

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 10th August, 1966

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (8) : ON NOTICE

JOINT PRINTING COMMITTEE

Resolutions Passed at Meeting of the 2nd August

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

- (1) Will the Minister ascertain and inform the House—
 - (a) Whether the Joint Printing Committee met on Tuesday, the 2nd August, 1966?
 - (b) If the committee did meet—
 - (i) whether the meeting was properly convened, i.e. were all members, or prospective members, advised of the meeting;
 - (ii) whether, in fact, the Joint Committee could constitutionally meet before this House appointed its members on the 3rd August; and
 - (iii) whether this House was properly represented in accordance with Standing Order 34 (vi)?
- (2) If it is found that the Joint Committee has met unconstitutionally, will the Minister request that the committee meet and confirm, or otherwise, any resolutions which might have been made on the 2nd August?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) (a) I understand a meeting of the Joint Printing Committee did take place on the 2nd August, 1966.
 - (b) (i) It is doubtful whether it was properly convened.
 - (ii) No.
 - (iii) No.
- (2) A meeting has been convened for seven o'clock this evening.

Mr. MARSHALL: This report urged the Government of the day to help bring the young people out of the sphere of economic exploitation and urged that the educational purpose be the dominating one, outside as well as inside school doors, during those important years of 12 to 18.

The most recent of these English reports—the one which is called "Half Our Future"—refers to this left-school group of youngsters like this—

This is a group which needs more community attention than any other. Yet it gets none. Their upper potential is never realised. Their lives are spent in dead-end jobs or semi-skilled work—mostly ill directed and hastily chosen. Their social and moral training has practically ceased.

Mr. Jamieson: What about the right-school group of youngsters?

Mr. MARSHALL: I think that in Western Australia we are laying the foundations to do something worth while in this field. And I know that other people in the world think so, too.

I would draw the attention of the House to a recent publication by the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, published with the financial assistance of UNESCO. It is a report of the meeting of "Experts on Youth in Asia," in Tokyo, March, 1965.

In its section on Australia it singles out this State. "Western Australia has a history of constructive policy with respect to youth welfare", it says. It then fills a page with a description of local national fitness work, the Youth Education Branch of the Education Department, and Government assistance to existing clubs. It concludes by mentioning the setting up of a Western Australian Youth Council on the lines of the Government's report on a suggested youth service. It says—

This is an exhaustive report, skillfully compiled and its recommendations are well worth perusal. The plan for the setting up of a W.A. Council for Youth Service as an autonomous body with executive powers is well conceived.

I think the comments of this world publication are a compliment to the work of the Minister for Education, and a tribute to this Government whose encouragement has allowed this development.

Mr. Davies: What is the name of the publication?

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Williams.

House adjourned at 9.56 p.m.

HOUSING

Coolbellup: Development of Shopping Centre

2. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has provision been made in the State Housing Commission area of Coolbellup for a shopping centre?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) when will the sites be developed, or land made available for development, as 900 housewives in this area at present have no shopping facilities; and
 - (b) what method will be adopted in the disposal or lease of this land?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Land will be made available for development as soon as the subdivision plan and zoning is approved by the Town Planning Board and the local authority.
- (b) The commission is now investigating various means and methods of developing the shopping centre and will decide which to adopt in the near future.

TEMPORARY MINING RESERVES

Number, Acreage, and Rights of Gold Prospectors

3. The Hon. J. J. GARRIGAN asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many temporary reserves were granted for the 12 months ended the 31st July, 1966 in Western Australia, for minerals other than gold, but may contain nickel, copper, cobalt, chromium, zinc, lead, and silver?
- (2) What would be the total acreage of these temporary reserves?
- (3) What would be the minimum amount of work required to be carried out on these temporary reserves by companies or individuals?
- (4) Would the genuine prospector prospecting for gold be allowed on these temporary reserves held by individuals or companies?
- (5) If the reply to (4) is "Yes", who would be the adjudicator in the event of a dispute arising between the holder of temporary reserves and those prospecting for gold?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) 48.
- (2) 28,679 sq. miles.
- (3) An exploration programme to the satisfaction of the Minister for Mines.
- (4) Yes.

- (5) In the event of a disputed application for a mining tenement, the Minister for Mines after receiving a recommendation from the warden.

4. *This question was postponed.*

PRICE CONTROL

Reintroduction

5. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS (for The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery) asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of the recent increases in the basic wage, both Federal and State, thereby adding to the general price structure and also to State finances, has the Premier, as Treasurer, given consideration to the reintroduction of price control as an obvious means of retarding the seemingly endless spiral?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Government does not believe that price control is effective in keeping down the prices level. This was proved during the time price control was imposed in this and other States.

WATER SUPPLIES

Norseman: Adequacy

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

If water is piped to Kambalda from the Coolgardie-Norseman main at Spargoville, as has been announced, will steps be taken to see that the town and mining industry of Norseman have ample supplies at the peak periods, and at all times, for their needs?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

If it is decided to supply the Kambalda mine from the Coolgardie-Norseman main, the system will be designed to ensure that Norseman's supply is unaffected.

CRAYFISHING

Closure of Season: Ballot

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

- (1) Would the Minister give consideration to the conducting of a postal vote ballot amongst licensed crayfishermen to determine when the crayfishing season should close?
- (2) If the reply to (1) is "Yes", when the ballot paper is prepared could further consideration be given to listing the months of May, June, July, August, asking the fishermen to indicate the month they favour?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No. It has been the practice of the Department of Fisheries and Fauna to hold a meeting of the

Fisheries Advisory Committee at Fremantle and Geraldton prior to the opening of the season. At this meeting fishermen are given the opportunity of expressing their views as to when the crayfishing season on the west coast and the Abrolhos Islands should be opened and closed.

(2) Answered by (1).

MOTOR VEHICLE THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

Trust: Receipts, Expenditure, and Staff

8. The Hon. E. M. HEENAN asked the Minister for Local Government:

For the year ended the 30th June, 1966—

- (1) What was the total amount of premiums received by the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust?
- (2) How many owners of motor vehicles insured against liability under the provisions of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act?
- (3) What was the total amount paid by the trust in respect of claims and costs, and other expenses?
- (4) What was the total amount paid or incurred by the trust in respect of its administration and general expenses?
- (5) What was the total number of staff employed by the trust?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) \$5,134,957.
- (2) No record available.
- (3) \$3,787,829 paid in respect of all current pool years, but not including claims reported but not yet paid.
- (4) \$137,260 or 2.6% of premium received.
- (5) 17 males and 14 females.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SIXTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 9th August, on the following motion by The Hon. V. J. Ferry:—

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

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

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [4.41 p.m.]: Firstly, may I say that I support the motion moved by the honourable Mr. Ferry. As a previous

speaker said, this is a time when we can speak about many things. I think that during the lengthy period we are in recess most members have an opportunity to gather together many thoughts in their minds about what should be done and what should have been done, and what has not been done within their electorates.

As my leader said when he spoke, I too feel that we have reached the stage of development in Western Australia where two parliamentary sessions each year are required. I think it is imperative that we should have two sessions of Parliament each year. We find that things are moving at a much faster rate, not only in the industrial sphere, because of the industrialisation of Western Australia, but also in regard to the problems which the average people in Western Australia have to face. And those problems are increasing.

Though I do not criticise people generally who work in Government departments, I think it is necessary to bring to the attention of the House some of the problems which confront those who try to do a service for the community. On that note I am going to speak about parents and citizens' associations and the difficulties with which they are confronted when they try to do something for their children, or for their districts, or for the Education Department.

The parents and citizens' association of a school in my province first wrote a letter to the Director of Education on the 13th March, 1964, requesting assistance for the development of the school grounds. On the 19th March, 1964, a letter was received from the Education Department emphasising that before a subsidy could be paid towards the provision of an oval, or money expended on school grounds, an area of 110 yards by 70 yards of lawn—a grassed area—must be provided. The details of the negotiations are as follows:—

13/3/64—Letter to Director of Education requesting assistance for the development of school grounds.

19/3/64—1623-23. Letter from Education Department emphasising that a grassed area 110 yards by 70 yards must be installed before any subsidy can be obtained for independent water supply.

9/12/64—Letter to Education Department asking for subsidy for development and request that permission be granted to install water supply before grassing.

17/12/64—From department: No assistance for development of primary school grounds; enclosing copy of memo. of understanding for well.

9/2/65—To department, again asking department to meet the offer of Shire Council of £1

- for £1 subsidy on development of school grounds in accordance with Mr. Brand's election policy speeches.
- 16/2/65—From department, reply, quoting 75 per cent. subsidy on well and £1 for £1 subsidy on grassing; enclosing details of subsidy procedure for reticulation and specifications.
- 18/3/65—To department, forwarding plans of development and again requesting permission to install well and reticulation before further grassing.
- 31/3/65—From department, correcting earlier letter regarding subsidy and grassing; insistence on grassing of an oval 110 yards by 70 yards before any subsidy on well will be considered.
- 27/4/65—From Minister for Education, re-stating details of subsidy.
- 10/5/65—Three specifications sent out to contractors.
- 16/5/65—Letter to Public Works Department requesting their advice for details of well and reticulation.
- 18/5/65—From Public Works Department, acknowledgement of letter.
- 18/5/65—From Public Works Department requesting scaled plan of school and grounds.
- 8/6/65—To Public Works Department forwarding plans.
- 12/6/65—Oval grassed by K.S.C. as approved by June meeting. Cost, £250.
- 30/6/65—Request for £125 subsidy from Education Department for grassing of oval.
- 22/7/65—To department, reporting offer of K.S.C. to meet half the cost of water supply to school oval and asking department to accept this offer and approve scheme.
- 25/7/65—Final replies from boring contractors; all unable to quote.
- 4/8/65—Rang Public Works Department and requested action on well details, etc.
- 26/8/65—From department, requesting fully receipted bill for full payment of £250 for grassing of oval.
- 6/ 9/65—To Department forwarding statement of payments to K.S.C. for grassing oval. Rang Mr. Brown P.W.D. further requests for details of well and reticulation requirements.
- So members can see that some time elapsed before the association could get the specifications; actually five weeks had passed. To continue—
- 12/ 9/65—Rang Mr. Brown P.W.D. and eventually, obtained details of well requirements by phone.
- 14/ 9/65—Copies of specifications sent to six Boring Contractors.
- 4/10/65—Electrical Engineer P.W.D. rang to say that Contractors had seen him for details and he considered our specification was not acceptable as it was old P.W.D. specification. He would contact Education Department and inform them to send latest specification.
- 7/10/65—Received three copies of new specification (17 pages). Seventeen pages of specifications for the sinking of a bore! Continuing—
- Made Xerox copies of specifications and sent to all contractors with letter.
- 12/10/65—Replies from three contractors specifications too severe withdrew from work.
- 22/10/65—Made further six copies of new specifications and sent them to five additional boring contractors.
- 22/10/65—Obtained preliminary approval from bank for loan of 50 per cent. of cost of well and reticulation, to meet K.S.C. grant, providing that firm letter of understanding of payment of this amount will be met by Department of Education as their part of the subsidy.
- 1/11/65—Two Contractors withdrew on grounds specification far too severe and would hamper job and boost costs.
- I can give members the names of the contractors concerned if they are required. To continue—
- 3/11/65—Further reminder sent to all remaining contractors asking for immediate reply and quotations.
- 14/11/65—All contractors excepting Mr. J. G. Anderson of Mandurah notified that they would not tender on this job.
- Then there was some other correspondence but I have only the reference numbers and therefore I cannot quote it. However, further action was taken as follows:—
- 5/11/65—Letter to Director of Education together with copy of this list requesting action.
- On the 11th November the association wrote to me and sent me a copy of the letter it had sent to the Minister for Education, and a copy was also sent to Mr. Harry Curran, M.L.A., who represents the

area in the Legislative Assembly. To continue—

8/12/65—Further follow up letter to Director Education.

31/12/65—In view of no reply from Minister or Director of Education—letter to Premier requesting action in this matter.

The association kept in touch with me and I wrote to the Minister for Education asking him to receive a deputation. I notified the members on the 7th January, 1966, that the Minister would receive a deputation to discuss the well and reticulation. Continuing—

12/ 1/66—Deputation waited on Minister for Education and P.W.D. Works Engineer.

Although the Minister tried to be helpful he did not realise the bungling that had occurred up to that stage, and we finished up in the office of the engineer from the Public Works Department who was responsible for this work. Although we met the Minister at three o'clock we did not leave the engineer's office until half-past five. I wanted to clarify the position because a new set of regulations and specifications had been promulgated and I was uncertain whether the bore could be proceeded with under the old or the new specifications. So we go on—

19/ 2/66—Mr. J. G. Anderson resubmits quotation to latest specification (increase of £300 to £1,650).

This increase was brought about because of the requirements of the new specifications. Continuing—

10/ 3/66—Letter from P.W.D. to Education Department recommending approval of quotation.

24/ 3/66—Letter sent to Education Department requesting expediting of issue of authority for work to proceed.

31/ 3/66—Reply from Education Department authorising work.

4/ 4/66—Order for work placed with contractor.

So members can see that the initial application to the Director of Education to develop these grounds was made on the 13th March, 1964, and approval was eventually given on the 4th April, 1966. Yet the people who made the application are the ones about whom we hear members of Parliament generally, the Premier, and even at times the Governor making statements in regard to the wonderful work they do in the community—I refer to members of the parents and citizens' associations. I have been in the movement for 30 years and I agree that they do a wonderful job. But no-one can tell me that something could not have been done to assist the organisation concerned instead of hindering it by the use of all this claptrap.

Those connected with the association are rendering a service to the department and, moreover, they are rendering a greater service to the children of the district.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Hear, hear!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The association to which I am referring is operating in an area which is virtually undeveloped. Many people pay lip service to the granting of subsidies for swimming pools for schools that can really afford them, but I am sure that if the association connected with the school to which I have referred could prove that it had the required sum of money in hand for this work approval for it would be forthcoming immediately; the people concerned would certainly not have to wait for two years as they did in this particular instance before they could sink a 30-foot bore.

The sad part of it is that the Kwinana canteen, which is the local hotel in Medina, is run by a group of citizens who work under the authority of the shire council and the profits are used to improve the facilities around Kwinana. In that instance there is an earnest body of people trying to do something, but in the case to which I have referred the Education and Public Works Departments have been continually hindering the association.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Which one do you think should bear the most blame?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Public Works Department, definitely, because its specifications are unrealistic for what is required for a school—

The PRESIDENT: Would the honourable member please address the Chair.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Certainly, Sir. These specifications should not be necessary for a bore which is to be used for reticulating a small school oval.

Another stupid requirement is that an area of 170 yards by 70 yards must be grassed before any finance for water can be provided. The school must have the grass growing, and had it not been for the volunteers and the aid of the Kwinana Shire Council, which could borrow tankers, and so on, at the weekend to cart water to the oval to keep the grass alive, the Education Department subsidy of £125 would have been lost, because the grass would have died. This would have meant that the canteen fund would also have been lost to the project. So there would have been a loss of £250 initially, and a further loss of £150 in manure which was bought to spread on the grass. When I rang the president of the parents and citizens' association yesterday I asked him how far he had proceeded with the reticulation of the oval. He said that 90 per cent. of it was completed; that it was necessary to go down only 18 feet for water, but that they had had continuous trouble over the type of work that had to be carried out.

This sort of interference and red tape should be frowned on. Members can hardly say that I am standing up and talking a lot of claptrap, because this sort of thing effects every one of us. I happen to represent these unfortunate people who have had to work so hard and have had to put up with so much red tape and nonsense. The same circumstances obtain in other areas where the people living in those areas are bound by departmental policies which are too rigid. The departments will not move from their stand, and they will not give any satisfaction to the organisations which are trying to do some useful work.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: One serious injustice not generally known is that of a primary school parents and citizens' association paying for the installation and rental of a telephone.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is quite so, and I have that matter before the Minister for Education in the form of a letter on behalf of two schools. When the Minister opened last year's parents and citizens' association convention he said he would see whether or not provision could be made in the 1966-67 Estimates for the installation of at least one telephone in each school where this was possible.

I have written to the Minister for Education on that point, reminding him of his promise and asking him what has been done about it. I received a reply from one of his officers to the effect that when the Budget for this year is brought down the question will be examined.

If members are now fully convinced that these parents and citizens' associations to which I have referred are receiving a rough and raw deal I will proceed to the question of youth activities, and the work that can and will be done by the Youth Council that was set up some two years ago. I understand that that council is now getting into gear, and that it will soon be functioning to try to achieve something for the youth of Western Australia. I have with me an article which appeared in the Fremantle supplement of the *Daily News*—I do not know its date—which reads as follows:—

Members Required.

The Fremantle Youth Club badly needs members.

Based at John Curtin High School, the club meets each Wednesday night to provide a selection of activities for Fremantle young people.

The club caters for young people to the age of about 20, and is run by a committee of parents elected by club members.

They have about 60 active members this year, but there is room for many more.

Some of the hobbies available are ballroom dancing, dressmaking and cake decorating.

For the more sports minded there are gymnastics and judo.

The club has several future projects in mind.

Club evenings start at 8 p.m. and end promptly at 11 p.m.

This is possibly one of the oldest organised clubs still in existence on Education Department property. The club has a magnificent hall, and, as a matter of fact, the late Evan Davies was president of the organisation for many years. It has a full-time youth organiser, who is probably one of the best in the State. He devotes many hours, both day and night, to the welfare of the youth of the area. I regret to say, however, that the response is not there; the youth will not respond.

I would suggest that when the Youth Council gets fully into gear rather than look at the more established forms of work carried out by youth clubs it expend some of its moneys to assist junior clubs—clubs where discipline and training are being carried out mainly at the expense of parents themselves and with help given from voluntary subscriptions. The first recreational activity that comes to mind is junior football, followed closely by junior cycling and other forms of sport and training indulged in by boys and girls.

It is a crying shame for children to join football clubs and play junior football from nine years of age upwards, only to find that in the main most of them have to pay to play football; the umpire must be paid, and in some areas payment must be made for the hire of the sports ground on which they play. If it were not for illegal lotteries which are conducted, and the letters written to business people asking for a few pounds donation these clubs would not be able to function.

The people who run these organisations are unpaid youth organisers, and they are giving the children basic training and the discipline so necessary to them at an early age. I hope the Youth Council will have a serious look at junior sport with a view to enrolling more members in these clubs, and getting more people interested in them, thus providing the financial assistance so necessary to the school-age children who participate in the sports I have mentioned.

Last year when I was talking on the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act Amendment Bill I referred to the dictatorial attitude of the Metropolitan Region Authority, and pointed out that this was creating hardship to landowners and property owners within the regional scheme. At that stage I pointed out to the House—and I will refresh the memory of members on this—that there is an area of land directly south of where the Kwinana Freeway meets the Canning Highway at the eastern end of Canning Bridge. Members will recall that there is a tea-rooms at that site, with a few amusements to attract people to it. The owner of this property also owns lots 1 to 5.

For some 10 years this area has been reserved for roadways. The property has been tied up in such a form that the owner has not found it possible to sell it, although many inquiries have been made about it, together with offers running into many thousands of pounds. The owner requested me to write to the region planning authority to ask it to resume the land, or to acquire it—I am not sure which is the appropriate term. It is said that the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority acquires land rather than resumes it. I disagree with that because I have known people who have not been able to sell their land; it has been tied up for years and years; and eventually the department has taken it over. To my way of thinking that is a resumption.

Anyhow, I wrote to the region planning authority on the owner's behalf late last year asking it to take some action in respect of the purchase of this property. An inspection was made by the officers of the planning authority, and several valuations of the property were made. The owner was visited at her home in Nedlands, and an offer was made to her by the department for the land, but this was completely unacceptable, because it was many thousands of pounds below other offers that were made two or three years ago.

After a bit more shilly-shallying the departmental officers went back and said to the lady concerned that they were considering resuming the property and asked whether she would accept half the money and permit the region planning authority to carry the balance of the money at an interest rate of 6 per cent., which it would pay her.

The owner replied that providing the price came within the range she wanted she would certainly agree to that proposition. The reason she was prepared to agree to it, she tells me, is that she is now 74 years of age; the sale of her property has been held up for 10 years and she wants to do something about it, which is quite understandable. Apart from this she wants to give some money to her family, so that she will be in a position to see them enjoy it before she dies.

Another reason why she wants to dispose of the property is that she wishes to take a trip round the world; that is, if the department wakes up in time and pays her for the property. After the department had made these inquiries I received the following letter dated the 4th February, 1966, from the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority:

Lots 1-5 Canning Loc. 37, Canning Highway, Manning:

Further to my letter of the 20th July, 1965, the Authority have resolved not to purchase the above property as it will be at least five years before it will be actually required for the Kwinana Freeway.

Is this justice? The lady in question has had this property for many years and every time a buyer came along and offered to buy it a check with the region planning authority would disclose that it could not be bought, because the authority was going to use it for the continuation of the Kwinana Freeway.

This lady wrote to me, and I think her letter is well worth quoting to the House. It reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,

I wish to thank you for your valiant efforts on my behalf, with the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, regarding my property of five blocks of land, 494 Canning Highway, South Perth.

For the past ten years the bureaucratic attitude of this authority has made it impossible to develop or sell this land, as they do not seem to be able to make up their minds regarding the purchase or non-purchase of the land in question and have advised that they will not be doing anything for the next five years. By this I am led to understand that they do not seem to have the finance or purchasing power for their commitments most of the time and therefore people are inconvenienced over many years because of their procrastination and their dog-in-the-manger attitude towards the holders of such properties.

I was led to understand that they were making arrangements to resume this property last year, but after having advised them on the high amount offered to me by a private investor three years ago and that the rates have more than doubled during this period, it seems that they have gone cold on the idea of purchase at present and are hoping for a drop in land values, so that they can pick it up at bargain rates. I feel that a move should be made by Parliament to remove this useless body as they seem to be unable to fulfil their commitments and are just messing people around to suit their whims over long periods of time.

In some of the other States property owners are protected if they have owned land for a period of 35 years or more, against the bureaucratic attitude of authorities of this type, and it is high time a bill was passed in this State for the protection of people in the same position as myself. As I have now reached the age of 74 I feel that something should be done, so that I am able to either sell or improve my property as I think fit and not be forced to wait another five years for them to make up their minds.

My present tenants have asked for leases for their businesses, which I am unable to grant, as I do not wish

to inconvenience people, the way I have been inconvenienced in the past ten years, and I hope that the disgraceful attitude of this authority will not be allowed to continue in the future as it has in the past.

Again thanking you for your attempts to get some justice on my behalf.

I am yours sincerely,

Year after year in this House I have pointed out how other people are being similarly affected, and this is not justice. Nowhere else in what we term the free world would this set of conditions apply. Probably the most over-governed country in the world is New Zealand, but this set of circumstances or conditions does not prevail even in New Zealand. On the contrary, in that country people receive a fair and just price which is determined by individual valuers.

I have discussed this matter with some members of this House and they agree with me. In this State two departments make valuations of properties—the Taxation Department on the one hand, and the Public Works Department on the other.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: The Main Roads Department could, too.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That could be so, but I was under the impression that the Taxation Department has been doing the valuations for that department. However, the situation is that one Government department determines the value at which another Government department purchases property, and justice is not done.

Some of the valuations which have been brought to my attention have been too ridiculous for words. Sometimes a property is worth double the amount initially offered by the valuers and consequently an argument starts and a battle ensues for a period of months and months. In some cases, such as in North Fremantle, people are uprooted from their houses. Uncertainty exists about their welfare and their future and this situation is very worrying to them. It has occurred not only in North Fremantle.

It is high time the people of Western Australia were treated justly. An independent valuer's tribunal or panel should be established and all property the Government—through any department—wishes to purchase, should be valued by that tribunal or panel. The valuation should not be done by another Government department.

If a person's home is to be resumed, that person should be provided with another home at least equal to the one to be resumed. He should not be offered State Housing Commission accommodation or be left to fend for himself. If he has a home he should be given another one which is either equal to or a little better than his present accommodation, thus compensating for the inconvenience. The

value of that home—and any other property involved—should be determined by an independent pool of valuers which should be established. The present system is not operating justly, and I could give many examples of this. However, I will give the details of two cases which I have had to refer to a Queen's Counsel because I knew I could do nothing about them.

There is no secrecy about the details. One of the properties is an area of two acres and the other is an adjoining four acres in South Fremantle. I will deal with the two-acre property first. The person who owns the land has been a market gardener and has a total holding of 3½ acres. He has been on this property for the past 20 years and has a modern home, a large shed which cost £2,000, and a smaller cottage—in which he previously lived—which he has let. The buildings would cover half an acre which leaves three acres for his market garden. This is beautiful market-gardening land in a hollow, and he makes a very handsome income from it every year—an income which I would like myself. However, for the purpose of a new school which is being constructed in this area, two acres of this person's property are to be resumed.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: That is two acres of his three acres?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is two acres of his total of 3½ acres. His market garden covers three acres. When the two acres are taken, he will have the half-acre for his buildings, as at present, and will have only one acre remaining from which he cannot earn his living.

In order that members might know the value of his land, I would mention that the current value of the building blocks adjacent to his range from £1,850 to £2,000 a block. As this market gardener is to lose two acres of his property, his implements, including his tractor, will be of little value to him, but he will not obtain their true value when he sells because he will have to sell them as secondhand units.

In addition to this the department is resuming his water supply, which is on the two acres of land to be resumed. However, the greatest hardship of all is that this man will be rendered unemployed. He will be out of a job, the occupation he has had for the past 20 years. The grand total he has been offered is about £7,800. He would make more than that in two years from his market garden. Yet he will lose two acres, his well, his income, and everything with it, and he will have to start afresh somewhere else.

He has asked the department to resume the whole of his property so that he can get enough money to set himself up somewhere else; but the department refuses. Is this justice? How would any

member in this Chamber like to have his income taken from him as a result of a resumption?

The Hon. A. R. Jones: We would spit fire.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course. When I approached the resuming officer about this I had quite a lengthy discussion with him, but he said that this market gardener is not going to make a profit out of the Government. This is the feeling—that these people are not going to make a profit out of the Government. Never at any stage had this man wanted to do so. All he wanted was sufficient compensation for the loss of his land in order that he might buy another market garden to work and raise to the standard of his present one.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: At least he is entitled to the replacement value.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes. And that would be no small amount. We must remember that to establish and cultivate a market garden to the standard of his present one would take five years. Therefore he would have a very much reduced income over those five years, even supposing he could purchase a suitable property of the same standard. With the amount offered he would not have a chance of doing that.

That is just one example of the injustice about which I have been speaking, and I hope other members will mention some of the cases of which they know and have told me. It is disgraceful—that is the only word to use—that people, including primary producers, as in this case, should be treated in such an off-handed, take-it-or-leave-it manner.

I wrote to the Public Works Department for this market gardener, but after receiving the department's reply, I referred him, and the owner of the adjoining property, to a Queen's Counsel.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: For what purpose is the property required?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: For school grounds. It will be used for an oval I believe. However, there is an oval not more than half a mile from this property.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The P. & C. Association will have a well at that school.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, it will have a well.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Is any other land around it being resumed, or is the two acres the area of the ground?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No. Two acres on the northern extremity of his boundary, which is not being used for market gardening, was resumed. The owner has agreed to the price. It is vacant land, but the owner was offered the same price for it as was the market gardener who was earning his living from his land. Also a further four acres on the western extremity are being resumed.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: At the same rate?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: So a high school will be built on a total acreage of what?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The other was Fremantle City Council land which was reserved for a high school.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Was it not resumed for a high school?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: For a high school playing field.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you mean to say that this is not connected with the existing school?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It will be a new school. A high school is to be constructed and this area will be the sports ground, so I am told.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is disassociated with the school ground?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Then, it is associated with it. What is the total acreage on which the school is to be built?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I could not say.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think this is not unimportant.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am not querying the department's right. I want the high school just as much as everyone else in the district wants it. At no stage have I objected to that. But, I am objecting to the standover attitude—the take-it-or-leave-it attitude—when a family man is going to lose his income. That is the point I am making. The family man is going to be forced out of his job and his land is being taken away. If there was not a resumption notice over this land, it could be subdivided—it is in a residential area so subdivision is possible—and if subdivided into quarter-acre blocks he would get more money than the amount which is now being offered; this would be a matter of his own choosing. However, he does not choose that—he chooses to be a market gardener.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: If the blocks are selling for £1,800, how would he be able to subdivide and get more money?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They are selling for between £1,800 and £2,000.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: Eight quarter-acre blocks?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They are selling for between £1,800 and £2,000 because they are bounded by roadways already.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: What zoning is it? Is it rural?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, it is residential. It is in Annie Street, South Fremantle.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The point exercising my mind is what the department is doing in building a high school on what appears to be eight acres of land.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, a far greater area than eight acres is involved. In all, three schools are being built in a complex—a technical school, a high school, and a primary school.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: The department should, at least, take the other acre.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The department should resume the lot and allow the man a fresh start. He should receive a decent pay-out, and this is the point that I am emphasising.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Full compensation should be paid.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: In North Fremantle, a pensioner's home was resumed and he was not fully compensated. Resumptions are going to take place in King Street and in Glyde Street when the new traffic bridge is built in Fremantle. The Hon. Mr. Willesee referred to a man who lost his rights as a storekeeper through reconstruction of the area on which his shop was located.

These injustices are going on continually but, unfortunately, too few people hear of them and too few people are prepared to say anything about them. I think the newspapers would be doing a service to the people if they made these inquiries and contacted the local authorities and found out what resumptions were taking place. It is only through public opinion—and newspapers are the medium for public opinion—that these injustices can be brought to bear on the Government. Irrespective of which Government is in office, the Public Works Act remains in operation and it is an Act with which I entirely disagree. We find that the Government is resuming land through a Government department and people are not getting justice.

Earlier on I referred to the pensioners and I have seen these people paid £1,800, or £1,500, for their properties. The other evening The Hon. Mr. Lavery spoke of a house in North Fremantle for which the owner received a sum of money which was nowhere near that required to buy even a slum house in another area. Some of the homes which are situated on land which is to be resumed are not grand, but at least they are homes and represent security. The people have lived in them for 30 or 40 years and they do not have to pay rent. Yet, these people are tossed out of their homes—or forced out, as one woman was—and not given the replacement value, or something equivalent. I think it is the department's responsibility not to worry about the cost structure in these cases where homes are involved. The

cost should not come into it. The person concerned should be provided with a home in a locality of his, or her, choosing.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: With suitable compensation.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: With suitable housing and this, in fact, is all they want. With the numerous cases with which I have dealt, the plea has always been, "Get me another house. I know the railway or the roadway has to come through here; get me something where I do not have to pay any rent." The Minister would know that what I am saying now is the gospel truth.

Let us consider the case of a man and his wife, both pensioners, who are living in a house which they own themselves. They receive £11 10s. fortnightly each—that is, there is £11 10s. coming into the house each week. The only payment they have to make out of that amount of money, on an annual basis, is for their water rates, and then only if they want to do it. If they do not want to pay, these rates can be built up as a charge against the property and can be taken out of their estate at death. The same process applies to local authority rates; these too, can build up as a charge against the property. Land tax is dispensed with because that is not a charge against the property. Therefore, if these people do not want to pay any rates or fees, they do not have to do so, because they are pensioners.

When their property is resumed, they are offered like accommodation to suit a two-unit family by the State Housing Commission. I give the State Housing Commission full marks in this direction because it always comes to the party and offers this accommodation. It is irrelevant whether a person received £1,800 or £800 for the home which was resumed because the moment he takes on State Housing Commission accommodation, he is not entitled to a rebate of rent as is the case with the normal pensioner couple. The normal pensioner couple are now paying in the vicinity of 30s. a week for State Housing Commission accommodation, but because the people whose homes have been resumed have in excess of £200 in the bank, they have to pay the full economic rent.

Therefore, the position is that one Government department is tipping people out of their houses on the one hand and another department is giving them accommodation on the other hand. However, the people are charged the full economic rent which, in the case of a flat, could be £2 15s. or, in the case of a house, £3 or £4, with the latest rental increases. This continues until the compensation moneys which they have in the bank have been reduced below £200. Is that justice? A person loses his home and his property, is forced to shift into accommodation provided by the State Housing Commission, and then has to pay an increased £2 a

week rental—simply because he is being compensated for his property and because he has more than £200 in his banking account.

These are the problems that we, as members, have to face. This is not justice. I think that the Minister for Housing should have a serious look at this situation.

Conflicting Acts of Parliament prevail as between the State and the Commonwealth. On the one hand, we have the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement under which the majority of rental homes are built out of Commonwealth Government moneys. These are financed by the Commonwealth and administered by the State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am afraid your knowledge of this is not as great as it should be.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Minister can correct me if I am wrong. To the best of my knowledge, the situation is as I have said.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Commonwealth-State rental homes are built out of loan moneys and the Commonwealth does not pay for them—the State pays for them out of its loan moneys.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The money comes from the Commonwealth.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No, it is Western Australia's reimbursement of loan moneys.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The money comes from the Commonwealth in the first instance.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No, from the States in the first instance.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Under the Commonwealth Act, a special grant of £5,000,000 was given in one instance in order to build homes for pensioners. A single pensioner can have £2,020—or \$4,040—before the rate of his pension is decreased, and then the pension is reduced by \$1 for every \$20 annually in excess of that amount. Therefore, we find that a married couple is entitled to have \$8,000 in the bank as a nest-egg—if we may term it that—and still be eligible for the full rate of pension. But, although the Commonwealth Act says that they are allowed to have £4,040—or \$8,080—when these people move into a State Housing Commission home, if they have £200, or more, they have to pay the full economic rent until their savings are reduced to an amount below £200.

I feel that a lot of rethinking is necessary on the welfare of our people, particularly of aged people. I think it is the Government's duty to rectify this situation. This House is the right place in which to express the hope that the Minister for Housing will have a conference with the other State Ministers for Housing on this matter in order to bring

about some conformity between the varying Acts which affect these people.

I am not going to labour the debate any further. However, I have many other subjects to deal with and I shall ventilate these from time to time.

A most interesting subject which will take some time to discuss is the construction of the standard gauge railway through the South Coogee area. No doubt, some members may have read of this in the Press. Here, another primary producer was seriously affected. However, I shall leave this matter until a later stage of the session. I have a full case history on this matter and I would like the members of this House and you, Sir, in particular to hear what did take place in this area and why it took place. I support the motion.

THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON (Lower Central) [5.42 p.m.]: I rise to support this motion. First of all, I should like to add to the remarks that have been made by several members to The Hon. Mr. Willesee and the honourable Mr. Dolan. I should like to congratulate them on being elevated to the positions which they now occupy on the front bench. I would also like to express the hope that the retirement of The Hon. Mr. Wise to the back benches of this House does not mean that we are going to lose the opportunity of listening to some of the very valuable remarks he makes in his contributions to debates.

I should like to dwell for a few moments on the trip to the north which was recently undertaken by members of Parliament. I had thought, possibly, that the first member who rose to his feet in this House this year would talk on the trip to the north. However, there has been very little said about it so far.

The Hon. Mr. Willmott's comments in this House last night were analogous to the remarks I would like to make. Excluding the mineral potential of the north which I commented on last year, I must say that I was amazed at the agricultural potential of the northern areas. If all the waterways in the north are to be harnessed and eventually put to the purpose of providing food—which they ultimately will be—they will, in time, be the means of providing food for a great number of people. On Friday night I listened to the Commonwealth Minister for the Interior propounding his theories on the Ord project. He went to great pains to assure us he was not against its development. He also went to great lengths to tell us about the excellent yields of cotton produced by growers in the Naomi district of New South Wales.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Not this year.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: No, not this year. I think he did say that the cotton crop was a failure this year. How-

ever, I must agree with his concluding remarks; namely, that we must develop the north. On this subject he went on to say that if we do not develop it someone else will. That is the important factor we have to keep in mind all the time and, in particular, the agricultural potential of the north. Whilst the discovery of minerals is very important to us at the moment—and will remain so for many years to come, I hope—it does appear that it is vital to conserve water in those parts in order that foodstuffs can be produced to a greater extent. The provision of adequate water supplies in a country such as Australia is absolutely necessary, and it does appear that we have ample supplies of water in the north to enable the surrounding country to be harnessed for cultivation.

Following a short trip many parliamentarians made into the north-west area last year, it was Mr. Robinson, I think, who put forward the suggestion in this House that the Government should take all interested members of Parliament on an educational tour of the north and when it was made I, for one, felt it must have been of great benefit to every one who was able to make that trip. Also, I must congratulate the department responsible and others concerned for the excellent manner in which the tour was organised. It was the most successful tour I have ever made on any occasion.

Being a farmer, and a member who represents an agricultural area, I now wish to speak on agriculture. We are constantly hearing the story, of course, of how hard the farmers have been hit, and how they have had to absorb the increasing costs of present times. The theme song, of course, that is heard from most Government departments, and particularly from Commonwealth Ministers—I heard the Minister for Trade speaking in this vein only the other night—is that there is only one answer; namely, that the farmers must increase their production to overcome their difficulties. This has been the theme song for many years.

In Western Australia I think there is ample evidence that the farmer has met the challenge made to him and he has been able to absorb—in the main, most successfully—these increased costs as they have occurred. Admittedly the farmer enjoys the benefit of a superphosphate subsidy and this is where I might, perhaps, disagree with some honourable members, who, last week, spoke on the question of subsidies. I consider that, in certain circumstances, subsidies are essential and, further, under some conditions, they are of national importance, as the super subsidy has proved to be throughout Australia as a whole.

About a fortnight ago, the Commonwealth Minister for Trade told us that the Commonwealth had paid \$23,000,000 in super subsidies during the past 12 months. However, he went on to point out that this

has proved to be a wonderful investment for the Commonwealth Government inasmuch as it has increased, to a great extent, the income from export trade, for most of which trade the farmers are responsible. In fact, during the past 12 months income from export of primary products amounted to about 80 per cent. of the total export trade figure.

Our earnings from exports are an extremely important part of our economy today, and any subsidy that will eventually increase them must be of national importance. I contend, therefore, that the farmer is quite justified, in the circumstances, in accepting the subsidy paid by the Commonwealth Government. Primary industries in Western Australia have expanded rapidly in the last 10 years. Figures show that our rural production has increased by 62 per cent.; wool production by 60 per cent.; and cattle by 46 per cent. These increases are rather staggering. In his Speech I think the Governor made mention of an increase of 2,000,000 sheep and 32,000,000 lb. of wool during the past 12 months. I would not like members, after hearing those figures, to think that the increase of 2,000,000 sheep was responsible for the increase of 32,000,000 lb. of wool.

One has only to pause for a moment to realise that there must have been a considerable increase in wool production during the year from our existing sheep numbers. Unfortunately in Western Australia meat and wool production have been limited because of the low percentage of lambing and this constitutes a very serious problem. I have here some figures which have been compiled by the Department of Agriculture, and they are most recent. These figures on lambing losses have been obtained from various centres, and indicate that over the past four years there has been a definite drop in lambing percentages.

For instance, in Cranbrook, the average loss was 60 per cent.; in Kojonup, 64 per cent.; in Plantagenet, 63 per cent.; and in Katanning, 66 per cent. This was in 1964. These figures are alarming. On the other hand, in the Chapman district the figure was, for 1964, 72.65 per cent.; Wongan, 67.98 per cent.; Beverley, 70.48 per cent.; Dandaragan, 70.05 per cent.; Merredin, 70.06 per cent.; Esperance, 63.12 per cent.; and Salmon Gums, 68.92 per cent.

So it can be seen that in other areas there is not a great variation in the percentage. The overall result is, of course, that these lambings are seriously restricting our production. There has been a great deal of agitation for the establishment of a research station to investigate this problem in the southern portion of the State, and I must admit that the C.S.I.R.O. and the Department of Agriculture are making a considerable effort in trying to solve this problem.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Did they take over Glen Lossie?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: No, they did not, but that is another question. It is unfortunate that half of Glen Lossie was sold in the early stages and when the proposition was put to the Government to take over the remaining portion I understand the area of cleared land on Glen Lossie was too small for the purpose required. I believe there are only 500 acres of old cleared land remaining on Glen Lossie, and if we are to establish a research station in this area a fair tract of old cultivated ground is needed, because the diseases that affect stock are already in existence, whereas it may take 100 years for them to develop on new land.

The Hon. N. McNeill: There may have been suitable land on the part of Glen Lossie that was sold.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Evidently there was, but unfortunately there was not sufficient agitation at that time for the property to be bought by the Government. These animal husbandry problems are extremely serious, and although our sheep numbers increased by 2,000,000 last year, approximately 320,000 sheep were imported into Western Australia by rail. I do not have the figures which would indicate the importations of sheep into this State by road, but the number consigned by road to the Esperance area could be considerable.

In the main I am of the opinion that the farmer in Western Australia has met the challenge of increased production by increasing his efficiency. After listening to the speech by Mr. Ron Thompson, I sometimes wonder whether the same theme song for increased production by the farmer is being sung in some of our Government departments; because looking at the picture from my angle I feel that, perhaps, with the enormous expenditure they have under their jurisdiction, there is every justification for those departments to put into effect the theme song for greater efficiency and greater productivity. I propose to deal with some of those departments at a later stage.

Before I leave the subject of agriculture I wish to draw the attention of the House to a statement which appeared in *The West Australian* concerning a search for another half million bushels of wheat.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You mean half a bushel, do you not?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes, that is correct. Very few people realise what effect an increase of half a bushel of wheat per acre has on the total production. The Commonwealth Government has shown its appreciation of the value of the products we are producing in this State by more than doubling the grant for agricultural research. We are hoping that this grant will, perhaps, help us to produce a further half a bushel of wheat to the acre.

During the concluding stages of last session a great deal of discussion arose over some of the legislation we passed concerning Commonwealth matching money for roads and the effect such legislation had on the shires. When this subject was discussed last session a great many points of view were expressed. Several shires put forward the suggestion that they would lose revenue as a result of their collecting only half the license registration fee on a truck. However, the figures have proved that instead of some shires losing revenue, they have shown a gain.

Today I compiled some figures in regard to the revenue obtained by quite a few shires in my province, and they are rather illuminating in view of the increased revenue that many shires have gained due to the abolition of the concession licenses and the additional charge on other vehicles. For the benefit of the House I will read a few of these figures, but before doing so I would point out that once a shire reaches the base figure it can retain all revenue over and above that amount. The figures in question show that in 1965-66 the Kojonup shire collected and retained \$22,232, and it sent to the Treasury \$13,780, which represented excess motor vehicle license fees and, with a matching grant of \$10,335 added, the total the shire received, approximately, was \$24,000 in return for its \$13,000.

This year Kojonup collected an additional \$22,726 above the amount applicable to the base year. The matching grant the shire received was \$17,000-odd, so in all it received \$39,960. There could be some variation of the figures, because some shires endeavour to collect the license fees before the 30th June, and some could have received a greater percentage of these fees than others.

The Shire of Wagin was in a better position. The figure for the base year was \$22,434. It sent down \$9,914 last year, and received \$7,435 in a matching grant, so it received a total of \$17,349. This year the shire sent down \$18,772, and received \$14,079 in a matching grant; so it received a total of \$32,851, which is very nearly double the return, from the matching money.

The Katanning, Broomehill and other shires show very little variation in the average. It proves that the shires have very definitely gained quite a lot of additional revenue. Of course the shires have lost half the revenue derived from the trucks which now pay the road maintenance charge. For many years the receipts from trucks have been considerable.

After the road maintenance contribution charge has been in operation for a period of 12 months the Minister should investigate the position and make a note of the losses which have been incurred by the shires. A shire which used to derive the full license fee from 20 trucks will now lose half of it, and that loss of revenue is considerable.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: How would the extra money affect their staff?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I do not think it will have an effect on the staff, but it will affect the rates. If a shire is getting money out of licenses it should not need so much money from rates.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: All the money goes to roads, therefore the shires have to pay everything from rates.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: They could purchase machinery or plant out of this money. Practically every month some shire or other in my electorate has to raise a loan for the purchase of plant. I suggest that out of the additional money received from the road maintenance charges the shires should be permitted to purchase plant and machinery. This will enable the rates to be kept to a minimum.

The Hon. E. C. House: The extra money could be expended on improvements around the town, because the town ward always gets a lean spin.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: It is evident the honourable member represents a town ward. All the time the town wards are getting more and more money spent on them. It is the general picture throughout the State that the shires have derived considerable benefit from the matching grant. I have the figures to show what each shire in my area will receive in a three-year period. Kojonup will receive \$172,503, which includes the matching money. Wagin will receive \$151,354; Narrogin Shire, as distinct from the council, \$93,426; Katanning \$229,454, and so on. Perhaps we were justified in making some attempt to obtain the matching money last year.

Sitting suspended from 6.5 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: At the suspension I was discussing increased revenue received by the shires from license fees. Unfortunately, I have handed the figures to *Hansard*; but in respect of motorcars I think they are up 13 per cent., and in respect of motor trucks about 25 per cent. That is not the end of the story as far as the farmer is concerned. Unfortunately we changed the system of licensing these vehicles to gross vehicle weight and this has produced quite a number of anomalies in the truck field. Now we find that many farmers, after paying at least 25 per cent. more in license fees, have had the carrying capacity of their vehicles reduced by a considerable amount and this has produced some ill-feeling.

The effects of this will not be felt until harvest time when bins are carried on the trucks. As you know, Sir, most farms are geared for bulk handling, and even the smallest trucks carry a bin which can hold five tons of wheat, or 60 to 70 bags. The farmers have been getting away with this,

but under the gross vehicle weight system they will be able to carry to a siding only 40 bags of wheat approximately on a truck, and that is not a paying proposition. There will be a terrific outcry when harvest time comes around, especially as the heavy haulage squad is now becoming active and will be more so as the months go on. I feel that perhaps the Government, in its wisdom, will have a look at the gross vehicle weight system and its effect on the licensing of farm vehicles.

On traffic control I wish to make one or two brief comments on points that have occurred to me. I agree with Mr. Wise when he said, while speaking on the Supply Bill the other night, that we do not see sufficient traffic police on the roads. The other day I had the privilege of having a car ride with the Minister for Police, and he made the remark, "Isn't it strange how the traffic behaves when a policeman can be seen driving in the street?" At Armadale I noticed how quiet and orderly the traffic was while a policeman could be seen.

Unfortunately we do not see enough traffic police. I feel we are placing too much emphasis on catching people rather than on educating them to drive more carefully. I would like to mention one thing which creates quite a serious hazard in the city. In Hay Street and other main streets, drivers will persist in opening the door on the driver's side in the way of passing traffic. They open the doors to their full width and other drivers automatically tend to swing out, which results in the chap on the other side of the road being jammed. The traffic police should be very strict on this sort of thing when it takes place in the main city area because it certainly represents a serious problem.

To change the subject, I have a newspaper cutting about which I am very concerned. I must admit that over the years the unions have done quite a lot of good for the community. However, I noticed this heading in the paper: "A.W.U. Bans Its Members From Shearing Test." The article states that the Australian Workers Union has banned its members from entering the State's top shearing competition at the Royal Show. This ban is Australia-wide. No union member is now allowed to take part in any shearing contest not run solely for the benefit of union members.

I think it is a shocking attitude for any union to take in regard to these contests, bearing in mind that there are only 600 unionist shearers, while there are 1,200 non-unionist shearers. Therefore the unionist shearers are not in the majority. Many non-unionist shearers are farmers and their sons. The article goes on to say that the union regards these non-unionist shearers as scabs. But many of these chaps have never had any opportunity of joining a union. They have never sheared in sheds where there has

been union supervision and therefore have not become members of the union. The majority have only sheared in two-stand sheds.

However, many of these men would be capable of winning a competition such as the one I have mentioned. Unfortunately this year unionist shearers will be debarred and this will deprive the public from seeing some of our top shearers in action. Some of the unionist shearers are the top shearers in the State and, for the benefit of the competition, it would be better had the old tradition remained.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Can the honourable member suggest that two-stand sheds should not be union sheds?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Further down in this article the union secretary (Mr. F. V. Mitchell) says that non-union members derive benefits that have been obtained by the union. This is absolute trash. What have the unions done for the shearers over the past few years? For years, farmers have been paying more than award rates. It is not a question of how much a shearer is paid.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They will shear a sheep cheaper than a barber will shear my hair.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Perhaps you are more troublesome than a sheep.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: It is a well-known fact that the farmer pays what the shearer asks in order to get his sheep sheared.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: Is that the reason given?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes. The union cannot claim any credit though.

The Hon. E. C. House: The union does not think they should shear on Saturdays and Sundays.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Thank you Mr. House. Mr. President, I am getting a lot of help with this speech.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Rafferty rules in the farming area.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes, but they have enabled us to achieve things. I have sheared many thousands of sheep and I have never been a member of the union.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: Shame on you!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What is wrong with the unions?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I will now change the subject and speak in regard to Government departments, which should do their utmost to increase their efficiency. First of all I will deal with housing. I contend that the State Housing Commission could help considerably to improve the present housing position.

There are problems in my particular town, and I think the same situation applies to many other country towns. There is a terrific housing shortage. As regards my town, there is a list of approximately 24 or 25 people waiting for houses. We have been in the unfortunate position this year where houses have been completed but we are waiting for them to be connected to the sewerage. I know that is not the fault of the Housing Commission.

I think the Housing Commission could assist in regard to the time lag when a house becomes vacant. The fault is not necessarily that of the Housing Commission, because in some rural towns quite often the clerk of courts or the Rural Bank acts as the agent of the commission. In my town it is the clerk of courts, and he may waste time before he announces that a key has been handed in. We have a lively industry there and, because of the housing shortage, people are having to live on verandahs, and so on. A house became vacant the other day and will remain so for at least a month before being re-let.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Does it have to be repainted?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Even without anything having to be done, it will be vacant for a month. If this position obtains throughout the State, then the period should be reduced. If it were reduced by one week there would be increased efficiency in the State Housing Commission.

The Hon. J. M. Thomson: Are you referring to new houses?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: No. When a key is handed in, the State Housing Commission sends a supervisor to investigate whether repairs, and so on are needed. In this particular instance, the supervisor has to go to Esperance, or some other place and it will be a month before the house is re-let. I am told that this is the normal period if there are no repairs required. It was not my intention to be critical, but simply to suggest that if we can reduce the time by one week it will mean a considerable improvement in the efficiency of the State Housing Commission.

In regard to main roads, I am one who has always congratulated the Main Roads Department on the manner in which it has carried out the terrific job it is required to do throughout the State. But here again, I feel there is quite an amount of room for an increase in efficiency in the administration of the department. I would make a brief reference to the traffic report which has not yet been discussed. The Perth-Williams Road has come in for quite a lot of criticism in regard to the number of accidents that have taken place there. I contend the Main Roads Department must bear most of the responsibility for a number of the accidents that have occurred on this particular section of the Albany Road. There are a considerable

number of sections on that road which are finished off with what is known as gravel bitumen, which is very slippery once it becomes wet; and it becomes more slippery with age, as the smooth surface of the stones becomes more pronounced.

I now wish to refer to another matter which perhaps concerns the surveyors. I speak of the bridge over the Arthur River. Approaching the Arthur River Bridge from Perth, one crosses a small bridge, turns sharp left, proceeds a few chains, turns sharp to the right, and then makes another sharp turn to the left across the new bridge.

The draftsman must have had great delight in drawing the plan for this particular curve and the approach to the bridge. We have had three bridges over that river. The first, which was put up in the old days, went straight across; the posts were put in and the bridge sat on top of them. That bridge lasted for many years.

It was replaced by a more modern version a little lower downstream. The logical way to build the new bridge would have been to go straight across but the engineer chose a site several chains downstream, which created the large curve on the approach to the bridge.

On Easter Monday there was an accident at the bridge involving two or three vehicles and one person was killed. Later, on the same afternoon, eight vehicles were involved in one pile-up. Fortunately, on that occasion, there was no serious injury to persons. Those accidents were caused mainly because of the slippery gravel section on this particular curve.

At the present moment we have a section of road from Tarwonga to the Arthur River Bridge which is in a particularly wet area. This was a narrow section on that road; it is one of the few sections that had not been widened. Unfortunately, work was commenced at the beginning of winter to widen this section of the road but the engineer has been in trouble for several months because it is a very wet place. We will have trouble right throughout the winter and it will cost an enormous amount of money eventually to finish that section of road.

I think it would have been far better to leave that road for a few months. It might have been cheaper to put the men off than have them do the work over and over again, as they have done during the past weeks.

Recently, a seminar of stud sheep breeders was held in Katanning, and another one at Geraldton. We had some very eminent people over from the Eastern States, Dr. Dunn, and Dr. Turner from New South Wales. I am amazed that we bring men all the way from New South Wales, and headlines appear in the paper, to tell us about knock-kneed sheep. If those doctors have nothing better to do than to travel all that distance just to tell us about knock-kneed sheep, then I am surprised.

Apparently those people spent many years investigating knock-kneed sheep, even to the extent of driving a flock of sheep for 20 miles to see if the knock-kneed sheep—

The Hon. J. Heitman: Knocked up!

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes, to see if the sheep knocked up. Speaking seriously, the object of the drive, of course, was to see its effect on the sheep. I think there is ample room for the particular department to make better use of some of the funds available to it. Perhaps I should change the subject.

I congratulate *The West Australian* for keeping tab on some of the things which occur in our State. There was an editorial published on Wednesday, the 3rd August, under the heading, "Keeping a Watch on Foreign Investment." I did make out a list of all the companies involved, but I have mislaid it. A publication concerning this matter was recently distributed to us and I think every member should study it. *The West Australian* has made quite a point in this article by drawing attention to the way the food-producing firms have been taken over. It is really amazing when one studies the article and sees who owns some of the companies in Australia.

I feel I have taken up sufficient time and with those few brief remarks, I support the motion.

THE HON. H. R. ROBINSON (North Metropolitan) [7.50 p.m.]: I join with The Hon. Mr. Syd Thompson in congratulating The Hon. Mr. Willesee on being elected as Leader of the Opposition in this House. I feel sure that members wish him well in his new position.

On the 5th May, the University of Western Australia, through the Adult Education Board, arranged a series of lectures for those considering submitting themselves for election to local government in Western Australia. The idea was to have 25 people go through this course of 20 lectures.

This was a wonderful opportunity for those interested—or about to be interested—in local government to listen to some top men in their field give advice. The Minister for Local Government has advised me that in the metropolitan area there are 300 elected personnel.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Approximately 300.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: I know that during the period when I was serving in local government I would have welcomed the opportunity to listen to some of these lectures. I will draw the attention of the House to the lecturers. They included Professor G. S. Reid, Professor of Political Science at the University of Western Australia; Mr. W. Dowsett and Dr. M. Harris, Senior Lecturers in

Economics at the University of Western Australia; Mr. A. White, secretary to the Local Government Association; Mr. G. A. Kennedy and Mr. P. Brinsden, legal consultants; Mr. R. Moffin, Chief Engineer, Main Roads Department; Mr. K. Bott, Fremantle City Engineer; Dr. D. Snow, Deputy Commissioner of Public Health; Mr. H. Salter, Chief Health Inspector, City of Perth; Mr. J. Lloyd, Town Planning Commissioner; Mr. P. Ritter and Mr. K. Hewison, town planners for the City of Perth and the Shire of Perth respectively; Mr. E. Smith, Mayor of Mosman Park; Mr. R. Paust, Secretary for Local Government; Mr. S. Parks, Deputy Town Clerk of Fremantle; Mr. T. Brown, Town Clerk of Nedlands; and Mr. W. Heron, Assistant Secretary for Local Government.

That is a list of the top men in local government in Western Australia who were to give advice to elected personnel. Only 20 submitted their names, and only 10 of those persons are attending the lectures. It seems a great pity that the lectures should fall flat because I consider that had the matter been handled properly, through the Local Government Department, these courses could have been filled on each occasion.

From information supplied to me, it appears that a circular was sent out to each local authority from the Adult Education Board. Admittedly, there was a fee of \$5 for admission, but surely each of the local authorities concerned could have paid that fee if that was the reason why some people did not enter for the lectures. I submit that in future, if this matter is properly handled by the Local Government Department there would be many of the 300 councillors from the metropolitan area who would take advantage of this particular course.

Yesterday I asked a question concerning the number of vehicles stolen in Western Australia. I have been concerned for some time at the number of vehicles being stolen, and the figures are rather alarming. The figures since 1955 are as follows:—

Year	Number Stolen
1955	713
1956	834
1957	790
1958	843
1959	982
1960	863
1961	767
1962	1,048
1964	647
1965	746

I have not got the figure for 1963. The figures that were given to me yesterday, for the months of May, June and July are: 123 in May; 114 in June; and 152 in July.

It seems that there is a need for some deterrent to the stealing of motor cars and motor cycles, which is going on particularly in the metropolitan area. I feel that the

Government should look into the question of minimum fines. I do not say it is a question of maximum fines because I have a list of the fines that are applicable to the various offences. I blame the magistrates in the courts for not imposing higher penalties as a deterrent to these offences.

A person can own a motorcar worth, say, \$2,000. If it is stolen he faces the disability of having to do without it, for some days in most cases, before it is recovered. In many cases, particularly where the offences go through the children's court, the offenders are let off with a caution; and when the cases go into the main court, the fine itself is not very high—nowhere near the maximum. I feel that the magistrates should give more attention to this matter.

Under section 60 of the Traffic Act, for the first offence for unlawfully using a motor vehicle the minimum fine is \$100, and the maximum fine is \$500. The maximum term of imprisonment is 12 months. For a subsequent offence the minimum term of imprisonment is three months and the maximum two years.

Under the Criminal Code, the penalty for stealing a motorcar valued at under \$1,000 is a maximum term of imprisonment of three years; or the offender can be fined or placed on a bond. For stealing a motorcar valued at over \$1,000 an offender can be imprisoned for seven years, or he can be fined or placed on a bond.

As far as I can see, there are not many cases where an offender is given a decent term of imprisonment. Yesterday I asked how many stolen vehicles were not recovered and the answer was 14 vehicles—being eight cars and utilities and six motor cycles. I also asked how many had been recovered in a damaged condition, and the answer was four were badly damaged and 20 slightly damaged. I consider that these offences should be viewed seriously.

Strangely enough, for stealing a horse—and a horse could be valued at \$50, or \$100, or perhaps \$150—

The Hon. R. Thompson: What sort of a horse would that be?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Would it be one to hang your clothes on?

The Hon. R. Thompson: One could be hanged for stealing a horse.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: For stealing a horse the maximum term of imprisonment is seven years, or the offender can be fined and placed on a bond. For unlawfully using a horse the fine is \$100.

I believe that this is a matter which could be investigated. The maximums provided for are sufficient, but it appears to me that the minimums should be increased as the magistrates are not imposing a penalty severe enough for this type of offence. When we consider that 152 vehicles were stolen in July, how much money was involved, and the fact that the number of offences in this connection

is increasing all the time, we must realise that something more will have to be done in regard to it.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What I am crooked about is the milking of my petrol tank. I have to walk down to the garage to get more petrol.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: That is a different subject altogether. During the weekend I had an opportunity to read the Wayne report on transport in Western Australia, and I found it a most interesting document. There is only one aspect of it on which I would like to comment and that is the suggestion of a transport authority. For this authority Mr. Wayne suggests a panel of seven as follows:—

- The Director-General of Transport.
- The Commissioner of Railways.
- The Chairman of the M.T.T.
- The Chairman of the Coastal Shipping Commission.
- The Commissioner of Transport.
- The President of the West Australian Road Transport Association.
- The Chairman of Directors of MacRobertson Miller Airlines Ltd.

However, there is one suggestion I would throw into the ring at this stage: that the Town Planning Commissioner, or his nominee, should also be considered for membership of this committee if it is established. I make this suggestion because surely the Town Planning Commissioner is vitally interested in the whole question of transport, particularly in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: What about the farmers?

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: Recently I asked the Minister for Health a question regarding the expansion of or additional beds for the Osborne Park Hospital. His answer was to the effect that an additional 36 beds are to be provided. I think the question I should have asked was, "What provision is the Minister making for the future development of the Osborne Park Hospital owing to the rapid advancement of the northern districts?"

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That will depend on the availability of loan funds.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: I am talking about the future of the hospital and I shall quote some figures in a moment to indicate why I think the department should be looking to the future. This hospital is established on 40 acres of ground and its needs for the future will have to be planned because of the rapid development of the districts adjacent to it.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How many beds does the hospital have?

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: At the present time 12 additional beds have been provided and a further 36 beds will be placed in the new additions. However, this will not cater for the future, and to

indicate why I think this I shall quote from a brochure issued by the Shire of Perth. Most of the northern districts that are served by the Osborne Park Hospital are situated within the Shire of Perth boundaries. The brochure was issued on the 30th July, 1966, on the occasion of the official opening of the new shire council reception room and council chambers. The brochure states—

The Shire of Perth has grown spectacularly in the past five years, population bounding from 84,000 in 1961 to 96,500 in 1963; then to 120,000 in 1966.

Further on we find this—

A statistical peep into the looking glass, based on a 7 per cent. population increase every year, indicates 209,000 residents for the Shire by 1974, with a final population density which would be near in 20 years to 350,000. (These estimates may even be conservative for in the past three years the population has been increasing at more than eight per cent. a year.)

Planning for a community of 350,000 people is the exciting challenge of the future in the Shire of Perth.

The increased population which is expected in the area will not only require additional beds to be provided at the Osborne Park Hospital, but also further hospital facilities will have to be built in the area north of Dianella. Therefore, I suggest to the Minister that his department keeps an eye on the position, or it could perhaps make provision for land in that area to be set aside for the development of a new hospital.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know that Osborne Park will ultimately be a multi-storied general hospital.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: That may serve the needs of the area, but at present that hospital does not cater for accident cases. All accident cases, from accidents north of the line, are taken to the Royal Perth Hospital. If there is an accident at Scarborough, or North Beach, the victims are taken to the Royal Perth Hospital even though the ambulance, in doing so, would pass close to the Osborne Park Hospital.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Dr. Hislop told you why in his speech the other night.

The Hon. R. Thompson: No he did not. He mentioned Bunbury.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: I do not think Dr. Hislop—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He was talking about neurologists and that type of specialist and why they could be situated only at the Royal Perth

The Hon. R. Thompson: Osborne Park—

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. N. E. Baxter): Order!

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Go on with your speech.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: I am waiting for them to finish.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I am on your side.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: Mention was made in the House last week of the position in Vietnam, and as this subject was mentioned I see no reason why I should not mention it again. I fully support the Federal Government's policy on Vietnam and the fact that it is honouring its treaty obligations. For that reason it should be given full support.

The Hon. R. Thompson: May I ask you a question? What treaty?

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: As far as I am concerned I would rather see the Communists contained in South-East Asia than being fought on the beaches at City Beach and Scarborough.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Why pick only one group of boys?

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East) [8.8 p.m.]: The discovery of nickel at Kambalda early this year has given the goldfields generally a real boost. It was something the industry needed and someone described it as a real shot in the arm. The *Financial Times* said it was a ray of market sunshine amid the Easter rain. The reactions of the industry to the discovery have engendered great confidence in the future of the area and many people in the town who contemplated leaving it are now deciding to stay. The real estate market there is booming again. I understand 400 houses changed hands within a period of a few months and more people are starting to come back to the goldfields.

The find has also stimulated prospecting. Small prospectors are going out and syndicates are being formed and, of course, large companies with world-wide interests are showing a very keen interest in the goldfields generally, including the town of Norseman and the area along the Eyre Highway.

There are some interesting features to note about the discovery of nickel. In the early days people did nothing about it. They mined a copper ore called cupronickel. The old-time miners could not understand why it could not be refined to provide good quality copper. Their superstitions made them believe it was the work of old Nick and, naturally, the word "nickel" followed.

Nickel was first isolated in 1751 by a German metallurgist, Axel Cronstedt, and the ore came from the Hartz mountains in Germany. The world's largest nickel deposits are situated in Canada at a place called Sudbury in the district of Ontario. Then, of course, there are deposits in New Caledonia, Cuba, and Finland. Canada produces 80 per cent. of the world's output of nickel and, according to the latest figures available, their ore reserves are 200,273,000 short tons or 179,000,000 long tons.

Nickel has a wide range of application and its use depends on the percentage of nickel in the alloy used. It is used extensively in the production of stainless steel and for hardening and improving the anti-corrosive qualities of metals. The interesting point about the Kambalda nickel deposit is the percentage of nickel. With the Canadian deposits the percentage of nickel is up to three per cent, but the Kambalda deposits range from 1.79 to eight per cent. by diamond drilling results. Unconfirmed reports are to the effect that the percentage has been as high as 13 per cent. but, as far as I know, this is not official.

Two big cartels control the world's nickel deposits, one is Canadian and the other is French. Australia imports her nickel requirements from New Caledonia. My research into this matter has shown that Kambalda is situated on the Hampton Plains properties and that in 1890 Hampton Goldmining Areas Limited purchased 19 lots from the Government, an area of 216,000 acres, for £27,000 sterling.

Another interesting fact is that in those days people were talking about a standard gauge railway and there was also talk of running a railway line from the fields through Eucla and across to Adelaide.

I understand 110 men will be employed at Kambalda, which means that as far as the town is concerned it will be a very useful industry, and I am sure the goldfields people will welcome the idea of an extra 110 men working in an industry such as this because they will make a terrific difference to the economy of the goldfields.

As I said before, many other companies are searching for nickel deposits and some geologists say that the geological structure at Frazers Range, which is 60 miles east of Norseman, is very similar to that at Sudbury, in Ontario, and I only hope it turns out to be as good and as big as that deposit, because if it does it will be a great help to Norseman.

Since the 1965 session of Parliament some very high quality gold has been recovered by prospectors, notably the Holman cousins who have been working a deposit between Spargoville and Widgiemooltha, in the South-East Province. Unfortunately, of course, the price of gold is still a headache to the people in the gold-mining industry. Costs are rising all the time and producers still have to sell their product at the same old fixed price, which means that they have to be more selective with the ore they mine; whereas, if the price was a little higher they would probably mine five weights, they now have to mine 5½, and so it goes on. It is sad to see that really good quality gold is being left in the ground. I read recently that President De Gaulle proposed a five power conference; his idea was to put the United Nations back on its feet by returning to the gold standard. The article went on to relate that he had met with

a very cool reception from the United States. Sir John Sweetman of the bullion market in London said he believed the price of gold would double in a few years as there was not enough gold to keep pace with the economic growth of the world. He estimated the price would double within five to 10 years.

If costs keep going up I wonder how many mines will be left in five or 10 years, particularly if bounties or subsidies are not greatly increased. In my area there is a pyrites mine which has increased its output by 40 per cent. The main users are the fertiliser works. The pyrites concentrate is railed to the works where it is burnt and turned into sulphuric acid. In turn that sulphuric acid is mixed with phosphatic rock to make it soluble, after which it comes out as super which is sold to the farming industry for its pastures, grain production, and so on.

As the people in the farming industry, and those who take an interest in current affairs know, there has been a greater use of super in the last few years, particularly since the subsidy was increased. A number of farmers have doubled and trebled the amount of super they use by using it for the preparation of their grazing land. I understand it takes one ton of pyrites to produce $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of sulphuric acid, and it takes 1 lb. of sulphuric acid to produce 1 lb. of sulphur.

Some world authorities say that the use of sulphur is a measure of industrial progress in the community. Norseman will certainly welcome that, because we have the best deposits of pyrites in Australia, and I am sure we could produce a lot more in Norseman than we are doing now. In Europe most of the sulphuric acid is manufactured from pyrites; chemically it is the same as the Norseman deposits.

In South Africa, pyrites is the only source of sulphuric acid. It is interesting to note that South Africa exports a great deal of pyrites. With our ore reserves at Norseman we would welcome the opportunity to sell larger quantities of pyrites.

I would now like to touch on a matter which has come to the fore lately. I hope members will not think I am trying to hop on the bandwagon, because I can soon prove I am not. In the Press recently I read about the fire-proofing of clothing and the fact that Government action was sought. The article reads as follows:—

Compulsory fire-proofing of children's clothing will be sought by the home safety division of the National Safety Council in W.A.

A decision to ask the Public Health Commissioner to take the first step towards legislation was made at a meeting of the division yesterday.

Executive officer Mrs. J. Devlin said after the meeting that it was agreed that the appropriate authority if it

already existed, should be asked to implement the safety measure immediately.

The article continues—

Dr. Robert MacMahon, surgical research fellow of the Children's Medical Research Foundation, New South Wales, criticised his profession for not having tried to do something about children's inflammable clothing much sooner.

He said mothers did not realise the danger in materials like cotton, rayon and flannelette, which could be set alight by a flying matchhead.

"We must do something to prevent these accidents," he said.

"Legislation is very urgently needed."

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Through our infant health clinics, Western Australia has done more, probably, than any other State.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I do not dispute that. I am merely trying to show that I have an interest in the subject. I have done a lot of research into the matter, and I came to take an interest in this subject because of a little girl who died as a result of being badly burned. She came from the town in which I lived. The Minister for Local Government will know to whom I refer. I got to thinking about the matter and I made inquiries about inflammable clothes, and so on. As I will show later, I have carried out a great deal of research into this matter.

I would like to refer to another article which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 6th September, 1965. It reads as follows:—

Child's Gown Catches Fire

A nine-year-old girl received second and third degree burns to her left leg and back when her dressing-gown caught fire as she stood in front of a fireplace at her home on Saturday night.

Cheryl Skinn, of Spring Park-road, Midland, was in a favourable condition in the Princess Margaret Hospital last night.

Only today there was a reference in the newspaper where some people from Busselton had tested various materials and found that they burnt very readily. The article reads as follows:—

Mrs. G. Somerville, West Busselton: A friend and I tested 11 materials to see how easily they would burn. We found that only wool does not blaze like a torch.

Anyone wearing any of the other ten materials is in dire danger of becoming a human torch if he or she is not constantly on guard when near a fire or when matches are being struck.

This was the result of our tests: Cotton—burns very quickly; wool—burns slowly; angora—melts material,

can be smothered out by its own material; cashmilon—burns steadily and gives off a terrible smell; wincey—burns very quickly; taffeta—very steadily burns all material; nylon or terylene—melts material to a toffee-like consistency; corduroy, satin and velvet (full pile)—burn very steadily.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: What about wool?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I would like to see a lot more wool used in clothing. It would be much safer and a lot more profitable to the grazing interests and also to the country as a whole. Members may recall that on the 8th September last year I asked certain questions about this matter. I was starting to take an interest in the subject then, and I was trying to get at the root cause of these accidents. On page 713 of *Hansard* I asked a number of questions of the Minister for Health. These can be found in volume 1 of *Hansard* for the year 1965. They are as follows:—

- (1) How many persons in Western Australia have—
 - (a) suffered from—
 - (i) first;
 - (ii) second; or
 - (iii) third degree burns; or
 - (b) died from the effects of burning accidents in each of the previous five years?
- (2) Is there any information available to indicate the cause of burning, either directly or indirectly, such as ignition of clothing?

I received the following reply:—

- (1) (a) This information is not obtainable.
- (b) 1960 — 19
1961 — 17
1962 — 17
1963 — 16
1964 — 16
- (2) There is no information readily available, and it would require a detailed search of the relevant records to elicit the information.

I subsequently wrote to the British High Commissioner and made inquiries. I had heard about Mrs. Patricia McLaughlin of Belfast West, of the House of Commons, requesting leave to introduce a Bill on the 4th March, 1964, regarding flammable materials. The short title of the Bill was "Flammable Materials". The long title of the Bill was "A Bill to Prohibit the Sale and Manufacture of Flammable Materials for Certain Purposes." I have here an article from the *British Medical Journal* dated the 14th March, 1964. At page 652 it reads as follows:—

FLAMMABLE CLOTHING

The Home Secretary has now undertaken to make regulations "prohibiting the sale of children's nightdresses

which do not comply with the low-flammability requirements of British Standard 3121." This overdue measure will be welcomed by all who are aware of the hazard that inflammable clothes present to young children. But does it go far enough? Mrs. Patricia McLaughlin (Belfast West) thinks not, and has introduced a Bill "to prohibit the sale and manufacture of flammable materials for certain purposes". Her intention is to prevent readily flammable cloth being used for the manufacture of pyjamas and party dresses as well, since these too are well-known causes of severe burns.

It then goes on to give some statistics about burning. I wrote to the British High Commissioner on two occasions and asked for the legislation concerning this matter. Apparently this was sent out but it went astray, and after having obtained further copies, he wrote me the following letter:—

I am enclosing herewith the following publications which you asked me to obtain in November:—

1. Consumer Protection Act of 1961.
2. Children's Nightdresses Regulation 1964.
3. Bill to Prohibit the sale and manufacture of flammable materials for certain purposes (Bill 101—1964).

I must apologise for the delay in supplying this information. The publications were in fact despatched to me by air in early December, but were never received, and I have had some difficulty in obtaining replacements.

I hope, however, that the information is not too late to be of use.

I have here the Children's Nightdresses Regulations, 1964; a Bill to prohibit the sale and manufacture of flammable material for certain purposes; and the Consumer Protection Act, 1961.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Did they give you any indication as to how effective these had been?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: During my speech I will try to give the Minister some information from the research I have done in this matter. In passing I would like to point out that during my research I found there was a very serious circus fatality at Hertford on the 6th July, 1944 in which 168 lives were lost, due primarily to the rapid burning of the tent which was made of ordinary water-proofed cotton duck. After this terrible loss of life and property, flame-proofing of materials for tents was demanded.

America also has had its share of fatal accidents. Numbers of little children had certain types of playsuits, and because of the number of fatal accidents through burning these were called "torch sweaters."

Incidentally I am sure that a certain member of this House will be pleased to know that I spent £7 10s. on my research in this matter. I bought some material here and some material there with the specific intention of doing these tests for my own edification. I have here wincey material that is obtainable in Perth. It is highly inflammable, and is a dressing gown material which was obtained from a firm in Perth. It is untreated.

I also have quite a few pieces of material which I have tested myself and found to be inflammable. I have moleton cloth which is used for children's and adults' dressing gowns, and this is highly inflammable. I also have ticking, used for pillows and mattress covers—highly inflammable; cretonne used mainly for curtains—highly inflammable; plisse for nighties and pyjamas—highly inflammable; mosquito netting used for babies' cots—very highly inflammable; angora frocking, used for frocking—highly inflammable; drill for work overalls—highly inflammable; head cloth for sports tunics—highly inflammable; and corduroy used mainly for frocks and kiddies' overalls—highly inflammable.

On the other side of the ledger—

The Hon. E. C. House: Out comes the wool!

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: —we have nylon which is mainly used for babies' and children's frocks, and this is not inflammable, although one would think it would be. I have here also some terylene cretonne which is used mainly for curtains, and that is not inflammable either. I also have some wincey, which is used for babies', children's, and adults' pyjamas and nighties, and although it is normally inflammable this particular specimen is not inflammable because it has been treated with a patent chemical, and it can be washed. Most of the non-inflammable materials are not washable, but this particular one will stand up to many washes, and is not inflammable.

Other materials which I have tested and proved to be non-inflammable are coating used for overcoats; brushed nylon, used for blouses and nighties; a dressing gown material which has also been treated with the proprietary chemical; and a furnishing material which has also been treated.

I have tested all these materials myself, and while I am not trying to get on the bandwagon, I felt that after having done so much research on the subject, and spent quite a few shillings on the materials, I should mention the facts. And with those few remarks, I conclude.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery.

House adjourned at 8.33 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 10th August, 1966

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

QUESTIONS (26) : ON NOTICE

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Meter Boxes: Positioning

1. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Electricity:

In view of his remarks following an inspection of electricity meter