle and mechanical defects, when is it anticipated an annual compulsory inspection scheme for motor vehicles is likely to be introduced in the metropolitan area?
- (2) Has the Police Department any control over this vexed problem in so far as the country shires are concerned?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (1) The implementation of the scheme has been delayed pending the acquisition of suitable sites for inspection centres. At this stage, it is not possible to say when the scheme will be started. Negotiations to secure suitable sites are still being pursued.
- (2) No.

### FISHING

#### *Mandurah Estuary*

3. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Has any fish research been conducted in the Mandurah estuary waters? If so, what was the nature of the research?
- (2) How important does the department regard the Mandurah estuary waters for commercial fishing?
- (3) Besides administering the Fisheries Act and carrying out some research, in what way does the department assist south-west fishermen?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) In 1941 Dr. G. L. Kesteven published a paper on the conservation of the mullet catch in estuarine waters.
- (b) In 1957 Professor J. M. Thompson published the following papers:—
  - (i) The size at maturity and spawning times of some Western Australian estuarine fishes.
  - (ii) The food of Western Australian estuarine fish.
- (c) Crab research is now in progress.
- (2) The Mandurah estuary provides a very substantial portion of fresh fish for the metropolitan area.
- (3) Conservation measures for the control and management of the fisheries.

#### *Research Expenditure*

4. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) What amount was spent by the Fisheries Department in research on fish for the years of 1966 and 1967?
- (2) What was the nature of this research?
- (3) Has any research been done in the waters south of Fremantle; if so, where and when?