Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 13th October, 1965

CONTENTS

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

QUESTIONS (10) ON NOTICE

HOUSING AT EXMOUTH

Rentals and Sewerage Rates

1. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has his department decided on the rents to be charged for—
(a) a two-bedroomed house, and
(b) a three-bedroomed house,
at Exmouth?

(2) Will sewerage rates be included in the rentals, or will this rate be the responsibility of the tenant?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:—

(1) Rents at Exmouth at present are:—
(a) two-bedroomed house—£7 8s. per week;
(b) three-bedroomed house—according to type—
£8 2s. per week,
£9 7s. per week,
£9 8s. 6d. per week.

These rents are subject to review in July, 1966.

(2) Sewerage rates are included in the rentals charged.

Annual Value: Assessment for Sewerage Rating

2. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

How is the net annual value of a dwelling assessed in respect of the sewerage rate at Exmouth?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:—

The next annual value will be assessed according to the provisions of the Country Towns Sewerage Act as follows:—

a sum equal to the estimated full, fair, average amount of rent at which the land may reasonably be expected to let from year to year, on the assumption (if necessary to be made) that the letting is allowed by law, less a deduction of forty pounds per centum for all out-goings . . .

AGED AND OTHER PATIENTS

Domiciliary Care by Nurses on Part-time Basis

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

As he is no doubt aware that the recent Royal Perth Hospital report reveals that hopes of—

(a) increased recruitment of student nurses, and

(b) a reduction in student wastage rate

had not been realised, will he give further consideration to implementing the suggestion contained in my parliamentary question of the 27th September, 1962, regarding domiciliary care of aged and other patients on a part-time award rate basis by qualified nurses under the supervision of local metropolitan and country general practitioners?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Government subsidises the Silver Chain Nursing Association to provide a domiciliary service.

Increased facilities for domiciliary care are at present being discussed between the States and the Commonwealth Government.

MOTOR VEHICLES: SUSPENDED OBJECTS

Banning from Windows

4. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Is it still an offence under the Traffic regulations for there to be objects suspended or moving at front or rear windows of vehicles?

(2) If so, can he explain the obvious spate of such devices in recent months?

Action against Offenders

(3) In how many cases has action been taken against offenders since the beginning of the year?

(4) If there is no regulation banning these objects, when was it repealed and why?

Effect on Drivers

(5) Does he agree that such objects can distract the attention of the driver, or otherwise lessen his perception?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The novelty of different types of dolls and mascots that come on the market from time to time are an attraction to young persons who like to decorate their cars with such gimmicks.

(3) From the 1st January, 1965, to the 12th October, 1965, 32 offenders have been cautioned and 15 prosecuted.

(4) Answered by (1).

(5) Yes. The present regulation has been retained in the Road Traffic Code, 1965, to come into operation on the 1st January, 1966. Policing of the regulation will be intensified.

STUDENTS: EXCHANGE ON SCHOLARSHIP BASIS

Government Scheme: Investigation of Possibilities

5. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has the Government any scheme in operation for the exchange of students within or outside the Commonwealth on a scholarship basis?

(2) If not, would he investigate the possibilities of such a scheme with a view to creating better world-wide understanding, good will, and closer relationship?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) There is no State Government scheme of the type mentioned, but there are several other schemes open to Western Australian students. The Government however, does assist the Commonwealth in bringing students to this State for the purpose of furthering their education by making its own facilities available to the students.

(2) While quite agreeing with the aim of the honourable member in his desire to create international understanding, it is considered that this can be developed by more effective ways than student exchange.

MILK SUPPLIES AT ALBANY

Summer Demand

6. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) In view of the anxiety as to milk supplies in Albany during the summer season, bearing in mind the increased population, 14,500 shire and municipality, plus tourist influx, can he give an assurance that demand will be met adequately?

(2) If an assurance cannot be given, will he undertake to take the matter up with the board with a view to bringing about a more equitable supply of milk during the summer season?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Answered by (1).

DISASTER RELIEF FUND

Creation

7. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

(1) Has the Government taken any steps towards the establishing of a disaster relief fund, either singly or jointly with the Commonwealth Government?

(2) If not, would the Government be prepared to investigate the possibilities of setting up such a fund to safeguard and protect primary producers from drought, fires, and other disasters?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) and (2) As indicated in a reply to similar questions last year, the creation of a fund of this nature has received consideration from time to time by State Governments and has been considered on at least two occasions at Premiers' Conferences.
There are considerable practical difficulties in formulating an acceptable scheme.

HOUSING FOR MIGRANTS

East Belmont Tradesmen's Flats: Effect of Use on Other Applicants

8. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) How many of the tradesmen's flats at East Belmont are still being used for accommodation?

(2) Is it a fact that these are to be made available to the Immigration Department for accommodating new arrivals?

(3) What is to happen to existing tenants?

(4) What effect will this arrangement have on other tenancy applicants seeking accommodation?

(5) Are there any other areas where similar arrangements are contemplated?

(6) If so, where and how many units of accommodation will be involved?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(1) 62.

(2) Consideration is being given to making 56 of these flats available to the State Immigration Department.

(3) The existing tenants are being offered alternative accommodation.

(4) The main effect on other tenancy applicants will be that with the exception of the remaining flats offers of accommodation at the Belmont flats will no longer be made.

(5) Yes.

(6) Possibly a further 20 similar type flats in areas yet to be decided.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL, 1965

Areas Defined: Estimated Enrolments, and Quotas

9. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

(1) What is the estimated enrolment in each of the three proposed areas defined in the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill, at present being considered by this House?

(2) On these enrolments, what would be the estimated quotas for the—

(a) metropolitan Assembly districts;

(b) agricultural, mining and pastoral areas?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) On the enrolment figures as at the 30th September, 1965, the estimated enrolments in each of the three proposed areas defined in the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill at present being considered by the House are—

(a) Metropolitan Area	264,394
(b) North-West-Murchison-Eyre Area	8,736
(c) Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral area	139,758
Total	412,888

(2) On these enrolments the estimated quotas for the following areas would be—

(a) Metropolitan Area	11,495
(b) Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral Area	5,823

LAND BOARD

Members and Qualifications

10. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) What are the names of members of the land board who have acted during the present year?

(2) What are their occupations and qualifications in each case?

(3) Is it a fact that a person from the locality where blocks are available for selection is appointed to the board in certain instances?

(4) If so, why?

Land Allocation: Preference to Local Applicants

(5) Does he consider that in such cases there would be a temptation to support a local applicant to the exclusion of others with greater merit?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Bovell) replied:

(1) and (2)—

Mr. R. J. Denton; Administrative Officer; Lands and Surveys Department, Perth.
Mr. E. W. Evensen; O.C. Registration and Deeds Branch; Lands and Surveys Department, Perth.
Mr. H. E. Coffey; O.C. Applications and Inspections Branch; Lands and Surveys Department, Perth.
Mr. N. G. Ranson; Senior Land Inspector; Land and Surveys Department, Perth.
Mr. E. C. de Luca; O.C. Roads and Reserves Branch; Lands and Surveys Department, Perth.
Mr. E. E. O'Brien; Retired Senior Land Inspector; Lands and Surveys Department, Perth.
Mr. B. E. Lange; President of Shire of Albany; Farmer.
Mr. A. E. Wright; President of Shire of Lake Grace; Farmer.
Mr. W. S. Paterson; President of Shire of Esperance; Farmer.
Mr. L. A. Dunnet; Deputy President, Shire of Nannup; Farmer.
Mr. M. E. Roberts; President of Shire of Dandaragan; Farmer.
Mr. S. F. Ravenhill; President of Shire of Denmark; Farmer.
Mr. C. A. R. Shirley; Councillor, Shire of Albany; Farmer.
Mr. B. M. Gillett; President, Shire of Mt. Marshall; Farmer.
Mr. F. C. G. Lucas; President, Shire of Carnamah; Farmer.
Mr. E. E. Teakle; President, Shire of Northampton; Farmer.
Mr. V. J. McIntyre; President, Shire of Dumbleyung; Farmer.
Mr. H. L. Pennington; President, Shire of Wandering; Farmer.
Mr. C. C. Roberts; President, Shire of Yilgarn; Farmer.
Mr. P. W. Thomson; President, Shire of Coorow; Farmer.
Mr. L. Broad; Vice-President, Shire of Yalgoo; Farmer.
Mr. D. K. House; Member of Albany Zone Development Committee; President of the Lower Great Southern Regional Committee and Regional Councils Association of Western Australia; Councillor, Shire of Gnowangerup; Farmer.
Mr. S. C. Davies; Acting President, Shire of Mt. Marshall; Farmer.
Mr. H. Williams; President, Shire of Mukinbudin; Farmer.
Mr. C. S. Smith; President, Shire of Augusta-Margaret River; Farmer.
The late Mr. A. E. McLernon formerly O.C. Applications and Inspections Branch, also acted on the land board for the first month of this year.

Ord River Only

Mr. R. J. Denton; Administrative Officer; Lands and Surveys Department.
Mr. F. L. Shier; Deputy Director of Agriculture; Agriculture Department.
Mr. J. R. Ewing; Deputy Under-Treasurer; Treasury Department.

(3) Yes.

(4) To provide the land board with special knowledge of local conditions.

(5) No.

THE CITY CLUB (PRIVATE) BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Durack, and transmitted to the Council.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Third Reading

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.44 p.m.]: Some 40 minutes ago representations were made to me on behalf of the Teachers' Union, and I was informed that the union is very concerned about these amendments. Did the Minister assure the House that agreement had been reached with the union?

Mr. Lewis: I did.

Mr. TONKIN: In these circumstances, I suggest the debate might be adjourned until the position is clarified; because I have been informed that there was a deputation to the Director-General and the Acting Director-General on Tuesday, the 14th September last. The union representatives were Mr. N. E. Sampson (president of the union), and Messrs. R. G. Moore, F. R. Evans, A. E. Hartley, R. Robinson, Dr. A. Nash, and J. M. Currie (general secretary). The discussion centred in the department's proposals which are embodied in the Bill.

The first proposal was that applicants who applied for advertised positions should be required to adhere to the preferences stated in the original application. The Bill seeks to ensure that this is so. In arguing this point, the notes of the deputation show that—

> Mr. Sampson said that while the union could understand the department's intention it believed that there were occasions when teachers ought to be permitted to change the order of their preferences. There were compassionate reasons and there were reasons which arose from lack of information at the time of making the

original application. He referred to possible changes in the availability of housing in any particular place and to a situation where the advertisement had not given a clear picture of the relative attractiveness of positions in two schools.

The union would not support capricious changes which only humbugged other teachers. It believed, however, that there should be a discretionary power to allow changes and that this should reside with the tribunal.

The notes of the deputation continue—

The Director-General thanked the union for the suggestion. He agreed that this was a satisfactory solution. He wondered if some more information on housing and other relevant details would assist applicants in their initial selections.

I am informed the union went away from the deputation under the impression that the Bill would provide for discretionary power to reside in the tribunal so that if a teacher, upon appeal, desired to rearrange his order of preferences, it would rest with the tribunal to make a decision.

The Bill gives no such discretionary power at all. It provides that once a teacher has indicated his preferences there shall be no alteration of them. The Teachers' Union considers it has been badly let down in regard to this matter.

The other proposal—and the position is not quite so clear here—is that part-time teachers, or teachers on supply, shall be prevented from appealing against teachers in the permanent service. The union, generally, agrees with this; but it had a discussion with regard to the situation that could arise where persons who are outside the service, and who therefore cannot be regarded as permanent teachers, are appointed to positions in the service. The union considers that in such circumstances part-time teachers should have the right of appeal to a tribunal and that the tribunal should then decide the appeal on the merits of the question. The Bill, if it becomes law, will give the part-time teacher no such right to appeal against anybody. I quote from the notes of the deputation with regard to this matter—

Mr. Sampson asked the Director-General if he would amplify the department's reasons for seeking this change.

The Director-General said that he believed that when the union and the department drew up the machinery for the present Act it was intended that appeals would be for full-time permanent teachers only.

Dr. Neal said that the tribunal had referred in its report to certain difficulties in the present situation. Under the Act the tribunal could hear appeals by supply and part-time teachers. However, only the Minister could appoint such teachers to the permanent staff.

Mr. Sampson said that there were certain positions particularly in the technical division and perhaps more particularly in the trades branch where persons from outside the service may receive appointments to vacant positions and supply teachers in the same field of work who were perhaps more properly regarded as on probation could not appeal under the change proposed. While as a matter of general principle the union could come down on the side of the permanent teacher. Where outside parties were brought into the picture by recommending them the union believed that appeals should be open to anybody on the staff.

With that I agree. Surely a teacher on supply, or a part-time teacher who is in the employ of the Education Department of Western Australia, should have the right of appeal—not the right to get the job, but the right of appeal against the appointment of somebody who is not in the service but who has been brought in from outside to fill a position.

The Bill will deny such right of appeal to part-time teachers, and the union feels it was given somewhat of an assurance—although not a clear-cut assurance in this instance—in respect of this matter, because the notes of the deputation say—

Dr. Neal said that perhaps the solution lay in more specific definition of the various categories of supply teachers.

That indicated that the department admitted there was something in the union's contention and was prepared to look for some solution in order to meet the position. The Bill does nothing in that direction, and I am wondering if the Government is in a position to indicate whether that aspect has been looked at and a solution found, because we are now in a position that the House was advised by the Minister in his second reading speech that agreement on these questions had been reached with the Teachers' Union, but the union now says that no such agreement has been reached on provisions in the Bill. It does say that agreement had been reached at a deputation but on a different basis to that which is now being put forward.

In the circumstances I suggest that it would be wrong for the House to pass this Bill, because to do so would be to pass it on wrong information, and we should at least hold the situation where it is until the Minister can examine it, clarify it, and explain the true situation to the House.

Personal Explanation

Mr. LEWIS (Minister for Education): In view of the remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I have no objection to having the third reading of the Bill deferred.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The Minister cannot do that. He is replying, and therefore closing the debate.

Mr. LEWIS: In that case, I will have to move that the debate be adjourned. Is that in order?

The SPEAKER: No; the Minister has already spoken.

Mr. LEWIS: I will certainly have some inquiries made; but I do not know how to proceed at the moment.

The SPEAKER: I think all the Minister can do is to make an explanation.

Mr. LEWIS: I want to explain to the House that when I made the statements during my second reading speech that agreement had been reached with the union I did so in all good faith, because I made a specific point of contacting the Director of Education and asked: "Is there any disagreement with the union in regard to this?" and he replied, "No; agreement has been reached with the union on this." So I felt fully justified in making the remarks I did. In view of the comments that have been made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition I will, however, have the statements fully investigated.

The SPEAKER: I will accept that as an explanation by the Minister and suggest that he have someone on the back benches move that the debate be adjourned.

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

BILLS (3): THIRD READING

1. Vermin Act Amendment Bill.

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

2. Street Photographers Act Amendment Bill.

   Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and passed.

3. Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

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

HORMONE-LIKE HERBICIDES

Control: Motion

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [4.54 p.m.]: I move—

> That in the opinion of this House the Agricultural Department should immediately control the manufacture, sale, distribution and use of hormone-like herbicides and similar substances, so as to prohibit their use, except under strict departmental supervision.

In moving this motion I suggest to the House that only a small proportion of the people in Western Australia fully realise the dangers to which some of our industries could be subjected by various herbicides and sprays which are being used at present by growers of various crops. Only those who have had close contact with some of these herbicides appreciate how dangerous they are and the damage they can cause.

We all know the advances that have been made in various fields by scientists, and particularly agricultural scientists in the production of fertilisers in an endeavour to make a few blades of grass grow where only one grew before, and to increase production generally, whether it be cereal, fruit, or vegetable production.

These advances have been particularly noticeable in the improvement that has been made in pasture development in Western Australia. Together with increased production of foodstuffs and pastures and the improvements that have been made to our fertilisers, such as artificial superphosphates, there has been an increase in the production and distribution of herbicides and insecticides which are used to control the growth of many weeds and to destroy pests of all sorts and sizes which are the bane of producers and market gardeners in this State.

The particular one I have in mind at the moment is the hormone-like herbicide known as 2, 4-D. A great deal of trouble has been experienced with this herbicide in the Geraldton district in its use on the tomato crop, and the tomato growers are fully aware of the dangers that accompany its use. It would not be any stretch of the imagination to say that tomato gardens in Carnarvon and in Geraldton, and the vineyards in the Upper Swan district of the metropolitan area could be destroyed in a few hours by unscrupulous or careless persons using this hormone-like herbicide 2, 4-D.

To emphasise the point I wish to make on this herbicide I seek the indulgence of the House to quote from the July issue of the journal published by the Department of Agriculture, an article which has been written by Mr. G. R. W. Meadly, M.Sc., who is the officer-in-charge of the Weeds and Seeds Branch of the Department of Agriculture. I want it to be clearly understood that I am of the opinion that this officer thoroughly understands his work and would be very valuable to the State of Western Australia. This article by Mr. Meadly is one of the cleanest and most concise articles I have read on any subject. It deals with the situation which growers can see in front of them at this

stage of the research that is conducted into the study of herbicides and insecticides which have been referred to by me. The article reads as follows:—

> Damage Caused by Hormone-Like Herbicides
>
> In a short period of time they have become accepted in a similar manner to insecticides and fungicides and are performing a comparable service.

Mr. Meadly refers to the selective action of herbicides such as 2,4-D and MCPA. The article continues—

> During 1964, in Western Australia more than one million acres of cereals were sprayed with 2,4-D. As a result, both quality and yield have been improved.
>
> One important advantage of the hormone-like herbicides over some other weed killing chemicals, particularly arsenicals, is that they are relatively non-toxic to animals. Stock may be grazed in paddocks immediately after spraying and no special precautions are necessary for spray operators.
>
> Despite their obvious value to agriculture, however, these chemicals can cause appreciable losses. Plants other than weeds can be destroyed and, for this reason, the term herbicide is preferred to weed-killer. Damage may be caused to the crop being sprayed or to cultivated plants in the vicinity.
>
> In Western Australia, 2,4-D is applied mainly to cereals which are relatively resistant, but instances of injury to the crop do occur. Wheat is more tolerant than oats, with even some variation between the varieties of wheat. The risk is greatest with the ester of 2,4-D, with MCPA the least likely to cause damage and the amine of 2,4-D intermediate.
>
> The recommended growth stage for spraying wheat is when the plants are stooling freely but before the "boot" stage, when the head is evident as a swelling in the leaf sheath.
>
> If sprayed too early, various malformations are likely to appear. Club shaped, twisted or branched heads are formed with an irregular arrangement of the spikelets, referred to as "scatter heads." The glumes may become fused, the number of spikelets in each group reduced and a proportion of the florets aborted. Symptoms also include thickened stems, yellowing, reduction in height and delayed maturity. Spraying at the "boot" stage does not usually cause abnormalities but reduced grain setting has been attributed to it.
>
> Clovers are more susceptible than cereals and when they occur in a crop, particularly in the year of sowing, additional care must be taken. 2,4-D amine or MCPA is then usually recommended, with 2,4-D ester only being used under special circumstances. Even when injury is not apparent, flowering of clovers may be delayed to the extent of preventing seed setting.
>
> Damage to plants other than those being sprayed can be caused in a number of ways.

What I have referred to applies to cereals, in particular to wheat, and to clovers. No matter how extraordinary this statement might seem, the use of some types of herbicides could cause damage not only to crops, but also to tomatoes, vines, roses, and such like. Their use could damage the main wealth of this State; that is, the wheat crops. The article continues—

> Spray Drift
>
> The extent of spray drift depends on a number of factors, including droplet size, type of formulation, wind velocity and height of release of the spray.
>
> Small droplets are carried for longer distances and the droplet size should be kept as large as possible commensurate with effective treatment. This can be done by selecting an appropriate nozzle and not using a pressure higher than is necessary. For most spraying 30 to 40 lb. per square inch is adequate.
>
> Due to a lower evaporation factor, greater drift can be expected with oil-based sprays and when oil is used as a solvent. Spraying should be done under calm conditions, especially when susceptible crops are in the vicinity; spray wands should not be elevated. Drift is accentuated by high mounting of nozzles and also with aerial application.
>
> When the wind velocity is high, plants can be affected at distances of more than a mile.
>
> Volatility
>
> Damage has been caused by vapour arising from sprayed herbage or from equipment containing a volatile formulation of 2,4-D or 2,4,5-T.
>
> The risk is greatest with the ester of 2,4-D and increases with rising temperatures. This means that even if the wind direction is away from a susceptible crop at the time of spraying, damage can be caused subsequently by a change in wind associated with the formation of vapour.
>
> Contaminated Equipment
>
> Frequently plants have been killed or severely damaged by applying an insecticide or fungicide wth equipment used previously for hormone-like herbicides, even after careful cleaning. Separate equipment for herbicides and other pesticides is

desirable under all circumstances but particularly with sensitive crops such as tomatoes, vines and cotton.

If the use of the equipment for more than one purpose cannot be avoided it should be cleaned thoroughly and restricted to plants relative resistant to 2,4-D. Wooden vats, rubber, leather or plastic sections (including hoses) should be replaced.

If amine formulations of 2,4-D have been used the sprayer should be washed thoroughly with water and filled with a solution containing one gallon of household ammonia in 100 gallons of water. After removal 24 hours later, the equipment should again be washed thoroughly with water. With oil formulations, including esters, kerosene should be used for the preliminary washings followed by a solution containing 5 lb. tri-sodium phosphate in 100 gallons of water.

Empty containers should be buried or, at least, dumped where they are unlikely to be salvaged or cause damage due to vaporisation. They should certainly not be used as incinerators or as containers for any material.

Contaminated Pesticides

There have been several instances in this State of tomatoes and vines being affected by spraying with pesticides containing small amounts of 2,4-D, even though manufacturers take elaborate precautions to prevent contamination during preparation.

Agricultural chemicals such as insecticides, fungicides and fertilisers should not be stored with hormone-like herbicides, particularly the esters of 2,4-D. They can readily absorb vapour arising from opened or damaged containers and only a trace is necessary to damage susceptible crops.

Symptoms

As already mentioned, grape vines, tomatoes and cotton are among the most sensitive crops, although other cultivated plants can be damaged severely. Most vegetables including lettuce, peas and beans are readily affected and lupins have often been damaged.

Effects on wheat have been described and are illustrated.

In general the first indication of damage is usually a twisting or bending of the stems and leaves due to differential growth rates. A thickening of the leaves and stems may occur, often resulting in splitting. Yellowing or reddening of leaves is not unusual and, if enough of the chemical enters the plant, growth will cease, followed by death of the tissue.

With sub-lethal doses, often caused by spray drift or slightly contaminated equipment, interesting secondary growth responses may occur. Normally broad leaves become narrow or finely divided, with the green colour disappearing from the veins. The term "shoestring" is often applied to this condition. Floral parts may be multiplied and fasciations appear. Fruits, including tomatoes, may be formed without seeds.

Slight malformations, particularly in cereals, may not adversely affect production. Severe damage, however, has caused total loss of tomato crops and vine and cotton yields have been reduced considerably.

Enquiries received by the Department of Agriculture indicate that abnormalities caused by hormone-like herbicides are often confused with diseases. This is understandable as some fungal and virus infections can induce similar symptoms.

Treatment

When plants are affected by 2,4-D, remedial action that can be taken is very limited, particularly in the case of large-scale crops. Some pruning of malformed portions has assisted with tomatoes and grapes.

If garden shrubs, such as hibiscus, are only slightly affected they can be expected to revert to normal growth without treatment but this can be expedited by removing affected sections and watering regularly.

Recommendations

(1) Only spray with 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T under calm conditions.
(2) Do not use a higher pressure than is necessary.
(3) Take added precautions when sensitive crops such as tomatoes, vines and lupins are in the vicinity.
(4) Avoid using the volatile ester when it presents additional hazards.
(5) Retain spraying equipment used to apply 2,4-D for that purpose only.
(6) Do not store 2,4-D along with other pesticides or fertilisers.
(7) Destroy empty containers.
(8) Do not leave vehicles or equipment used for spraying in the vicinity of gardens or sensitive crops, particularly when the temperature is high.

That article was written by a person whom I regard as the leader in this class of research in Western Australia. To emphasise some of the points which he made, the layman would wonder how it was possible for chemists to make such a lethal weapon, in the form of the various insecticides. It is well known, and I have seen it happening at Geraldton, that after

a spray has been applied, and the container has been emptied and left standing without a lid, the garden in close proximity has been affected. That happened although there was not a teaspoonful of spray left in the container, but the fumes from the spray spread as a result of a rise in temperature. This happens particularly when the sprays are oil based. The fumes from them will travel far and destroy plant life, particularly tomatoes and vines, in close proximity. Several instances have occurred where tomato plants and vines have been damaged.

That leads me to refer to the position in which the growers in Geraldton found themselves in July or August last. The loss which occurred in the tomato crop was very heavy, but the total has not yet been assessed, because the season has not been concluded. Unfortunately the end is very near, and this resulted from the use of the insecticide 2,4-D.

Last year the Singapore market took 38,000 cases of tomatoes from Geraldton, and that represented a handy source of income to the State, and particularly to the Geraldton district. This year that market was supplied with 21,000 cases, because the season closed much earlier, and that will probably result in the loss of some portion of the Singapore market. That was caused by the trouble experienced in the use of herbicides.

In another part of the article Mr. Meadly referred to damage caused by aerial spraying. It will be recalled that last year this House passed the Damage by Aircraft Bill, which provides that damages may be recovered where loss is caused by liquid and liquid spray. Unless some control is exercised by the Government, we could find some producers in one area applying a spray to eliminate Cape tulip or wild radish, and completely ruining the vineyards located several miles away. The loss would be greater in the case of vines than tomatoes, because the tomato plant grows rapidly. Three crops of tomatoes can be planted a year, and the plants do not live for a long period.

I want to emphasise the damage that can be caused by herbicides. In the Geraldton area on one occasion a spray was used along a road, but with a southerly wind blowing several days afterwards the market gardeners on the side of the hill—who had no idea that the particular type of spray was being used in the district—found their tomato plants gradually taking on a bluish tinge. The officers of the Department of Agriculture found out what was wrong with them, and anyone with experience of the effect of these herbicides would know how to deal with them. There is no mistake about the damage that can be caused by hormone-like herbicides. There is no stopping them when they are used, and they are all-powerful, and are capable of destroying plant life. These sprays are very dangerous.

In various news items broadcast over the radio and published in the Press, I can remember that last year operators were reported to be spraying in the cottonfields near the Kimberleys and those men were overcome by fumes, and, I believe, had to have hospital treatment. We did not hear much more about that. It is something that is happening nearly every day of the week in some part of the State. Men who are handling fertilisers may have a skin that is allergic to artificial superphosphates, the effect of which is much less than that of the hormone-like herbicides used in connection with the destruction of the various weeds we are cursed with.

Some action should have been taken before this to ensure proper control over the manufacture, sale, and distribution of herbicides, including their use; and, if members wish, there could be the same control over fertilisers. There needs to be very strict control and supervision by the Department of Agriculture. Possibly there will be a cry that more inspectors would be needed in order to control the manufacture, distribution, and use of these herbicides, but I say this Parliament of Western Australian cannot afford to allow the present state of affairs to continue; because, as I said previously, some person with a twisted or warped mind could, within a short time, completely destroy the grape crop in our Upper Swan area, apart from tomatoes and anything else we may have.

I would like to hear other members in connection with this matter. I am sure they have had some experience with the damage that can be caused, even in their own home gardens. I have heard it said that people in the metropolitan area with young rose bushes are worried over the fact that they may have some sort of disease from the use of herbicides. Members will find that Mr. Meadly touched on that in his article and said that on no account should these hormone-like herbicides be stored alongside fertilisers for use in the home garden. Perhaps it will not be long before we have superphosphates possessing radioactive qualities.

I ask the Minister just how far we are to go in this matter; and how far we are going to allow agricultural chemists and scientists to continue making these products, which they are doing in all good faith. They are doing a good job; but we believe there should be some strong measure of control, as I said before, over the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of these herbicides. We all know producers experience enough troubles during the 12 months in which they hope to derive an income without having something like this foisted on them—something that

could ruin them in a very few minutes. These hormone-like herbicides could ruin a vineyard, a tomato garden, even a nursery, where a man was dependent upon the sale of young rose trees and that sort of thing for his living.

Members will recall that in the first pages of this article, Mr. Meadly dealt extensively with the damage that can be caused to pastures and cereals; and there are illustrations in the journal to show the malformations that can take place after plants have been affected by these hormone-like herbicides, previously referred to by me.

I move this motion in all seriousness and hope the House will agree to some measure of control by the Department of Agriculture on the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of hormone-like herbicides.

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

BILLS (5): RETURNED

1. Cattle Industry Compensation Bill.
2. Milk Act Amendment Bill.
3. Agricultural Products Act Amendment Bill.
4. Fruit Cases Act Amendment Bill.
5. Marketing of Onions Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [5.23 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I would like to indicate that this Bill has one purpose and one purpose only. Members may recall that last year I introduced a similar Bill for the purpose of eliminating, as far as possible, the abuses relating to postal voting. That is all this Bill seeks to do.

For the benefit of new members, and possibly of members who were not in the Chamber at the time last year when I gave classic examples—perhaps those members have not had time to read *Hansard* to find out what it was all about—maybe I should relate the particular cases which came to my notice during the last Federal election.

I would like to refer particularly to one "C"-class hospital where I had been asked by the sister of a patient to make arrangements for that patient's postal vote. We filled in the application form and forwarded it to the department, and later on in the week I went back to find out whether the vote had arrived for this particular patient. He had not received it. He was a bed patient, so I asked the matron whether the postal vote had arrived. To my amazement she had to go through a pile of ballot papers, containing from two to perhaps three dozen. While going through them she said, "Half of the people who are getting these ballot papers can hardly scratch themselves."

In other words, it indicated someone had been to the hospital and filled in application forms. I do not know who sent these people, but later on possibly someone was going to come back and complete the ballot papers. That was the way the vote was being taken.

I spoke to the matron of another "C"-class hospital and asked her what the procedure was for taking postal votes in her institution. As with the other matron, she informed me that at least 50 per cent. of the people in that hospital would be incapable of casting an intelligent vote. I believe her reaction to postal voting was a sound one, and it would be all right if it were adopted. She said that in the event of a person being capable of having a postal vote, she indicated the fact to the relatives of that person so they could make arrangements. That was quite a good idea.

At the time, the matron asked me if I would like to go around with one of the sisters and see the patients. I did not do so as I did not want to do that. That was her particular method; and if every person who was able to vote did so, there was no point in my going around with any particular sister—or nurse, for that matter. This is one case where everything seems to be all right. However, on the other hand, at the "C"-class hospital which I first instanced, there was a pile of ballot papers and, as the matron said, the majority of the patients could not even scratch themselves. Yet, for some reason, they made application for postal votes.

Mr. O'Neil: These ballot papers were in envelopes when you saw them?

Mr. TOMS: I think the honourable member would have seen the papers. They were encased in an envelope. I did not have anything to do with that part of it. I believe there is not one member in this House who would be able to say that he had not seen the postal-vote system abused. It is a well-known fact that at noon on the day of nominations, it is almost a case of the whistle has blown and there is an invasion of certain hospitals for the purpose of getting these ballot application papers filled in. I do not think it is right; and I do not believe any member in this House would believe it to be right for people to be pestered in hospitals by an influx of people seeking to take advantage of their position.

I do not blame the Electoral Department for what is happening, as it is permitted under the Act at the present time.

Nor do I blame the sisters at the hospitals, as I indicated last year. My contention is that there are zealous party supporters who do these things; and, in the interests of the hospital authorities and the patients, the taking of these votes should be under the direction of the Electoral Department.

Members will notice that the Bill provides for a rather wide personnel to take these votes; and I believe it is something that should be done by the method laid down in the measure. A member of the Electoral Department or an officer appointed by the department could then find out from any hospital which patients were capable of taking votes; and could also ascertain, from the hospital records, the names of people who were not able to make an intelligent vote. The names could be listed in the Electoral Department. This would save the department the trouble of forwarding notices asking people why they did not vote, because the department would be in full possession of the facts in regard to these particular people.

I commend this Bill to the House and I hope other members will have the courage of their convictions, when the debate is resumed, and perhaps be able to tell this House of other glaring instances where the postal voting system has been abused and where people, unable to make postal votes, have been preyed upon. There is no other word for it. I believe that anyone who takes advantage of a person who has not his full faculties about him, can be classed as nothing less than a vulture.

I hope that on this occasion the members of the Government will see the wisdom in this measure so that postal voting will be properly organised and carried out under proper supervision.

Mr. O'Neil: Would this Bill apply only to postal votes from institutions and hospitals?

Mr. TOMS: It could do, because provision is made for the electoral officer to authorise certain people. I leave it to the electoral officer because I believe he should be in a position to know whether a person can be trusted to do the job.

Mr. O'Neil: A postal vote will only be arranged by the authorised officer from the Electoral Department?

Mr. TOMS: Yes. The Electoral Department will have the entire control of the voting. For the information of members, this amendment will not affect the north-west.

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

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading: Defeated

Debate resumed, from the 6th October, on the following motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [5.32 p.m.] I have studied the Bill introduced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the comments he made during his second reading speech. I have also sought advice from the Minister controlling this particular Act; and he, in turn, has had the matter studied by his officers and by the Licensing Court.

In the first place, I think we should have close regard for the intention of section 39 of the Licensing Act. A gallon license was originally granted to a grocer as an adjunct to his business and a means by which he could satisfy his customers in respect of the supply of liquor where licensed premises were not available or near at hand. I think it is very important that we should have full regard for the background of the original circumstances under which these licenses were provided for in the Statutes.

The emphasis was on the grocer's shop being permitted to sell alcohol in quantities of not less than one gallon. Most of us agree that this was our understanding of the position, although in recent times—as mentioned by the honourable member—this view appears to have changed very drastically. In other words, it would appear that the whole spirit behind the original licenses has changed.

From time to time considerable pressure has been brought to bear by the Gallon Licensees' Association, through the retail grocers' association, to break down the restrictions contained in the Licensing Act in respect of gallon licenses and to have the Licensing Act amended so that gallon licensees may sell single bottles. The honourable member correctly related, in his second reading speech, the provisions of section 39. It is important to note that the amending Bill passed by Parliament last year—1964—removed an obligation which previously applied in respect of the requirement that gallon licensees should enter the name of the purchaser of the liquor in a book kept for the purpose.

The 1964 Bill, which was introduced by The Hon. E. M. Heenan, M.L.C., contained a clause which eliminated the necessity for gallon licensees to enter in their books the quantity of liquor sold—the same provision as in this present Bill before us. It will be recalled that at that time the Government opposed this measure; it objected to

what was sought to be achieved. The Government saw this move as an undesirable step and one which would make it harder for the police to keep a watch on the activities of some gallon licensees suspected of offending under the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act.

I emphasise this point somewhat because in this type of dealing we know that the majority of people, under any licensing system, try to do what is right because they want to obey the law and practise within the spirit of the law. However, there are always some who do not act within the law and it is this minority which probably brings two-thirds—if not, 80 per cent.—of the Statutes on to the Statute book in the form in which we find them. We have to watch very closely the activities of this small minority group. I am informed by the Minister concerned—who, in turn, gets his information from the people who have to police the legislation—that experience has proved this to be correct.

Despite the fact that the Legislative Council agreed to one portion of the Bill introduced by Mr. Heenan, the necessity for the gallon licensees to enter the sales of liquor made by them was retained. In this regard the honourable member put forward the argument that when one provision was removed, the other became ineffective. Superficially, one might be inclined to agree. However, on analysis and as a result of a close study of the information made available in connection with the work of those supervising the licenses, I have to agree with the authorities that the present provision has a practical value in the policing of the licenses; and a value which is considered sufficiently important by the Government for us to want to retain it.

In this current year, 1965, the gallon licensees made a further attempt to be permitted to sell single bottles; and this, as members will know, was objected to by the Government. We have good reason for this and we think that the suggestion is foreign to the concept of the original gallon license provisions. If the original concept means anything, which we think it does, then this desire to sell single bottles is quite out of character with it.

I cannot help feeling—whether or not the honourable member is aware of the result of his own action in bringing this forward—that agreement to this Bill would provide an easier situation for some gallon licensees—and I emphasise some, not all; and I would go so far as to say the minority—to break the law and, consequently, make it much more difficult for the Liquor Inspection Branch of the Police Department to keep a close watch on their activities.

In the course of seeking information so that I could better appreciate the practical situation that exists, I was able to see papers which demonstrated to me that the police in the course of their inspections did, in effect, gain some assistance in their detection work and inspection work through the present provision. In effect, quite a few worth-while cases have been successfully studied; and as a result, either a prosecution has been made or some correction has been made within the particular premises. That was as a result of the present records which are kept. In spite of the fact that names are not now incorporated, it is felt that if this provision were removed the task of the police assigned to this work would be more difficult. I do not think it is time to contemplate anything which will make any type of illicit trade any easier than otherwise might be the case. I do not think any members would want it to be made easier, particularly having regard for juvenile drinking. Anything we can do to prevent that being practised is worth while. If the system is a little cumbersome, I do not think that is too big a price to pay for some form of prevention.

The honourable member seems to be unaware of the considerable value which arises from keeping such records as are required by the present section, as amended in 1964. As a matter of fact, the honourable member has emphasised that his move is a desirable one in the opinion of the retail grocers' association, and does not appear to have any regard for the undesirable result of agreement with this Bill. In saying that, I am conscious of the fact that the honourable member expressed the view that the legislation in its present form had no particular value, and I would understand that he was sincere. However, I do tell the honourable member that as a result of the check which is available under the present provision in the Statute, there is a practical value.

Mr. Tonkin: Why keep this result to yourself?

Mr. COURT: I am not keeping it to myself.

Mr. Tonkin: You have not told us anything. You have stated that you have seen these things. What things?

Mr. COURT: I have said quite definitely that as a result of the present legislation it has been possible for officers engaged on this work to detect cases where there have been deficiencies in records of stock. Some of these cases would involve action if they were deliberate evasions of the law. Other cases, as has been the position for many years, only involve a critical study of the records and stocks with the co-operation of the proprietor. I think that members know enough about the methods used by the detection and inspection officers. They are not out to hound people. In most cases there is a commonsense working arrangement between those people and the proprietors in

the study of the records. The inspectors realise that those people do not have full-time bookkeepers, and records cannot be kept to the nth degree. In my experience the discrepancies are worked out, and if there is a satisfactory explanation given, it is accepted; and if not, there has to be a prosecution. It is as simple as that, and the present records can disclose deficiencies which assist the police in their work of supervising this legislation.

There are examples of the type of result which quite frequently occurs from the police inspection of gallon licensees' records, and the police view previously expressed last year was to the effect that it was highly desirable to retain the section of the Act as it was prior to the amendment in 1964.

Mr. Tonkin: Did they say why?

Mr. COURT: Because of the advantage of having the name of the purchaser. However, it does not mean to say that the deletion of this provision requiring the name made the section completely inoperative. I remind the honourable member that, at the time, the Government objected to the deletion of the provision about names, even though some people might have given fictitious names, as he suggested. At that time we objected to the deletion; but the Legislative Council and this Chamber agreed to modify the Bill and amend it. If Mr. Heenan had had his way the whole provision would have been removed as is now proposed by the honourable member.

I come back to my point. The police were emphatic that it would be stronger —that is, the Act—if the names of the purchasers had to be inserted in a book. But the fact that Parliament decided that names should no longer be recorded does not mean that the section is completely ineffective. After reviewing its practical effect, the Government is of the view that the present provision should be retained.

The books of gallon licensees are inspected quarterly by officers either from suburban or country police stations, or from the liquor inspection branch. This, like all forms of audit of this type, has both a moral and a practical effect. In addition, the Liquor Inspection Branch makes checks on books where it is suspected that a gallon licensee is breaching the law. A number of prosecutions are obtained from an inspection of the books, and the removal of the requirement by the gallon licensee to record sales, as has already been said, can only make the task of the police more difficult.

If the keeping of books by the holders of gallon licenses were abolished there would be no check on the amounts the gallon licensees sold, and the Licensing Act regarding them could not be enforced. Failure to insist on the keeping of books would also make it difficult to detect sales which take place off the licensed premises, an offence which, unfortunately, some gallon licensees—and I emphasise the word "some," meaning a minority—are prone to commit. This is one of the most serious offences and I am sure, knowing the honourable member as I do, that he would not wish to condone it; and I am assured that the present provision in the Statute assists in the detection of this type of trading.

The fact that the name is not now recorded would not, as was suggested by the honourable member, prevent the checking from being of the value mentioned previously. It is regrettable to have to say that some gallon licensees are constantly seeking ways and means to get around the requirements of their licenses, and nothing should be done which would make evasion more difficult to detect, and this applies particularly in regard to the sale of small quantities of liquor to juveniles. Even if the provision in the Act goes only part way to stop this sort of trading I think we should retain it, and it is perhaps a pity that the other words were removed.

I would like to point out that a number of gallon licensees are not retail grocers, as the honourable member suggests, and some are only token grocers. An inspection of gallon licensees' premises, particularly in parts of the metropolitan area, will show that instead of conducting a gallon license in conjunction with a grocery business, the whole of the shop area is given to the sale of liquor only. I do not think this was ever the intention when Parliament passed the original Statute—I can hardly imagine it was—but the fact remains that a number of these people have allowed liquor to become a predominant feature of their business. In many cases they have only a token grocery business run in conjunction with their gallon licences.

The honourable member's Bill, of course, does not deal with that particular aspect; it deals only with the question of records. The only other point dealt with in the honourable member's Bill is the question of the two-gallon license. It is true that a two-gallon license does not now exist, but this really does not justify an amendment. No difficulty is caused by the existing reference to two-gallon licenses, and I cannot see the value of removing this provision.

I am certain that if it is desirable—and it is, and the honourable member must also think it is—to retain the bookkeeping provisions for spirit merchants' licenses—in fact, I think he dealt with this specifically and did not advocate the removal of the bookkeeping provisions in respect of spirit merchants' licenses or brewers' licenses, most of whose sales are only wholesale to other licensees—it is desirable to retain the provisions for gallon licensees. The Government is opposed to the measure and I intend to vote against it.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.50 p.m.]: If ever I heard the Minister for Industrial Development struggling to put forward an argument it was just before he sat down on this issue. By no stretch of the imagination can I see the desirability of retaining the present set-up. I would probably agree with the Minister in saying that the present system should be continued if it were also provided that, with the selling of liquor, the names of the persons to whom it was sold had to be recorded. But what sense is there in the present provision?—because all that the gallon licensee has to do is record the fact that he has sold, for instance, nine bottles of wine on such-and-such a date, 10 bottles of beer on another date, and seven bottles of some other liquor on yet another date. It does not make sense. All it means is that the gallon licensee can check to see that his stock is correct. The Bill distinctly states that the holder of a gallon license—

> shall keep a book and shall enter therein forthwith, after every purchase by him of liquor, for sale under his license, the date of purchase, the quantity and kind of liquor purchased, and the name of the seller.

Surely that is fair enough if anyone wants to check on how much liquor the gallon licensee has. However, the Minister missed the point. If he is not prepared to tackle the problem of licensed premises selling liquor illicitly he should not buy into an argument like this. He, like other members, would know that many of these stores run telephone sales of liquor by referring one to a cool store with the number of a barrel and, as soon as that number is quoted, the barrel is passed on to the person buying it.

Unless the Minister is prepared to do something about illegal sales of liquor of this kind I cannot see any reason for continuing the present practice, because in my view the information available to the police now is useless. The Minister said he had instances of where this information had been of great value, but he did not quote even one case. Unless the names were entered alongside the sales of liquor it would be extremely hard to detect whether any illicit selling was being carried out.

Under the present set-up a gallon licensee would be mad if every now and again he did not write down in his books that he had sold so many bottles of this and so many bottles of that to cover himself. There is also the question of breakages. It would be almost impossible to conduct a successful case at law under the present arrangements or unless the gallon licensee were required to supply more information than is required at the moment.

Also, the law as it stands is almost impossible to police. If the Minister says it can be, then I say he is completely wrong because it is a practical impossibility. If that is so we should do the right thing and alter it. If we want to know how much liquor a gallon licensee is selling from time to time, and to whom he is selling it, the Minister for Police has other methods of detection, as he has with unlicensed premises which are selling liquor. These premises can be watched and people can be caught in illicit practices. But to assume that one could get the information one wanted from the books is completely wrong; and I defy the Minister for Industrial Development, with all his accounting knowledge, to bring a set of books here and determine whether a case could be taken at law—that is, using the method that is set down under the Act as it exists.

The proposal in the Bill that a gallon licensee shall record all his purchases is a far better proposition if the police want to know just how much is coming into and going out of a store; because if the gallon licensee purchased a certain quantity of liquor and he did not have that in his possession when his shop was inspected one could immediately say that so much liquor had passed through his hands and the police could watch to see whether it is being sold legally or not.

I do not know much about the other part of the Bill, but the Minister did not seem to think it was of much importance and he was not prepared to argue in regard to it. However, in respect of the gallon licensee, I think it is only complete humbug to insist on the licensee going through a procedure that means nothing at all. All he does at the moment is to put pencil to paper and write down the number of bottles sold. As a matter of fact, I imagine there would be a thousand and one ways for a person to get around the provisions in the Act. No doubt these people could pre-sell their liquor by book entry to make sure they were always in a good position; or, alternatively, every night they could enter up that they had sold so many bottles of liquor. That could be done as they were checking their stock after closing the store.

I cannot see how the present requirements in the Act can be carried out effectively, and I cannot imagine a gallon licensee, after he had sold seven bottles of beer, for instance, to one customer, saying to his next customer, "You will have to wait a moment while I write down that I have sold seven bottles of beer," and following the same sort of procedure after he had served that customer, with, for instance, six bottles of wine. That sort of thing would not happen unless there was a requirement in the Act that the customer's name had to be recorded. If that was required then, of course, the police could easily arrange for a pimp to go into a shop and buy some liquor. If it was found that the name was not recorded in the book the police would have

a legitimate case to take before the courts. However, as the Act stands now, there is no basis upon which a legitimate case can be taken. I support the Bill.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.56 p.m.]: Seldom have I heard a weaker argument than that put up by the Minister for Industrial Development—a weaker argument on any subject by anybody. The Minister's speech consisted wholly and solely of assertions.

Mr. Court: Oh no!

Mr. TONKIN: And assertions are not argument.

Mr. Court: It was a statement of fact.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister has followed the line of the department. For years retail traders have tried to obtain from the Police Department some reason why it wants to retain the present procedure.

Mr. Court: Why should the police tell them?

Mr. TONKIN: This afternoon I endeavoured to get some reasons but all I got was this—

> On an analysis the Government agrees with the authorities the provision has a practical value.

But the Minister did not tell us what that practical value was, and neither will the Police Department. It is all very well to say a thing has a practical value. But surely there is an obligation on the person asserting it to show what that practical value is; and I ask the Minister, or any member of the Government, to advance a single argument in proof of the practical value.

Mr. Court: But they found discrepancies through the application of the present law.

Mr. TONKIN: They found discrepancies! There are two classes of licensees—

Mr. Court: Do you want to make it easier to sell liquor illicitly?

Mr. TONKIN: —those who obey the law and those who want to get around it. Those who are obeying the law will faithfully enter up their books, because they have nothing to hide and nothing to fear. Those who want to evade the law will cook the books; and how will the police know?

Mr. Court: The police are not that dumb. They are experienced in this sort of thing. They have spent their lifetime at it.

Mr. TONKIN: The reason why Parliament agreed previously to delete from the law the requirement that the seller of liquor had to write the name of the purchaser in the books was that there was no guarantee, and there could never be a guarantee that the seller was writing the correct name in the book. How would he know he was being given the correct name? One does not have to produce one's birth certificate when one buys a gallon of liquor. A person goes into a retail grocer, and says, "I want a gallon of beer," and the grocer says, "I have to put your name in the book. What is your name?" The customer replies, "Mickie Dripping." What value would that be to the police? He could say it was Smith, Robinson, Jones, or anything else. Would the grocer say, "You prove to me that is your name. Where are your marriage lines?" Of course he would not!

So, in practice, the thing is useless. Without the name the writing of the figures is also useless, because the man who wants to trade illegally will sit down at the end of the day and say, "Now let me see. I sold one bottle there, two bottles there, and four bottles there. I will have to write that I sold six bottles; then I will write that I sold another eight bottles. Let me total that up. Yes, that is what I should have sold today." How will the police know he sold 14 bottles as 14 single bottles or as the requisite quantity? How will the police know by coming in once a quarter and reading those records?

Mr. Court: They do not only turn up on the quarterly check. They have their own methods.

Mr. TONKIN: The police would still not know any more, because the one who wants to trade illegally will make sure he has cooked his books satisfactorily. What silly fool who is breaking the law will deliberately write into his book that he has sold less than one gallon? Who will do that?

Mr. Fletcher: No astute businessman

Mr. TONKIN: So it must be assumed that if he makes an entry, and he is trading illegally, it will be a false entry. How will the police know it is false or otherwise? The police have no name to check by, or anything by which to check the date of the sale.

When the police have been asked, "What is the real reason for this?" they have adopted the method of the Minister and have said, "It has practical value." But they did not say what that practical value is.

Mr. Court: The smartie you are talking about is also smart enough to know that the police do not wait till the quarterly check to see how he is running his business.

Mr. TONKIN: For some reason or another the Minister wanted to associate this Bill with the desire of the holders of licenses to sell single bottles. It has nothing to do with the desire to sell single bottles.

Mr. Court: I only mentioned that in passing. These people are constantly pressing for easements.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister did that deliberately to create in the minds of members the impression that this measure was in some way related to the sale of single bottles. It is nothing of the kind. It has no relation to it in any shape or form.

Mr. Court: I never said it was. I said they are continually pressing for easements.

Mr. TONKIN: That is so; but this is no easement in the sale of liquor.

Mr. Court: It is intended to make life easier for them.

Mr. TONKIN: I repeat that this is no easement in the sale of liquor. This would save the time of the grocers and the time of the police. The Minister did not say a single thing which, in my opinion, justifies the waste of time involved in this question. The Minister said it would make it easier for some people to break the law. That is an assertion. The Minister did not say how it would make it easier for them to break the law. I want to know how it would make it easier for them to break the law.

I would like the police to say, or somebody on behalf of the Government to say, how this alteration of the law will make it easier for some people to break the law. It is all very well to make assertions—we get so many of them—but when one is called upon to back an assertion with some evidence it is a different proposition altogether. I say most definitely that this does not make it easier for people to break the law; and in support of my contention I would say that the gallon licensee must record the amount of liquor he purchases. If he wants to break the law, one of the only two ways in which he can break it is that he sells the liquor away from his premises; and is there anything to stop him from entering on his premises the quantity of liquor he sold off his premises? Not a thing in the world!

There is nothing to say he cannot take his records home and write them up. So a licensee who is selling liquor off his premises can simply record in his book that the liquor has been sold from his premises. How on earth does it make it easier for him to sell liquor that way, if we say he does not have to write it up? It is nonsense, in my view, to assert that it makes it easier.

If there were some check on the entries; if there were some audit of the entries, and some way of verifying the entries, there might be some sense in the Minister's argument. But there is no way to check this. A policeman could come in, take hold of the book and find that on the 9th January there was a sale of 14 bottles to blank; a sale of 11 bottles to blank; and a sale of 10 bottles to blank. How does that policeman know those sales were in right quantity, or in breach of the law? How could he know? Would the licensee tell him if he had broken the law? If the policeman interrogated the licensee and said, "Did you sell those quantities in the right quantity?" what answer do members think he would get? So of what practical value is it?

The Minister said this Bill would make illicit trading easier. That is an assertion: a pure assertion. The Minister never advanced a single argument to show how it would make illicit trading easier. Members in the House heard the same as I did, and I challenge any one of them to mention one argument in support of the contention that it would make illicit trading easier. Of course there is not one argument in support of that contention; and that is the whole weakness in the Government's case. If the Government has arguments, surely it is right and proper that the arguments should have been advanced and not just assertions made.

The Minister said that the taking away of this provision in the law would give undesirable results. That is an assertion. It is nothing more and nothing less than a straightout assertion. But did the Minister endeavour to give a single illustration of these undesirable results, or how they would occur? He did not give one.

I have been to many debates in my time and have heard school children debating a question for and against. They have always made some attempt to support their contentions or their assertions with evidence. But if we go through the whole of the Minister's case this afternoon against this proposed amendment, we find there was no evidence at all. What I would have expected the Minister to do was to say, "It would bring undesirable results, and these are a few of them. This has happened, or that has happened." But no; all the Minister said was that it will bring undesirable results.

Mr. Court: And so it would.

Mr. TONKIN: How?

Mr. Court: We are not going to take the legislation off for your satisfaction and try it out.

Mr. TONKIN: That is not an illustration.

Mr. Court: Of course it is! The fact that the legislation is there shows it has prevented some illicit trading.

Mr. TONKIN: How?

Mr. Court: Because it helps the police in their records.

Mr. TONKIN: More assertions! That is all we can get, and that is all the retail traders have been able to get.

Mr. Court: That was the only answer we got from your Government.

Mr. TONKIN: When an approach was first made to me in connection with this matter, I was impressed by the attitude of the representatives of the retail traders, because they said, "We object to this, because we think it serves no useful purpose. That is our strong belief, and we have tried over and over again to obtain from the Police Department some reasons why they want this retained, and we cannot get any." So we are asked to retain a provision in the law which is unduly irksome; but we are given no reasons why we should retain it. Any proposition at all should be supported by reasons.

I know this Government has got into the habit of doing things without reason, because it just uses its majority and gets away with it. Reasons are not necessary when the Government has the force. But surely on a question like this, if there are reasons, it is not too much to expect that they will be mentioned.

But for the Minister to get up and make assertions like, "It will have undesirable results;" and "It will make illicit trading easier," and that sort of thing, does not provide a reason at all. Anybody can say that. To justify the contention is an entirely different matter.

No doubt the Government will treat this as a party question, and use its numbers to defeat the amendment. It reminds me of what I have heard over many years to the effect that majorities prove nothing. They only decide questions; they only decide issues; and more often than not they decide them in the wrong.

If, however, there was a simple question which ought to be dealt with on its merits this is it. On the one side the retail grocers say it is irksome to have to do this; it is a waste of time; it is a waste of police time and it serves no useful purpose. In support of that contention they say, "The person who wants to trade illicitly can cook his books and keep on cooking his books, whereas a person who is not trading illicitly has to go through the labour unnecessarily."

On the other hand the Police Department and the Government assert that to take this provision away will bring undesirable results; but when they are asked to say how these undesirable results will occur, or what is the nature of the results, they can say nothing.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: There was one other provision in the Bill. Section 39 as it stands in the Act provides that the holder of a gallon license, a two-gallon license, a brewer's license, or a spirit merchant's license, shall do certain things. There is, however, no such thing as a holder of a two-gallon license, as this is no longer in existence.

When I approached the draftsman in connection with my proposal to amend the Act to remove the obligation which exists for a licensee to record his sales of liquor, the draftsman suggested to me that it would be wise to take advantage of the opportunity to tidy up this section and remove the reference to a two-gallon license as no such thing now exists. I thought that was pretty good reason for taking action, and that is why it is included in the Bill. If I understood the Minister correctly, he is against that, too.

Mr. Court: There is no particular significance in it one way or the other.

Mr. TONKIN: So it seems that the Government is determined to oppose whatever is in the Bill just because it comes from the Opposition. It is pretty obvious what is going to happen, but I cannot do much about it. However, I think it is something which the Government will live to regret because, for the life of me, I have been unable to obtain from anywhere any justification whatever for the retention of this provision in the law.

I repeat that the police have been asked over and over again, in a reasonable way, to submit a case as to why this requirement should remain, and all they will say is that it is necessary; and that is all the Government says, without giving any supporting argument at all. It comes down to this: The Minister says that to take this from the law will give undesirable results; and we have to accept the position. The reason is that he says so; and that is all the House has to go on. If we agree to this amending Bill, it will produce undesirable results because the Minister says so, and not upon any evidence whatever which has been advanced from any source.

I have never, in all my experience, heard a weaker argument supporting a proposed course of action, and I can only express my regret that the Government fails to deal with the question on its merits and simply takes up a position which is really untenable when we come to examine it, because it wants to use its numbers and prevent this desirable amendment from being made.

I leave the matter in the hands of the House. I have done all I can to explain the reason why this is desired and to show up the weakness in the Government's case. I can do no more. The question is now in the hands of the Assembly.

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

Ayes—15

Mr. Davies	Mr. Moir
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Toms
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Hawke
Mr. Kelly	*(Teller.)*

Noes—22

Mr. Brand	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Court	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Craig	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Grayden	Mr. O'Neil
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Hart	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Williams
Mr. Lewis	Mr. I. W. Manning *(Teller)*

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. May	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Evans	Mr. Burt
Mr. Rhatigan	Dr. Henn

Majority against—7.

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

SUPERPHOSPHATE: PRODUCTION AND USE

Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 15th September, on the following motion by Mr. Kelly:—

> That a Select Committee be appointed thoroughly to examine all aspects of superphosphate production, distribution, and use, the feasibility of extension of superphosphate manufacture to selected inland areas, and the future prospect for the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country centres.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [7.40 p.m.]: I rise to reply to the motion of the member for Merredin-Yilgarn; and I find—as he admitted when introducing it—that it is very similar to a motion introduced last year by the member for Boulder-Eyre except, of course, that he has included one or two other proposals.

The honourable member referred to the motion introduced last year, and I do not intend to criticise his remarks; but I would like to comment on the fact that although he criticised the Minister's reply last year—and he went to the trouble to work out how many minutes and seconds I took to reply—he spent most of the time when introducing this motion this year in commenting on something completely irrelevant to the motion.

Mr. Hawke: Who told the Minister that?

Mr. NALDER: Who told the Minister that?

Mr. Hawke: Yes.

Mr. NALDER: I read it myself in *Hansard*. I know I have not been back very long, but I have had an opportunity to casually look through the remarks made by the honourable member. He took about 2½ minutes to submit to the House the actual information on the motion, and to give the reasons he considered a committee of inquiry was necessary. The rest of the time he spent quoting cuttings from newspapers and making observations about the political parties, meetings in Merredin, and the like. I am not criticising the honourable member for that.

Mr. Kelly: Not much!

Mr. NALDER: He is quite at liberty to do that, but I was looking for some real information as to why this inquiry is necessary this year in comparison with the information that was available last year. I found very little information to indicate that there is any more reason this year for an inquiry than there was last year.

During his speech he obviously overlooked referring to a newspaper article which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 29th March this year. This article was very well written and covered the whole aspect of manufacture, storage, and the cost of superphosphate to farmers in Western Australia. The details given are very illuminating, and the conclusion arrived at by the writer of the article is that it appeared that super in Western Australia was the cheapest in this country.

Mr. Kelly: Who said that?

Mr. NALDER: The article was written by Chris Griffiths, and it appeared in *The West Australian* on the 29th March, 1965. That was the conclusion he reached after studying the whole of the ramifications of the cost of manufacture, distribution, and the like, including the addition of trace elements. He came to the conclusion that Western Australian superphosphate was the cheapest in Australia.

The facts disclosed in that article showed that because of the wide distribution of fertiliser works in this State, the weighted average cost of superphosphate was lower than elsewhere in Australia; and that was because of overall lower transport costs.

Western Australia has seven manufacturing centres of superphosphate; and I just want to compare the situation here with that in the other States, because it is well that we should know the position in this State. In Western Australia, as I have said, superphosphate works are situated at vantage points in the main ports around the Western Australian coast from Geraldton to Esperance. Superphosphate is manufactured at, and distributed from, those centres to the adjoining farming areas. These manufacturing works produce quantities ranging from about 50,000 tons a year—I am just giving this as the figure for Esperance, as I understand that is the approximate amount produced there—to the largest works in the metropolitan area that turn out approximately 200,000 tons. The seven manufacturing centres last year produced a total of some 972,000 tons of superphosphate.

I draw attention to the fact that the price quoted shows that the cost in Victoria is £5 19s. 6d. a ton at the works, as against the price charged in this State

of £7 6s. a ton; and the prices in all the other States were above the price in Western Australia.

It should be pointed out that the Victorian price of £5 19s. 6d. a ton is for superphosphate of 22 per cent. phosphoric acid content, as against 23 per cent. in this State. In addition, there were reports that the Victorian price was not remunerative to the manufacturers; and we now learn—this information came to me yesterday from that State—that the price has risen by 18s. a ton. This announcement was apparently made in Victoria yesterday. We all know that the price in Western Australia has risen by 13s. a ton, and it is said this is due entirely to the extra cost of landing sulphur here.

Even allowing for the new price increases and the difference in the phosphoric acid content, there is still a disparity; but it is not very much when we work it out. The one per cent. phosphoric acid content represents, possibly, £1; so there is the difference between the price quoted for Victorian super and the price quoted for Western Australian super.

It is well known that the cheapest superphosphate is obtained from works that produce a large quantity. There is no argument about this: the greater the output the lower the price. The works in Victoria—there are three of them—are operating close to one another in the one vicinity. So their output is much greater than the Western Australian output, and some consideration must be given to that aspect. I am informed that two of the works produce in the vicinity of 500,000 tons annually. This production must influence the actual price that is charged for the superphosphate from those works.

In Western Australia only one superphosphate manufacturing works produces anywhere near that amount; and it produces only half that quantity—200,000 tons. So we must accept this greater production as an advantage that the Victorian manufacturers have as compared with the Western Australian manufacturers.

The works in Victoria are manufacturing to total capacity. I have not heard what occurred this year, but last year there was a definite shortage both in Victoria and New South Wales: the consumption was greater than the production. By contrast the works in this State are spread along the whole of the coast that serves the agricultural areas of Western Australia from Geraldton to Esperance.

At this stage Esperance produces—the works have been in production for only a short period—in the vicinity of 50,000 tons per annum; and I think we must all agree that such a small quantity does not make for economic production. In spite of this, the fertiliser companies and the Government decided that these works were necessary to serve that area.

I wish to emphasise the importance of the present distributing and manufacturing centres of superphosphate to the farmers. Each one of those established in Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, Albany, and Esperance is sited so that the farming community can get their superphosphate on the basis of cheaper rates for transport. Because of this the farmers at Esperance—the latest centre established—are able to buy super at the same price as super users anywhere else in the State.

The costs have been averaged so that the farmers in the older-established areas where superphospate has been manufactured and distributed for many years are contributing in some way towards the additional cost that has been brought about by manufacturing a smaller quantity at a new centre; and I think, Mr. Speaker, you will agree that farmers in any of the older-established areas would be quite prepared to agree to this proposition; and it has been accepted over the years in respect of the establishment of works in centres other than the metropolitan area.

It is interesting to have a look at the cost of superphosphate in other countries. I wish to quote the prices of overseas superphosphate which I recently obtained. In Vancouver, Canada, the wholesale price for bulk superphosphate containing 19 per cent. phosphoric acid per short ton of 2,000 pounds was 53 Canadian dollars. If this is worked out on the basis of 23 per cent. phosphoric acid per long ton of 2,240 pounds, the price would be 72 Canadian dollars. Converted to Australian currency, this would be £30 6s. per ton. Inquiries in Bakersfield, California, U.S.A., on a similar basis gave a figure of £22 17s. per ton.

In Auckland, New Zealand, the price of bulk superphosphate ex works containing 20 per cent. phosphoric acid was £8 14s. New Zealand currency. On this basis, 23 per cent. phosphoric acid superphosphate would be worth £10 per ton which, converted to Australian currency, would be £12 10s. per ton; and this was prior to the announcement of the increased price of sulphur. When we consider these points it is interesting to note that we still have, probably, the cheapest superphosphate available to farmers in the world.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn mentioned the situation in respect of trace elements, and this is quite interesting. This matter was dealt with last year, and I make the point again that we cannot underrate the importance of the addition of trace elements to superphosphate. We have proved that so much of our land, which earlier was considered to be useless, is very valuable because of the application of trace elements to it. The application of trace elements has revolutionised the

situation in this State and has made available for interested land developers much more land than we would have been able to use previously, because of the economic position.

The most important trace element here is copper. Earlier we were able to supply our own requirements from copper that we mined in different parts of the State. However, because of the increasing usage of this element and because of the diminishing supplies of copper in Western Australia, we have had to look elsewhere for supplies. For many years our own copper ore served as the chief source of supply; but in 1950, after we began to increase the amount of land for development, it was found that our supplies of copper ore were gradually becoming depleted, and it became necessary for us to look for supplies elsewhere.

The demand for copper has increased the cost in Western Australia. We have had to look beyond the State for our supplies, and as a result it has been necessary to increase the cost of superphosphate which contains trace elements, and that increase has had to be passed on to the users.

Zinc prices also rose at the same time; and in Western Australia there has been an increase in the demand for urea. Several years ago this commodity was available at a very reasonable price because many production plants were being established in different parts of the world. While this situation continued there was an oversupply of urea and the price was very reasonable, and the commodity was readily available. Because of the increased demand here, however, it was not very long before that situation changed, and it was found that the cost rose and that the increase had to be met by the users of the fertiliser.

Returning to the point that was raised in the latter part of the motion moved by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, this reads as follows:—

> ... the feasibility of extension of superphosphate manufacture to selected inland areas and the future prospect for the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country centres.

In my opinion the situation in relation to that aspect has been adequately covered. In November of last year Cabinet gave full consideration to this proposal and appointed a subcommittee which investigated the details relating to the requirements of this State in the interests of decentralisation in particular, because that is a policy which is supported by this Government. Where it is at all possible, and when the economics prove that such a proposition can be put into effect, we give it every support.

The information covering this situation was collated; and it was felt that the position at this stage, with all the information available, would point to the fact that it would be premature to suggest to any person, company, or group of individuals, that it would be an economical proposition to establish another manufacturing depot in another part of the State. That does not indicate that conditions will not alter in a few years, but at present the circumstances suggest that it is uneconomical to establish another manufacturing depot at present. Because of the information that was collated, and because of further demands, the Government constituted another subcommittee to investigate the complete proposal that had been submitted to ascertain whether anything further could be produced in the light of additional information. That is the position as it now stands.

It has been said that the Government did not encourage anyone to establish another manufacturing unit elsewhere in the State. We have not said that this was not a reasonable proposal; we have only said that we proved that the economics of the situation were not sound. If anyone is desirous of establishing another manufacturing unit he is quite at liberty to do so.

The other proposal submitted by the honourable member was that it was advisable to consider the question of the establishment of bulk superphosphate depots in country centres. This is being considered right now. The Cabinet subcommittee had a meeting last Thursday with all interested parties and the proposals submitted by the manufacturers were considered and it was thought advisable that the Farmers' Union should be invited to give further consideration to the proposals that we are submitting and with that in view a meeting is to be held tomorrow to consider further the economics of establishing bulk depots in centres where superphosphate would be readily available to users.

Because of these factors I feel—and I think the Government supports me in this contention—that it would be quite unreasonable for the Government to agree to set up another committee to go over the same ground which I have described briefly to the House this evening; namely, to search around and to request members of this inquiring committee to seek out information which we already possess and which, in my opinion, will prove nothing more than that which I have been able to present here this evening, and which I announced last year; that is, that a committee of inquiry will not bring forth any more evidence to indicate that the cost of superphosphate in Western Australia at the moment is too high. In view of this I feel I have no other course than to oppose the motion put forward by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [8.5 p.m.]: In commencing his comments on the motion moved by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn the Minister said that last year he did not have sufficient information to warrant an inquiry being held. I do not think that statement fits in with the facts of the case, especially if one reviews the debate that was conducted last year; and, in particular, the speech made by the member for Mt. Marshall who, I consider, put forward a most adequate case for conducting a full inquiry into the manufacture of superphosphate. That honourable member went to a great deal of trouble to obtain facts and figures, and to ensure they were correct, and to quote information concerning other companies in the Eastern States.

For the Minister to say that there was insufficient information at that time to justify an inquiry being held is not quite correct, especially as this was followed up, at a later date, by the appointment of another committee to inquire into the same need. So apparently it was considered that a further investigation was warranted, and I am still of the opinion that such an inquiry would be desirable.

Another matter dealt with by the Minister was the cost of superphosphate in other countries. Whilst it was very interesting to hear all these costs it is more important to us in Western Australia to obtain superphosphate at the lowest possible price and at times which are most convenient and suitable to farmers. Therefore I fail to see how costs in other countries are relevant to this motion.

I think a committee appointed to inquire into this problem in Western Australia would have a tremendous task ahead of it to obtain the facts for which it was searching, because when one looks at the seven manufacturing centres and their position at present one finds that there is virtually only one company manufacturing superphosphate in Western Australia.

I will now deal with the manufacturing centres as the Minister dealt with them. Briefly, they extend from Geraldton to Esperance. We find that the Geraldton manufacturing company comprises the companies of Cuming Smith, B.P., and Farmers Fertilisers Limited, and I understand that they have equal shares in that holding company.

The same company operates at Fremantle, Picton, and Bassendean. At Bayswater there is Cresco Fertilisers Ltd. which is a separate entity and a public company in which shares can be purchased. The Albany Superphosphate Company, again, comprises Cuming Smith, B.P., Farmers Fertilisers Ltd. and, in addition Cresco Fertilisers Ltd. So at Albany we have a fourth company entering into partnership with the other three firms; and, of course, at Esperance the company which operates there is a subsidiary of the Albany superphosphate works.

So all those manufacturing companies are dovetailed one with the other and therefore are not likely to compete with one another. I agree that with the exception of the fertiliser works in Perth and Fremantle, all the others have regional zones in which they distribute manufactured fertilisers.

The business of manufacturing fertilisers is very lucrative because it is found, when one tries to buy shares in Cresco Fertilisers Ltd., that they are over double their par value, which is £1. For weeks and almost months now the shares have been at 43s., and recently they rose to 45s. I understand they rose to a figure considerably higher than that when a recent suggestion of a takeover was mooted. Is it likely that all these companies will divulge their profits and cost figures when they are not so required? They will, of course, make available all their costs and figures sufficient to keep one quiet.

Other factors which indicate that the business is quite lucrative are the rebates which the companies allow at certain times of the year. I will deal with this aspect a little later. If a fertiliser works establishment were developed in the inland a certain trade concession would be granted on raw materials for the manufacture of superphosphate because it is found that two-thirds of a ton of phosphate rock will manufacture one ton of superphosphate. Therefore there must be a considerable freight saving on the cartage of phosphate rock because two-thirds of a ton of phosphate rock will be carted for two-thirds of the price of the freight on one ton of superphosphate. Phosphate rock is much cheaper to transport because the manufactured article produces more bulk weight.

The cartage of phosphate rock can also be done by the railways at less cost, because it can be back-loaded during the wheat handling season, whereas most of the superphosphate has to be carted, as it were, out of season when wheat carting is not being carried out. Another point is that phosphate rock does not deteriorate. It can be stored readily and does not require any special protection. This is totally different from the manufactured article which could, I understand, be carted during the off season. Therefore it can be seen that there would be a considerable saving effected on the cartage of raw materials for the manufacture of superphosphate.

I believe that a co-operative venture in this line would be quite a success. This has been proved in the State of Victoria. That is one of the reasons why the price of superphosphate in Victoria is less than that in Western Australia. It is because

in Victoria there is a co-operative company by the name of P.I.V.O.T. which has over 20,000 shareholders.

When one reviews the speech made by the member for Mt. Marshall it is found that he mentioned that this particular co-operative company granted a rebate of 18s. a ton to all its shareholders and that a person holding £300-worth of shares obtained a rebate of £1,300 during the last 10 years, which is equal to a return of £130 per annum on an outlay of £300. So if one obtained a rebate of 18s. a ton and also a handsome rebate in addition, it would indicate that the whole business must be very lucrative.

When we consider the rebate granted by the companies it is found that the superphosphate companies in this State are prepared to pay a rebate during certain months of the year. On a quick reckoning, this rebate amounts to practically 10 per cent. It is found that for early deliveries at sidings in September the companies are willing to give a rebate of 16s. a ton and the railways will give 5s. rebate on their freight charges. In October, the rebate is 12s. a ton plus a railway rebate of 5s. a ton. In November the rebate is 10s. a ton plus a rebate of 5s. by the railways, and in December and January again the companies pay a rebate of 4s. a ton, and a 4s. rebate per ton is granted by the railways. Quite a saving can be made by purchasing supplies early; but for the saving to be made and for the companies to give away a considerable amount in order to get the superphosphate out, they must have a sufficiently large margin.

Regarding the establishment of bulk depots we have read the report which has been presented. It sets out the various costs to the companies for storing bulk superphosphate at various centres. In essence the cost to the companies is for the storage of 7,000 tons; that is, where they distribute 7,000 tons, the cost will be 14s. 9d. per ton. If the superphosphate is delivered into storage in the months of September and October, the companies have up their sleeves 21s.—made up of 16s. rebate which they normally pay out for early deliveries, and 5s. rail freight concession. If it is delivered into storage in November they will gain 17s., which is still above the cost of 14s. 9d. for storage and delivery from a bulk depot in any siding, provided the storage is in the vicinity of 7,000 tons.

This takes into consideration the fact that these companies build their own storage facilities, weighbridges, and so on, and that they allow for labour, depreciation, maintenance, fuel, electricity, insurance, and sundries. So all the items are covered. When we examine the rebates, it is unreasonable to assume that the cost would be any greater for superphosphate stored in country centres in company bins, than for superphosphate delivered from works, especially if the deliveries were beyond the time limit.

It is only natural that when an insufficient quantity of superphosphate can be stored in a siding, and is required in any district, the cost will go up, because the initial costs for the bins will not be very much different. We are told that in storing 5,000 tons of superphosphate at a siding the cost increases from 14s. 9d. to £1 0s. 4d. per ton; and that when the storage capacity drops to 3,500 tons the amount per ton is £1 8s. 9d., or double the cost for 7,000 tons stored.

I can see no reason why the Government is opposed to the holding of an inquiry into this question. The appointment of a Select Committee would not put the Government on the spot in any way; on the other hand, it would enable the Government to obtain information in many directions. The fact that over the past three years 79 questions have been asked in this House regarding superphosphate and its components—they were asked mostly by members on the Government side—indicates quite a bit of dissatisfaction on the delivery and price of superphosphate. The Select Committee proposed in the motion would be able to do a very useful job in delving into this problem which confronts all the farmers in the State. I support the motion.

MR. ROWBERRY (Warren) [8.19 p.m.]: I would like to say a few words on the last-mentioned proposition in the motion; that is, the future prospect for the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country centres. Considerable representation has been made to me during the superphosphate carting season by farmers whose operations have been held up, because their orders could not be met or because they were unable to take advantage of the rebate in price and the railway freight concession. They claim that in order to take advantage of the rebate and the freight concession they have to handle the superphosphate twice, by taking it off the rail and putting it in store, and then to take it out of storage when they decide to spread it on their paddocks. They say that the amount and the cost of labour for handling offset the advantage that accrues by accepting deliveries early.

I put this to the Minister: In the establishment of a bulk depot, if there is no financial advantage to be gained in accepting deliveries early—except that farmers have the super on hand for use whenever they require it—then why should not the reduction in price and the freight concessions be devoted to the building of the bulk establishment? If the superphosphate companies send superphosphate ex works to the bulk establishments in suitable country centres they should qualify

for the reduction in price and freight concession—in the same way as the farmers qualify. This would go a long way to providing bulk depots at country centres to enable farmers to take advantage of the availability of superphosphate at a time when they are free of other activities.

Mr. Nalder: Do you think farmers are prepared to pay the extra cost for the erection of country depots?

Mr. ROWBERRY: No; but instead of giving the farmers a reduction in price and freight concessions, the companies should devote the price rebate to the building of bulk establishments. By doing so the bulk centres would qualify for the rebate and concession by accepting superphosphate at times convenient to the companies.

Mr. Nalder: Someone would have to man the country depot, and machinery would have to be installed to handle the superphosphate.

Mr. ROWBERRY: That would be the position in any case. I am merely putting forward the idea that this could result in the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country areas. I was told by a farmer, and I do not think he was telling an untruth, that in order to take advantage of the price rebate and freight concession he has to handle the superphosphate twice, and as a result it is of no financial benefit to him. Taking him at his word, then instead of giving the reduction to the farmer, the money should be devoted to building bulk establishments at suitable country centres, which would then qualify for a reduction in price and freight. That would reduce the impact on the farmers in handling the superphosphate twice. I leave that thought with the Minister, and I hope he will put it before the Cabinet subcommittee. Anything which this House can do to reduce the impact of the cost to farmers should be done. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Hart.

PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee, etc.

Resumed from the 6th October. The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Graham in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after clause 3 had been agreed to.

Clause 4: Section 12 amended—

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The member for Balcatta sought to amend the Act in certain particulars, and the Government has agreed to all of them with the exception of one. There has been some discussion of this point at the Committee stage. The member for Balcatta has asked me to consider further the proposition and the amendment which he has advanced, and as a result I have placed on the notice paper an amendment to clause 4. I have discussed this amendment with the member for Balcatta and he has indicated that it suits his purpose, and that he does not propose to proceed with the one in his name.

Section 12 of the Act provides for the registration of painters in three particulars. Firstly, a person must pass the prescribed course of training and examination, and have practical experience as laid down by the board, or as laid down by the Court of Arbitration for apprentices; secondly, he is a member of an association of painters recognised by the Master Painters' Association of Australia; thirdly, he has in some place other than Western Australia obtained a degree of proficiency as a painter which the board may evaluate, before registering him, if his standard is comparable with the standard applying in Western Australia. It is the second of these legs to which the Government takes exception, and my amendment deals with the point.

As the Act now stands registration can be effected only if the applicant has passed the prescribed examinations in some place other than Western Australia or has gained a standard of proficiency which is recognised by the board. But there remains the painter who operates outside the metropolitan area, which is the area covered by the Act. The country painter who has obtained a standard of proficiency which the board may recognise is unable to be registered, because he does not come from another part of Australia. That is an anomaly, and my amendment seeks to rectify the situation.

I agree with the principle that country painters should be eligible for registration, on a par with painters who come from other parts of Australia and who have a similar standard of proficiency, provided the standard is recognised by the board, but they should not be eligible for registration merely because they are members of the association. I therefore move an amendment—

> Page 2, lines 26 to 30—Delete all words after the word "for" down to and including the word "Australia" and substitute the following words:—
>
> "paragraph (b) of subsection (1), the following paragraph:—
>
> (b) was at the date of the commencement of this Act and is at the time of the application engaged outside the metropolitan area referred to in section three of this Act in the occupation of a painter or as a supervisor of painting as the whole or a part of his means of livelihood; or."

Mr. GRAHAM: I thank the Minister for his remarks and his agreement to the insertion of the words he has proposed, which substantially meet the point I raised. I can appreciate that those who were at the time of the coming into operation of this Act carrying out their painting activities in the metropolitan area, as defined in the Act, have had their opportunity of being registered; and if they missed the bus that was their fault. But there was no requirement for those in the country districts to be registered; and working on the assumption that the Master Painters' Association is a responsible and reputable body, which would be hardly likely to embrace as members any master painters in the country districts unless they met the standards required of them, I would assume there would be very few likely to be affected.

Nevertheless, I feel this gives a good measure of justice to those who, for their own good reason, found it expedient to seek to continue their trade in the metropolitan area as against the country districts where they had been operating previously, but with the requirement that they must have been so engaged in the country at the time of the coming into operation of the Act. I have no objection to the amendment submitted by the Minister.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with an amendment.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COASTAL SHIPPING COMMISSION BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

CITY OF PERTH PARKING FACILITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [8.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is before us in pursuance of an undertaking which I gave several weeks ago when we were considering legislation to amend the Local Government Act. Members will recall that in 1956, when the City of Perth Parking Facilities Act was approved by Parliament, it was then—because of the terms of that legislation—obviously the intention of Parliament that all proceeds from parking stations and parking facilities should be placed in a separate fund to be used for the extension of parking facilities; that is, when costs had been met in connection with those facilities already established.

For a period of some eight or nine years that has been the order of the day and has received general approval and acceptance from various authorities, including the Royal Automobile Club, which as spokesman for motorists, correctly interpreted, I feel, the wish of motorists. However, in 1960, Parliament agreed to a most voluminous Statute known as the Local Government Bill, which now has force and operation as the Local Government Act.

That Statute permits, subject to approval of the Minister in respect of certain detail, any local authority to provide parking facilities off-street as well as on-street; to install parking meters, and the rest of it; but there was no requirement whatsoever for a separate parking fund and for any of the proceeds and for charges or fines or other income to be used for parking purposes. In other words, the local authority could have a parking scheme and all the net proceeds could be utilised—as I indicated when previously debating this matter—for the purpose of building a swimming pool for the people in the district.

My view in 1956 was, and has been ever since, that the proceeds of parking should be used for parking purposes and works associated therewith, and for nothing else. However, this Parliament by a majority in both Houses, and with the full approval of this Government, agreed only in part with that proposition when I sought that what applies in the City of Perth area should apply in the districts of every other local authority in the State.

It is now my wish that what applies elsewhere should apply in the case of the City of Perth. This Parliament, within the past several weeks, has agreed that moneys received from parking charges can be used for the purpose of acquisition of land, buildings, and other structures, for the provision, by means of street widening, of parking facilities, metered zones and metered spaces, and for the regulation and control, by that means, of the parking and standing of vehicles within any parking region.

In other words, it will allow proceeds from parking charges to be used to purchase land and buildings and pay the cost of widening roads, ostensibly for the purpose of making additional parking facilities available. That is something which is denied the Perth City Council at the present moment.

Mr. Craig: Has the Perth City Council made a request?

Mr. GRAHAM: No. Here let me interpolate that there is no obligation, even with the passage of this legislation, on the Perth City Council to use any of its

moneys for these purposes; but I desire it shall be placed in exactly the same position as the other local authorities, so that, if it wishes to widen any road for the purpose of vehicle parking, then it shall be permitted to do so.

Mr. J. Hegney: Equal application of the law.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. I believe there is a total of 146 local authorities in Western Australia and, in my view, it is fantastic that we should establish principles that will apply in respect of 145 of them and have an entirely different conception in respect of the other one. The principle is either right or it is wrong; and a democracy accepts the majority decision of Parliament; and Parliament, not the member for Balcatta, has decided that the 145 local authorities should have the power to do this if they wish. I am suggesting, therefore, that the Perth City Council should be permitted to use money for that purpose if it so wishes and desires.

Let us remember at all times that it is not as though the City of Perth is an isolated centre, but it borders other local authorities where the middle of the street is the municipal boundary. Surely it would be ridiculous if a street were widened on one side from parking proceeds and the cost of widening on the other side of the street came from ordinary funds of the local authority. I feel no objection should be raised to this provision.

The other amendment is similarly designed to make the legislation conform with the decision of Parliament so recently made—namely, within the last week—that moneys received by the parking authority —it would be the local authority—by way of fines and other penalties should not be required to go into a parking fund, but that these moneys might be used for any purpose by the local authority. True, these profits could be used for parking purposes or the provision of further parking facilities; but on the other hand, they could be used for whatever purpose the local authority deemed fit.

This principle, again, has been laid down by this Parliament, and it is to apply in the case of 145 local authorities. There is one exception, and it is my desire that this exception should be made consistent with others. For anyone to argue against the two propositions contained in this Bill, condemns him for the attitude he adopted within recent weeks. All the facts and circumstances are fresh in our minds and I do not anticipate that there could be any logical opposition to the measure. For that reason I commend the Bill to members for their support.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Craig (Minister for Traffic).

STATE HOUSING DEATH BENEFIT SCHEME BILL

In Committee, etc.

Resumed from the 12th October. The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 11: Delegation by Commission of its powers—

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after the clause had been partly considered.

Mr. O'NEIL: As I promised last evening, I have had the matter as to whether this clause is a necessary part of the Bill, inquired into. I did point out that it was an opinion that perhaps the authority to operate the provisions of this Act should be given by way of clause 11 to enable officers of the commission to carry out the functions required of them. This has been determined as not being the case. Officers may do things in the name of the commission, and I propose that the Committee vote against clause 11 and have it deleted from the measure.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 12 to 16 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with an amendment.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1965-66

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 12th October, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

Vote: Legislative Council, £20,039—

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [8.50 p.m.]: In the absence of anybody else to take up the cudgel on this debate, I will unexpectedly be the next to speak on the Estimates, after having to hurriedly accumulate some material on the subject.

The Treasurer will remember my asking a series of questions relative to the deterioration of money values. The Treasurer, like everyone else, gets less value for the money now available. We have to ask ourselves why and the obvious answer is inflation. I have endeavoured to point out, on previous occasions, that the Government is on a treadmill in this respect, as is the Federal Government. It just cannot overcome inflation. In effect, it cannot apply the brake.

A member: Which Estimates are you speaking to?

Mr. FLETCHER: I am speaking to the Annual Estimates. I am sure that you, Mr. Chairman, would have called me to order if I had been again speaking on the Loan Estimates. I will be frank enough to admit that I did make this mistake on one occasion when I rose to speak a second time on the Loan Estimates.

A member: You learnt your lesson.

Mr. FLETCHER: It was not a case of learning my lesson; it could happen to anybody in this House. However, our very attentive Chairman has not called me to order. I was mentioning the need for control, and I asked a question along those lines. Just as we have to control a vehicle, so we have to control our economy. Just as our mothers and wives have to control the economy of the home, intelligently, and impose controls to ensure that the economy is properly handled, so does this Government—and also the Federal Government—have to impose controls on those who step out of line to the detriment of the people.

I asked why the State, on a State and Federal basis, was not subject to control. In trying to be helpful in this respect, on the 16th September I asked—among other things—the following question of the Premier:—

(1) With a view to curtailing inflation, will he consider legislation to enlarge the arbitration machinery to determine maximum charges for goods and services on a similar basis to that used to determine the maximum price at which the general working community can charge for their time and labour?

(2) If not, what grounds of equity or justice permit price control on the latter—

that is, the price at which the general working community can sell its labour; and the question finishes—

while ignoring the former?

The Premier replied, "No", to the first part of the question. He would not consider enlarging the arbitration machinery, as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition the other evening.

This is not a conspiracy between the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Fremantle. We on this side of the House can see the situation. That is what causes this type of answer. When I asked if the Premier would impose these controls, he replied that the arbitration machinery was not designed to fix the price for labour, but to determine the minimum wage. The Government holds the view that natural competition is an effective price determining medium for goods and services within the community. In effect, the same old shibboleth: competition under private enterprise controls prices. We have seen what has happened over the years as regards inflation.

In the Premier's reply there is no reference at all to my comments in relation to justice or equity; no reference at all. After thinking about it for a week and trying further to be helpful to the Premier and the State, I again asked a relevant question on the 21st September, which was as follows:—

Adverting to the reply to part (2) of question 4 of the 16th September, to the effect that "the Government holds the view that natural competition is an effective price determining medium for goods and services within the community," and having in mind that the State basic wage is increased some months after a proven increase in the cost of living—

I repeat, after a proven increase in the cost of living—

on what grounds or to what reason does he attribute the inflationary spiral since the present Government's uninterrupted term of office since 1959?

Mr. Brand replied that it was for the same reason that costs increased when price fixing applied to this State.

This answer was not good enough for me, but I could understand the Premier's curtness; and anybody who analyses that reply of his will admit that it is a curt reply. I know why it was a curt reply: because the subject is a touchy one, particularly to the interests in St. George's Terrace. However, not to needle the Premier, but to illustrate the injustice which I have mentioned, I refer to a third question which I asked on the 5th October, as follows:—

In his reply on Tuesday, the 21st September, that "costs increased when price fixing applied to this State," is he alluding to—

(a) the Commonwealth wartime control of prices—

I would remind the House that in reply to earlier questions the Premier made reference to the fact that prices still rose while price control existed. To continue the question—

or

(b) State legislation regarding unfair trading and monopolies and restrictive trade practices?

Let me interpolate here to state that was the first piece of legislation taken from the Statute book when I came to this House in 1959, and was removed by whom? Removed by this Government. I ask: What has happened since in relation to the inflationary spiral? No wonder the Premier is short of money for essential purposes.

I went on further to ask—

(2) If his reply relates to 1(a) — which was in regard to the Commonwealth wartime controls—

—is he aware that it is generally accepted that prices and wages were never more stable than during the war years?

The next question was —

(3) If his reply relates to 1(b) — which was the unfair trading legislation that existed —

—is it not a fact that during the currency of this legislation prices of goods and services could be

increased by wholesalers, retailers and others to any level short of being liable to penalty under the legislation mentioned, whereas on the other hand minimum wages were fixed quarterly by the Arbitration Court?

That was the unfair trading and restrictive trade practices legislation. Prices could be raised until somebody objected to them and took a case to a magistrate who was appointed to hear cases regarding these injustices. However, as a consequence, very few people took this action and prices continued to rise; whereas, as I have stated, minimum wages were fixed quarterly by the Arbitration Court. Therefore, surely there was justification for my asserting that since the Arbitration Court fixed wages why should it not be enlarged to fix prices for goods and services also.

The fourth question I asked reads as follows:—

(4) Since strict court control applied to price of wages and not to prices of goods and services, does he attribute inflation to the influence of those in receipt of wages, salaries or pensions or those having goods and services for sale?

The Premier replied —

(1) to (4) It is quite clear that, in general terms, prices have continued to rise more or less, both during World War II and after, and that this has occurred irrespective of whether price controls were imposed. In consequence, the Government is not satisfied that price control provides the answer to these problems.

I note the Premier says "more or less." He is right: it is "more or less." However, I submit that during the currency of the wartime controls any increase was infinitesimal. I am old enough to remember that period. I am old enough to remember the control that existed during the war years and who, in the subsequent years, continued those controls to the advantage of Australia as a whole. I am also aware that this control was anathema to business interests and so the Chifley Labor Government was defeated in order to destroy those controls—

Mr. Dunn: By whom?

Mr. FLETCHER: —which had maintained a safe and stable economy.

Mr. Dunn: Because the people did not want it.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will deal with that later. I submit that inflation, as distinct from minor increases during that period, has been meteoric since 1949 on a Federal basis, and since 1959 on a State basis.

Mr. Dunn: For what reason?

Mr. FLETCHER: For the reasons I have outlined; and, in answer to that ridiculous interjection, and particularly in view of the case I have submitted, I would remind the honourable member that wages are increased every three months only after a proven situation has existed—that the cost of living has increased. I am surprised at the ignorance of the member for Darling Range on this subject. He insists on putting the cart before the horse. I am showing where the horse should be. The horse is the equivalent of rising prices and he is right out in front and wages, like the cart, drag along behind.

Mr. Brand: This happens in Tasmania doesn't it?

Mr. FLETCHER: That state of affairs has existed federally since 1949 and it is quite evident to those who study these things.

Mr. Court: It is just as well you are not talking to the Bills introduced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition or you would be called to task.

Mr. FLETCHER: I should now like to quote an example that touches on country areas, including the area represented by the member for Darling Range, and the economy of the State as a whole as a consequence of no controls. Let me say, too, that I do not ask questions in this House merely to establish a record regarding the number of questions asked. I ask them for a specific purpose—not to get the usual ridiculous replies that I do get, but I require material I can use on occasions such as this. I asked the Premier the following question on the 6th October, 1965:—

(1) Is he aware—

(a) of the 5th October, 1965, *The West Australian* comment: "Dispute Threatens Meat Sales to U.S.";

(b) that overseas shipping companies are demanding 10 per cent. increase in shipping freights to U.S. markets as from the 1st November, 1965, with prospects of further increases early next year?

That is on top of the 10 per cent. that the shipping companies threatened us with. To continue—

(2) Will he at the next Premiers' Conference urge all State Premiers to prevail upon the Federal Government to establish a Commonwealth shipping line as an urgent necessity to—

(a) counter the existing overseas shipping line monopoly by creating competition;

Competition that this Government alleges it believes in.

(b) ensure that farmers' produce is not priced off overseas markets;

(c) assist the W.A. economy;

(d) assist Australia's adverse trade balance;

A period of nearly 12 months has shown the disparity between exports and imports. I can see the member for Roe appreciates my comments and my efforts to help the pastoral industry and the State as a whole.

Mr. Hawke: The member for Darling Range looks confused now.

Mr. Williams: You can't blame him.

Mr. FLETCHER: I thought the last interjector had more intelligence than that.

Mr. Brand: That was the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. FLETCHER: No; it was not. I heard the sensible comment of the Leader of the Opposition. He said that the member for Darling Range was looking askance, or something to that effect, and the Minister for Industrial Development, I suspect, said, "I am not surprised" or something like that.

Mr. Brand: He never opened his mouth.

Mr. FLETCHER: Then it was the Premier.

Mr. Court: I get the blame for enough as it is.

Mr. O'Connor: You ought to apologise.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not apologise. I have plenty of time.

Mr. Brand: So have we.

Mr. FLETCHER: The final reason I gave for asking the Premier to urge the various State Premiers to assist in the establishment of a Commonwealth shipping line was as follows:—

(e) assist to prevent economic domination from an overseas source.

Intelligent members would realise what I meant by that part of the question.

Mr. Dunn: Then we don't.

Mr. Hawke: You have struck the member for Darling Range right out now.

Mr. FLETCHER: Intelligent members in this Chamber who read economic matters as distinct from sport, or who is going to win the football, or the next race, would realise what I am talking about. Those intelligent members would know, for example, that Canada is economically dominated by a near neighbour as a consequence of investment in Canada; and I am concerned about a similar overseas domination of our economy existing here as a consequence of what I have just outlined. I hope that elementary explanation is sufficient for the intellect of the unruly interjectors from the other side. In answer to my question the Premier replied as follows:—

(1) Yes.

(2) The situation is being closely observed and the Government will take whatever action it considers necessary at the appropriate time.

In other words, he is telling the member for Fremantle to mind his own business; he is saying in effect, "Mind your own business! This side of the House runs the show and it is none of your business to ask questions of that nature."

Mr. Brand: I did not say that at all.

Mr. FLETCHER: I know that, but I am sure it was the implication of the reply.

Mr. Brand: I have never been that discourteous.

Mr. FLETCHER: I now wish to read briefly from a Press comment in *The West Australian* of the 12th October, 1965. It is relevant to meat exports and the heading is "Beef Exports Could be Doubled: Expert" and reads as follows:—

> The long-term prospects of Australia's beef industries are bright.

Bright for whom? Bright for the shipping companies, I would suggest. To continue—

> There is now enough world demand to take double the present volume of Australian beef being sold on overseas markets, and at good prices.

Good prices for the shipping lines. The farmers who produce it get what St. George's Terrace and the shipping lines leave. To continue the article—

> This is the opinion of the London chairman of a leading Australasian firm of meatworks operators and exporters.
>
> He is Mr. A. M. Borthwick, chairman of Thomas Borthwick and Sons (Australasia) Ltd., who arrived in Brisbane today to inspect his company's works in Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria.

I heard the Minister for Police more or less apologising for quoting from Press comments. I make no apologies for quoting from them because, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said this evening, it is of no use getting up with a spurious argument: one must quote some authority to support one's contentions; and since my contentions are so unsatisfactory to the other side, to the extent that I notice the members on the front bench invariably move out immediately I get up to speak—

Mr. Dunn: They are still there now.

Mr. FLETCHER: As I said, I make no apologies for quoting from Press comments, and as members opposite will not accept my opinion I ask them to accept an expert opinion—in this case it is the opinion of Mr. A. M. Borthwick. I ask members: Is this article an answer to the

question of whether a Commonwealth shipping line should be established to assist farmers and the State generally; and was I not justified in asking the Premier to join with other Premiers in seeking its establishment?

Mr. Hawke: You could also quote what the Federal Treasurer said.

Mr. FLETCHER: I could; but, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, he did a very smart back-flip immediately overseas shipping lines took him to task for it. He immediately qualified his earlier remarks. I note the Leader of the Opposition also reads the paper intelligently. I only wish others did, too.

Mr. Hawke: I think the Lord of the Ports might have put pressure on him.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is quite possible; and look at the grandiose title he has received as a consequence!

The Press is quoted as saying that the associated habitation provided would not be suitable for his accommodation. Even if it were only half the existing standard, I submit it would, and it would serve him right, particularly in view of what he has done to this country's economy. I ask the House to consider what no controls have done to freights in the manner I have outlined on a Federal basis. We are in a similar position on a State basis.

Mr. Brand: You want to put better controls on the wharves.

Mr. FLETCHER: In reply to the Treasurer's interjection, it is quite obvious that the Federal Government detested the competition that existed in the days when there was a Federal overseas shipping line. When competition was established the Government sold the shipping line and destroyed the competition that this type of Government alleges it believes in.

I will give a parallel of what has happened on a State basis. During my brief time here the present Government has sold the State Building Supplies. It is a wonder the Minister for Industrial Development has not said, "Do not resurrect that." I resurrect it to show that any Government trading concern that exists is anathema to the interests that this Government represents, so it unloads such concerns among its friends to the detriment of the community and, in the process. destroys the competition in which it is alleged to believe.

Relevant to my earlier comment in relation to the control of wages, but none on goods and services, I would again make reference to the Press to support my contention of what could happen when there is control of the price at which the working community, including salaried people. can sell their labour, but when there is no such control on goods and services. I would refer the House to the *Daily News* of the 6th October, 1965. I think it is worth reading these few paragraphs. Under the heading "Myer's Record Profit," we find the following:—

> Myer Emporium Ltd. today reported the highest profit ever earned by an Australian retailer.

This is also pertinent to the comment of the Leader of the Opposition the other night in regard to the sky being the limit where profits are concerned, and in regard to there being a clamp down on the wages I have mentioned. To continue—

> The company disclosed a group net profit of £5,964,338. . . .

Near enough to £6,000,000 in anybody's language. It goes on to say—

> . . . for the year ended July 31st—a rise of 15 per cent. on the previous year.
>
> This compares with a profit of £5,277,161 in 1963-64 and £4,804,281 in 1962-63.

So it has gone from £4,000,000 to £5,000,000 and then to £6,000,000.

Mr. Dunn: The value of the pound has changed.

Mr. FLETCHER: It has also changed for the unfortunate who gets so little in his pay envelope. To continue—

> Directors also announced in today's preliminary report that consolidated sales of the group rose from £121,696,053 to £133,243,860.
>
> The ordinary dividend already announced, has been raised from 16⅔ per cent. to 17½ per cent.

I know members on that side of the House would be very happy to have shares in anything that would return them 17½ per cent. But let us consider what it is doing to people whom we on this side of the House represent. The article continues—

> Myer's closest profit rival in the latest financial year was G. J. Coles and Co. Ltd., which showed a consolidated net profit of £4,100,000 for the year to January 26.
>
> Woolworths was next with a profit of £3,300,000 to January 31 last.

I need not read any more, but I quote those figures to show members the tremendous profits that have been made on capital outlay. It is nothing to smile about. I know who pays. Members on the other side, by and large, are not very interested, though those who represent particular electorates should have some appreciation. As I said earlier, the House does not like my analysis of the situation, but here is an analysis contained in the *Daily News* of the 6th October, 1965. This even rated a subleader of the same date which says, in part, under the heading "Prosperity—a Myth"—

> Many Australians must be longing for a return to the bad old days.

The trouble with the current dose of supposed prosperity is that most of us can't afford it.

To continue—

The relative decline of living standards and the appalling slump in matters such as education don't appear to square with pie in the sky propaganda.

This is unusual comment to be coming from a newspaper which supports the Government. One would expect it from the member for Fremantle. But I make no apologies for quoting this material. To continue—

Yet for most Australians real prosperity is a myth.

Their standard of living has been slipping over the past 15 months.

I submit it has been slipping over the past 15 years on a Federal basis. The extract continues—

Only two classes of people have been relatively untouched by these increases —the very rich and the unmarried, teetotal, non-smoking cyclists living in low-cost housing without telephone or television.

I could add to that by suggesting that perhaps beachcombers could be included. If I were to quote figures they would be considered suspect, but I will quote them from the article I have mentioned. It is as follows:—

The purchasing power of the average W.A. wage-earner has been seriously cut by a chain of increased Government taxes in the past 15 months.

The latest in a series of financial blows came yesterday with a new scale of increases contained in the State Budget.

That is why I am on my feet: to discuss the State Budget. To continue—

These increases will cost the average West Australian at least 3s. a week, according to *Daily News* calculations.

Not the calculations of the member for Fremantle—

[The Trades and Labour Council today assessed that the cost would ultimately be much more.]

The latest W.A. taxes come hard on the heels of Federal Budget increases costing the average wage earner about 12s. 1d. a week.

And little more than a year ago the previous Federal Budget brought increases estimated to cost an additional £1 1s. 5d. a week.

It all adds up to an increase of £1 16s. 6d. a week in direct and indirect State and Federal taxes in only 15 months.

Against this the Commonwealth basic wage has remained unchanged at £15 8s.—over the same period—meaning a serious loss in living standards for those in that income group.

I interpolate here to point out that that is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition said on behalf of the people of this State the other evening. I know that what is left of the front bench is not interested in this, but those on this side of the House are. To continue—

In the same period the State basic wage has risen only 9/10 a week to £15/17/10—representing a net loss in this respect of £1/6/8.

These figures take no account of steep increases in essential commodities and services over the past year.

PLIGHT

If the position of the basic wage earner is grim, the plight of skilled and white collar workers is not much better.

Particularly have I risen on this score for and on behalf of the skilled and unskilled worker. I am very pleased to see that the paper has also taken up their cause. It continues—

Average weekly earnings of adult males in Australia last year—just before the Federal Budget—were £26/0/2.

That does not allude to tradesmen, but it is an overall average. I assume it even includes our own salaries. They are thrown into the melting pot to create an average. To continue—

This year, before the Federal Budget, they had risen to £27/9/1—leaving a deficit on Federal taxes alone of 4/7 a week.

In Western Australia average weekly earnings last year were £23/8/- and they rose this year to £25/7/6—an increase of £1/19/6.

But before West Australians start whooping at their apparent gain of 3/- a week they should remember that prices of most essential commodities have risen far in excess of that amount.

Bread and milk prices were increased recently. Newspapers cost more. Bus fares went up and car insurance rates will be substantially increased next month.

In all, the average man who finds himself only £1 or so out of pocket each week after the past year of great prosperity, is fortunate indeed.

These are some of the increases which the working man has keenly felt in the past 15 months:

- Two increases in personal income tax.

Extra duties on beer, cigarettes (Twice) petrol, cheques.

Car registration and Licence fees are up.

Telephone charges, television licences and telegram costs have all gone up.

In the private sector housing costs and the over-all cost of living have gone up and up and up.

I suggest to the House that it is quite safe for this paper to criticise now, because there is no election pending.

Mr. J. Hegney: You are right there.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is the position; there is no election pending, and the public memory is short.

Mr. Hawke: I think the *Daily News* has a new editor.

Mr. FLETCHER: I think it must have. I often wonder why we stand up in all sincerity here and make pleas for and on behalf of our people when there are empty galleries in this House. There is nobody here to listen to what we have to say, including the very few on the other side of the House.

Brand: Look how your own benches are packed!

Mr. FLETCHER: I expected that comment. Members on this side are away preparing material to later fire back at the Treasurer.

Mr. Brand: Very fiery material.

Mr. Hawke: That has quietened the Premier.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will again quote an authority of greater consequence and greater ability than the member for Fremantle. I quote from the *Daily News* of the 4th September, as follows:—

> This week a leading authority on social problems warned that W.A. is in danger of creating a "new class" of poor people. Professor Eric Saint head of the W.A. University Department of Medicine said Perth's phenomenal growth would bring big problems for the under-privileged.

This gentleman whose name has just been mentioned is very active on the social service council of this State. I have attended meetings of a medical nature and a social service nature at which he has been present and it would do members good to hear the ability and sincerity of this man on problems of this kind as they affect the little man—the working man and the man in the street.

As I say, I am glad someone else has raised this matter. When I do, those on the front bench opposite seem invariably to find urgent business elsewhere. The article is by John McIlwraith and among other things he quotes Professor Saint as having said—

> Housing provides a vicious circle for low-income families—if they pay high rents, they cannot save to buy a home.

Further down the article reads—

> Most builders say a couple would need £1,500 either in cash, or cash and land to that value, to buy a home.

Let me interpolate here to ask this question: How many times have I said this to those on the other side who do not appear to care? The article continues—

> But there is another vicious circle involving the children of poorer-paid couples.
>
> Says Dr. Roy Adam, of the W.A. University's faculty of education: "Equality of opportunity is the great Australian myth."

We have heard that word before this evening. Continuing—

> In a paper he presented to the Australian College of Education conference in Brisbane, he said: "Some children have less opportunity than others to reach full stature."
>
> These would include children whose parents do not or cannot read books, children who live in the overcrowded districts of big cities and children whose parents have recently migrated to Australia.

I ask members to listen to this—

> Dr. Adam quotes a survey which shows that only two per cent. of the sons and one per cent. of the daughters of unskilled or semi-skilled men go to Australian universities.

Let me interpolate here again to say that here is a tragedy. I have told members here before how in my own electorate I have written testimonials for boys and girls of a tender age with a potential intellectual ability beyond my own, so that they could go out to work to augment the inadequate economy of their households. That is not only a loss to those children; it is a loss to the State, and that is why I speak on this theme. The article continues—

> The sons and daughters of professional people are more fortunate—25 per cent. of the sons and 18 per cent. of the daughters enter university.

Do members see the disparity in the figures? I ask the Premier: Does he see it? On the one hand 25 per cent. of sons and 18 per cent. of daughters of professional people enter universities, while on the other hand only 2 per cent. of the sons and 1 per cent. of the daughters of skilled or semi-skilled workers attend universities. The doctor is quoted as saying—

> The proportions have little to do with natural ability.
>
> The same survey suggests that many children who leave school before completing a high school education would have the intelligence to study at university.

Many of these school leavers were in the top third of their class.

That bears out exactly my comments made this evening and which I have made here before. I will not quote further from that article, but I do hope the examples I have given will expose to those on the other side—certainly not to empty galleries, but to the few here—the fundamental differences of our party policies.

Under a Liberal Government the drive for profit, I submit, exposes consumers to a dangerous myth of affluence where human priorities take second place to the elaborate ritual of the salesmen on TV., at the door, and elsewhere. This, as I say, represents capitalism which represents the few; capitalism which grants to each according to his greed. I wil spell it: G-R-E-E-D; while Labor policy is one of each according to his need—N-E-E-D. Unfortunately we, the dissidents, on this side of the House, and those we represent, are impotent in the face of apathy mass produced from above through the media I have mentioned.

The Press quotations I have made represent a refreshing wind of change—a refreshing wind which I hope will keep blowing until, and including, the next Federal and State elections. We might then break down this stubborn resistance to a necessary change that seems to be inherent in the—for want of a better word—metabolism of a capitalist society, which is part and parcel of the body I mentioned. If we could get such a change we could have a Labor Goverment representing us, the people, rather than them, the few.

Under the present State and Federal conservative Governments I have noticed shareholders have that lovely, lively, lyrical feeling as the rush of takeover bids mint them money. Liberal election victories cause cheers from the Stock Exchange which can be heard blocks away, and such victories create a situation where board rooms become an annexe to the Cabinet room so that Tory Governments may smooth the path of corporate expansion and welfare rather than public welfare.

Mr. Brand: Where are you reading that from?

Mr. FLETCHER: I am not reading it from anywhere. I have carefully prepared this material for this occasion, and my colleagues who are accused of being absent, are away preparing something of the like.

Mr. Hawke: Hear, hear! It is a pity the Premier is not enjoying it.

Mr. Brand: I am enjoying it. It is the Leader of the Opposition's inference that it is not enjoyable.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am saying I would be happy to let the light of Labor into this twilight area where the State and Federal Governments and private industry interact to the public detriment.

This Government was not elected because of the vote for a single party. It is a coalition Government. No single party, as I pointed out before, can defeat the Labor Party. The Liberal Party cannot do it on its own, and neither can the Country Party or the D.L.P. Collectively it can be done. This applied on a Federal basis to such a fine extent that recently there was only a difference of 17,000 people who decided whether or not Labor was to be in power. Seventeen thousand is not many out of 8,000,000-odd. Seventeen thousand could easily be accommodated at a football match, but that is the fine balance that exists. However, that does not justify the Federal Government inflicting on the people the misery I have mentioned, misery as a consequence of which our women are driven out to work, not of their own choice, but merely because of economic need.

Mr. Grayden interjected.

Mr. FLETCHER: I ask the member for South Perth to wait his opportunity to speak. I know his interjection was not unkind, but I have not time to listen to it. As I say, women are driven out of their homes not of their own choice, but because of economic need, as a consequence of the detrimental effect of this economy on their family.

Prices now, I submit, are based on the assumption that someone can pay and—excuse the language—to hell with those who cannot! Professor Saint's estimate of the percentage of underprivileged has borne out what I said here this evening and what I have said over the years. Prices of land, homes, goods, dental and medical care, fear of sickness, and consequent loss of income have driven mothers and wives out to work to help the household economy.

On the other hand thousands of pounds of the taxpapers' money is spent to import assisted migrants, yet we retain the social disorder I mentioned, which drives potential mothers—I repeat potential mothers—out to work, and drives them to the "Pill" so that motherhood will not interfere with providing food and necessities including a roof over their heads. What is the result? Fewer children in Western Australia with the consequent need to import citizens from overseas at the taxpayers' expense.

I suggest that the difference between what it costs to import citizens from overseas and the £10 that they pay themselves towards their passage could well go towards helping the householders I have mentioned rather than drive these women folk out to work to augment an inadequate income. One man's income is not sufficient to maintain a reasonable standard of living at this point of time. As I said, women do not go out to work of their own choice. They go out through sheer economic need.

Mr. Grayden: This is not the only country or State in which the women take the "Pill."

Mr. Brand: I presume it happens in Tasmania.

A member: Why bring the "Pill" into it? It is not relevant.

Mr. FLETCHER: The "Pill" is relevant. I suggest that if there was a better prospect of a future for our kiddies here in this State, then we would have the home-grown variety instead of the imported variety of citizen.

I have here further newspaper cuttings to support my argument in connection with the difficulties appertaining to housing and land, which are left to the speculators; and this, it appears, is more or less condoned by the existing Government.

Mr. Grayden: Rents here are a fraction of what they are in the Eastern States; and so are the prices of homes.

Mr. FLETCHER: The honourable member may get satisfaction out of that, but the unfortunate people that I am attempting to defend here do not get any satisfaction from the fact that people in other States of the Commonwealth are worse off than they are. I am submitting my argument on behalf not only of the people of Fremantle, but those of the whole State; and when I refer to the State I also mean the state into which this Government has placed Western Australia. Fortunately I have found something further.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): Order! The honourable member has only five minutes left.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will use them to good advantage in relation to housing, and I will deal with as many quotations as I can. Over an advertisement which appeared on Saturday, the 14th August last, I wrote a heading, "Speculation in Land." The advertisement states—

> Partner
>
> One of Perth's major reputable real estate firms requires a new partner.
>
> The new partner will share equally in the profits of the business. In the past year his share of the net income would have been well over £5,000. This should be considerably increased by the introduction of the new partner.

Further down the advertisement continues—

> Since the appointment is being made to gain a talented addition to the partnership, the financial considerations are extremely attractive and can be discussed at interview.
>
> Interested applicants should write personally in strict confidence, marking their envelope, "Personal".

People rubbish the Labor Party, but I am more gentlemanly and will not rubbish the avaricious business institution that is responsible for that advertisement. The amount mentioned was £5,000, and the promise was for more than £5,000 in the subsequent year. I ask: At whose expense will that income be made; and by whom are such practices condoned? There is freedom for private enterprise to do that.

Let me quote something from the Australian Labor Party Federal Secretariat. The heading to this paragraph is, "The Great Housing Swindle," and it refers to the subsidy that the working people are supposed to get. It states—

> After a delay of six months, the Federal Minister for Housing (Mr. L. Bury), brought down the promised legislation to provide a housing subsidy of £250 for £750 saved, on Tuesday, 5th May, 1964.
>
> Only a passing reference was made by the Minister to the other Liberal election promise to establish a mortgage insurance corporation.

Further down we find the heading, "Minister Would Not Understand"; and this extract is from the *Daily Mirror* of the 6th May, 1964, as follows:—

> The day after his speech in the Federal Parliament, the Housing Minister told Ray Kerrison:
>
> > I wouldn't understand a word of this myself if I were not the author of it and its principles.

Did members hear that? To continue—

> If the Minister can only understand the Bill because he wrote it, how does he expect young people, anxious for the promised benefit, to know what they are entitled to when he used such sentences as:
>
> > The forms chosen are in aggregate those in which the great bulk of personal saving for a home is accumulated.

That is a lot of gobbledygook. Listen to this paragraph under the heading "Young People Deceived."—

> Worse than the platitudes, however, is the way in which thousands of young people have had their "bright hopes" dimmed and even extinguished.
>
> On election eve Sir Robert Menzies wrote:
>
> > . . . the Government's housing policy is designed to help young people planning marriage by offering subsidies of £1 to £3 to saved deposits on land or homes.

That extract was taken from the Melbourne *Herald* of the 29th November, 1963. Later we find this—

> Mr. Bury nailed this lie in the opening sentence of his speech on 5th May, 1964, when he said:
>
> > The purpose of this Bill is to help young married couples obtain a home of their own.

He did not refer to young people who were planning marriage. This is an immediate reversal. To continue—

> He stressed this point later when he said emphatically:
>
> > . . . a grant will not be paid to an unmarried person.

Further on in this election gimmick we find—

> Nor is it £3 per week that the eligible person has to save but £4 16s. 4d. for every week for three years.
>
> Admittedly, there is no "maximum savings period" but there is a maximum in any given year of £250. Mr. Bury said:
>
> > . . . there should obviously be a limit on the amount of acceptable saving in a year.

That extract is taken from Federal *Hansard* of the 5th May, 1964.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am very glad I got in that final broadside!

MR. HART (Roe) [9.50 p.m.]: I wish to add a few remarks to this debate, and I feel at the outset that my line of thought will be a little different from that of the member for Fremantle.

I consider I should commend the Premier on the very strong and forthright Estimates and plans he has put forward for the coming year. Western Australia is in the position where it has nothing to do but go forward and expand.

We have just listened to the member for Fremantle and he has voiced certain fears and dangers that are alarming up to a point, but he has not put forward any remedy for them.

Mr. Moir: I think his remedy was quite clear: get rid of this Government.

Mr. HART: The remedy is to do what is outlined in the Estimates, and that is to go ahead, and that is what we are doing. If we stand still we die. That occurs to all, including farmers, business people, and so on. We can either go ahead or stand still. Undoubtedly we are going to have plenty of problems in the future, but we have to face up to them. I have no illusions about the immediate future; I think one of the greatest problems many of us will have to face will be rising costs; and the Government will have that problem, too.

Mr. Davies: Give us a remedy.

Mr. HART: In spite of rising costs we have to go ahead because our problems will be greater if we stand still.

I shall try to give a picture of just where agriculture stands in Western Australia today in relation to all the other expansion that is taking place. Perhaps a quick turn around the State and a return to agriculture might give an idea of what I wish to put forward. Certainly our industrial development is making rapid strides in Western Australia today and is going ahead in no uncertain way; and this is very good for Western Australia. I know the cost is great and that the Government is involved in many things that are taking place.

If we turn our eyes to the north we see what is being done in regard to iron ore development. Capital expenditure of something like £400,000,000 has been mentioned. B.H.P. is investing to the extent of about £100,000,000, also.

This is all very wonderful, and on a long-term basis it must be good. If we look at the Premier's Estimates for the coming year, we find a figure of £102,000,000. That is something to be proud of, too; and there are plenty of problems in connection with it. The figure 10 years ago was £49,000,000. That is the way we are going, and that is good.

Turning to agriculture and the part that agriculture plays in Western Australia, I think it is reasonable to expect at this stage that Co-operative Bulk Handling will receive 100,000,000 bushels of grain—"all grains"—this coming harvest. If we turn back 10 years, as I did with the Estimates—we find the average then was about 40,000,000 bushels. That is something that is well in keeping with the overall expansion in Western Australia.

The Leader of the Opposition made a few remarks last evening on sheep and wool, and I think he commented on the lower returns last season. Again the overall picture for the 10 years tells the same story, because for the year ended the 31st March, 1954, some 14,000,000 sheep were shorn in Western Australia for 127,000,000 pounds of greasy wool. Ten years later, 21,000,000 sheep were shorn yielding 207,000,000 pounds of wool, representing an increase of 60 per cent. over the 10-year period.

Getting back to the query raised with respect to the drop in the wool returns last year, I find that in 1963-64, when we had good returns, the average price was 66.87d. per pound for greasy wool. Last season—1964-65—it dropped to 55.87d. per pound, a drop of 11d. per pound; and of course that means quite a few million pounds, overall, to Western Australia. In round figures this decline in the price of wool last season—in the 12 months to the end of June this year—amounted to something like £82,000,000. It would be reasonable to assume that of that sum, Western Australia lost about £9,000,000.

The drop in these returns last season, I would say, was due mainly to the numerous vagaries of the auction system. On this question of wool selling, the woolgrowers will soon vote on the proposed

minimum reserve selling price. I do not wish to say anything about the vote that is to be taken tonight except to say that I feel that in support of a "Yes" vote we could bear in mind that throughout Australia we have something like eight or nine Commonwealth-wide marketing authorities handling our primary products with great benefit to Australia as a whole; and throughout our various States we have something like 55 State marketing authorities.

All these authorities were brought into being by the vote of the growers, and I have yet to learn of any one of these authorities of an appreciable size being voted out by the growers; and they are open to being voted out at any time.

I think wool is about the only commodity that does not come under some semblance of organised control; and the answer to that question lies with those who wish to give it serious thought. Those comments give a fairly clear picture of where we are going in Western Australia and the part that agriculture is playing and has played.

There is no doubt in my mind that in the foreseeable future we will be exporting 120,000,000 bushels of grain; we will have over 25,000,000 sheep; and more than 20,000,000 acres of developed pasture. I feel these figures are quite interesting and bear out the strength of agriculture to Western Australia in the past and the strength it will be in the future. I appreciate that other developments are taking place, but I think we should be careful to ensure that we maintain the stable income of Western Australia that we have leaned on for so many years.

The point I am coming back to now is one I have mentioned before; namely, that I feel that with our agricultural development as it is in Western Australia there is a need—and I think the need is well supported by many people, including members of this House—of some form of financial assistance for a percentage of our new farmers.

I have raised this question before, and I raise it again tonight because, although a great deal of thought has been given to it, we have not yet reached the position of being able to accomplish anything. I know it is easy to say, "Why should we involve the Government in its financial worries and with more land settlement schemes? Already we receive 10 or 12 applications for every block of land that is available and we have difficulty in allocating the land to successful applicants."

The point I wish to raise is that some form of allocation should be adopted to grant land to young farmers, perhaps on the same conditions that were laid down under the war service land settlement scheme; because, with wheat and sheep farms in particular, the finance required is so great and the risks so numerous that unless something is done to assist a certain section of intending farmers which represents, say, 10 per cent. of applicants for land, they will never become farmers.

I am firm on the point that that section of young intending farmers will represent a great loss to the future of Western Australia if they are not granted financial assistance to obtain the land they require. The other 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. of those seeking land are able to get started and battle along; but if we could see our way clear to assist that 10 per cent. of the farmers who will prove to be good settlers in the future, it would be of advantage to the State. If one were to go around Western Australia one would find in all districts some of the best farmers in Western Australia; and, on making inquiries, one would discover that they started from scratch and, together with a little bit of luck were able to keep going. However, those days are finished now.

I appeal again to the Premier and to the Deputy Premier for further consideration to be given to assisting young farmers financially because such a move would be well worth while, and I hope this suggestion will be considered by them in the near future.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Mitchell.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [10.3 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide amendments to a number of sections of the Local Government Act that have been brought to the attention of the Government, and with the approval of the associations concerned. The majority of the amendments are to rectify small anomalies that have cropped up in the Act. There are 20 clauses involved in the Bill, and I will deal with each in turn.

Clause 2, firstly, proposes to amend section 10 of the Act. This section provides for a poll of electors of a municipality to vary the mode of election of a mayor or president. The amendment ensures that at least 20 per cent. of the electors or ratepayers who are entitled to vote must do so in order that a poll shall be valid. This will mean that where a poll of this nature is demanded, 20 per cent. or more electors entitled to participate do so; otherwise no change can be made in the mode of election. This amendment, and others to be dealt with shortly, have been included at the request of the Local Government Association.

Clause 3 refers to subsection 2 (e) of section 12, which gives authority to the Governor to alter the name of a municipality. It has been considered desirable to make provision in this subsection for the alteration of the name of any ward of a municipality in addition.

The fourth clause adds after section 19 a new section 19A. This deals with the situation where portion of one municipal district is severed therefrom and annexed to another district. Section 19 covers cases of severance and annexation where a new ward is created, but does not deal with the case of an annexed area that is simply added to an existing ward. This omission in the Act will be corrected by the proposed amendment contained in this clause.

The next amendment, in clause 5, is similar to that mentioned in clause 2, in so far as at least 20 per cent. of electors entitled to vote at a poll are required to participate to make it effective. The poll referred to in this case is that which may be required by the Minister upon the presentation of a petition.

At the request of the Country Shire Councils' Association, a new section 43A is inserted in the Act by clause 6. It will enable a member of a council to given written notice to the council that he intends to resign from his office as from a specified future date. Following this, it is made possible by the amendment to take the action necessary to fill the anticipated vacancy before the resignation becomes effective.

I now refer to clause 7, and here an amendment is proposed to section 127 to permit the counting of votes in municipal elections to proceed in accordance with the Act in cases where electors fail to place a number in the space provided alongside only the last preference in an election involving multiple candidates.

Clause 8 seeks to amend section 174 to permit a member of a council to speak on a matter before the council in which he has an interest. This permission applies only where the interest of the member is so remote or trivial as to be of little influence on the result. This amendment is based upon the existing English practice.

Another amendment proposed to this same section will enable a council member who has an interest in a matter under discussion to take part in it provided a majority of the council so decides, although the prohibition on his voting on the matter still applies. The proposed amendment makes provision for a record of the council's decision to be kept in the minute book and also as to his abstaining from participating in the vote. It has been found that it would be in the interests of the council and the district for a member so barred by the Act to take part in the discussion and so assist the council in reaching the correct decision.

Clause 9 is a simple amendment to correct a typographical error occurring in the Act.

The next amendment, contained in clause 10, will add a section 199A to the Act. This will include authority for a council to make by-laws for the control of holiday camps. This control is similar to that exercised over caravan parks.

Clause 11 refers to section 244 of the Act and enables a council, where it removes anything deposited in a street, to dispose of it without incurring liability for damages.

Clause 12. An amendment to section 400 will permit, as in the case of the redevelopment scheme in the City of Fremantle, premises on either side of a pedestrian mall of not more than 33 feet in width to extend their buildings over that mall at a height of about 15 feet. This will allow better use of the land and also add to its appearance.

In addition, a further amendment to this section will make the prohibition of verandahs on posts effective in every district that makes a by-law for this particular purpose. At present this section has the authority to compel the removal of verandahs or posts, but it appears to give a right of re-erection.

Now to deal with clause 13. At present section 520 of the Act provides that a council may construct a crossing for a ratepayer at the cost of the ratepayer, whereas in section 358 councils bear half the cost of the crossings. This conflict in the Act will be eliminated by the deletion of the word "crossings" from section 520.

The amendment in clause 14 will include grants received or sums reimbursed by the Commissioner of Main Roads in respect of works carried out by a council, in the definition of ordinary revenue of a municipality.

This amendment has been considered necessary to dispel any doubt that main road grants are rightly regarded as ordinary revenue of the council, and that sums reimbursed are available for general purposes.

Clause 15 seeks to amend section 533, and is similar to others already proposed in this Bill that deal with the required 20 per cent. of electors entitled to vote, doing so in order to make the poll effective. This section deals with a poll of ratepayers on the question of whether the system of valuation in a district should be altered.

An amendment to section 540 is provided by clause 16, at the request of the Local Government Association, because it has experienced a great deal of inconvenience from ratepayers, particularly land agents, exercising their right under the Local Government Act to inspect the rate book in order to obtain information relating to their business activities. This is particularly troublesome where a card system is in operation. The proposal is to enable ratepayers to see the valuation register,

which will provide the desired information, leaving rate book cards available for the use of staff members.

The amendment in clause 17 affects section 599, and will make it clear that the revenue for overdraft purposes includes Government grants for roads. The next clause, number 18, is also similar to those dealing with requirements that a poll shall require at least 20 per cent. of electors qualified and voting to make a poll effective. Section 611, which it is sought to amend, refers to polls relating to loans.

Clause 19 includes a proposed new section 624A in the Act. This will allow an advance not exceeding £5,000 to be accepted by a council from an owner of any ratable land within the district to carry out work requested by an owner such as the construction of a road giving access to a subdivision. The approval of the Minister will be required in that he would consider whether such an arrangement would be good for the district. The advance would be redeemable out of future rates. This amendment is based on section 178A of the New South Wales Act.

Finally, clause 20 proposes to include a new section 691A in the Local Government Act. This proposal is supported by the three associations concerned with local government, and seeks to allow a council to confer the titular honour of being an "honorary freeman of the municipality" on an outstanding citizen, or on a distinguished visitor, such as a member of the Royal Family or the head of a State. This is similar to an honorary degree conferred by the University.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Toms.

JENNACUBBINE SPORTS COUNCIL (INCORPORATED) BILL

Second Reading

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [10.15 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This legislation is required to enable the assets of the now defunct Jennacubbine Race Club Incorporated to be vested in a body to be known as the Jennacubbine Sports Council Incorporated.

Various leading citizens in the district, most of whom are former members of the race club, have conceived the idea of forming a sports council for the district, and of taking over the former race course for the purpose of constituting a general sporting area within which all sports may have their grounds. A general meeting of citizens discussed and approved the idea, there being, so I am informed, no opposition. The shire council has also expressed its approval.

A draft constitution has been prepared for the new association and approved by a number of sporting clubs in the area, which have agreed to become the foundation constituent bodies. Sports represented include football, cricket, tennis, hockey, and basketball. Membership will also be open to any other sporting body that wishes to join.

It is proposed that the council be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act and steps will be taken to do this immediately the race club's land and other assets, comprising some £600 in a bank at Northam, can legally be vested in it. Unfortunately, this transfer cannot be made other than by legislation.

The rules of the race club provide that the president and other officers of the committee shall retire annually; also that no member is competent to vote on any occasion unless he has paid his subscription for the current year. The last general meeting of members was held, I believe, in 1953, and no committee has since been elected. No persons have paid subscriptions since that date and hence no-one is eligible to vote.

The race club is therefore defunct and no legal means exist whereby it can be resurrected. Consequently this legislation has been brought forward to resolve this dilemma. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Hawke (Leader of the Opposition).

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways) [10.19 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is one which arises out of the transaction between the Western Australian Government and the Midland Railway Company, which was ratified by this Parliament. It deals specifically with land and other assets acquired from the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia. In accordance with deeds signed by the liquidator of the company on the 1st August, 1964, all assets of the Midland Railway Company were vested in the Minister for Railways. Included in these assets were mineral licenses granted by the company to mine various minerals from land previously owned by it. I think some of the older members of this House will recall that there was a time when these mineral rights followed the land, and in respect of some of these mineral rights the Midland Railway Company retained them.

There was some legal argument between the Government and the Midland Railway Company from time to time regarding the exact ownership of certain mineral rights.

Mr. Brady: Who won the argument?

Mr. COURT: We did, because we bought the Midland Railway Company, and it was part of the agreement that all rights and privileges enjoyed by the company passed

to the Western Australian Government Railways. The honourable member will realise as he studies the Bill that it is to regularise the mining transactions as between the Railways Department and the Mines Department, by putting them into the department where they rightly belong.

Mr. Brady: Did the case go to litigation?

Mr. COURT: The main argument did not go to litigation. There was always the threat of litigation and the fear in the mind of the Government of the day that if it was ever tested legally the company might have established a legal right. As it happened, the purchase of the Midland Railway Company by the State resolved this problem. We are hardly likely to enter into litigation against ourselves.

Included in the assets that were acquired by the Minister for Railways from the Midland Railway Company were mineral rights granted by the company to mine various minerals on land previously owned by it. The crucial date so far as the land titles and the division of mineral rights from the freehold title were concerned goes back to 1899. All land acquired before the 1st January, 1899, had certain rights which land, allocated after that date, did not have.

Under the construction agreement—that is, the Midland Railway Company agreement, which is commonly known as the Waddington agreement—and confirmed by the Guildford-Greenough Flats Railway Act, No. 24 of 1886, approximately 2,500,000 acres of land were granted to the company. The major portion of this land has been sold and transferred to purchasers, but the company retained the mineral rights as a residual interest in the titles.

In addition, the company was granted mineral rights under the War Service Land Settlement Acts of 1951-54. These mineral rights are now vested in the Minister for Railways, and the present position is that there are two separate government departments dealing with mineral rights; that is, the Mines Department and the Western Australian Government Railways Commission.

The Mines Department, by its officers, is specially set up and trained to conduct all dealings in minerals, whereas the Railways Commission does not have officers trained in mining matters. The present situation is that these mineral rights are held in respect of land owned by third parties, and are not in respect of land vested in the Minister; and the minerals are not on land held or used in connection with the railway. Neither the Miinster for Railways nor the Railways Commission has the power to deal with these minerals, or to issue any leases or mining tenements with them.

The proposed amendment to the Government Railways Act provides for revesting in Her Majesty of all mineral rights that were formerly held by the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia, and which are now vested in the Minister for Railways, pursuant to the agreement made by the liquidator of the company. These rights will be controlled by the Mines Department, and uniformity of administration will be ensured.

The Bill also provides that all property vested in the Minister for Railways by the liquidator of the company shall be vested in the Minister for Railways on behalf of Her Majesty; and where such property is not required for the purpose of the railway, the Minister may sell, dispose of, or otherwise deal with it under terms and conditions as are considered necessary.

It will be appreciated that as an ordinary purchaser, the Railways Commission in regard to the assets previously owned by the Midland Railway Company —including the land—is in a different position from the Railways Department when it develops a railway through land resumptions and through funds that are made available in the ordinary way from loan funds and the like. There is, therefore, special provision in this legislation for land and other assets which are no longer required for railway purposes to be dealt with as circumstances dictate from time to time.

To summarise the Bill, it clarifies the position in respect of mineral rights formerly held by the Midland Railway Company and vested in the Minister for Railways by virtue of the acquisition of the Midland Railway Company. It also clarifies the position in respect of the disposal of assets acquired by the Minister for Railways and the Railways Commission as a result of the agreement with the liquidator of the company.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brady.

TAXI-CARS (CO-ORDINATION AND CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Transport) [10.23 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Act, as it stands, sets up a Taxi Control Board to co-ordinate and control the taxi industry. Provision is made for the control and licensing of taxi-cars but the board, which has been operating for nearly 18 months, from its experience to date finds that its general purpose cannot be fulfilled, unless some specific power exists to control and regulate the operations of taxi-car drivers.

The general power to examine applications, and to test and license drivers of taxis is administered by the Commissioner

of Police under the Traffic Act, and the Bill does not propose to disturb this authority in any way.

In an attempt to exercise some control over drivers of taxis, as well as control over taxi owners, the board has been provided with certain powers under the taxi-car regulations, 1964. These regulations are identical with the Traffic (Taxi-Cars) Regulations, 1964, which give the board and the Commissioner of Police respectively power to require the operator of a taxi to do all things necessary for the comfort and convenience of passengers, not to demand other than prescribed fares and charges, and to be clean and to wear clothing which is neat in appearance.

The board's regulations also require every driver of a taxi operating in its sphere of control, the metropolitan traffic area, to wear an identity disc. This is necessary, both in the interests of passengers and the board's inspectors, for the purpose of enabling identification of the driver.

To the extent that the taxi-cars Act, 1963, in its long title, only refers to the co-ordination and control of taxi-cars and makes no reference to taxi-car drivers, it is felt that any of the regulations as affecting drivers, as distinct from owners of taxis, and promulgated pursuant to the taxi-cars Act, 1963, could be challenged as being *ultra vires* the existing Statute.

The main purpose of this Bill is, therefore, to amend the long title of the Act and give the board specific power in respect of drivers of taxis as well as owners of taxi-cars.

Section 11 of the Act sets out the powers and duties of the Taxi Control Board and it is proposed to amend this section to enable the board to include the registration of taxi-car drivers.

This addition will enable the board to require all drivers of taxis to register and to renew such registration each year, and be issued with some form of identification. At present, considerable difficulty is being experienced as drivers, when changing their employment or changing their address, are failing to notify the board of such change.

The Bill makes provision for payment of a registration fee of 10s. or such other fee, not exceeding £2, as may be provided. It is not intended at the present juncture to vary the fee of 10s. per annum, most of which is absorbed in the issue of the identity disc, but it may be necessary to increase the fee in the future.

It has been the policy of the Government for some considerable time to restrict the issue of taxi licenses, as far as practicable, to owner-drivers and any transfers which are approved by the board are permitted only to persons who are genuinely engaged as taxi-operators and who have been driving a taxi continuously for a period of at least four months. The Bill contains a provision that the board shall not issue a license or permit a transfer to a person who holds two or more taxi licenses.

As the regulations stand at present, the board's inspectors, when they notice that a taxi, its meter, or its equipment is in an unserviceable condition, shall report that fact to the licensing or registering authority. This is not a very satisfactory method of ensuring that early action is taken by the owner or driver of the taxi to have necessary repairs effected. The proposed legislation gives an inspector the authority to require the owner to submit the taxi-car, within such time as he then specifies, to the authority by which it is licensed. It also gives an inspector, where he considers that a taxi-car, whilst being operated in a control area, is so unclean as to be likely to mark or damage the clothing or luggage of a passenger, the power to direct the driver of the taxi to have the taxi cleaned, within such time as he specifies.

The Government is mindful of the fact that the taxi industry, having well over £1,500,000 invested in vehicles and equipment, is an important part of the passenger service of the State and is, therefore, anxious that drivers and vehicles as presented to the public should maintain a standard that compares with the best in Australia.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Graham.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 14th October, 1965

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