

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

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

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

Amendment to Motion

I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

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

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Bickerton.

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 4th August, 1966

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

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE ROADS

Kimberley Districts: Expenditure

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

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

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

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

The question related to main roads funds.

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

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

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

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

MINBALUP AND SOUTH KENSINGTON OCCUPATIONAL CENTRES

Transport and Subsidy Arrangements for Children

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

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

will the Education Department make to ensure the safety of these children whilst crossing highways or roads?

- (b) what provision will be made to ensure that the children travel on the correct bus or rail transport and alight at their correct destination?
- (5) Why is it necessary to alter the existing transport arrangements for these children?
- (6) Is it considered that any benefit, financial or otherwise, at all, will be derived from the altered procedure?
- (7) Is the department aware that a great number of these children suffer from serious disabilities which, amongst other things, preclude them from reading signs, crossing roads, or catching their correct transport?
- (8) Have the parents of these unfortunate children been approached regarding the desirability of changing the existing arrangements, and if so, what was their reaction to the proposal?
- (9) Do the specialised teachers at these centres, and the Slow Learning Children's Group of W.A. (Inc.), agree with the new proposal?
- (10) Why is it considered necessary to place additional strain and anxiety on the parents by insisting that their children use public transport to attend the centres?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) 21 children (all of whom attend South Kensington School) out of a total of 160 children involved will use public transport.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) (a) and (b) Each individual child is fully briefed on what he must do in regard to both these matters. Only the most capable children are permitted to use public transport.
- (5) Primarily the changes are for the purpose of developing in the children more independence and responsibility, but opportunity was also taken to provide a better transport service by revising the routes.
- (6) The benefits will be mainly in providing better training for the children but there will also be some saving in costs.
- (7) Yes, but no child suffering from serious disabilities will be asked to use public transport.
- (8) Yes. The majority of parents are in favour.
- (9) Yes.

- (10) Children are permitted to use public transport only if the parents agree.

NOISE IN MINING INDUSTRY

Survey and Tests

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

- (1) In reference to the Occupational Noise and Hearing Loss Survey being conducted at the mines in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, and at Norseman—
 - (a) how many shafts have been visited; and
 - (b) how many men at each shaft presented themselves for the test in the categories of—
 - (i) surface; and
 - (ii) underground employees?
- (2) How many of each of the surface and underground employees who were tested were found to have a hearing impairment due to noise?
- (3) What steps in hearing conservation have been taken?
- (4) When is it anticipated that the survey will be completed?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) (a) 16 shafts.
- (b) Approximate number of men presenting for examination at each mine is as follows:—

Gold Mines of Kalgoorlie (Aust) Ltd.:	
Surface—32.	
Underground—109.	
North Kalgurli (1912) Ltd.:	
Surface—25.	
Underground—36.	
Great Boulder Gold Mines Ltd.:	
Surface—69.	
Underground—59.	
Lake View & Star Ltd.:	
Surface—85.	
Underground—140.	
Norseman Gold Mines N.L.:	
Surface—12.	
Underground—13.	
Central Norseman Gold Corp. N.L.:	
Surface—21.	
Underground—72.	
- (2) These figures are not available and a great deal of research is still needed. It is hoped that a report will be available soon.
- (3) (a) Sound levels at underground and surface workings have been estimated, and recommendations made to attenuate dangerous noise levels, but the nature of the work and the type of machines in use frequently make this impracticable.

- (b) All men, where indicated, have been fitted with personal ear protectors.
- (c) A nursing sister has been engaged part-time to continue the hearing conservation programme in the goldfields, supplemented by periodical visits of a team from Perth.
- (4) Hearing conservation is a continuous programme requiring follow-up of men already fitted with ear protectors, and the gradual inclusion of other miners exposed to excessive noise, especially entrants to the industry.

TAPE RECORDING BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Conversations with Public

3. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Justice:

What Government departments are using tape or other recording machines for the purpose of recording conversations between members of the public and Government officials?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Agriculture: Recording interviews for publicity purposes.

Child Welfare: In counselling work at Riverbank and Longmore institutions.

Crown Law: Occasional use in briefing witnesses.

Mental Health Services: In counselling work with patients, both individually and for group therapy purposes.

BOATS

Survey and Manning Regulations: Life Rafts

4. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna:

Arising out of the amended survey and manning regulations of the Harbour and Light Department made pursuant to the Western Australian Marine Act, 1948, and which became effective on the 4th November, 1965, and the subsequent circular issued to licensed fishing boat owners setting out the requirements and equipment to be installed before a Certificate of Survey is issued—

- (1) Will the Minister explain in detail the meaning of the paragraph headed "Buoyancy," which requires one self-inflating or rigid life raft capable of supporting the full number of persons on board, as part of the required equipment for—
 - (a) boats under 15 tons; and
 - (b) boats over 15 tons?

- (2) What are the trade names of the accepted self-inflating and rigid life rafts, and supporting capacities under—
 - (a) State; and
 - (b) Commonwealth regulations?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) As a result of the Royal Commission the regulations for the safety of fishing boats were amended and many more regulations were added. As a guide to fishermen who possibly were not very clear on the regulations themselves, the department issued a circular to all fishermen setting out the requirements for their various vessels. These were put forward in two sections, one under 15 tons gross and one over 15 tons gross, because certain regulations applied differently to these two sizes. This circular was put out under various headings such as anchors, chains, lights, pumps, etc., also for clarification, and one heading was "Buoyancy" which was to indicate the life raft or boat that was required for supporting people after their boat had been lost. Actually under this heading the requirements for both sizes were the same. The "Buoyancy" section said that every vessel shall carry one self-inflating life raft or a rigid life raft capable of supporting the full number of persons on board.

- (2) (a) State:

Self-inflating—

RFD. and Beaufort: Supporting capacity—2 to 24 persons.

Rigid Life Raft—

Fairway Buoyant Apparatus Mark 2: Supporting capacity—2 persons.

- (b) Commonwealth:

Self-inflating—

RFD, Beaufort, and Elliott: Supporting capacity—2 to 24 persons.

Rigid Life Raft: Nil.

There are many other types of self-inflating life rafts. The reason they are not approved is because there are no means within the State of testing and repairing these life rafts should anything happen to them, such as perishing, or their being punctured by a sharp instrument. The makers sell these rafts only on the condition that there is an annual test, otherwise they will not guarantee them.

SEWERAGE

Doubleview-Scarborough District: Extension

5. The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON asked the Minister for Mines:

On completion of the sewerage mains in the Glendalough area within the Shire of Perth, has financial provision been made to extend the mains to the Doubleview-Scarborough district?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The sewer from the pumping station at Glendalough will be extended in a north-west direction to a point west of Sundercombe Street to serve the industrial premises *en route*. Financial provision for this work to commence has been made in the loan proposals for 1966-67.

The sewerage of the Scarborough-Doubleview area is the subject of a separate scheme at present under investigation.

ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Geriatrics Ward: Provision

6. The Hon. J. M. THOMSON asked the Minister for Health:

Will the Minister inform the House what is the position in regard to the provision of a geriatrics ward at the Albany Regional Hospital?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

The commencement of construction of this ward is included in the provisional loan programme for this financial year and private architects will be commissioned shortly.

DISTRICT ALLOWANCES

Principle behind Payment, and Variation in Derby

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

- (1) What is the principle behind, and the purpose of, district allowance payments to employees in various parts of the State?
- (2) Will the Minister explain in detail the justification for, and the reason why, some Government employees at Derby are paid \$6 per week district allowance, while others are paid \$8.60 per week district allowance?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The 1958 decision of the Arbitration Court determined that the payment of district allowance in the northern areas was to compensate workers for the increased cost of living, climatic disadvantages, and isolation.

- (2) The district allowance of \$6.00 per week is a flat rate payable to both married and single wages employees. Officers under the Public Service Act are paid \$8.65 per week to married officers and half that allowance for single officers.

The allowances paid to public servants were determined by the Public Service Commissioner in 1964 following negotiations with the Civil Service Association.

District allowance to wages employees applies to both Government and private workers under a number of awards of the Industrial Commission, and any amendment of the allowance is a matter for the Industrial Commission to determine.

OSBORNE PARK HOSPITAL

Increase in Bed Accommodation

8. The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON asked the Minister for Health:

Owing to the rapid increase of population in the northern metropolitan districts, is it intended to increase the number of beds provided at the Osborne Park Hospital during this financial year?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

Yes. It is expected that tenders will be called in a few weeks' time for the construction of an additional 36 beds to this hospital.

SUPPLY BILL

Standing Orders Suspension

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.51 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended so as to enable a Supply Bill to have precedence each day before the Address-in-Reply, and to be passed through all stages at any one sitting.

Question put and passed.

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is the customary Bill introduced early in each session to assure availability of funds to carry on the services of the State.

The estimated requirements from consolidated revenue for the first three months of this financial year amount to \$42,000,000. General Loan Funds of \$14,000,000 are also sought. These amounts exceed last year's by \$2,000,000 in each case. Increased amounts are needed to meet the current higher cost of Government services and their general expansion.

Provision is made this year for an issue of \$5,000,000 from the Public Account. This will enable the Treasurer to make temporary advances as required. This exceeds the provision made last year by \$1,000,000.

Details of proposed transactions under both the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan Fund will become available to members when the Estimates are presented in another place.

It is as yet too early to give firm estimates of prospects in respect of the current year. Rising budgetary costs, however, particularly as the result of substantial increases in salary and wage payments, pose problems in all States. The course of events in New South Wales and Victoria is reflected in our budgetary position owing to our being a claimant State.

The standards used by the Commonwealth Grants Commission will no doubt reflect certain financial difficulties in both New South Wales and Victoria and this is not expected to lessen our difficulty.

However, it is expected that the deficit of \$4,697,000 incurred here for 1964-65 will be recouped to the State during this current year. This will be known, I am sure, when the Federal Budget is brought down shortly.

Last year there was a final deficit of only \$10,000. Our final budgetary position will nevertheless not be known until August, 1967, when the Grants Commission will have completed its analysis of the accounts for that year. I might add that the reason is the adjustment is always two years behind.

It may be expected that by the time the Estimates for this current year are presented by the Treasurer in another place, a clearer indication of prospects for 1966-67 will be possible. Members will then have the opportunity of obtaining any desired detailed information in respect of anticipated revenue and expenditure from the Ministers controlling the various departments.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [2.55 p.m.]: This is a traditional Bill that comes forward at this time each session. It is necessary to provide funds for the service and operation of the State and there is no intention on my part to delay its passage through the House. As a matter of interest I decided to take out the figure for the first Supply Bill introduced into this House in 1946, and it totalled £2,700,000. In 1956 the figure had grown to £19,000,000; and, keeping the figure in pounds, in 1966, it is £30,500,000. This goes to show the great advance made within the State and just how big is the business of running a Government.

I would like to take this opportunity to further a thought that was prompted by an interjection—a helpful one—from the Leader of the House when he

asked me, when I was talking about a dual session of Parliament, how I thought this could be done.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You were talking to me about it.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I thought afterwards that it would be advisable for me to present my thoughts on this matter to the House, not necessarily as a blue print, but to show that two sessions are possible and that there would be advantages if we had them.

In the first instance, I feel there is a trend of thought throughout the State in favour of two sessions of Parliament. I believe we are unconsciously moving towards that line of thought when we see instances of the Government holding over the Strata Titles Bill for deeper consideration by members, together with a Bill dealing with third party commitments—which was held over for the same reason—rather than dealing with such important legislation in the one session of Parliament.

I think the two sessions should be within the financial year rather than the calendar year. So the two sessions would operate during the period from the 1st July to the 30th June. I would think the first session would be the major session, with an opening day similar to that which we have at present, and commencing, say, in July or August, depending upon the desire of the Government. It would have an opening ceremony similar to that which we have now and would be the major session of the two. It would commence with the Address-in-Reply, continue to the conclusion of the Estimates, and finish, as we do now, with an appropriation Bill.

I think the first session would have its qualifications as against the general session which we now have. In the first instance, no sitting would be later than 11 p.m., except for urgency motions, or for an order of the day for which Standing Orders had been suspended by the Government. Standing Orders generally would cease to be suspended for anything but supply or for motions of urgency. In other words, no ordinary legislation would be dealt with by the suspension of Standing Orders, and we would not have a repetition of the situation two sessions ago when, after the suspension of Standing Orders, some 70 Bills were dealt with.

The next important point regarding the first session would be the setting of a deadline for new business, the date to be set by the Government.

To give concrete thought to the proposal I would suggest that by the 31st October all business on the notice paper would be dealt with and brought to a conclusion. The Government would have the right to introduce any further legislation, but this business would be adjourned at the second reading stage for

consideration during the second session. That is to say, if a further 20 Bills were introduced after the deadline for normal Government business, those Bills would be clearly explained—as is the case at the moment—and then adjourned until the later session. In essence, business would be carried forward to the second session but all business being dealt with at the deadline date would be completed by the Government in the first session.

Materially, there would not be very much difference between the proposed first session of Parliament and the present one session of Parliament, except that we would not be required to rush legislation. The second session would be a minor one and would commence on a date suitable to the Government. I would suggest that it should commence about mid-March. We could then move immediately into the completion of the Bills already introduced during the first session.

The Government would have the right to introduce new measures of urgency and to pursue such measures to a conclusion. I would assume that only urgent matters would be introduced during this session. An advantage would be that matters such as the iron ore agreements could be introduced and dealt with sooner than has been the case in the past.

Private members' business would be attended to during the second session. This is similar to what is done at present, except that the Government would, of necessity, have to place a deadline on the introduction of such business.

The second session would, of course, be much shorter than the first session but it would have the effect of completing all the legislation that was introduced, in the current financial year. The Government would move into its new financial year on exactly the same basis as it has in the past. We would be given a longer period of time to attend to the business of the State and honourable members could go more into the details of legislation, rather than leave the detailed work to the Ministers.

Members would be called upon to spend additional time attending Parliament, but I think the disadvantages would be far outweighed by the advantages. I see a difficulty in the possibility of non-deferment of legislation at the end of the second session. I feel there should be a minor and a major session, and there should be no carry-over from one financial period to the next. I see a difficulty also in defining the type of legislation that should come forward during the first session. It might be suggested that some restriction be placed on the Government. However, I think this problem would be theoretical rather than practical.

The greatest difficulty would be during an election year. It has been the custom to hold general elections during February or March. Perhaps we could forgo the second session in an election year; or alter-

natively, have the second session in January or early February.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In the middle of electioneering?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: There is nothing to stop the Government having the election in April or May, and so hold the minor session, of short duration, earlier.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am not too sure about May; I think the Government might run out of time before May.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I do not really know. There must be a limiting date, but what it should be I do not know. I do not know how far back we could actually go for a commencing date for the second session.

I do feel there would be many advantages derived from two sessions of Parliament. There would be no interference in any way with the right of the Government to introduce a Bill and complete that Bill in the year under appropriation, as is the case now. A new Government would have the same opening procedure and policy administration as it has always had. More time would be available for members to study legislation and become fully informed on the subject being discussed.

In turn, members would become a better-informed media for their electors. It would be possible to contact interested public bodies and so form a closer liaison between those bodies and members for the study of the legislation being submitted by the Government.

So I feel that two sessions of Parliament would have a great moral effect and would do away with the long periods of inertia which depreciate the goodwill that might exist in the minds of the public with regard to the functions of Parliament. For that reason alone I feel there is a good case. I think the suggestion of two sessions of Parliament has great possibilities and would be most advantageous to the State.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [3.8 p.m.]: Like my leader I also support the passing of this measure. However, in view of an answer given to a question I asked this afternoon, I will devote a little time to the matter of wrong information given by the Harbour and Light Department with respect to life rafts to be carried on fishing boats.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Information given to them or by them?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Wrong information given to the fishermen, and also wrong information given to the Minister, which was in the reply to my question this afternoon.

In April-May of this year—as correctly stated by the Minister—the Harbour and Light Department, for the convenience of fishermen, issued a circular—a copy of which I have with me. This circular sets out the requirements and the standard of all gear that should be carried in all craft

before a certificate of sea worthiness can be given.

The subject matter of my speech is buoyancy. Under the heading of "Buoyancy" in the circular, it is required that each boat shall be fitted with one self-inflating or rigid life raft capable of supporting the full number of persons on board the craft. My argument is based on the word "support", and the definition of this word as set out in *Nuttall's Standard Dictionary*, is as follows:—

The act of upholding or sustaining; that which upholds; that which maintains life; maintenance; subsistence; assistance.

And so it goes on. I think I have made the point that nowhere in that definition does it mention the word "carry". It merely states, "the act of upholding or sustaining; that which upholds".

I now wish to point out that, in accordance with the circular issued to them, the fishermen, acting in good faith, have gone to the trouble of putting their boats in order. At this stage, also, I would like to interpolate by saying that one of the best manufactured articles in the world is manufactured in Fremantle. I refer to the Fairway Mark II Life Raft. This life raft has the following particulars:—

Length—42 in.

Breadth—42 in.

Depth—12 in.

Width across top and bottom section—8 in.

Weight with grab lines—48 lb.

Colour—British standard yellow.

Cubic capacity—7.33 ft.

Buoyancy—504 lb.

Support capacity—12 persons.

In referring to the buoyancy of this float, under the standard that is necessary before a certificate of approval is issued by the Commonwealth department, this life raft has to support 504 lb. whilst being towed at the rate of 6 knots.

For this Fairway Life Raft, Mark II, a certificate of approval, No. 220, was issued by the Commonwealth Department of Shipping and Transport on the 22nd January, 1966. A similar certificate was granted on the 10th December, 1964, by the South Australian Harbours Board and, in this State, a certificate was granted by the Harbour and Light Department on the 11th September, 1964. In Victoria, a certificate of approval was granted by the Marine Board on the 23rd November, 1964, and in New South Wales a similar certificate was issued by the department in authority on the 8th September, 1964.

I have in front of me several photostat copies which set out all the information concerning this life raft and they can be examined by any honourable member of this House if he so desires. I merely wish to emphasise that this life raft has passed the regulations of all States, and also the Commonwealth regulations, to support a maximum of 12 persons. According to the circular sent out by the Harbour and Light Department in this State the requirements

were that every craft must carry a life raft capable of supporting all persons on board.

The complaint I am now making is on behalf of one who is, perhaps, one of the best fishermen in this State. I understand he started in the industry at about six years of age on his father's craft. He has had 40 years of experience and, in saying that, I am being conservative. Only during the past few years has he switched from sail to power on his craft. So he is a man with vast fishing experience who has never had any mishaps and is not likely to have one.

Being most meticulous with his craft, and most careful concerning the welfare of his crew and himself, at the cost of £66 he purchased a Fairway Mark II Life Raft and had it installed on his boat. When his boat came up for survey he was told that the life raft did not comply with the regulations as it was capable of carrying only two persons. However, nowhere in the regulations is it stated that any person must be out of the water completely when supported by a life raft. The word that is used is "support". That is, the life raft must support people.

I think it will be of interest to members if I read the correspondence that was written on the 7th July, 1966, to the Manager of the Harbour and Light Department, Fremantle. It is as follows:—

Dear Sir,

re: L. F. B. Sebastiana
Survey & Manning Regulations.

I refer to the sheet summarising the above regulations issued by your Department earlier this year.

These regulations have been issued to all fishermen. Apparently the object is to let fishermen know what gear and equipment will be necessary to allow fishing boats to meet requirements of your Department's survey.

I now refer to the regulation under the heading "Buoyancy" on the sheet which reads "One self inflating or rigid life raft capable of supporting the full number of persons aboard." I understand also that on the 11th of September you wrote to P.M. Products advising it that the Mark II rigid life-raft was approved by your department for use in fishing boats.

Acting on the faith of the regulations I purchased one of these rafts. The raft is stamped on the side with the mark of the Department of Shipping and Transport and branded as having the capacity of 12 persons, I understand that a number of other fishermen also acting in good faith have purchased similar rafts.

The Department's Chief Surveyor now informs me that the raft is not suitable. He informs me that the raft is required to "carry" the full number of persons on board. I have a crew of four.

As pointed out above the raft I have is branded as having a capacity

of twelve. The regulation requires that it "support" the crew. It does not say "carry". I feel that the regulation as written is reasonable. To interpret as the Chief Surveyor has is unreasonable and inaccurate. If the Department adheres to its apparent interpretation of the regulation then I and my fellow fishermen have been misled.

I am asking that you reverse the ruling of your Chief Inspector and instruct him to approve the raft. If you feel that you should not do this I would be pleased if you would refer this whole matter to the Minister. That fisherman was anxious to obtain a quick reply to his letter because he intended to leave on an overseas holiday, which is not relevant to this matter.

However, on the 28th July, 1966, the Harbour and Light Department replied to him in this vein—

I have to acknowledge yours of the 7th instant on the above subject which has been given very serious consideration.

The sheet referred to was issued as a guide to inform fishermen of new equipment required on their vessels as a result of recommendations of the Royal Commission and was not intended as a copy of the regulations. That does not appear to be too clear, does it? The department issued a sheet of instructions for the guidance of fishermen, but it is not to be interpreted as if it were a copy of the regulations!

The Hon. J. Dolan: A couple of bob each way.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes. I now quote a further paragraph from this letter from the department—

The letter of approval to P.M. Products in respect to their Mark II raft was given following approval by the Department of Shipping and Transport of this equipment as "Buoyant Apparatus" capable of supporting 12 persons.

Here we learn that it is capable of supporting 12 persons.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Is that in the letter?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is not in the letter. It is in the answer which was given by the Minister today. His answer was—

The "Buoyancy" section said that every vessel shall carry one self-inflating life raft or a rigid life raft capable of supporting the full number of persons on board.

Rigid life raft—

Fairway Buoyant Apparatus Mark 2. Supporting capacity —2 persons.

Yet the department declared on the 11th September, 1964, that it was capable of supporting 12 persons.

I quote further from the letter to which I was referring—

This department's approval was granted under the same terms as the Department of Shipping and Transport and the last paragraph read "not to be regarded as taking the place of inflatable life rafts", and as rigid life-rafts are an alternative to inflatable life-rafts, cannot take the place of rigid life-rafts either.

The recommendation of the Royal Commission was that rigid life-rafts should support people out of the water as a protection against biting fish. The Fairway Buoyant Apparatus Mark II complies with the requirements as to buoyancy and area etc, of a rigid life-raft for two persons and has been approved as such. "Buoyant apparatus" is required to have buoyancy equal to 32 lb. per person whereas a "rigid life-raft" is required to have buoyancy equal to 200 lb. per person.

It is our opinion that the Department has not misled you but you may have been misled by others.

I regret that I cannot reverse the ruling of my officer and instruct him to approve of the raft other than for two persons.

First of all the fishermen are told that they are required to have something with a capacity to support the total number of people on their craft. They have been spending money in good faith, but then the equipment is rejected. What a ridiculous situation this department has got into! I cannot recall—I have not had time to check on this matter—any recommendation of the Royal Commission which states that a fishing boat must carry a craft which is suitable for accommodating all the occupants and crew. It has recommended the carrying of floating material, because if a fishing vessel of some 40 feet were to be wrecked on a reef, or to capsize in rough seas, a dinghy would be completely useless. If a 40-foot vessel cannot survive the elements, then neither can a 12-foot or 14-foot dinghy. Further, it would be impractical to carry a dinghy of that size on board.

I am asking the Minister to make every effort to have this decision reversed, because the writer of the letter has asked that the matter be referred to the Minister. Nothing in the reply of the Harbour and Light Department has intimated that the matter had been referred to the Minister. The department did not even acknowledge the concluding paragraph of the letter which asked, if the decision was not reversed, for the matter to be referred to the Minister. The department further misled that person by the ambiguity of the reply.

We find that these people have spent sums of money to equip their boats to bring them up to standard, only to have the equipment rejected by the department,

simply because it changed its mind after having issued directions as to what was required.

I cannot accept that, and I do not expect the fishermen to accept it. It is the duty of the department to be consistent, and it should reverse its decision forthwith, and for more than one reason. In these days we see large newspaper headlines about new industries, big industries, and foreign capital coming into Western Australia; but this person, who has been manufacturing this item of equipment to which I have been referring, has been thwarted. This item is up to world standard, and the lifebuoys and other forms of lifesaving equipment which he manufactures in Fremantle are sold in Fremantle, and are being installed in overseas liners. This equipment is regarded as being up to world standard, and everywhere in Australia fishermen are purchasing it for their craft. Recently an order was received from the New Hebrides, and the equipment has been sent.

Because of the ridiculous attitude adopted by the Harbour and Light Department, a craft with a crew of three or four will not be able to use this equipment as it has been ruled to be out of order. Yet in every other State it is considered to be capable of supporting 12 persons. What a ridiculous state of affairs this is! The person concerned will be forced out of business if the department persists with its ridiculous ruling.

Let us compare the cost of an inflatable life raft—the type mentioned by the Minister in his reply today. The cost ranges from £140 to £160. This rigid type life raft is indestructible. It can be cut in half and it will still float. It is ideal for use around reefs. If an inflatable life raft is jagged on a rock half of it will deflate, and if it bumps against the rock a second time the other half will deflate and the raft will then sink. Yet in this case we have an article which is well made and which has been proven, but the manufacturer is to be put out of business, virtually.

This man is an engineer by trade and he has done everything possible to ensure safety. He manufactures a survival kit, which has not been recommended by the department because the requirements include bandages, mercurochrome, and other articles, sufficient to sustain the people on the boat. I have in my hand a can of emergency drinking water. Members might be alarmed when I tell them the price of this but the can is made of special steel, and it is vacuum packed. It has a date stamp and it is capable of withstanding any type of conditions for a period of three years. The cost is 4s. 6d. for the can, as against 7s. 6d. for the imported product.

He has gone to no end of trouble to establish his business with his own capital, and it is Western Australian-owned. Yet we find the department is putting him out

of business. I have a very firm conviction about this. So the Minister for Works will not have a persecution complex in view of the actions I took against another department—actions which were agreed to by this House—I say there are many things wrong with the Harbour and Light Department in its supervision of small craft; and it is my intention, in the next session of Parliament, if something is not done in this department to ensure greater efficiency to ask this House to agree to a full inquiry being made into the department. We cannot just let things drift on as they are. Unfortunately, everything I do concerning the Minister for Works is criticised by him. He takes it as being something political, which it is not. My intentions are sincere. I like to know that departments are run as they should be, and people are not misled as this department is misleading them at present. So much for that subject.

Today I gave notice of a question I intend to ask at the next sitting, and my purpose for mentioning the matter now is to acquaint members with the situation before the Minister for Mines answers the question. I refer to the underwater blasting that is taking place in Cockburn Sound at present. The first communication from the Shire of Kwinana to the Minister was dated the 12th May, 1966, when a telegram was sent. The next day the telegram was confirmed in writing and the shire outlined its objections to the damage which was being suffered by the people in the Naval Base-Kwinana area. In all I have here 30 objections which were sent in. The last one I received on the 23rd. May.

A company is carrying out dredging at Cockburn in order to allow larger ships to use the B.P. Refinery jetty and the facilities for the new nitrogenous super works being constructed. A large amount of rock has to be removed in order to widen the channel. No one is objecting to the channel. The shire, the residents, and I have no objection, as I will prove in a moment when I quote some of the letters which have been received. They all say that it is progress and they are in favour of it. However, when 30 people have their homes damaged and cannot gain satisfaction with regard to compensation, it is a serious matter.

Although the first communication was dated the 13th May, and tests have been made, the engineer's report was to the effect that no damage should be suffered by the amount of explosives which should be used each time.

Early in June, at the request of the shire council, Mr. Lavery and I went to the shire office, a building which is several years old but which is in very good condition—almost new. We inspected the building and found that the plaster, and the mortar between each horizontal brick had vertical cracks. I am referring to the bricks underneath the window ledges and above the doors and archways. I hope members can understand what I mean.

We visited another public building after we had gained permission to do so, and I asked the person who showed us through whether the building had any cracks. He said that it had hundreds and that it was, in fact, crazy with cracks. He took us through one doorway and I said, "That is a beautiful one up there." He then told me that that particular crack had not been there the day before. It was some 4 feet long and I would say that near the ceiling the plaster had opened up half an inch. Yet he claimed that the crack had not been there the previous day.

Mr. Lavery went with me on those inspections and then I carried out further inspections of homes on my own and found them to be damaged. I will read extracts from some of the letters I received. I do not want to weary the House with all the details, but I think members should know the situation because we passed legislation here which ratified the agreement which is responsible for this work being done. It is the poor householders and the ratepayers who have to bear the consequences. These are some of the comments—

These blastings are causing me some concern in case of damage to my house, by ceilings cracking and possibly broken windows.

I have been in touch with my Insurance Company and they will pay me for any damage caused by the blasting and will recover any expenses from the Department concerned.

Please note that I am not the only one complaining, if the charges were restricted and properly supervised there would be no cause for alarm.

We witnessed some of the explosions. Some were just a rumble as the explosions were approximately four miles from where we were sitting at the time. I do not know whether the two craft were exploding charges simultaneously or whether double the amount was being used on the more difficult rock, but all the windows in the building virtually rattled out of their frames. I further quote—

I wish to draw your attention to Channel blasting in Cockburn Sound. You are aware of the nuisance caused by the reverberations, and in my opinion they are steadily getting worse, and definitely more frequent, every window in my home rattles, with possible breakages, also there are cracks evident on the outside wall, facing the Sound.

A further one—

I would like to bring to your attention the disturbance which the blasting for the channel has caused in my home. The Council has expressed concern in regards to the damage which may be caused in Medina, but I feel sure Naval Base could be regarded as equally if not closer. Also how would one stand in regard to damages claims as the fluorescent tube has blown and the TV has developed the shakes both since the

commencement of the blasting and I feel that a window is also in danger of being cracked.

Here is another one—

I notice a number of cracks are appearing down the plasterboard and you can inspect any time you like.

I want to know if I have any redress for compensation of damage done by blasting.

And another one—

Twice in the last three months I have had to have the cornices replastered where they have broken away from the ceiling.

Three walls have cracked and a bricklayer employed to fill the cracks. These are now opening up again.

While blasting operations are in progress the whole house shakes and windows and doors rattle.

Can the Council give any assistance, as I am not the only one affected in this area.

Another four inspections were carried out by someone else. I could go on because there have been 30 different complaints but nothing has been done for those concerned, despite the fact that the shire council first made requests on the 13th May. All that has been done is that an engineer has been there, but his report does not assist in any way because he claims that the shocks are not sufficient to cause the damage.

In connection with underwater blasting at Cockburn Sound, the Shire of Kwinana advised me on the 3rd June 1966, that it felt there was need for some discussion on this matter, and suggested that if I was anywhere near Medina within the next two days, I might find time to call in and see its officers. They said that the position was most difficult at that time, particularly in the light of the most recent comments of the State Mining Engineer, Mr. E. E. Brisbane; namely, "that no damage to structures is likely to result."

If the Government does not hurry up and do something about this, there will not be any structures which have a resale value left. I am not saying these structures are going to fall down but that their value must depreciate.

The insurance assessor did go through this area several weeks ago in order to have a look at the position. He advised the people in the area that, as a result of his assessment of the damage caused to their houses, his company was going to give up its policies with the dredging company—his company was not going to renew them.

Mr. Shaw, who owns a property in that area, wrote to Dredging Industries (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. to lodge a claim and a complaint. The reply from Dredging Industries (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., dated the 30th June, 1966, is worth noting. It reads—

Reference is made to your letter of 19th May, 1966, in which you complain of damage to your property, etc. In

reply, we would advise that the utmost care is being observed in connection with our blasting operations in Cockburn Sound. In order to determine the extent of vibrations caused by blasting we made arrangements with the Department of Mines to conduct a series of checks with a sensitive vibragraph, this being the instrument used to record the amplitude of vibrations. These checks were made in a number of locations within an extensive radius of the point of discharge.

I will correct that with "in an extensive radius of the point of discharge." The letter continues—

In every instance without exception the amplitude was found to be substantially below that at which damage would occur to a reasonably well built structure. In view of the foregoing, we are unable to accept any liability for the alleged damage to which you refer.

How would any member feel about this, particularly Mr. Abbey and Mr. Jones? These honourable members are closer to Rockingham than most of us. I feel sure that Rockingham is going to be affected in the same way as Naval Base and Kwinana have been affected.

I have, in fact, asked questions of the Minister today to try to bring this matter to a head but, before these questions are answered, I should like to take this opportunity to say that we are not blinded by the science of engineers who say that no damage should take place. It is apparent, and it has been proved by 30 letters to the shire council, that damage has taken place. Even the homes belonging to the shire council, including the one occupied by the shire clerk, have been affected and yet their objections are not listed here. Although damage has been done to their property, neither the public building complaint nor the shire council's complaint has been listed in the 30 letters referred to.

Therefore, I call on the Government—irrespective of what answer may be given to my questions; and I believe they will be answered in good faith—to do something forthwith to remedy this damage and to compensate fully these people for the damage which has occurred to their homes.

With these remarks, Mr. President, I support the Bill.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.4 p.m.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [4.4 p.m.]: I wish to take this opportunity to express some views in connection with road works in the north. Roads have been a hobby of mine ever since I came into this House and, with your permission, Sir, I wish to read what I had to say in the first speech I made in this House on the 16th August, 1950. When I read this speech again I wondered how I had made it because it certainly read much easier and better than it sounded to me when I made it.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That goes for all of us.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: However, this is what I had to say—

I believe that the Great Northern Highway, which is the road which runs right up the coast serving all the ports should be made a good all-weather road and, as a result, quite a lot of tourist traffic would follow. I believe that our 2,000 miles of coastline, which stretches right up round the north-west cape and then north-eastwards to Cape Londonderry and Wyndham, would provide many attractions for tourists. The tourist trade is a profitable one for small businesses, but it has a more profitable side than that because it leads to the opening up of the country. Provide roads and people will follow. That has been the experience elsewhere, and the north would prove no exception. Under existing conditions, however, the north is shut off and is practically unknown.

That, of course, was in 1950. The McLarty-Watts Government, which was then in power, obviously did not take any notice of my views because not one splash of bitumen was used in the area of which I spoke. Because of that I thought the Government of the day had some difficulty in looking further than the South-West Land Division—at least in respect of roads. However, in 1953 there was a change of Government and from that time until 1959 a good deal of bitumen road was laid in our north-west towns and on the North-West Coastal Highway. The road was sealed between Carnarvon and Northampton—some 250 miles of it I think, from memory, and the last link, some 15 or 16 miles, was completed by the present Government when it came into office in 1959.

Since that time little work has been done in the north on the sealing of roads but the Government at least switched its attention to areas outside the South-West Land Division, because it started to bituminise the Eyre Highway, and is carrying on with the job of sealing the road as far as the South Australian border.

Members will recall that when a Bill similar to this was before the House at this time last year I had a lot to say in protest against this work because it meant road works elsewhere could not be proceeded with. However, I noticed in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June an article which stated that the Government had decided to continue the work of bituminising the North-West Coastal Highway beyond Carnarvon and towards Port Hedland. A promise to do that was made in 1953 by the then Liberal-Country Party Government but the work was not carried out. However, it is good to see that although some years have passed the work is to commence this financial year.

I have some serious objections to raise as regards the sealing of the Coastal Highway between Carnarvon and Roebourne.

The plan which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June last, shows that the highway is to bypass Onslow completely. In my view—and I think others hold the same opinion—it behoves the Government at least to retain a township and community in the outback instead of bypassing it and ultimately causing the closure of the town.

Onslow seems to be most unfortunate in that it has been in the path of several cyclones during the past 10 years and it has earned for itself a reputation as being an expensive town to maintain from a Government's point of view. However, cyclones do not always follow the same track, and it is possible that future cyclones will follow paths similar to those taken by other cyclones in years gone by—that is, they will strike areas further north. On many occasions Roebourne, Port Hedland, Point Samson, Broome, and Derby have suffered from the effects of cyclones. However, due to some phenomena, in recent years cyclones have centred on Onslow and for that reason this Government appears to have condemned the town altogether, and has said, "So far as Onslow is concerned it is to exist no longer."

Only two years ago a departmental committee recommended that the highway be deviated to bypass Onslow, and that the town should be moved inland. Heavens above, I do not know who the committee thought could be moved inland! The only ones who could possibly be moved by the Government would be those employed in Government departments. No private individual would move because there would be no employment for him. In the report recently made by Railways Commissioner Wayne it was suggested that Onslow should be closed as a port. If the Port of Onslow is closed the town might as well cease to exist. The eight to 10 families who are now connected with the working of the port would have to leave the town—at least eight to 10 families whose living depends directly on the port. This would have a tremendous effect on a town of that size.

I sincerely hope the Government will take a sympathetic view of the position in which Onslow is placed—certainly a more sympathetic one than it appears to be taking at the moment—and that it will seal the road into Onslow and give the people in the town an opportunity to provide for the tourists, who are now travelling in increasing numbers around Australia, and up and down our north coast. Some Eastern States tourists travel only as far as Onslow or Exmouth Gulf and then return by the same route. Others go right around Australia, while many Western Australians motor to the north-west ports and return to Perth by the same route.

Onslow offers tremendous opportunities for tourists, particularly if they are interested in fishing. It has an excellent

fresh water supply and really everything that tourists could wish for, including a wonderful climate during the winter months. It is amazing that although Onslow is only 30 miles from the first declared commercial oilfield in Western Australia, the Government seems to be keen, and even anxious to bypass the town, close it up, and leave it as a derelict township.

When I speak of an oilfield it reminds me of an occasion when I heard the present Minister for Mines (The Hon. A. F. Griffith), when he first came into this house, speaking on a motion dealing with the north-west. I remember his saying that he hoped oil would be found in the north-west—he sincerely hoped oil would be found, because that would mean a big step-up in the population. We all thought that would be the case; everybody did.

But when we were at Barrow Island only a few weeks ago—and when I say "we" I mean many members who are sitting here today and who went on the tour—a question was asked as to what would be the population of the island once it became productive. The reply given was that it would be no more than 50. We know now that it does not matter very much how much oil is found near a small town, it will not have much effect upon it from a population point of view.

I know the Minister cannot give me this information on the Bill with which we are dealing at the moment, but he will have the opportunity to do so later on in the session as he always does when he informs members on any subject about which they inquire; but I would like him to present to the Government an appeal on behalf of the north-west members, anyway, that Onslow should not be bypassed by the highway and that a section into Onslow will be sealed. Even if the shipping is terminated there will then be a good sealed road on which road transport can operate to enable it to take people into the town.

The Premier makes no bones about what is in his mind when he talks in the Press about this sealing of the highway. He said—

Though the new highway would bypass Onslow by a wider margin—

That is, by a wider margin than the existing road bypasses it now—

—it would give more reliable access to the town because it would be on higher and better ground, and would be serviceable in all weathers.

This article does not say whether the Premier expects nature to provide an all-weather road, or whether he intends to have the road sealed and made an all-weather road. Accordingly I would like the Minister to let us know something about this matter at an opportune moment. With those few remarks I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (North-East Metropolitan) [4.17 p.m.]: I do not propose to make a long speech, but I would like to touch on two subjects. I will leave the rest of what I have to say for the debate on the Address-in-Reply. Most members may have seen from the newspaper of the 2nd August that Mrs. Cordwell has returned. I spoke about this last year. She went abroad in the cause of autistic children. I was speaking to her and she had a very interesting story to tell of her travels and experiences. She informed me that Dr. Creak will be lecturing at the Princess Margaret Hospital on Tuesday, the 9th August.

There is not too much known about these children. They have been passed over as children without ability, as children who are more or less *non est*. That was the thinking in years gone by, but it is not so today. This problem is being tackled most vigorously at the moment, and in London there are three new courses for the special training of teachers, to cope with deaf, spastic, and physically handicapped children. This also covers mal-adjusted children. It is the purpose of the autistic group to make a further study of handicapped children, and the area will be extended in Western Australia. This approach to a public understanding of family difficulties will help in maintaining a stable family atmosphere, and will advance the case for community stability. The imposition of a community boycott, as it were, upon suffering families, is most short-sighted and cruel but, unfortunately, it is one that still exists in the approach of the community to this problem and to the needs and difficulties of our neighbours.

Science has thrust a heavy burden upon those in the community who are handicapped, because in an advancing scientific world those among us who are handicapped are passed over. This creates family frustrations which very often lead to rebellion and crime within the community. The more I study this problem the more I find that to be the case. It is more economical to create a happy community by adequately helping and caring for those who need it than to spend vast sums on prisons, courts, detention schools, and the like.

I will leave these thoughts with members and I hope that the Government will be generous when these matters arise. There is no doubt that happy homes and happy people make happy nations, and it is certain that happy nations are something which are badly needed in the scientific age in which we live.

I now want to speak on the question of Vietnam, and to say at the outset that in this matter I am a complete rebel. I feel entitled to speak on this subject because I have memories of four wars. As a child of seven I remember, during the South African war, we were stranded, as a family, on the Melbourne wharf after having returned from Western Australia.

I think this was in 1899 or 1900. The last contingent was leaving for the South African war and I recall an Australian soldier coming over and giving me a chocolate and speaking to me. I asked him where all the men were going and he said, "They are going dearie, to fight those whom they hope will never come to our shores."

That ship did not reach South Africa, because the war ended before it got there. I also remember the first world war, which was supposed to be a war to end all wars. I have a brother who has suffered all his life since as a result of shell shock. He was a Lewis gunner and he suffered life-long misery and received a pension of 7s. a week for a crippled arm. Apparently not much notice was taken of shell shock in those days.

The last world war, of course, is fresh in my mind, because it embroiled my own sons. Our family suffered considerably from that war as a result of death and wounding. It is little wonder, therefore, that I rebel against the starting of wars. Most members here will say that everybody rebels at that thought, but that is not altogether correct. Wars are made by men. There should be room for consultation on a world-wide basis so that the difficulties can be ironed out without people killing one another.

It is fantastic to think that in our day and age men will go out and kill one another, and bring misery to innumerable women and children; it is they, after all, who are the innocent sufferers. I am very much against the war in Vietnam. If America wants to fight in Vietnam, let it do so. We should not get involved because it does not concern us. That is my very definite opinion.

The battle in Vietnam should not be fought by Australia. I have heard all the tales about keeping the enemy from our shores, but I have no doubt that if they want to come here they will do so. To my mind one of the most terrible features of this war is the selection of one section of the community for conscription. In previous world wars we never needed conscription in Australia. We were all willing to do our share. The civil and the military sections in the community were organised and there were no upheavals at all. Everybody played his part. But we do not even know what this war in Vietnam is about. If anybody can enlighten me on the matter I would be very happy to listen, because on several occasions I have tried to find out what it is all about, and I have been given a different answer each time. The most dreadful thing that has been done, of course, is to conscript young lads of 20 years of age who have been chosen from only one section of the community. If a proper approach were made in the matter I feel sure there would be just as many Australians ready to go to this war as there were in previous wars. It was certainly not necessary to conscript them previously. It

is an insult to think that the Government should consider it necessary to conscript Australian lads of 20 years of age from one small section of the community in order to send them to this war in Vietnam.

I spoke to one mother who was crying bitterly at the airport when these lads were leaving. She told me she did not know what she was going to do. She had a baby of about 8 months in her arms and I tried to comfort her. She said to me, "Madam, they have taken my boy, and it is only three weeks since his father died. I do not know what I will do." I asked her whether she had protested and she said she had, but nobody would listen to her. I think she came from near Harvey. It upset me terribly to see the plight this poor woman was in.

I would like to know how any Government could do this dreadful thing to anybody. How is it possible to compensate the family of a young boy who was bright and debonair before he left for the war and who was brought back in a coffin? My conscience and my heart rebel against this sort of thing. It is nothing short of refined cruelty to do such a thing to any family. There is no doubt that a community crime has been committed. These young lads carry the badge of conscription.

I know a good deal about Australian men, and I can recall the South African war when I was a child. I know just what will happen after this war; I know just what will be said and done to these lads who are at the moment being conscripted to fight this war. The question is: What are we fighting for? If Mr. Holt is so anxious to go all the way with L.B.J., well let them both go to the war and lead their soldiers into battle. I detest this idea that has been carried out, and I have every right to stand up and say so. Never before has such a blot been placed on Australian youth, nor have they ever been smeared in this fashion. It has never been necessary to introduce conscription, and it should not be necessary now to conscript boys of 20 years of age and take one small section from the entire community and send them away to fight, whether they want to go or not. It is a dreadful thing to subject their families and their loved ones to such misery and suffering.

When the assistance of nations was required during the world war this was given, particularly in Australia, without community resistance; it was given willingly, and a heavy price was paid. But here we have a Liberal Government imposing misery and heartbreak on the parents of these young lads; it is imposing death on one section of our Australian youth. For what? It is done to serve America's behest to fight in a horrible war which brings death and misery in its wake with

the use of napalm bombs, a war which nobody seems to know anything about. I thought we had left that degradation behind us. We heard enough about it in the last war.

The Liberal Governments, Commonwealth and State, will go down unhallowed and unsung. Australia is the big American takeover, especially Western Australia. I have no means of finding out to what extent, but when I was in America I heard it talked of; and I have talked with some of the men who have come here. Even by means of literature, we are being conditioned to the American way of life and those who should know about it are too dumb to see it.

Why are we meddling in a rotten war, using napalm bombs and causing untold misery by maiming innocent women, children, and men? Who can suffer his conscience by perpetuating such calamities? Yet we hear that the Prime Minister of Australia is ready to "Go all the way with L.B.J." Let them both go and lead the armies if they are game to do so!

In this speech I am making my protest against the conscription of Australian youth to serve in Vietnam and I am rebelling against our taking any part in it. I have here a little booklet on Vietnam showing women with children in tatters and rags. Physically and mentally the mothers in Vietnam are in a shocking state. If someone can tell me why it is necessary for our troops to be there I will listen, but we should never conscript Australian youth to go there.

What a burden these boys will suffer all their lives. It is of no use anyone saying they will not. The finger will be pointed at them, however innocent they may be about things. I detest a Government that does a thing like that.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) (4.33 p.m.): There are two items I wish to discuss in the debate on the Supply Bill. One is in regard to compensation paid to people whose homes are compulsorily taken over by the Government for roads and other purposes. What I have to say affects the Minister for Works, but I do not want my speech to be regarded as an attack on him. It is the principle I am concerned about; and I shall mention a case which is one of many on which I could elaborate. In view of the time of the day and the importance of this Bill to the Government I will not mention any others.

In North Fremantle we find that since a new railway embankment or alignment has been built a number of people who have lived in what I must admit is a slum area have now been dispossessed of their properties and have had to move further afield. The case to which I refer concerns a house on $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land. I am sure the Minister for Local Government would

not now allow a house to be built on $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land. However, there are several houses in Willis Street and the people concerned have owned their properties for most of their lifetime and have reared their families there.

One person came back from the war and bought his property at a lower price than that which he is now being offered. I will mention the subject of prices in a moment. This person was told he had to get out because his land was required for the widening of John Street, and that a 15-foot bank of sand would be backing the walls of the house. He was quite satisfied that, in the circumstances, he would have to move.

In 1945, he bought this property for £490. In my opinion he was overcharged. As a matter of fact, I think the house was a disgrace to the powers that be, but he was allowed to live in it. This man has seven children, the eldest of whom is not of an age to work. The department offered him £1,420 for his property. Comparing the value of money in 1945 with the value now, I say he was not offered a great deal more than he paid for the property.

I am not concerned about the amount offered, but I am concerned about what happened to that man in regard to his trying to replace his home. Where can he get a block of land for £1,400? In addition he has to build a home. He just cannot do it. He has tried to buy a property somewhere else in North Fremantle and, although he is entitled to war service homes finance, that department is not prepared to accept properties in North Fremantle for purchase. Therefore, he is left in the position where he has to go to the war service homes people and borrow over £2,000 to use with the £1,400 he will obtain from the Public Works Department in order to build a new home.

I think it was in October last year—I will not bet on it, but it was between October and December—that the department gave notice that it was taking over his land, and until three weeks ago the title deeds were still in his name. Because of this he was not able to obtain war service homes finance, although his war service made him eligible for it. I have taken this matter up with the Minister for Housing who has done his best, but he had to say, "I can do nothing until the titles are changed, because until then this man owns a home." The Public Works Department's resumption officers, who have been very kind in assisting in this matter, have told the War Services Homes Department that the Public Works Department has owned this property since October or November, but still the War Service Homes Department is not prepared to do anything.

What happened was this: The Public Works Department said to Mr. Sim, "We have to shift you out in a couple of days time and we will send the teams in to shift you out and make an allowance for the

shift. We have found you a place in one of the cottages we previously resumed in Stirling Highway, North Fremantle, near the flourmills, and will put you there until such time as you can get somewhere else to live." I think that is reasonably fair, but the chap, who previously paid no rent, is now being charged £5 5s. per week.

I am hoping that the Minister for Works and the Leader of this House will do something for other people in North Fremantle who are in the same position as the particular family I have mentioned. I know section 15 of the Public Works Act states certain things about resumptions, but if people are not given sufficient time, when properties are resumed, then the Act should be amended so that alleviation is provided for them.

Mr. Willesee spoke about the railways in West Midland; and we have had answers back from the Assistant Minister for Railways showing that as far as the Public Works Act is concerned, his hands are tied to a certain extent. In these times, when great development is taking place, and so many railways and roads of national importance are being built, I believe some sort of compassionate allowance should be provided for.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did you talk to the Public Works Department about the rent being paid by this man?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: No, I have not been down about that. The house belongs to the department and that is the rent being charged.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You went to the Housing Minister and I wondered whether you had been to the Minister for Works.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Members of Parliament should not be doing these jobs; the Public Works Act should be amended, or financial arrangements should be made through the Treasury. As Mr. Willesee said the other day, when the capital cost of a railway or road is being planned, the compensation involved should be added to the cost. I remember when the drains were being put down in the old Peel Estate. In those days horses and drays were used. They were bought, together with 100 gallon tanks, and the cost was added to the scheme. However, it seems that today the Treasury is not in a position to find ways and means to make compassionate moneys available to people in the circumstances I have mentioned.

Because this is a financial Bill, I wish to refer to the Police Force in this State. I do not know how many members of Parliament know what the position is so far as the protection of property is concerned. There is very little protection in the metropolitan area. I will not refer to the country districts but will leave that to country members as no-one has ever been able to accuse me of going into another man's electorate and taking over his people's affairs.

A few days ago I came across an article in *The West Australian*, I do not know the date, but it reads as follows:—

Many Men are Leaving Victoria's Police Force

A policeman's lot can be an unhappy one. Walking down a dark alley at midnight to check the lock on a warehouse is uninviting, particularly in winter.

Unless the Police Force offers above-average pay and working conditions the man on the beat is tempted to throw in his uniform and try his luck in private industry.

In the same paper I found an article dealing with the strength of the Police Force in W.A. It reads as follows—

The present approved strength of the W.A. Police Force is 1,310. There are now 1,314 men in the Force but this includes 22 recruits who are going through the police training school.

In the past year, there have been about 40 resignations, all of which have been replaced by recruits from previous schools.

I was tempted to ask questions about resignations and, had I done so, I think members would find the number to be greater than 40. Continuing—

W.A. Police Commissioner Napier said that the number of resignations and enrolments was about the same as in previous years. The morale in the Force was very high.

The approved strength was enough to meet present needs but he expected more men would be needed in the future to meet the population expansion in the North-West.

I do not want to be disrespectful to Commissioner Napier because I know him and I know of his reputation, but I think he might have had his tongue in his cheek when he said that the approved strength was sufficient.

Are you aware, Mr. President, that between the hours of 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. there is not one single constable on the beat in the city block of Perth? He is not there to employ. When the change of shift takes place after tea six constables used to go around the block, and then five would go back to office work and one would continue patrolling the city block until 8 p.m. We all well remember when the previous Lord Mayor, Mr. Howard, was attacked one night by a group of young men. I was a witness to exactly the same sort of thing only a few nights before that incident, in almost the same spot, and I walked around the city block twice and could not find a constable.

I believe the reason for the criminals drifting into this State from the Eastern States is that they know what is happening and know of the lack of police supervision. There have been many crimes and big robberies recently; and the robberies are reaching astronomical proportions.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If the Eastern States criminals don't know now of the situation, they will certainly know from your advertising.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: We know what happened at Rockingham a couple of nights ago. The criminals are here; make no bones about that. I am concerned, although Commissioner Napier feels that the morale is very high. I can assure him that the ordinary constable in the street is not very happy with his position. Constables work three shifts and because of this situation not as many constables are on duty on Saturdays and Sundays as are required.

I know that around Easter and Christmas many men are used on patrol work trying to save lives on the road. Normally, a number of these men would be on the beat. I also know, from information, the source of which I cannot divulge, that for some days last Easter there was one constable on duty in the City of Perth. One only. I think it is time for us to give support to our Minister for Police and ask for further financial aid from the Treasury to see that the number of constables under his control is increased considerably.

One can go into almost any police station after six o'clock at night and there will be a notice on the door "Back at 8.30", and so forth. I am referring to the Rockingham and Spearwood areas. I do not know what is happening at Brentwood, but I do know it is happening at Inglewood too, because I have been there trying to contact a constable.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you know the strength of the force in Rockingham?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I am not sure, but I think we have a sergeant and four constables. At Medina the load on the local station is very heavy indeed. There are a sergeant and two constables, but one has to be out on patrol most of the time. There has been a large growth of population in that area, especially among the young people.

Another matter I might mention with regard to Medina is that there is only one justice of the peace there.

I believe the constables themselves are prepared to leave the service as soon as they see an opening for another job. Some have been in the service for 20 years and those men will lose quite a bit in superannuation if they leave. However, they are concerned with the future. A constable receives \$108 a fortnight made up of several parts. His basic amount is about \$42 per week.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [4.51 p.m.]: A long time ago a very wise writer by the name of Lewis Carroll said, in his work *Through the Looking Glass*, and I quote—

The time has come the walrus said
To talk of many things;
Of shoes and ships and sealing wax,
Of cabbages and kings.

And why the sea is boiling hot,

And whether pigs have wings.

The latitude given to us when speaking to a supply Bill, or to the Address-in-Reply, is an opportunity which I think all of us, whether novices or experienced speakers, should avail ourselves of. Many of the subjects mentioned by Lewis Carroll, so long ago, have been touched on this afternoon. I will introduce another subject.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Give me a second chance and I will introduce some more subjects.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The honourable member will have a chance during the committee stage, if she avails herself of it. I intend to speak on such matters as roads and traffic, and traffic control; subjects which, in my view, require in this day and age some very pertinent comments and very serious examination.

Firstly, I shall deal with roads. Flowing into the city are many main highways from nearby suburbs and, indeed, extending as far as Armadale. The use of the median strip is, in my view, much overdone. Many roads into the city of Perth are being narrowed substantially in regard to their effective use by the overdoing of the median strip. Indeed, one can pick many highways in the nearby suburbs where an extra line of traffic could be flowing if there were no median strip.

The acceptability of highways, and their proper use, is being lost in this fetish for the median strip. I think such strips serve no useful purpose at all, except near and at intersections.

However, I do commend the designers who have been responsible for recent intersection review; and for the alterations that have been made by the provision of small egress channels for taking traffic out of the main lines for either left or right-hand turns.

This can be seen particularly at the Broadway intersection and at the Stirling Road intersection at Claremont where traffic is now able, without impeding the flow of other traffic, to turn left or right and get out of the main line of vehicles with great ease. It can also be observed outside the University where there is a new road leading from Hampden Road to Stirling Highway. It keeps the through traffic flowing at a very busy intersection.

Another point which I think is commendable is the recent marking of the road borders on some of our country roads.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Hear, hear!

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: White lines have been painted on the edge of the bitumen. The person who first thought of the idea of the centre marking of roads, whoever he may be, is a man worthy of a monument. There has been no contribution greater than that towards helping better driving on the country and city roads. It is a great help to have the centre line of the road clearly marked,

and where the highways are broad enough, the laneways also marked. It certainly is a great help on country roads to have the kerbside or bitumen edge marked, whether travelling by day or by night. So much for roads, which I intend to deal with in a much broader sense perhaps later on in this session.

I wish now to turn the attention to many things that happen because of the indiscreet handling of cars by drivers—careless drivers; and many people who continually, day by day, tend to be menaces of some sort on the road.

I hold the view that the principal menace on the road is not necessarily the driver who drives at a speed a few miles in excess of the limit. The slow driver, in a line of traffic, can also be a menace. He is the person who banks up traffic. At some times of the day it is very hard to penetrate the second line of moving traffic.

I think the rule, which I admit has not been rigidly enforced, requiring all traffic to travel in the left-hand lane, as near the kerb as possible, is rendered impracticable on several of our highways because of the permissive parking. Between Fremantle and Perth, particularly between Mosman Park and Broadway, one finds oneself dodging in and out of motorcars, from one lane to the other, whether one likes it or not, if attempting to adhere to the rule of keeping to the lane near the kerb. While we continue to allow parking at any time—not at specific times—in the nearside lanes on busy highways, such parking becomes a menace and renders the requirement to travel as near the kerb as possible, quite hopeless.

It is quite impossible to conform to a rigid traffic rule of that kind while parking is permissible. Parking makes a four-lane highway a two-lane highway because the two lanes are the only ones where free-flowing traffic can travel.

This is also the pattern of traffic that travels from, say, the Causeway to the airport. There are only two unrestricted traffic lanes on that road simply because parking is permitted in the inner lane, and a motorist cannot drive at anywhere near the permissible speed whilst driving along either lane nowadays. Therefore, I consider that slow drivers as well as kerbside parking constitute a problem which should be examined as soon as possible; because there is no doubt that a slow driver is a menace to himself and to others on the road.

I vigorously oppose some of the methods used by police officers to obtain prosecutions against motorists who offend against the traffic laws. I am one who strongly supports the police in their work and in their endeavours to insist on the enforcement of the law. I have a high regard for them and respect them as a group of men. However, it would be much better if some clear thinking were to be done by the members of our Police Force, from top to

bottom, in relation to some of the methods adopted by them.

There is no doubt that furtiveness creates distrust. Any sneaky sort of attitude brings in its train some condemnation of the person or organisation that adopts such attitude. For instance, I do not like to see a policeman hiding behind a hedge on his motor-bike, or out of sight behind a tree, or in a lane ready to pounce on one offender among 100 or 1,000. He earns no respect, either, when it comes to interrogating a person who has committed a misdemeanour. If the same number of police—more or less—were available as respected people—I would like to see them all respected by the community—travelling with the traffic, or even stationary at the kerbside in full view of the traffic they would see countless breaches and offences being committed every day if they cared to look for them.

I repeat that furtiveness is no virtue, and I would like to see the police command the respect that they deserve. Whilst they are awaiting the odd speedster to appear, or the odd driver who tries to beat the traffic lights, they are missing hundreds and thousands of obvious traffic offenders. I would suggest that, between Fremantle and the city, between Midland Junction and the city, or Armadale and the city, on our roads every day one can see drivers who are guilty of the extremely bad practice of hanging an elbow or part of an arm out of the car window. This offence, of course, is committed mainly in the summertime; one rarely sees it being done during the winter months. Some drivers even have the arm completely out of the window with the hand clutching the roof gutter. This constitutes a very serious offence under the Traffic Act. It is an offence under the Road Traffic Code, 1965. Regulation 1605, under that code, provides:—

A person while driving, or travelling in or on, a motor-vehicle, other than a motor cycle, shall not permit any part of his body or limbs—

- (a) to be upon or in contact with any external part of the vehicle;
- (b) to extend or protrude beyond or through any external door, window or other opening of the vehicle;
- (c) to extend or protrude beyond or hang over any side or the front, rear or any other external portion of the vehicle.

A person so doing is liable to a very substantial fine.

However, I would suggest that one in every four, at certain times of the day, travelling on our near-city highways, is guilty of this serious breach of the law. When a driver does commit this offence, one does not know what he is going to do. A driver will often flick a cigarette out of the window, and, of course, such an offence is multiplied many times on the various highways, whilst a road patrol

officer is waiting to catch some person committing a breach at an intersection. I would suggest that if one really kept a watch out for those drivers who contravene Regulation 1605 of the Traffic Code, one could get 500 prosecutions a day with half a dozen policemen.

As for the giving of hand signals, the only thing that one can be sure of when many drivers attempt to make a traffic signal is that the window of the car is open. In many instances the hand of the driver will hang limply out the side of the car. As a result, one does not know whether he is going to stop, turn right, or what he is going to do.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Also, quite often one cannot tell the sex of the driver because of the length of the hair.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, that is quite true. The regulations relating to traffic signals are very clear. There are only two of them. There is no need for the driver to wind his arm up and down; this only suggests that the driver could be going one way or another. The proper signals to be given are for the forearm to be held at right angles to the upper arm, with the palm forward, to signify that the driver intends to stop; and to signify that he intends to turn right the arm is fully extended, again with the palm forward. There are many offences which are—and will continue to be—the cause of many accidents. The speedster of the dangerous kind is rare.

Some people, who are naturally fast drivers, drive right up to the speed limit or perhaps a little over it, almost all the time. Those drivers are rarely in trouble. But the person who speeds erratically is the one who often causes accidents. One particular offence committed is that of the driver who drives right up to the rear of one's vehicle whilst one is travelling in the outer lane—which is the safe lane, although one may be breaking the law by travelling along it—and he will travel in such a position—about six feet or less from one's rear bumper—for quite a distance. Such an act also constitutes an offence, because a driver of a vehicle is not permitted to follow another too closely. Nevertheless, dozens of drivers every day could be apprehended for committing this very dangerous practice, but very seldom are prosecutions instituted.

Some drivers with long hair—as the Minister for Mines has stated, I was not certain of their sex—have driven up to within a foot of my rear bumper and then have been impertinent enough to toot the horn to indicate that I should give way to them. Such an act could be responsible for many more accidents, because unless the driver of a vehicle allows a distance of 10 feet for every 10 miles per hour he is travelling between his vehicle and the one in front, he does not have sufficient time to apply his brakes in an emergency to prevent his running into the rear of the vehicle in front of him.

I would suggest that the members of our Police Force should remain in full view of the motorists so that they can be seen at all times. If they do, they will gain more respect; they will control traffic more efficiently, and unwittingly, because all of us are good rear vision mirror drivers. No driver will offend against the traffic laws if he knows there is a policeman on the road, but if he cannot see a policeman in sight, a driver will often take the risk and commit a breach of the Traffic Act.

I am wondering what has happened to the police radar car. Has it proved a failure?

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Yes, it has.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Has it proved a failure? I am wondering whether it has. I know one person, with 40 years' driving experience, who is an extremely good driver, and he was apprehended by a policeman for having driven his car at a speed of 42 miles an hour over a distance of 400 yards. His speed had been checked by the police radar vehicle. He asked the Minister if the radar car was correct and the Minister assured him it was. So he faced the music, but he was not prosecuted. Instead, he was instructed to attend lectures on safety and driving instruction at the Mt. Lawley driving school conducted by the National Safety Council. I consider that was a good move because he would have been able to find out many of his driving weaknesses of which he was not conscious. On the other hand I consider that many people could have been improperly prosecuted for speeding when the radar check was the only one made.

I think I have nearly served my purpose, but I now wish to refer to the involved, confusing—and, at times, when put into operation—stupid rule of giving way to the right. In my view, the rule of giving way to the right, if completely adhered to, causes a great deal of confusion. There are a great number of motorists who do not understand the rule. Another group wilfully ignores it, and then we have the third group that rigidly insists on adhering to it and so, at any intersection one can name, between the three groups one will find indecision, confusion, and, at times, the cause of accidents that could easily have been avoided.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think there is the fourth group, too: that is, those who do not want to understand the rule.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, that may be so. An instance that occurred recently at an intersection comes to my mind. If members know the railway crossing at Jarrad Street, Cottesloe, they will know that the first cross-street is Marmion Street. I was third in a line of cars travelling along Marmion Street. At the crossroads the four leading cars on

each highway met and each one of them stopped because there was a car on the right-hand side of each driver. The four drivers were so diffident about moving that, eventually, a driver about three cars back made up his mind to get out of line and made a dive for the crossing, but at the same time so did somebody else on his right. However, those cars would have been there yet if someone had not made a move. There is so much indecision caused by this give-way-to-the-right rule, especially on our highways—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Was there a "Stop" sign at any of those four streets in Cottesloe?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: "Stop" signs do not make any difference to the rule, anyway.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, there were no "Stop" signs but all had stopped. Do country members understand that nowadays a person has the right to enter highways without stopping?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Such drivers are a menace.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, they are a menace, but it is proper for them to do so. If the right side of the car is hit the driver is in the wrong at law. No vehicle should be allowed to enter any suburban highway without stopping, to ensure it is entering safely. Have we not a positive menace on the road when a driver enters a highway and crosses three lanes of traffic?

At Richardson Avenue, Claremont, every day we find drivers crossing three lanes of traffic just below the fire station where the traffic is flowing freely to head towards the city. I would not mind it so much if they crossed over at 35 miles per hour and got into the fourth lane from where they started, instead of slowing down to 10 miles per hour, which they mostly do. Generally they enter the highway at speed, cross over three lanes of traffic, and slow down in front of, maybe, 100 motorcars which are following them. Such people should be compelled to remain in the outer lane when they enter traffic in such a manner. They should keep with the fast flowing traffic until they get over to the kerb.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: They are supposed to do that.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: But they do not. I shall not talk about cabbages and kings, but I think I have given sufficient illustrations on this very vital, but perhaps relatively unimportant matter in the scheme of things, to bring about an improvement in the safety of persons and vehicles.

Every day we see an example of the need for more police patrol officers on the road. More should be engaged on this work as a deterrent to those who

break the law, and as a corrective to those who have very bad driving habits ingrained in them. There is hardly any act affecting pedestrians and others which is not covered by the road traffic code, but I am afraid some of the simpler and more dangerous driving habits are very much disregarded. The crosswalks in the city should be watched closely as should the pedestrians who, sometimes, are a menace to drivers and to themselves. At crosswalks some pedestrians seem to be determined not to give the motorist the right of way.

Along Murray Street we have seen the traffic banked up from the crosswalk at Boans Limited, because few pedestrians will give way when there is a line of traffic waiting to proceed. They seem determined to stop the traffic. At times there is traffic control at such crosswalks, but pedestrians seem to bear some enmity to cars. Personally I would rather wait three minutes for the traffic to clear before crossing. In the city block there is a great need for more traffic control.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) (5.20 p.m.): It is my intention briefly to reply to some of the comments which have been made in the debate on this the first Supply Bill of the session. I had intended to leave it until I spoke in the debate on the Address-in-Reply, but I propose to do so now. I very sincerely convey to Mr. Willesee my congratulations on his election to the position of Leader of the Opposition in this House. I wish him well in this office. I say facetiously that I hope he lives a long time to enjoy the position he now holds!

Mr. Willesee follows Mr. Wise and it is appropriate at this point that I should convey to Mr. Wise my appreciation of his leadership of the Opposition. He and I have an understanding of each other, and as a result we get along very well together. There were times when I found myself to be shaking a little as a result of the onslaught of the Opposition led by him, but we take that in our stride in the work we do.

I extend to Mr. Willesee the same hand of co-operation as I extended to his predecessor. I would also like to offer Mr. Dolan my congratulations on his election to the occupancy of the seat next to the Leader of the Opposition.

Having said that it is appropriate that I reply to some of the points that were raised in this debate. I wish to point out to the Leader of the Opposition that the question of having two sessions of Parliament has been considered by the Government. The Premier was questioned on this matter, and the answer which he gave to a member of another place was that the Government at this point of time intended to continue with the present practice. The mooting of two sessions of Parliament each year is more easily put forward by the Opposition than by the

Government. All I can say to Mr. Willesee is that I will obtain a copy of his comments from Hansard, and have them examined. At this stage it is not the intention of the Government to make any change.

I will have the other matters which were raised in this debate examined by the respective departments. Mr. Ron Thompson spoke about blasting operations in Cockburn, and my attention was drawn to it. The State Mining Engineer examined the extent of the blasting, and has expressed an opinion. Beyond that the matter is not a concern of my department. Nevertheless I will have his comments examined, and also answer on Tuesday next the question which he addressed to me on the subject. Regarding the comments of other members I will endeavour to obtain all the information I can when I speak on the Address-in-Reply debate. I thank members for their support of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY : FOURTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 3rd August, on the following motion by the Hon. V. J. Ferry:—

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

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

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) (5.28 p.m.): I was very pleased to listen to the optimistic remarks of His Excellency the Governor when he delivered his Speech on the opening day. I think we all agree that generally speaking the economy of this State is in a very healthy condition, and one cannot find any argument against what was said by His Excellency. However, there are one or two items to which I could make reference, and which could be added to as the debate proceeds.

I was one of the many who were disappointed with a forced omission from the

Speech, as a result of the fact that the Commonwealth Government has delayed its decision on financing the major dam on the Ord River. Now that members have had an opportunity to tour the north, under the pleasant climatic conditions which exist there, I am sure they will have a much broader and more realistic impression of what some of the representatives of the north talk about when they put forward submissions in this Parliament affecting the north.

I am very grateful indeed to the Government—and so are the people of the north—which made the trip available for all members of Parliament. In order that an overall picture of the area might be obtained, I hope the Premier and the Minister for the North-West will organise a similar tour about the middle of January so that all members might have a very up-to-date, thorough, and comprehensive knowledge of the area. It need not necessarily be in January. February would be as good a month. I hope the Minister will make that submission to the Premier and the Minister for the North-West so that members are not misled about the congenial climate.

All those members to whom I have spoken were very impressed with what they saw at the Ord River and with the possibilities and potential which would follow the construction of the main dam. The Governor told us that the 31 farms there would return at least \$2,000,000. That would mean that each farm would have an income of a little more than \$64,500 which is a very handsome income indeed. One wonders what the economists are talking about and why they are raising Aunt Sallies in Canberra to prevent production of this type being further expanded on a large scale.

Knockers and doubters have always existed, and they are particularly critical if expenditure is not to be in their area. I remember when I was Minister and Mr. Wise was sitting where he is now. Someone had approached him in those days about the economics of large expenditure on the Ord River. This was during the Hawke Government's term of office and I remember that Mr. Wise submitted questions to Parliament so that the facts could be made known. For the information of members I intend to read one of the questions and its answer. The question appearing on page 2829 of volume 3 of *Hansard*, 1956, reads as follows:—

Are the proposals known as the Ord River Irrigation Scheme considered to be practicable as an economic land settlement scheme?

I was in the north at that time and the Chief Secretary replied for me. His answer appears on page 2830 as follows:—

If costs of dam construction, hydro-electric power station, water reticulation, and alterations to Wyndham jetty are included as part of land settlement costs, the Ord River irrigation

proposal cannot be considered as an economic land settlement scheme, in the meaning that water rates paid by settlers would repay interest, sinking fund, maintenance and all working expenses. In submitting a case for the proposal to the Commonwealth, however, this Government took the view that these works should be considered a charge against a national effort to encourage settlement in our northern areas, in which case, other charges associated with farm construction and operation appear quite favourable from a land settlement point of view.

That was the view of the Hawke Government in those days and that has been the view of all Governments from the days of the donkeys, mules, horses, and camels.

Railways were not built with the idea of recouping the expenditure from the farmers who used them. They were built to develop the country the same as are roads, jetties, and all other public facilities, and every Government recognises the fact that initial expenditure by Governments is something which must be provided before private enterprise, or farmers, can be expected to go out into the hinterland to develop it.

Since 1956 those doubters and knockers, as they are referred to, have existed, and it appears that they still exist even today in connection with the continued development of the major Ord dam. The diversion dam on Bandicoot Bar was commenced in the middle of 1958. The return which was quoted to us by His Excellency is a magnificent one for those farmers who are pioneering the area. We must remember that this is only about their third or fourth year of cotton growing.

So I hope the Commonwealth Government will take no heed of its advisers and take the chances commenced way back in 1958. It was only by chance that the amount originally allocated was doubled. In 1957 the first £2,500,000—that is \$5,000,000—was made available for development in the Kimberleys, and in 1958 the Prime Minister doubled it. Sir Robert Menzies was making a speech during the election campaign. There must have been heckling of some kind and Sir Robert said that if it was thought that £2,500,000 to develop the Kimberleys was a paltry sum, he would double it, and that is how £5,000,000 was made available.

The present Prime Minister should think along the same lines. It is known that the expenditure is insufficient as it is handed out so why does the Commonwealth Government keep haggling and dragging this question out? Why does it not give us £2,000,000 a year, or whatever the Government can spend in one year, until the job is completed? It is beyond the comprehension of any logical person that having the evidence before it, the Commonwealth Government should continue to obstruct the development.

I hope when the Ministers meet to discuss this matter later in the month in Canberra, our State Ministers will achieve some success. This matter has been dragging on for years. I do not know how far back the proposals for the Ord River irrigation scheme go but I do know that it was during the time when Mr. Wise was Premier that the Kimberley Research Station was established on a 50-50 basis with the Commonwealth. Prior to that there was a smaller one further north sponsored by the State. As loan funds became available different Governments in this State contributed something annually towards research on the Ord scheme. It is fantastic to think that 20 years later we are still waiting and wondering while the Commonwealth haggles about what it should do in connection with this development.

The original £2,500,000 was granted following a deputation to Canberra. That deputation consisted of the then Premier of the State (Mr. Hawke), the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Ross McLarty), the Leader of the Country Party (Mr. Watts), the then Speaker (Mr. Rodoreda), and myself as the then Minister for the North-West. That was in 1955 and was as the result of a motion moved by Mr. Ackland in another place and Mr. Jones here, but the State received no favourable word for some time.

The Ord dam was the first stage; the second stage, tied in with it, was the Wyndham jetty; the third the Black Rocks jetty, which all the people in Derby and Wyndham wanted; the fourth was some assistance for the Wittenoom asbestos industry which was about to fold up. No. 5 was a very important one and that was, "to be released from taxation on a sixty-fourth basis" or in lieu—if the Commonwealth would not agree—that the Commonwealth should agree to make capital expenditure concessions in the area.

A prompt reply came in connection with Wittenoom on the matter of taxation concession; the proposal was rejected out of hand. However, the £2,500,000 came along for the construction of the Wyndham jetty and the Black Rocks jetty, and the survey of Napier Broome Bay. The latter was carried out and the Black Rocks jetty project was to be proceeded with. However, when the money became available, the people in Derby did not want it there. They said, "No, we will have a jetty elsewhere"—where, in fact, they have one now. The Government was not very concerned about the positioning of the jetty and considered it was a matter of pleasing the people.

Today, we have the rather astounding situation where the people in Derby rejected Black Rocks because they said the road to it would cover a distance of something like 30 miles over which they would have to cart their supplies from the jetty to the town. They considered it was altogether too inconsiderate to sug-

gest that they should cart supplies 30 miles; they could not accept that at all. Yet, we find in recent reports on transport submitted by Mr. Wayne that he suggests, and recommends, that Derby be bypassed by the State ships and that the State ships call only at deep-water ports. He is suggesting that Derby should be bypassed altogether and that the State ships should call at Port Hedland, Broome, and Wyndham. If that is the case, the people in Derby are going to be unfortunate enough to have a very fine jetty, which cost £1,500,000—not \$1,500,000—and they are going to have their goods transported by road from Broome, which is 120 miles away—not 30 miles away. I trust that Mr. Wayne's suggestion will not be tolerated for one moment for that is the position which has eventuated out of the clamour for Black Rocks, and then the rejection.

Of course, the survey of the Broome jetty was completed at the end of 1958 and the Hawke Government told the people of Broome that a deep-water jetty would be built at Broome out of State funds—the Government did not ask the Commonwealth Government for any assistance there.

That is the history of the Ord as I know it and I say again that it is amazing and astounding for one to find that the Commonwealth Government jibs at supplying capital for development of an area which sadly needs it, and an area in which farmers have shown such wonderful returns in the short time they have been there. It is absolutely beyond my understanding to know why there should be any query about the finance.

Last year there was quite a lot of debate in this House in connection with the road maintenance Bill which came before the House. Members representing northern areas, the goldfields areas, and the remote areas of the State, attempted to amend that Bill so that the impost would not fall heavily on the people living in the remote areas of the State—that is, on the people who are dependent upon heavy-haulage vehicles to bring their supplies and to take their produce away. Unfortunately, the representations of certain members in this Chamber were not accepted by other members and the amendments which were moved to exempt certain produce in those areas from this tax were defeated.

I think the cases which were submitted by those who spoke for the amendments, and against the imposition of those heavy-haulage charges, were very clear, concise, and truthful. In addition, the members who moved the amendments predicted that there would be quite an outcry from people in the areas concerned and, in fact there has been. During recent trips through my electorate, I have found that in almost every case transport is protested against. However, some of these people can pass the costs on and they do pass them on; it is the people

living in those areas—the people who work in those areas and keep those areas alive and moving—who are the ones who have to pay this tax. Wherever I have gone—from Halls Creek to all the coastal areas—I have heard the people protesting strenuously against the rises in the cost of commodities which they must buy in order to live.

When those points were expressed in this Chamber, the members of this House, unfortunately, would take no heed of them. The outcome of this is that in a town such as Wittenoom, the labour turnover of the company working Wittenoom has increased enormously. This has been brought about by the exceedingly high costs of goods in Wittenoom. People say, "What is the good of living and working in a place where you simply just work in order to eat and in order to keep alive; we may as well go elsewhere."

This is a fact because the costs are tremendous. When the heavy-haulage charge became enforceable, all prices on road transport from Point Samson to Wittenoom increased proportionately. The freezer trucks, which travel from Perth to Wittenoom with perishables, have had to increase their charges. The company which is sending its asbestos to Point Samson for shipment has had to face increased costs, and this is an industry which is struggling all of the time. This industry has never yet shown a profit. It is a subsidiary of the Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Ltd. which has invested millions of pounds in it but, up to date, has had no return to offset the outlay.

When one moves further up the coast to Broome and Wyndham, one finds that cattle transporters have had to increase their charges, too. In the case of the Fitzroy Crossing area the increase means as much as 10s. a head but further on—towards Halls Creek—the increase has been as much as 15s. and 18s. a head. The very same position applies down the coast and, in my opinion, Wyndham has lost a large number of cattle because of the imposition of those charges. Many of the cattle that used to come into Wyndham from the Northern Territory do not come that way now—they go the other way.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Is it not a fact that most of those cattle are going to the Broome meatworks because of the increased prices that are offering there?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: No, they do not go to Broome; they do not now come into Western Australia at all. I am talking about the cattle that are going to the Northern Territory. They go to Katherine, Darwin, or somewhere else. The result is that the kill at Wyndham drops considerably, and when it drops by some 8,000 or 10,000 beasts it means that the overall return to the grower who sends his cattle into Wyndham is less than it would have been had the kill remained at a higher figure, because the overhead charges are in no way lessened. Those charges are

spread over the number of cattle that are killed on a co-operative basis. So this tax has had a very bad effect upon industry in the north. It has had an adverse effect upon industries which should not have to bear that impost, and this has been pointed out quite heatedly at times by those members representing the area. The same applies to people living in the north.

I can recall The Hon. H. K. Watson—I am sorry he is ill and unable to be present in the Chamber this evening—telling the Government how that sort of thing had been avoided. At the time he pointed out that it could be avoided in regard to the flour tax that had been imposed, and this has worked quite successfully. I suggest, therefore, that the Government should have another look at the proposal put forward by Mr. Watson if it is not prepared to exempt that area from the provisions of the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act.

The Kimberleys, in particular, are very hard hit with this heavy haulage tax. None of the interstate hauliers travel as far as the Kimberleys. They all finish up at these new iron ore projects, and when they are completed, the work of the interstate hauliers will be completed, also. The interstate hauliers will not travel north to serve those projects any longer once they are in full operation. Therefore, I consider a grave injustice has been meted out to those people in the north, particularly when we discover that the roads in the Kimberleys area are maintained under a special Act—under the beef roads scheme, and as the Minister told me yesterday, in reply to my question, the Commonwealth has contributed something like \$1,500,000 yearly. Under this scheme the Commonwealth grant for last year was \$1,500,000 and it contributed a similar amount the previous year. Also, this year a grant of \$1,500,000 will be made by the Commonwealth for the upkeep of the beef roads.

There is no doubt that the expenditure of that money on the main roads in the Kimberleys is doing wonders. Bitumen has been placed on many miles of road between Fitzroy Crossing and Derby. I would estimate that over 100 miles of that road has been sealed as a result of the Commonwealth making this money available. What is more heartening is the knowledge that this grant will continue. I have not been over the road from Halls Creek to Wyndham in recent times, but I do know that a 64-mile stretch is being bituminised between Kununurra and Wyndham. That is a main road.

I consider that with this extra expenditure from Commonwealth funds, and with the expenditure of money from the Main Roads Department funds—which is almost equal to the Commonwealth grant—the people who live in those parts, and who use those roads, should not be charged this road maintenance tax. I think the Minister stated that, this year, an amount of \$143,000 would be allocated from the

road maintenance fund for expenditure on roads in the north. But I have not had time to ascertain what the road transport hauliers pay into the fund.

I should think that the road hauliers in that area may be contributing to a fund the moneys in which are used to repair many city roads which are affected by wet weather. Those of us in this Chamber know that we often find many potholes on city roads, but these days we do not find them on some of the roads in the north which are sealed. The road between Northampton and Carnarvon is standing up remarkably well, especially when we consider the extent of the heavy traffic that passes over that road. All the goods and machinery required for the iron ore projects are transported along that road, together with the constant haulage of goods from Carnarvon to Perth and the backloading of goods from Perth to Carnarvon.

Every town along the north-west coast, and every person who lives in that area is being penalised by increased costs and charges. If these imposts continue they will not encourage people to remain in the north but, instead, will encourage them to transfer to the city. And who could blame them? As a result people will gradually become discontented and leave the north, because they will not be prepared to put up with the arduous conditions and the high prices charged for commodities.

Amendment to Motion

Whilst I agree with the motion moved by The Hon. V. J. Ferry, I consider it needs a few words added to it. I therefore move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

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

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I second the motion.

Point of Order

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: On a point of order, Mr. President, is the Leader of the Opposition, in view of the fact that he has already spoken to the motion, in order in seconding the motion for the amendment? If he is out of order, I will second the motion.

The PRESIDENT: I rule that the Leader of the Opposition is out of order in seconding the motion for the amendment, and that the motion is seconded by the Hon. F. J. S. Wise.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines).

House adjourned at 6.6 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

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