

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 6th September, 1972

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

QUESTIONS (43): ON NOTICE

1. INTRASTATE AIR TRANSPORT

T.A.A.: Effect on Employment

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Has he yet made an assessment of the loss of employment by Western Australians in all categories which will result from the entry of T.A.A. into the State?
- (2) If not, will he have one made with a view to minimising the impact?
- (3) Will he table the assessment when it is made?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) to (3) These questions are based upon an assumption that loss of employment without alternative opportunities for re-employment is the inevitable result of the entry of T.A.A. into intrastate air service in Western Australia. Doubtless, the Commonwealth Government gave full consideration to all the problems involved before coming to its decision to permit T.A.A.'s participation.

2. MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Output

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) For the period Monday, 21st August, to Friday, 25th August, 1972, what was the total number of cattle, pigs, sheep and lambs slaughtered at Midland abattoir for—
 - (a) local consumption;
 - (b) export?
- (2) Would he list the names of the companies who had stock slaughtered for export and the number of stock slaughtered for each company during the same period?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

(1)	(a)	(b)
	Local	Export
Cattle	494	615
Calves	36	Nil
Sheep and lambs	8,505	22,798
Pigs	1,650	3

- (2) This information cannot be provided since it would disclose details of the activities of the private companies concerned.

3.

MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Pig Slaughtering Floor

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the name of the company which recently completed or has almost completed major alterations to the pig slaughter and dressing floor at Midland abattoir?
- (2) When was the contract signed and work commenced, and what was the date set for completion?
- (3) What was the purpose of having a trial run of the pig slaughter floor on Sunday, 19th August?
- (4) How many men were required for the trial run and what is the estimated cost to the abattoir for the trial?
- (5) How many pigs were slaughtered during the trial?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Process Engineering Pty. Ltd.
- (2) The contract was signed on 8th June, 1971. Construction commenced on 1st October, 1971. The completion date was set at mid August, 1972.
- (3) The trial run on Saturday, 19th August was to determine whether any mechanical problems were present.
- (4) 37 men. Estimated cost \$450.
- (5) 7.

4. This question was postponed until Tuesday, the 12th September.

5.

SHEEP

Exports

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the number of live sheep exported from Western Australia for the years 1970-71 and 1971-72?
- (2) To what countries were they exported?
- (3) What are the numbers shipped to each country?
- (4) What are the numbers shipped from each Western Australian port?
- (5) By whom were they consigned?
- (6) What is the total value of the sheep, either f.o.b. or c.i.f.?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 1970-71—381,139.
1971-72—572,061.
- (2) 1970-71—Singapore, Malaysia, Arabian Gulf ports, Mauritius.
1971-72—Singapore, Malaysia, Arabian Gulf ports, Mauritius, France and Kenya.

- (3) 1970-71—
 Singapore—151,087.
 Malaysia—21,795.
 Arabian Gulf ports—206,562.
 Mauritius—1,695.
- 1971-72—
 Singapore—156,755.
 Malaysia—21,676.
 Arabian Gulf ports—380,152.
 Mauritius—3,474.
 France—10,000.
 Kenya—4.
- (4) 1970-71—
 Derby—8,083.
 Geraldton—16,700.
 Esperance—22,646.
 Fremantle—333,710.
- 1971-72—
 Geraldton—32,860.
 Esperance—78,400.
 Fremantle—460,801.
- (5) Clausen Steamship Co. ex outports.
 Clausen Steamship Co.
 Patton exports.
 Emanuel exports.
 Wesfarmers.
 Livestock exports.
 Dalgety exports, ex Fremantle.
- (6) Not known.

6. MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Output, and Slaughtering Charges

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Would he provide a list of names and addresses of persons and/or companies registered to have stock slaughtered at Midland abattoir?
- (2) What was the total number of cattle, pigs, sheep and lambs slaughtered at Midland for the period July, 1971, to June, 1972?
- (3) Of the total number of cattle, pigs, sheep and lambs slaughtered at Midland abattoir for the period July, 1971, to June, 1972—
 (a) how many were slaughtered for local consumption;
 (b) how many were slaughtered for export but returned to local market?
- (4) What were the approximate tonnages of beef, pork, mutton and lamb produced from stock slaughtered at Midland abattoir for the years 1968-69, 1969-70, 1970-71, 1971-72 for—
 (a) export, in total, and
 (b) export to America?
- (5) If approximate tonnages cannot be given for part (4) (b) would he state the percentage of meat exported from Midland abattoir which he estimates is channelled to America and on what he forms his assumption?

- (6) Are different charges levied at Midland abattoir for the slaughtering of stock for local consumption as against that for export?
- (7) If "Yes" to (b), what are the charges for slaughtering of various stock—
 (a) for export;
 (b) for local consumption?
- (8) When was the alteration to slaughtering charges made and what were the previous charges for slaughter of stock—
 (a) for export;
 (b) for local consumption?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) to (8) The answers contain considerable data which I submit for tabling.

The answers were tabled (see paper No. 323).

7.

EDUCATION

Free Books Scheme

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the number of staff in the several categories involved in the research work and production of books written by the State Education Department?
- (2) To what extent in the next few years will these present numbers be increased with the development of this section of the department?
- (3) What is the range of books, insofar as age grading and subject matter, that are produced and that are proposed for production?
- (4) Can he advise over what period of time it is proposed that each type of book will be used?
- (5) Does he, as Minister for Education, reject the criticism of Mr. A. W. Anderson, Director of the Western Australian University education research unit that, as a result of children being brainwashed by books written by the department and the outlook of teachers being "deformed through present methods of teacher training . . ."; "by 1984 governments could be expected to be more firmly in charge of the educational process, schools more rigidly and identically organised, teachers less able, and pupil performances lowered"?
- (6) If so, how does he arrive at such a rejection of the criticism?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Teachers employed in the curriculum branch carry out a wide range of duties and cannot be placed in specific categories.

Seventeen are engaged mainly in the production of teaching and learning materials (of which the free book scheme is only one aspect) and 13 in curriculum and research duties.

- (2) No accurate estimate is possible as the activities of the branch will be dependent on curriculum development, the revision of learning materials now in experimental form and the preparation of teaching materials.
- (3) Grade I primary to third year high school in all core subjects and a wide range of options.
- (4) No. Books are revised as found necessary.
- (5) Yes.

- (6) Mr. Anderson is apparently unaware of the type and purpose of the books being produced and ascribes to them the attributes of "texts" of the traditional type. The learning materials are actually intended to provide a stimulus for interesting and varied learning experiences, not a body of knowledge to be assimilated and later reproduced in examinations. The emphasis in recent years in primary schools and in that part of secondary education which is operating under the achievement certificate is for diversity of course offering, increased school autonomy and the development of educational programmes designed to meet the specific needs of the individual student.

8. MOTOR VEHICLES

Liquid Petroleum Gas: Use

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) With a view to decreasing atmospheric pollution from vehicle exhaust emissions in the metropolitan area in particular, will the Minister have the Environmental Protection Authority investigate the claims made—pages 40, 41 and 44 of W.A.A.C.C., July, 1972, Motor Industry Journal, re advantages of the use of liquid petroleum gas?
- (2) If the claims mentioned are proven, will the Minister have Government vehicles which are used mainly in the metropolitan area, converted to this type of fuel as an encouragement to owners of commercial and private vehicles to do likewise?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

This question was passed on to my Department as it could be more properly dealt with by the clean air section of the Public Health Department.

- (1) A committee is in the process of being formed under the authority of the Clean Air Act, specifically for the purpose of investigating ways and means of reducing atmospheric pollution from vehicle exhaust emissions. It is the intention to invite the Environmental Protection Authority to nominate a representative on this committee.
- (2) The Member's proposal will be referred to this committee for consideration.

9.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Office Space: Approaches

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Health:

As at 1st September, 1972—

- (1) How many private developers approached, or were approached by, the Department of Health in regard to office space since 20th February, 1971?
- (2) The details of how many of these approaches appear on Health Department files?
- (3) What feasibility studies have been made by the Department of Health in respect of building its own office accommodation since 20th February, 1971?
- (4) Are details of such a feasibility study on Health Department files?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Four private developers submitted written propositions.
- (2) Four.
- (3) In October, 1971, the Principal Architect investigated a proposal to build on the existing site bounded by Hay, Irwin and Murray Streets.
- (4) Yes.

10. *This question was postponed.*

11. RELEASE OF PRISONERS *Wilful Murder, Murder, and Manslaughter*

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Attorney-General:

- (1) Since 1940 how many persons who have been convicted of wilful murder, murder, or manslaughter have subsequently been released from imprisonment?

- (2) How many of these have again been convicted of one of these crimes?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) The information is not readily available.
- (2) In the knowledge of the Director, Department of Corrections and his staff, none in Western Australia. However, confirmation would require extensive verification.

I mention here—and what I say now also has relevance to a question asked by the member for Floreat—that to verify this answer and supply the information later would require extensive research which it would not be possible to accomplish, I would think, before the Bill dealing with the abolition of the death penalty comes before this Chamber again.

12. TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Oxford-Bourke Streets Intersection

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is it intended to install traffic lights at the intersection of Oxford and Bourke Streets, Leederville?

- (2) If so, when?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) The intersection of Oxford Street and Bourke Street has been channelised in a manner suitable for the installation of traffic control signals.
- (2) The installation of signals has not been programmed to date.

13. WATER SUPPLIES

Storage Reservoir at Karragullen

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is the surveying in the various orchards in recent months at Karragullen part of a feasibility study for the siting of a storage reservoir downstream from the Canning Dam?
- (2) If not, and as the orchardists are apprehensive for their future, what is the purpose of this survey?
- (3) Are there any long term intentions to construct a reservoir on the Canning River below the present dam?
- (4) If so—
- (a) where is the prospective site;
- (b) how can the Government's intention to construct the recently announced major water carrying tunnel be substantiated?

- (5) How and when will the feasibility of using a substantially unlined tunnel be proved?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) This survey was conducted by the Public Works Department. Its purpose was to examine the most practical methods of apportioning the flow of Stoney Brook in the event of licensing being re-introduced.
- (3) There is no such work planned for the foreseeable future.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) The diamond drilling of this work is virtually completed and satisfactory rock conditions are available. A decision as to the financial feasibility of the work will await the receipt of tenders for the work.

14. ROCKINGHAM-KWINANA HOSPITAL

Construction

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has notice been given to the lessee of Rockingham-Kwinana hospital site for release of this land for building purposes?

- (2) How many persons will be employed in—

(a) preparation of ground works and foundation for the hospital;

(b) construction of the hospital;

(c) running the hospital?

- (3) What is the estimated cost of groundworks and foundations?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) (a) Approximately 50 on groundworks, concrete foundations and concrete structural frame.

(b) Up to 150 on site.

(c) Not yet determined.

- (3) Estimated cost of groundworks, concrete foundations and concrete structural frame is \$500,000.

15. LOAN ESTIMATES

Introduction

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer: When are the loan estimates expected to be introduced into Parliament?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied: Tomorrow.

16. TOWN PLANNING

Kalamunda Shire Scheme

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) With reference to the Kalamunda town planning scheme as gazetted 9th October, 1963, in particular clause 33F subsection 2, has the Kalamunda Shire ever given dispensation from the requirements of subsection 2 to persons wishing to erect commercial buildings?
- (2) If so, on how many occasions?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) and (2) Council advises that it has never given dispensation to any single lot and that it has no power, under its scheme, to give a dispensation. In 1965 council approved a commercial development on lots 1, 2 and 3 Newburn Road, Maida Vale, in which the building on lot 1 exceeded 60% site coverage. Viewing the development of the three lots as a whole, however, the site coverage conformed with the 60% requirement.

17. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Amaz Mitchell Plateau Project

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) Does he contemplate introducing legislation dealing with the deferment that has been granted in respect of the Amaz Mitchell Plateau project in North Kimberley?
- (2) Are any amendments involved to the legislation dealing with either Alcoa Kwinana or Pinjarra agreements?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.

18. FOOTBALL POOLS

Proposals for Introduction

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) (a) Has the Government received any proposals for the conducting of football pools in Western Australia;
- (b) if so, how many proposals are there and are they for pools on Australian rules football and/or on other football codes?
- (2) (a) What stage has been reached in studying these proposals;
- (b) When is finality expected?
- (3) Does the Government favour the introduction of football pools, and, if so, on what basis?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Two on Australian rules, three on soccer.
- (2) and (3) The proposals have been studied and the Government has decided to take no action for the present.

19. STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE

"No Fault" Insurance Proposals

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) What is the latest position with the Government "no fault" insurance proposals?
- (2) Will legislation be introduced this session?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) The proposals are receiving urgent attention with a view to the introduction of legislation as early as possible. On present indications it is unlikely that legislation will be ready for introduction this session.

20. CASINO

Proposal for Establishment

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) (a) Has the Government a proposal before it for a casino in Kalgoorlie or other place in Western Australia;
- (b) if so, has a decision been made on the proposal;
- (c) if no decision has been made, when can one be expected?
- (2) If no proposal is currently before the Government, did the Government previously have one under consideration, and, if so, with what result?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) It is not possible to say with certainty.
- (2) Answered by (1).

21. REMEDIAL EDUCATION

Teachers and Facilities

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many remedial (as distinct from special) teachers are employed in the primary division of the Education Department?
- (2) How many children receive remedial education from these teachers?
- (3) What other provisions are made for remedial education in primary schools?

- (4) Is it expected that headmasters in class I or class IA schools should devote some of the time to remedial teaching or to relieving other teachers who would then be able to undertake remedial teaching?
- (5) If (4) is "Yes" what care is taken by the Education Department to see that such expectations are fulfilled?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 50.
- (2) 750.
- (3) Remedial teachers are appointed on the recommendation of the District Superintendent after consultation with the headmaster.
- (4) There is no regulation requiring headmasters to perform these duties, but many do of their own volition.
- (5) Not applicable.

22. EDUCATION

Relief Teachers

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) If teachers are absent for one or two days from primary schools is any differentiation made between various classes of schools when relief teachers are being provided?
- (2) What formula is used and what rationale underlies the formulae?
- (3) Is it intended that children from a class whose teacher is absent for one day should be "split up" among other teachers in class I or IA schools?
- (4) If (3) is "Yes" why is not the headmaster expected to teach the class of the absent teacher?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No formula is used but in schools where the headmaster is responsible for a class or where more than one teacher is absent, relief is provided on application.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.

23. TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGES

Certificates and Applicants

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What percentage of the teacher trainees at the respective teacher training colleges were granted—
- (a) teachers certificates;
- (b) conditional teachers certificates;
- (c) no certification whatsoever, in each of the five years from 1967-71?

- (2) What percentage of those issued with conditional teachers certificates were offered employment with the Education Department in each of those five years?
- (3) What percentage of those who were not certificated were offered employment with the department in each of the five years?
- (4) Was the Director of Teacher Education correctly reported when it was stated in *The West Australian* of 1st September, 1972 that qualified applicants for teacher training had been rejected because there were too many such applicants?
- (5) Will he consider increasing the intake into the teachers' colleges so that those who are manifestly not fitted for teaching will be directed into other (non-teaching) employment more suited to their abilities?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Instead of percentages actual numbers are given since in some years the colleges used different dates for reporting enrolment.

(a) Teachers' certificates—

	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Claremont	378	327	197	300	236
Graylands	203	196	199	128	194
Secondary	116	161	176	259	316

(b) Conditional certificates—

Claremont	76	21	7	12	10
Graylands	18	19	16	6	6
Secondary	40	27	37	32	43

(c) No certificate—

Claremont	1	1	4	—	1
Graylands	—	—	—	1	—
Secondary	—	—	—	—	1

(d) Terminated as unsuitable—

Claremont	7	7	2	6	5
Graylands	2	7	3	1	4
Secondary	4	3	2	12	11

- (2) 100%.
- (3) Nil.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) The intake into teachers' colleges is governed by two factors—

- (a) the accommodation available;
- (b) the estimated number of teachers required.

In the estimated number of teachers required, allowance is made for voluntary withdrawal, termination because of unsuitability and numbers likely to teach in non-Government schools. In each year 1967-1972 the intake has been such as to provide the number of teachers required and the colleges have taken the required number even though in some cases there has been considerable overcrowding.

24. COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS

Payroll Tax

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is payroll tax imposed on country high school hostels?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) what amounts were collected in the last two years and from whom;
 - (b) why should such voluntary organisations providing educational services for Government schools be called on to pay tax to the Government?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes, if the wages paid or payable in a year exceed \$20,800.
- (2) (a) Since the State imposed payroll tax, as from 1st September, 1971, an amount of \$623.53 has been paid. Under section 5 of the Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act, 1971, the department is required to keep individual taxpayer's affairs confidential.
- (b) No exemption is provided by law.

25. PROBATE

Commonwealth and State Assessments

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Commonwealth estate duty department and the State probate department both make separate valuations of properties involved?
- (2) If so, is there any reason why such extra cost and delays should continue?
- (3) What prevents the acceptance by one taxing authority of the valuation adopted by the other?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No. In all but exceptional circumstances, separate valuations are not made. It is normal for the Commonwealth authority to adopt the State value.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Answered by (1) except in cases where the law requires a different basis of valuation to be applied.

26. TOWN AND NATURAL GAS

Charges in Last 10 Years

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Electricity:

Could he give the price per unit charged by the State Electricity Commission in the metropolitan area for household gas (town and

natural) consumed during the last ten years, indicating the periods for which the various unit prices applied?

Mr. MAY replied:

Town gas—

1st March, 1961—1.55d per unit.

1st June, 1965—1.5d. per unit plus a fixed charge of 3/- per month.

14th February, 1966—1.25c per unit plus a fixed charge of 30c per month.

1st April, 1970—1.25c per unit plus a fixed charge of 30c per month.

or optional tariff—

0.83c per unit plus a fixed charge of \$1.50 per month.

Natural gas (to apply from date of connection to natural gas)—

1.15c per unit plus a fixed charge of 30c per month.

or optional tariff—

0.76c per unit plus a fixed charge of \$1.50 per month.

Natural gas became available as from 1st December, 1971, onwards.

27. POLICE

Indictments for Wilful Murder, Murder, and Manslaughter

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Attorney-General:

- (1) How many cases of suspected homicide (to include wilful murder, murder, manslaughter, etc.) were reported to the police during the period mentioned in his reply to question 4 on 22nd August, 1972?
- (2) How many of these cases resulted in charges laid against suspects?
- (3) How many of these charges resulted in convictions?
- (4) Out of the convictions, in how many cases was the verdict—
 - (a) for death penalty;
 - (b) for life imprisonment;
 - (c) for imprisonment?
- (5) Of the convictions in (4) (a) how many death penalty verdicts have been commuted by Royal prerogative of mercy to other sentences?
- (6) Of all convictions under (4) how many offenders had previous records of offences—
 - (a) of any type;
 - (b) connected with violence?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) to (3) As C.I.B. statistics of the cases specified are not recorded prior to 1944 the information is not readily available.

- (4) to (6) The information is not available without considerable research.

I commented earlier on this when answering a question asked by the member for Mt. Hawthorn.

28. POLICE

Convictions for Wilful Murder and Murder

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Attorney-General:

During the period mentioned in his reply to question 4 on 22nd August, 1972, how many persons convicted for murder or wilful murder were residents in Western Australia—

- (a) for five years or more;
- (b) for less than five years, prior to committing the crime?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

Information not readily available. Extensive and detailed search of Police, Crown Law and Department of Corrections records for relevant years necessary to obtain these facts.

29. ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

New Offices: Cost

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

What was the total cost for the new offices provided for medical and lay administration at Royal Perth Hospital?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

	\$
(a) The cost of alterations to provide offices for medical and lay administration in the Ground Floor, north-east wing of the main building, was	22,512
(b) The cost of upgrading of services (including air conditioning, fire alarms and electrical wiring) was	12,964
Total cost	<u>\$35,476</u>

30. ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Mt. Lawley Annexe

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

How much has been spent on the Mt. Lawley annexe of Royal Perth Hospital since it was purchased?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

Presuming the Member's question relates to structural improvements, the amount is estimated at \$8,000, including the wages of the hospital's maintenance staff.

If the honourable member is referring to anything other than structural improvements, I would be happy to give him the information.

31. WATER SUPPLIES

Pipeline: Gnangara Road

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

What purpose is served by the concrete pipeline now being constructed along Gnangara Road adjacent to the Santa Maria land?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

The purpose of this concrete pipeline is to convey ground water from the wells constructed by the Metropolitan Water Board to its Mirrabooka treatment works.

32. WHEAT QUOTAS

Negotiability

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Now that the Farmers' Union of W.A., acting in the interest of wheat growers has expressed opposition to negotiable wheat quotas, is it still his intention to introduce legislation to make quotas negotiable?
- (2) If such legislation is to be introduced, will he say which sections of the industry have recommended negotiable quotas?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes, unless some over-riding argument can be advanced against negotiability.
- (2) The Pastoralists and Graziers' Association has indicated support for negotiability of quotas.

33. WATER SUPPLIES

Pipeline Near Mundaring Weir

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

What purpose is served by the pipeline now being constructed near Mundaring Weir?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

To increase the output from Mundaring Weir pumping station to meet the increasing domestic and farmland draw of the goldfields water supply system.

34. HOUSING

*Trades and Labor Council
Building Society: Rules*

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is the Trades and Labor Council Building Society subject to the Housing Loan Guarantee Act?
- (2) Will he table a copy of the approved rules of the Trades and Labor Council Building Society?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) The Trades and Labor Council No. 2 and No. 4 Societies have obtained funds which are subject to guarantees issued under the Housing Loan Guarantee Act.
- (2) The Trades and Labor Council Building Societies are using the terminating building societies' model rules promulgated under the Building Societies Act—a copy of which is tabled.

It is not considered desirable to table the official registered copy of the rules, which may be sighted on file in the office of The Registrar of Building Societies.

The rules were tabled (see paper No. 324.)

35. HOUSING

*Trades and Labor Council
Building Society: Applicants*

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has he seen a copy of the *Clerks Bulletin* supplement put out by the Federated Clerks Union of Australia, headed "Low Cost Housing" which refers to loans available from the Trades and Labor Council Building Society?
- (2) Is it true that applicants for housing finance from the Trades and Labor Council Building Society must—
 - (a) be financial members of the union;
 - (b) bank or be prepared to bank at the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia;
 - (c) allow the Trades and Labor Council Building Society to arrange insurance on the dwelling?
- (3) Does he know to which insurance company the Trades and Labor Council Building Society will direct business referred to in (2) (c)?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) No.

- (2) (a) It is understood that a condition of obtaining a loan from a Trades and Labor Council Building Society is that the intending borrower be a financial member of a union affiliated with the Trades and Labor Council of Western Australia.

- (b) Yes. It is normal practice, at present, for any terminating building society, which obtains funds from a bank, to require borrowers to transact their banking business through the bank providing the funds.

- (c) Yes. It is at present normal practice for any building society to nominate the company which is to effect insurance on the dwelling which is subject of an advance from the society.

- (3). Yes, the State Government Insurance Office. This would be in line with usual practice at present for terminating building societies to arrange insurances with a company which has provided funds to the society.

36.

HOUSING

*Trades and Labor Council
Building Society: Funds*

Mr. R. L. YOUNG, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has the Government persuaded or directed the Rural and Industries Bank and/or the State Government Insurance Office to lend funds to the Trades and Labor Council Building Society?
- (2) What is the total of funds available to the Trades and Labor Council Building Society from—
 - (a) the Rural and Industries Bank; and
 - (b) the State Government Insurance Office?
- (3) Have either—
 - (a) the Rural and Industries Bank; or
 - (b) the State Government Insurance Office,
 advanced loan funds to any other terminating building society?
- (4) If "Yes" to (3), what amounts have been so advanced since 20th February, 1971?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) Not to my knowledge.
- (2) (a) \$400,000 firm for 1972-73. The Registry of Building Societies is unaware of any arrangements beyond this amount.

(b) \$250,000 firm for 1972-73. It is believed similar amounts for each of the succeeding four years are tentatively arranged subject to availability of funds and approval of the investment programme, although no formal advice of such has been given to the registry by the State Government Insurance Office.

(3) (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(4) Nil.

37. SHEARING SCHOOLS

Plans

Mr. BROWN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Relevant to an article in the *Countryman* on 17th August under the heading "Cut in Shearing Schools Planned", what action has the Department of Agriculture given to promoting this industry?

(2) How long have the shearing schools been in operation and in what districts did they operate other than Robb Jetty?

(3) What was the annual number of applicants for enrolment over the period 1967 to 1972?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

(1) The department has promoted the industry by providing initial and improver schools at Robb Jetty and country areas as well as through press releases, broadcasts and a shearing film.

(2) Shearing schools have been in operation at Robb Jetty for 15 years and have been held in the majority of shires in the agricultural areas over the past 20 years.

(3) The number of applications for shearing schools for the years 1967-1972 have ranged from 40-223 per year. Only 40 applications have been received for the 1972 schools.

38. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

Terms of Loans

Mr. STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

Of the successful applicants for—

(a) debt reconstruction;

(b) farm build-up,

how many and what percentage of the total in each case have been granted loans for ten years and under, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years and over 20 years?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

The information asked for is not kept "week by week" by the authority, but is part of that compiled and collated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, on computer. Consequently, the information is available only quarterly.

The latest figures we have are at 31/3/72. They are:—

Rural reconstruction	Number	%
Ten years and under	48	16.8
11-15 years	54	18.8
16-20 years	182	64.4
Over 20 years	Nil	—

284 100

Farm build-up

Ten years and under	3	5.3
11-15 years	12	21.0
16-20 years	42	71.0
Over 20 years	2	2.4

59 100

The number of applications approved to date are:—

Debt reconstruction—383.

Farm build-up—93.

39.

SEWERAGE

Point Peron and Rockingham

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) When will the Point Peron sewerage works be fully operative?

(2) What has been the cost to date?

(3) What is the estimated total cost when complete?

(4) How many homes and other units in the Shire of Rockingham are now using deep sewerage reticulation?

(5) Where is this sewage being treated and disposed of?

(6) How many built-on and vacant blocks are not reticulated for treatment by Point Peron Works?

(7) Is he or the Department concerned over the efficiency of these works—

(a) as to pollution of the adjacent atmosphere;

(b) as to pollution of the ocean or Cockburn Sound?

(8) If "Yes" to (7), where could this sewerage works have been sited to better advantage?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

(1) The first module to serve 30,000 persons will initially operate as an extended aeration plant serving 7,500 persons and will be brought into operation in approximately 12 months' time.

- (2) Pt. Peron outfall—\$114,266 (completed).
- Pt. Peron treatment works—\$145,069.
- (3) (a) \$600,000 for the unit to serve 7,500 people.
- (b) \$900,000 when extended to serve 30,000 people.
- (4) Sixty-one properties were connected as at 31st August, 1972, of the 802 lots currently served by sewerage.
- (5) A temporary extended aeration plant is located adjacent to the main Rockingham pumping station near Lake Richmond. The secondary effluent from this plant is discharged off-shore via the ocean outfall west of Point Peron.
- (6) Not readily available.
- (7) and (8) The works are efficiently designed and are located with regard to prevailing winds.

Mr. Hutchinson: Does the Premier still think they are wrongly sited?

40.

TOWN PLANNING

Wanneroo: Rezoning

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

Adverting to question 30 on 24th August, 1972 relating to Wanneroo town planning scheme approved on 4th August—

- (a) for the four applications and the two in part upheld by the Minister, what was the acreage, and the zoning prior to and after each decision;
- (b) what was the acreage of each of the applications upheld against the Town Planning Department and local authority's recommendations and the old and new zoning of each successful appeal;
- (c) when are these amendments to the metropolitan region scheme expected to come before Parliament?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

Adverting to question 30 on 24th August, 1972, relating to Wanneroo Town Planning Scheme approved on 4th August—

- (a) No zoning existed, in the local sense, prior to the recent approval of the Wanneroo Town Planning Scheme. The zoning mentioned for each area indicates the classification in the scheme.

4 objections upheld as follows:

- (i) Commercial zone, 4 acres.
- (ii) Hotel/tavern zone, no specific acreage.

- (iii) Hotel zone, 4 acres; commercial zone, 6 acres; service station zone, 2 acre.
 - (iv) Residential development zone, approx. 25 acres.
- 2 objections partly allowed:
- (i) 3620 acres as follows—special development zone, general industrial zone, Whitford town centre zone, various residential zones.
 - (ii) Commercial zone—4 acres. Service station zone—2 acre.
 - (b) One objection—Hotel/tavern zone, no specific acreage.
 - (c) It is anticipated that the proposed metropolitan region scheme amendments will come before Parliament at its first sitting in 1973.

41.

HOUSING

Building Blocks at Kelmscott: M.R.P.A. Plan

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Further to question 20 on 24th August, 1972, why will he not provide me with a plan showing the commission's purchases of blocks in the M.R.P.A. (Kelmscott) No. 4 scheme when one can obtain the information by search at the Titles Office or walking around the subdivision?
- (2) Will he reconsider his decision and provide me with a plan showing this information now, especially as the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has displayed its total plan in Parliament House?
- (3) Since March, 1971, how many blocks—
 - (a) have been purchased by the commission in the Shire of Armadale-Kelmscott—
 - (i) M.R.P.A. scheme No. 4; or
 - (ii) other areas;
 - (b) are under option now?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) The diversion of staff and the work involved in preparing a special plan is not considered warranted when the information can be sighted on the working plan at the Commission's Office, in addition to being available in the ways indicated by the member.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) (a) (i) The Commission has acquired 287 residential lots in the M.R.P.A. scheme No. 4.

(li) 185 residential lots have been acquired in other areas of the Shire of Armadale-Kelmscott.

(b) In the Armadale area, the commission is currently negotiating for 251 residential lots.

42.

SHEEP*Lice and Tick Infestation*

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it correct that there has been a sudden increase in the incidence of—

(a) lice;

(b) tick,

on sheep?

(2) If the answers to 1(a) and 1(b) are "Yes" what are the reasons?

(3) What action is being taken to overcome the problem?

(4) How many cases of affected sheep have been reported?

(5) How many sheep have been detected in—

(a) metropolitan saleyards;

(b) country saleyards?

(6) How many properties have been quarantined as a result?

(7) In what local authority districts are these properties located?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

(1) (a) There has been a progressive increase in the incidence of lice infestation in the last 2-3 years.

(b) There has been no increase in "tick", i.e. sheep ked infestation.

(2) The general depression in the sheep industry caused by low wool prices has led to a neglect of lice control measures such as dipping, adequate fencing and the prevention of straying. An increase in the practice of split shearing and a failure to dip all sheep on a property at the same time have been important additional causes.

(3) Increased publicity and extension on lice control to the farming community and a stricter enforcement of the regulations dealing with lice are being implemented.

(4) Only a few cases have been reported by owners.

(5) In 1971-72, 20,700 of 3,531,790 inspected in metropolitan saleyards; and approximately 2,000 of 1,224,790 inspected in country saleyards.

(6) 125.

(7) In almost all south-west land division districts.

43.

TOWN PLANNING*Ritter Plan, and Corridor Plan Implementation*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

(1) What has been the cost of—

(a) preparation and promotion of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority corridor plan;

(b) preparation and promotion of Mr. Ritter's directional network plan;

(c) preparation and promotion of Metropolitan Region Planning Authority report on the analytical study of the proposed corridor plan for Perth and possible alternate?

(2) What is the present planned-for workforce for the central business district?

(3) What measures does the M.R.P.A. consider practical for the limitation of the workforce for the central business district?

(4) Does the M.R.P.A. consider the workforce for the central business district should be limited, and, if so, to what figure should it be held?

(5) Has the Government—

(a) approved the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority corridor plan;

(b) rejected Mr. Ritter's directional network plan?

(6) If the answer to (5) (a) or (b) is "No" who is to be responsible for summarising both plans for consideration by the Government?

(7) When is it estimated a plan for the future development of the metropolitan region will be approved?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

(1) (a) and (c).

The preparation of the corridor plan, the report on the corridor plan and the report on Mr. Ritter's study have been part of the normal work of the department. It would not be possible to assess the cost of allocation of departmental activities specifically to these projects. The only outside costs have been those incurred through the Government Printer as follows:

4000 copies of the corridor plan, \$8,371;

3000 copies of planning bulletin on the corridor plan, \$330.20;

3000 copies of the report on the corridor plan, \$3,954;

3000 copies of the report on Mr. Ritter's study, \$1,089.

In addition, there was an expenditure of \$100 for a tour of corridor plan areas by Members of the M.R.P.A.

- (b) I refer the Member to the replies given by my predecessor to questions by the Hon. Sir David Brand on 13th and 20th April last.
- (2) There is no specific planned-for workforce for the Perth central business district. The P.E.R.T.S. study, 1970, and the current M.R.P.A. report on the corridor plan draw attention to the judgment that a workforce significantly higher than 100,000 people would probably involve a degree of congestion that could be intolerable and exceed the ability of public resources to provide adequate access.
- (3) The M.R.P.A. in its report outlines a series of possible measures that would serve as disincentives to accelerated growth of the C.B.D. workforce and as incentives to dispersal to selected centres elsewhere in the metropolitan area.
- (4) The M.R.P.A. has expressed the opinion that the disadvantages of an over-concentration of workforce in the C.B.D. should be fully appreciated by the Government, the Perth City Council and the metropolitan community generally in terms of the environment and the social and economic health of the city.
- The authority's report further implies that if these factors are not appreciated and no counter-measures taken, the main burden of increasing transportation capacity beyond that already contemplated would be likely to fall on the Government.
- (5) (a) and (b). No.
- (6) The Minister for Town Planning.
- (7) A plan for the future development of the metropolitan region already exists in the operative metropolitan region scheme. The corridor plan now under consideration represents a strategy offering guidelines for development of the region and progressive amendments to the region scheme allowing for such development.

QUESTIONS (9): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. HORSE-RACING AND TROTTING MEETINGS

Betting Facilities

Mr. MAY (Minister for Mines): On the 17th August, the member for Ascot asked a series of questions relating to horseracing and trotting meetings. I undertook to obtain the information, which I now have, but as it is of a comprehensive nature, I request permission to table it.

The information was tabled (see paper No. 325).

2. OLYMPIC GAMES

Munich Tragedy: Expression of Sympathy

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

Will the Premier give consideration to an opportunity for the House to record tomorrow its concern at the tragic events in Munich over the last 24 hours, with a view also to conveying our sympathy to the people of Israel?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

I have already publicly expressed my horror at this tragedy which has occurred and my sympathy to the people of Israel. I am quite prepared to ask for a suspension of Standing Orders tomorrow to enable an expression of opinion with a view to advising the Government of Israel of our full sympathy in connection with their loss as a result of this tragedy.

3. INTRASTATE AIR TRANSPORT

T.A.A.: Effect on Employment

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Labour:

I would like to ask a further question arising out of question 1 on today's notice paper and the Minister's somewhat evasive answer with respect to Commonwealth responsibility for State unemployment.

I would like to ask: Does not the State have a direct responsibility regarding the employment of its citizens who may be affected by the entry of T.A.A. into this State? Is it not the Government's responsibility to make the necessary checks with the Commonwealth Government and/or T.A.A. and A.N.A.?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: How do you know unemployment will result?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Will the Minister have the necessary checks made?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: How do you know unemployment will result? You are only guessing.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HUTCHINSON: May I count that as a question?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

The answer to the question was as clear as one could make it. Decisions are made daily by inter-state companies and the Commonwealth Government with regard to activities within this State. This applies to opening new premises and closing others. Whilst the State certainly has an overall responsibility to watch employment movements within the State, it is completely impossible to keep track of all movements and changes in activities which take place in the commercial, manufacturing, and other fields. The State has an overall watching brief but in the present situation, which may or may not result in unemployment, there seems to be no cause at the moment for such investigation.

4. SEWERAGE

Subdivisions: Limited Financial Contribution

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Minister for Works:

Has the Government approved any subdivision in which it has limited the amount to be contributed by the subdivider for sewerage to a certain sum?

If so, will he advise details and table the files?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

Although I have had some notice of this question, it will involve considerable research by both the Metropolitan Water Board and the Public Works Department in connection with all country activities. I therefore ask the honourable member to put this question on tomorrow's notice paper.

5. STOCK (BRANDS AND MOVEMENT) ACT

Part VIII: Confusion and Prosecutions

Mr. I. W. MANNING, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that there is confusion and misunderstanding among stock owners and transporters as

to their obligations under part VIII of the Stock (Brands and Movement) Act, 1970?

- (2) Is it intended that the provisions of section 46 should include the movement of young calves to and from calf markets?
- (3) Is it intended to launch prosecutions against persons who have failed to comply with the provisions of section 46 of the Act?
- (4) Will a degree of tolerance be extended to stock owners and transporters until the requirements of the Act are generally understood?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No prosecutions are contemplated at the present time.
- (4) Yes.

6. NEW INDUSTRY

Announcement in Television Programme

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Premier:

- (1) Is the recently announced imminent resumption of the second stage of the Pinjarra-Alcoa construction programme the new industry he referred to on the recent *Half-Way* television programme?
- (2) If "No" to (1), is he now in a position to advise the name of the new industry which is to come to Western Australia?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) I cannot follow the member for Dale; and, as I do not have a copy of the question, I would ask him to put it on the notice paper.

7. EDUCATION

Country High School Hostels: Payroll Tax

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Premier:

I wish to ask a question following the Premier's answer to question 24 relating to payroll tax by country high school hostels. Part of the question was as follows:—

Why should such voluntary organisations providing educational services for Government schools be called on to pay tax to the Government?

The reply was a technical one. The Premier stated that no exemption is provided by law. I now ask the Premier—

- (1) Does he consider it right that hostels are compelled to pay the tax?
- (2) Will he amend the Act to provide for exemptions?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

(1) and (2) As the honourable member knows, it is necessary to amend the Act before exemption can be given. The matter will receive consideration.

8. EDUCATION

Free School Books

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Education:

Further to question 7 on today's notice paper, will the Minister table copies of the range of books produced so far by the Education Department and as others are produced from time to time?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

To comply with this request would result in the overloading of the Table of the House. However, as the curriculum branch of the Education Department is only a few hundred yards away, the honourable member, and indeed, any members, would be most welcome to inspect the books there.

Sir Charles Court: Not on a confidential basis, I hope!

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You ought to talk about a confidential basis after the experience with your Government for 12 years.

Sir Charles Court: I am simply asking.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Hutchinson: Do not tell us you were not secretive.

9. EDUCATION

Free School Books

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister for Education:

As I had no idea of the range of books so far produced, would the Minister be good enough to supply a list of the books produced to date and those projected?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I suggest you also ask for the difference in price.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

I repeat the invitation extended to the honourable member—that if he wanders over to the curriculum branch he can see the entire range of books.

Mr. Hutchinson: Will the Minister let me have a list, or not?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The honourable member may look at the books.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir Charles Court: I would also like to know where they are printed.

BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Appropriation Bill (General Loan Fund).

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. J. T. Tonkin (Treasurer), and read a first time.

2. Environmental Protection Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Davies (Minister for Environmental Protection), and read a first time.

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

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. R. L. Young, and read a first time.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

MARGINAL DAIRY FARMS RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion

MR. BLAIKIE (Vasse) [5.20 p.m.]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the administration and operation of the Marginal Dairy Farms Re-construction Scheme in Western Australia with a view to ensuring that the scheme functions in the best interests of the State, to those engaged in the dairying industry, the dairying industry in general and to make appropriate recommendations for amending legislation or otherwise.

The Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme was implemented by the Commonwealth on the 27th July, 1970. At the point of implementation the Commonwealth agreed to allocate to the States some \$25,000,000 on a 50/50 basis. The arrangement was that 50 per cent. of the allocation was a loan to be repaid over 25 years, and the other 50 per cent. was a grant to the States to cover administrative costs and also the write-off of redundant buildings.

That was how the scheme enunciated by the Commonwealth in which Western Australia took part was financed. I am very pleased to say that Western Australia was the first State in the Commonwealth to agree to the proposal of the Federal Government. The purpose of the scheme was to overcome a major problem which had become evident in relation to low-income and low-producing dairy farms. Standards were set under which farmers

could qualify for aid. In Western Australia the basic standard of qualification was 12,000 lb. of butterfat; in other States the average was about 13,600 lb.

I would hasten to add that some members may be confused because we have two reconstruction schemes operating in Western Australia at present. We have the Rural Reconstruction Scheme, which operates under a board established by an Act of Parliament passed in this House, and the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme, which operates under an altogether different system. I will quote from a communication from the Minister for Agriculture to me in order to indicate how the administering body is formulated. It is—

... a Committee comprised of the Director of Agriculture, Chairman of Commissioners R. & I. Bank, and the Under-Treasurer. The Committee formulates and advises me on Scheme Policy.

Decisions regarding the allocation of individual farms bought and sold through the Scheme are the responsibility of the R. & I. Bank as the Administrative Authority.

I felt it necessary to make that clarification because we have two schemes operating and I point out that the schemes differ widely in application.

We already have a serious problem regarding low-income dairy farms in Australia, and we will be confronted with a major problem when Britain enters the European Economic Community because up to this time Britain has been a major purchaser of the dairy products of Australia. I would refer to some statistics I have relating to the situation in Western Australia.

In 1950-51 the production of dairy produce expressed in whole-milk terms amounted to almost 52,500,000 gallons; and 20 years later we find that we are producing some 58,360,000 gallons. So, by and large, the production of dairy products in this State has remained relatively static in spite of increasing costs. I draw this comparison because during the same period a tremendous number of people left the dairying industry.

I think it is also important to draw a comparison between Western Australia and some of the other Australian States. In New South Wales during the same 20-year period production dropped by some 30,000,000 gallons of milk over that period. In Queensland the production during the same period dropped by approximately 120,000,000 gallons. In the remaining States production has increased, and in Tasmania and Victoria it has more than doubled. It is also interesting to note that

the returns paid to producers by manufacturing companies in Victoria and Tasmania are the highest of any other Australian States. It is also significant to note the increase in production in those two States during the last 20 years, whereas all other States have remained relatively static or have actually decreased production.

I would like to make a further point at this stage. I have been a dairy farmer, and I know that the dairying industry has been subjected to criticism over the years because it is a poverty stricken industry. In some quarters it is despised; but the dairying industry was worth some \$428,000,000 a year to Australia in 1971, and I believe this is a major point.

So it will be seen that the Commonwealth Government was well advised to offer the reconstruction programme, and I believe the State is to be commended for taking up the offer. The scheme has been viewed as a major step forward in Western Australia. The producers are actively behind the scheme, and it has received the support it warrants.

I believe the dairying industry in this State recognises its own disabilities; it recognises the problems of low-income producers; it recognises the problems faced by manufacturers as a result of the long distances involved in travelling to processing plants; and it also recognises that if we are to have a dairying industry in Western Australia in the future it must be a viable industry. In this respect I believe the reconstruction scheme will assist us to achieve a viable industry. It will allow some farmers to leave the industry altogether, and it will allow others to build up their properties and, in some cases but not all, to increase their production. All in all, the concept of the scheme was well received.

In September-October, 1970, the scheme's administrative officers toured country districts and attended meetings in Denmark, Manjimup, and Margaret River. They provided farmers with details of the scheme, and at that stage it was indeed well received. At the meeting I attended it was freely canvassed that Western Australia would need about \$4,500,000. It was also suggested that if farmers got in early they would be accommodated, and when the \$4,500,000 was expended it was expected that the Commonwealth would probably agree to a further allocation of funds.

It is most pertinent to remember that the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme was introduced on the 27th July, 1970, and was intended to operate for a period of four years. So much for the ramifications of the scheme and its introduction.

I would now like to turn to the progress of the scheme in the various States. The figures I have available are as at the 30th June, 1972, and they are as follows:—

State	Expended \$
New South Wales	450,000
Victoria	263,000
Queensland	8,262,000
South Australia	115,000
Western Australia	674,000
Tasmania	98,000

That is a total of \$10,000,000 almost having been expended in almost a two-year period to the 30th June, 1972.

I am disturbed by the number of applications that have been received by the scheme from farmers who wished to take advantage of the scheme. To follow that through we should see what has happened in the other States. The following are the relevant figures:—

State	Applications
New South Wales	86
Victoria	52
Queensland	623
South Australia	18
Western Australia	99
Tasmania	38

That is a total of 916 applications.

Regarding the number of applications that have been accepted the following are the figures:—

State	Applications Accepted
New South Wales	31
Victoria	14
Queensland	341
South Australia	7
Western Australia	30
Tasmania	8

That is a total of 431 applications which have been accepted.

I understand that some concern has been expressed in the other States. I do not dispute what is the position in the other States, but I am concerned with the Western Australian figures. On the 27th July, 1971, I asked the Minister for Agriculture the following question relating to the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme:—

How many applications have been received from farmers wishing to sell their properties through the—

- (b) marginal dairy farms scheme, and from which shire district have they originated?

I hope members will appreciate the very great concern that has been expressed over the operation of this scheme, which has particular application in my electorate. The answer of the Minister was—

(b) Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme—

Augusta-Margaret River Shire	46
Busselton Shire	11
Nannup Shire	2
Manjimup Shire	14
Denmark Shire	5
Greenbushes Shire	2
Balingup Shire	3
Albany Shire	1
Waroon Shire	1
	85

This matter has been of great concern to me and, to a lesser extent, to the electorate of the Minister administering the portfolio concerned.

The fact that I feel very concerned is indicated in a further question I asked of the Minister for Agriculture on the 22nd March, 1972. I do not intend to weary the House with a repetition of the figures given, but the point which concerns me is that since September, 1971, 11 persons have applied to sell their properties.

Mr. H. D. Evans: How many dairy farmers in this State are eligible to make application?

Mr. BLAIKIE: On the Minister's figures about 250.

Mr. H. D. Evans: That is correct.

Mr. BLAIKIE: What is the point the Minister is making?

Mr. H. D. Evans: There are five times the number of eligible applicants in this State as are in the other States, with the exception of Queensland.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I did not know that I had alluded to the figure for Queensland.

Mr. H. D. Evans: You have made reference to the figures for the other States.

Mr. BLAIKIE: If the Minister will permit me to continue he will hear the figures I am about to quote. The matter that is of great concern to me is that in the last 12 months, or since September of last year, 11 applications have been made by farmers wishing to sell their properties; but in the 12 months prior to that there were 89 applications. So, in the first 12 months of the scheme there were 89 applications in Western Australia. The reason was that farmers were desirous of applying and they believed that the scheme offered them some opportunity. In that period there was an air of confidence. I put forward this as a reason for the greater number of applications; but in the last 12-month period the applications dwindled to 11. As I understand the position, since April—or in the last five months—there have

been two applications only from farmers wishing to sell their properties through the scheme.

In regard to the matter which I raised in the House in March last the Minister said that it was incumbent on those in the industry to participate, that if they did not participate it was their own fault, and that the scheme would fail if they did not participate. I do not disagree with the Minister's comment, but there are other factors which the committee of inquiry I am proposing will be able to investigate, such as the reasons that the scheme has failed and alternatives to improve the scheme.

I appreciate the Minister drawing my attention to one particular aspect a few moments ago. When I raised the matter to which I have made reference in March last the Minister in reply admonished me somewhat for being critical of the scheme. However, in *The West Australian* of the 7th April, 1972, appeared a report under the heading of, "Dairy plan in danger, says Evans." The report states—

The Commonwealth-State marginal dairy farm reconstruction scheme is in danger of falling below its planned objective, according to the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. H. D. Evans.

He said yesterday that the number of farmers waiting to buy land under the scheme was well in excess of those willing and eligible to sell.

Further on in the report the following appears:—

The scheme's objective of correcting the serious low income problem in the dairying industry would not be attained unless many more farmers offered their properties for sale to the authority.

The policies governing the scheme would remain unchanged in its second year, except that farms over which the authority had an option would be advertised regularly in the press.

The constructive matters I tried to convey to the House were that there was a lack of confidence in the scheme.

Mr. H. D. Evans: You also need the people who desire to sell their properties. There have been 99 applications to sell, but there are just under 190 applications to buy. Unless people are prepared to sell how are we to overcome that? We cannot compel them to sell.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I agree, but we should have a scheme which is attractive to them. As I proceed I hope to illustrate where it has failed. My purpose in moving the motion is to seek the support of the House for the appointment of a committee of investigation.

In the matter which I raised in the House in March last I said that the policy would have to be changed or the scheme

would be doomed to failure. However, on the 7th April last the Minister stated that the policies governing the scheme would remain unchanged in its second year. Earlier I pointed out that the advisory committee advises the Minister on policy matters in administering the scheme and yet in spite of shortcomings the policy of the scheme was to remain unchanged. The concern which I expressed in March last and the reason for moving this motion are not inconsequential. They are of major importance.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What about establishing a case to support what you are saying?

Mr. BLAIKIE: I shall proceed to do that. It is of major importance to the manufacturing sector of the industry—or the remnants of this sector of the industry that is left. For many months I have heard concern being expressed from many quarters. Such concern has been expressed by the managers of the banks in my area; by farm advisory services which comprise people who are right at the hub of farming activities; by farmers who have been advantaged by the scheme; by others who have the future welfare and the interests of the dairying industry in mind; and by the Farmers' Union. Of course, in this regard the Press has also played its part in reporting the concern from time to time. I do not hear the Minister interjecting to say there is no concern.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Be specific. Concern on what point?

Mr. BLAIKIE: I shall come to that. In the *Farmers' Weekly* of the 20th April last appeared a report under the heading of, "Advisory committee could be of value in restoring confidence in the scheme." This is a report of a meeting that was attended by the Rural and Industries Bank chief valuer. This was the first time that he attended a meeting of the dairying section of the Farmers' Union, and it was a major step. However, such a move should have been made 12 months before, when the farmer groups could see the problems lying ahead. The chief valuer of the bank (Mr. Fischer) was reported as having commented as follows:—

Not one farm had been offered to the authority for sale in the last month. He said the situation was therefore "rather disturbing".

I believe it was disturbing and apparently the Minister was in agreement with what was said. Further in the text of the report the President of the Butterfat Section of the Farmers' Union, Mr. Noakes, said that the response to the scheme indicated that farmers had no confidence in the way it was administered.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Did he give reasons, or can the honourable member give any reasons for that statement?

Mr. BLAIKIE: I will get to that.

Mr. H. D. Evans: That is a fair question.

Mr. BLAIKIE: Yes, and I believe that generally this is a fair comment and I hope I will be able to prove to the Minister why I believe this to be the case. As I said earlier, in the initial stages of the scheme there was a tremendous amount of expectation. I believe that was justly so. However, there was no liaison. The farmers' organisation concerned had requested, from time to time, that there be some liaison because they felt there was a need for people with practical experience to be on the committee. I trust the Minister does not disagree with this fact.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Your predecessor could not have thought so otherwise he might have taken a different line in setting up the administration.

Mr. BLAIKIE: The scheme came into operation in September, 1970. The Government changed office in February, 1971, so what time was there in which to operate?

Mr. H. D. Evans: The first applications were received in September, 1970. The administration was set up prior to that.

Mr. BLAIKIE: Yes, but who is controlling the scheme now, and who has been controlling it since February, 1971? The first farms changed hands in March, 1971, and it is since then that the pitfalls have become quite obvious.

Mr. H. D. Evans: In the six months an R. & I. Bank officer has been attending Farmers' Union meetings there has been no criticism.

Mr. O'Connor: There has not been much result either.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What would you know about it?

Mr. O'Connor: As much as you; I happen to have been down there.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I will be happy to pass that message back, that there has been no criticism of the scheme in the last six months by the Farmers' Union.

A Press report of a meeting held at the end of April is headed, "Fears scheme may fail." The report commenced as follows:—

The Farmers' Union dairy executive's fears that the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme is headed for failure if it continues to operate as it has since September, 1970 . . .

Mr. H. D. Evans: I asked the honourable member previously to explain the reason for a comment of that kind.

Mr. BLAIKIE: Well, I am trying to explain.

Mr. H. D. Evans: You are not doing very well.

Mr. BLAIKIE: First of all, there has been a lack of liaison—a complete and total lack of liaison. I do not question the

capacity of the officers in the administration section, but it is essential that some practical experience and knowledge be forthcoming. That has been the case with the Rural Reconstruction Scheme, so why is it not so with the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme? At the moment there are some pressing circumstances which must be taken into account. The method under which the committee purchases and disposes of farms is subject to a tremendous amount of criticism.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Would you prefer the scheme which is used in the Eastern States?

Mr. BLAIKIE: Which State?

Mr. H. D. Evans: With one exception, they are identical.

Mr. BLAIKIE: With the exception of Victoria?

Mr. H. D. Evans: Yes.

Mr. BLAIKIE: Victoria follows our system with one exception: In that State they advertise farms which are for sale. The method adopted in the other Eastern States does appear to be more desirable.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Well, why is there only a 2 per cent. acceptance of eligible farms in the Eastern States while we have a rate of 10 per cent.?

Mr. BLAIKIE: The Minister will have an opportunity to speak and I will study his question at a later stage.

Mr. H. D. Evans: My questions are getting too hard, now.

Mr. BLAIKIE: The operation in the Eastern States does appear to be much more acceptable than the operation in Western Australia. The matter is left to the dairy farmers who qualify for the scheme to establish the price at which they will buy or sell.

Mr. H. D. Evans: But they are doing only about one-fifth as well as Western Australia in achieving results with the scheme. How can it be more desirable?

Mr. BLAIKIE: The authority acts as a banker. That is not the case in this State because the authority goes through a tremendous amount of red tape which in the end frustrates the farmers. The Minister can refer to the other States but I would like him to go to the people concerned and establish whether or not they are truly satisfied with the scheme as it is operating. If the farmers are satisfied with the scheme why have we had only 11 new applications during the past 12 months?

Mr. H. D. Evans: This is understandable. The honourable member has been generalising and making vague references to dissatisfaction but he has not given any reasons for the dissatisfaction.

Mr. BLAIKIE: Well, I am coming to that.

Mr. H. D. Evans: We have been waiting for a long while.

Mr. BLAIKIE: There are instances where the scheme is showing little appreciation of personal circumstances or personal requirements. These are the matters which require investigation. It is all very well for the Minister to say there is no cut and dried answer, and that I have not supplied one. A multitude of pin-pricking circumstances have come up from time to time. I know people who have been involved in the scheme and they have stated that they will have nothing further to do with it because of the red tape and frustration to which they have been subjected.

I have received a letter from a dairy farmer who wished to purchase an adjoining dairying property. I will not mention his name but the letter is available if the Minister wishes to read it. The letter, in part, reads as follows:—

The Scheme cannot operate successfully when the buyer and seller cannot negotiate between themselves and agree upon a price.

This business of The Taxation Department valuing on a take-it-or-leave-it basis is very undemocratic and completely reverse to how this country operates.

We experienced this very thing twelve months ago when a property which joins us by full boundary was offered to the Scheme, the prospective seller qualifies under the Scheme and we were led to believe we qualified as buyers. The value put on his property by the Taxation Department did not meet his expectations and so he refused to sell.

That is fair enough. To continue—

The owner was prepared to take private terms with us for the difference and we were prepared to meet these, but under the ridiculous structure of the Scheme it is impossible for this arrangement to be carried out.

And so it goes on. The two farmers had a common boundary and I believe the prospective buyer would have qualified. His neighbour certainly did. However, because the value put on the property by the Taxation Department was below the price the person wanted—even though the writer of the letter was still quite prepared to pay the difference in price—he was denied the property. This matter has gone a step further because the person who wrote the letter to me bought another property for the purpose of dairying some 4½ miles away.

I have a sheaf of letters with me but I do not think the Minister would want me to read every one of them to ascertain every point which has been brought forward.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Actually, I do not think you will be permitted to do that.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I am trying to point out the type of frustration which has been occurring. The points I have raised may appear to be trivial, but they are most annoying to the individuals concerned. Events such as I have just mentioned have led to disagreement and frustration to the farmers, and I believe an inquiry is warranted.

Mr. H. D. Evans: In what way have the farmers been disadvantaged?

Mr. BLAIKIE: I have already read a letter from one farmer. With your indulgence, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. A. R. Tonkin), I would like to read a further letter. Again, I will not quote the name of the writer but the Minister is welcome to view this letter also if he so wishes. It is addressed to me, and is as follows:—

Both myself and other dairy farmers have been very disappointed with the way the Marginal Dairy Farm Reconstruction has operated.

The scheme has a poor image among farmers, possibly some comments most heard would be as follows. When a farm is offered it is not known how long before a decision is likely and if a sale is likely. If an acceptable buyer is found by the administering authority it is such a long time before settlement takes place. Also if a settlement is dragging out this puts a clearing sale in some cases at time of the year when it financially unattractive a farmer could be better off not selling the property.

The small dairy farms that the scheme supposed to help leave the industry. Dignity and some finance are the ones the scheme is not helping because of the size or soil type or situation the property is not ready saleable at the moment and it is the reason why in most cases the farm is not viable.

The idea of tendering farms that have not attracted suitable buyers is repugnant and it doesn't leave a farmer with any dignity to have his farm hawked around and he would sooner withdraw it from the scheme than have this happen.

The administering authority has not liaised with the Farmers Union or practical farmers and has lost the confidence of dairy farmers as they don't feel the R. & I. Bank has a practical understanding of their problems and requirements.

We hope that a quicker way of arranging sales when properties are offered could be adopted and money put into the industry that remains to keep it viable and of a high standard.

Mr. H. D. Evans: That is a bit rich saying that the Rural and Industries Bank has no understanding of the problems associated with farming. It came into existence for this very reason.

Mr. Stephens: I think if the Minister refers back to the War Service Land Settlement Scheme he will realise that was beset with all sorts of problems.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Let us stick to the problem we have before us.

Mr. BLAIKIE: The Minister is on safer ground.

Mr. H. D. Evans: We are not dealing with a separate authority.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I have many letters which I would like to give to the Minister so that he may read them. They are from people who have been associated with the scheme, and who are disadvantaged.

Mr. H. D. Evans: How have they been disadvantaged? You have not established this at all.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I ask the Minister to make some preliminary inquiries with the Farmers' Union and the bank managers in the area, and with at least one or two reputable farmers so that he can gauge the situation for himself. He will then see where the disadvantages are.

I am asking the House to agree to my proposal for an inquiry into the scheme because I believe such an inquiry would have some bearing on the future destiny of dairying in Western Australia. I also believe that the basic intention of the scheme, when it was mooted, was sound and it was well received. I have no hesitation in saying that it was well received by the dairying community. However, I would further add that if the funds had been made available two or three years earlier they would have been used to much greater advantage than is the case today.

I still believe the funds could be better expended. They are certainly not being fully expended at the present time. I would hope the committee would inquire into the administration of the scheme, particularly to ensure that it operates in the best interests of the State and those engaged in dairying. If it were found that the scheme was operating as well as it possibly could under its present terms, we should take the opportunity to press for amendment of the existing Commonwealth legislation to provide that it will operate to better advantage in Western Australia.

I make this final point. If the scheme continues to operate as at present in Western Australia, by the time the scheme

lapses in 1974 not more than \$1,000,000 will have been expended. As I said when I began, the State that is able to spend the greatest amount of money under this scheme is the State that is advantaged by the scheme. I commend the motion to the House.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. H. D. Evans (Minister for Agriculture).

METROPOLITAN REGION PLANNING

Criticism of Government Action: Motion

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [6.02 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government has failed to co-ordinate its metropolitan regional planning efficiently and has proceeded with its planning in an unco-ordinated manner which will affect adversely the future metropolitan regional traffic plan and operations, environmental aspects and result in a large financial cost and waste to the taxpayers of Western Australia.

This House is also of the opinion that the Government should act immediately to co-ordinate its planning using the services of competent authorities such as the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and the Environmental Protection Authority.

I move this motion in the hope that it will lead to improved facilities in Western Australia as far as the population, traffic flow, and general environmental aspects are concerned.

Western Australia is a very young State in a very young country, and with proper planning it will have tremendous opportunities. The potential of this State is virtually unlimited, and action taken today to effect proper planning will greatly improve the potential, and the comfort of our people in the future.

Past generations have realised that many mistakes have been made as a result of inadequate planning and inadequate thought. One has only to visit overseas countries to see some of those mistakes. Some time ago, I had the opportunity to travel to England, which is a country of much greater age than Australia, and particularly Western Australia. Although it is a very beautiful country, in many cases the planning left a great deal to be desired. One finds cluttered housing development, smoke and fog, and industry very badly located. I was in Birmingham for something like three days, and I saw the sun for something like three minutes. It is an industrial area which I believe is over-industrialised in relation to the population surrounding it.

We should all be very much aware of the effects that sufficient planning can have on our environment and future. I am sure that people are much more aware of this today than they were previously. I believe that Western Australia began on a very good footing. Back in the early 1950s Professor Gordon Stephenson was appointed by the Government of the time to draw up a plan for the metropolitan region of Perth. That plan is generally known as the Stephenson-Hepburn plan. It was highly regarded by all people at that time and it is still highly regarded today.

Despite the lapse of time since that plan was drawn up, and despite the tremendous increase in the population since then, I believe the plan gave us a very sound basis on which to plan our city. As one would expect after a lapse of something like 17 years, some faults might be found in the plan. Nevertheless, it was a creditable effort which has placed our regional planning on a very firm footing.

In the mid-1960s the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority studied the Stephenson plan in an effort to improve and revitalise it for the future. I think it was expected by Professor Stephenson and his colleagues that this would happen. As time goes by, almost every plan requires some modification as a result of greater use of motor vehicles, greater density of population, and other changes that occur.

This was brought forward to ascertain the future expansion needs of the Perth region. As early as 1965-66 the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority was having a look at a corridor system for the Perth metropolitan region. On the 4th November, 1970, the plans for a corridor system for Perth were presented to the Government. At the same time as the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority was working on the corridor plan, the Government had also appointed a committee to ascertain the future traffic needs of the Perth metropolitan area. To do this the Government appointed Dr. Robert Nielsen, a very competent person who was provided with adequate and efficient assistance.

I have given this information to indicate some of the work that had been done towards providing an adequate town planning system for Western Australia and I intend to show how this has been broken down in recent times. I believe that the staff of the M.R.P.A. is very good indeed. Those working with Professor Stephenson were extremely efficient. When we look at the people who brought forward the corridor plan we see such names as Mr. M. E. Hamer, O.B.E., J.P., a man who has worked in this field for a long period of time and is well respected throughout the State. We also see such names as Mr. John Lloyd, the Town Planning Commissioner and Mr. Don Aitken, the Commissioner of Main Roads. The work done by

them was, I believe, as good as any which could have been produced. We had the best possible people apply themselves to this field.

The corridor plan for Perth was adopted by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, as I have pointed out, on the 4th November and it was the result of several years work. The primary purpose of the corridor system was to ensure maximum economic efficiency in the future development of the Perth metropolitan region, to enhance the urban environment, and to preserve the essential character of the non-urban area.

The Perth Regional Transport Study and the corridor system were worked out in extremely close conjunction. I would like to read an extract from the corridor plan, which appears on page 8. It is as follows:—

The 1955 Stephenson-Hepburn Report and Subsequent Action.

The Stephenson-Hepburn Report marked the start of a new phase of development in the largest urban centre of the State. The Report provided a basis and a forecast on which future regional growth could be guided. Perth, Fremantle, and the surrounding areas then had a population of about 416,000.

In December 1959, the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act was passed and The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority was formed—in April, 1960—to prepare the statutory scheme and to administer its provisions. The Scheme—for the planning of 2,080 square miles was publicly exhibited in August 1962. After objections had been heard, it was tabled in Parliament and became operative in October, 1963.

Something like 12 years of study and planning went into this and I, for one, believe it should not be cast aside. Until 18 months ago there had been a smooth pattern and proper planning as far as our region is concerned. In conjunction with the PERTS report I believe this was a proper way to carry out the scheme.

It is a great pity that certain schemes have been proceeded with and also very large schemes have not been referred by the Government to the M.R.P.A. Certain plans are of vital importance to our town planning. Let us look, for instance, at the plan presented this year to Parliament by the Government for an underground railway. The plan is for a six-mile inner railway in the centre of the city. The Deputy Premier let the cat out of the bag when he spoke of this plan at a function in Kwinana or thereabouts. He advised that it would happen before any formal announcement had been made. At the time the Premier was away. I do not know whether the Deputy Premier tried to clear the matter up before the Premier

returned or what the position was. Quite frankly, when the plan was presented to Parliament it did not fit in with the authority or, entirely, with the Nielsen report.

In my opinion it was an ill-conceived plan. No engineering works had been undertaken in connection with it. When we tackled the Minister in this House he admitted that the stations shown on the plan may not be at the positions indicated. He also admitted there could be problems in connection with water and building foundations. He indicated that everything had been done in a hurry. Some lines had been placed on a plan which, in my opinion, was not a good one. The Minister considered that the plan could be changed and the stations put in different places if this were desired.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Prior to the tea suspension I had explained to the House the detail of the planning that had progressed over the last 20 years so far as the metropolitan region is concerned. I expressed my support for it as it related to the Stephenson report, the corridor plan, and the PERTS report.

Unfortunately, the plan is now like a crippled ship in a storm; it is floundering. It is a pity, because I believe the foundation we had should have been built upon and continued with as was the case over the last 20 years.

When the present Government came into office the Deputy Premier was appointed Minister for Town Planning. He now appears to want to disown some of the decisions made by his department while he was its Minister. Apparently his colleague is also trying to evade some of the repercussions which have resulted. I certainly hope that under the new Minister we will have better results from the department than we had in the past. I feel we probably will have better results.

When he was appointed Minister for Town Planning the Deputy Premier quickly appointed Mr. Ritter and commissioned him to have a look at the corridor system. He did this after expressing his own views and saying that he opposed it; he appeared to be committed to a scheme other than the corridor scheme.

I think this alone considerably restricted what Mr. Ritter could do so far as bringing a report back to this House was concerned. If it did not restrict him it certainly let him know what the Minister wanted; he was certainly aware of the Minister's views before he was appointed to prepare a report.

While Mr. Ritter's report may contain some good points I believe its presentation to Parliament and to the parliamentary members—and I now mean the parliamentary members actually in Parliament

House—was by far the worst presentation of a document that I have seen undertaken in this House.

I say this because in his explanation to members of Parliament Mr. Ritter virtually gave no details of what his plan was all about. We had to read the paper the next day to discover that he was against the corridor scheme; that he suggested a scattered planning scheme. This, of course, is contrary to the 20 years' work that was put in by the M.R.P.A., by Professor Stephenson, and by those who helped to organise the PERTS report.

I fail to see why we should have wasted so much time on the Ritter report. It did not take into account many of the features that afflict us; features like the traffic flow and the effect it would have in Western Australia. Following the presentation to this House of the M.R.P.A.'s views a newspaper report appeared dated the 24th August which stated—

He—

that is Mr. Ritter—

—proposed the abandonment of zoning and corridor planning and advocated the reverse of corridor development—virtually unrestricted urban growth throughout the metropolitan region except in areas safeguarded for recreation, industry and Government use.

In a report tabled in Parliament yesterday, the M.R.P.A. said that Mr. Ritter's analysis of the corridor scheme was not a scientific document and made no serious contribution to an examination of the corridor plan.

In an appendix to the report, the M.R.P.A. said that many of Mr. Ritter's arguments were fallacious. It claimed that almost none of his hypothesis was scientifically based.

"A scientific study may have been carried out, but the document known as the Ritter study does not record it."

When we consider the fact that Mr. Lloyd had been in charge of town planning in the State for many years—and we all know he is a man with a great deal of ability—it was rather odd to find the present Town Planning Commissioner saying yesterday—

that he rejected Mr. Ritter's study because it was neither scientific nor analytical and did not provide a feasible solution to the needs of the Perth region.

Sir David Brand: Have any of those copies sold?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not know, but I feel that most of the public who have seen the copies would not be very impressed, bearing in mind the fact that prior to this we had a good planning

scheme into which had gone a tremendous amount of work. Mr. Lloyd, the Town Planning Commissioner, further stated—

Those with experience in town planning had concluded that almost none of Mr. Ritter's hypotheses were scientifically formulated and that the bulk of his evidence had to be regarded as dubious, if only because of bias.

These are strong words which one would not expect the Town Planning Commissioner to express. They do, however, indicate the views of the town planners in this State regarding the scattered development scheme; they also indicate that the planners are concerned that at the moment our planning scheme has been virtually pushed aside.

I would even go so far as to say that the Government has used the M.R.P.A. and the E.P.A. for its own convenience. This is a great pity. *The West Australian* newspaper was certainly on the ball in its comments. I know you will not allow me to read very much of this, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. A. R. Tonkin), but I would like to quote from the leading article of the 24th August. I do not always agree with what the newspapers have to say but on this occasion it is apparent they were equally concerned.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I also agree with them sometimes.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That is fair enough; but it was obvious that this newspaper was concerned at the great amount of time that had been wasted, time during which it felt the Government should have been proceeding to plan the development of the State which, of course, it was not doing. The leading article headed, "Perth's Future" states—

With each comparison the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority's corridor plan makes more sense, and Mr. Paul Ritter's ideas of haphazard urban growth make less.

In conclusion the article says—

Few proposals have undergone the scrutiny to which the corridor plan has been subjected. The honorary Royal Commission now preparing a report on the plan would surprise if it did other than endorse the scheme.

As soon as the Government has the commission's findings it should act to chart a corridors course.

Too much time and expense have been wasted already.

I think these views are exactly right—too much time and expense have already been wasted. The Government has proceeded with schemes which should have been referred to the M.R.P.A. These schemes, however, have not been referred to the

M.R.P.A., and this omission on the Government's part has caused a great deal of damage to the planning scheme generally.

The Government should endeavour to get back on the tracks and rectify the errors it has made; it should allow those who are competent in the field of town planning to proceed with this aspect.

I made mention of the underground railway system which is vital in the town planning of the metropolitan area; it is certainly vital when we decide to do what we propose to do in relation to the future planning of the metropolitan area.

The previous Government, under Sir David Brand, appointed Dr. Nielsen, who presented a very extensive and comprehensive report to Parliament. I have that report in my hand. A great deal of study went into the preparation of that report and it was presented to the public late in 1970. We find that even the present Premier commended the report at that time.

The report in question envisaged all that should be done so far as our transport planning was concerned over the next 20 years; it envisaged a plan that would fit in completely with the metropolitan region corridor plan, thus enabling planning to be carried out in a proper and orderly manner.

It is not just a matter of saying, "This is what we are going to do"; it is necessary for us to find out where our development will be taking place, where our housing requirements will be, and where our traffic needs will be greatest over the next 20 or 30 years.

This is what was done jointly with the M.R.P.A. and in conjunction with the Nielsen report. It was done by members who worked jointly to the point of coming up with answers and the view that the corridor system was the correct system of planning as it would give us a transport system that would adequately cover our requirements over the next 20 years.

But what has happened? We find that without reference to the M.R.P.A., the Government now brings in a railway scheme which will cost \$546,000,000. I cannot see how this will eventuate, because I do not believe it will be possible for us to finance it. But even if that were possible the point is that this has not been referred by the Government to the M.R.P.A.; indeed I doubt whether it was referred to the city council and both these bodies are vitally interested in such a plan.

One can hardly believe that a Government would proceed with a plan of this nature without referring it specifically to the M.R.P.A. It is possible the Government will say that some of the members of the steering committee were members of the M.R.P.A. This may well have been so, but those members might have been absent at

the time of the meeting; I do not know, but I do feel that in a matter of this magnitude and as vitally important as this is it was the Government's duty to refer it to the bodies concerned.

In a meeting here it was said that the Government had not done so and the Government has not denied this. There is little doubt the Government has erred in this particular field.

When considering the rail scheme I cannot help but feel it is the most airy-fairy scheme one can imagine, because no work was done on it—indeed the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Works made statements on this matter when the Premier was involved in Japan.

I do not know who was at fault but it appeared obvious that no planning was done. We found that someone was suddenly advised to draw certain lines on a piece of paper, and this was done. To anyone viewing the lines that had been drawn it was obvious the trains could not make some of the curves; that the lines were in the wrong places; that there were difficulties involved concerning water tables and the foundations of buildings, etc., to all of which the Minister admitted. There were troubles with gradients at various points and the Minister also admitted that very little or no engineering work had been carried out.

So here we have a major development which is envisaged for the metropolitan area at a cost of \$546,000,000, concerning which no reference was made by the Government directly to the M.R.P.A. One would hardly believe this to be possible.

We now find that power lines are to go through the Midland area and the hills area. Power lines are to pass through the Guildford Grammar School grounds contrary to the views expressed by the M.R.P.A. which advised against it. In spite of this the Government has proceeded with its plan; it has not left the matter to be considered by those who know about these things.

We have other instances where the Government has interfered with plans in places such as Melville and Wanneroo. Going even further, I am sure some members will be able to mention still more places at a later stage. These are important matters. The Government should turn its attention to permitting the specialists to get on with the job instead of hindering them as it has done.

One of the latest moves is the announcement that a bus terminal is to be built on top of the ground near the corner of William and Wellington Streets. The Government has already indicated its planning in regard to an underground railway through the centre of the city. It has stated that it will bring buses into the city somewhere near the West Perth subway.

Now we have news of a bus terminal to be constructed near the corner of William and Wellington Streets. With this proposal, together with the proposal for parklands near Barrack Street, how will traffic be able to get to the north of the line? How will this ease the traffic flow to the north of the line? The Government should have looked into this possibility.

Mr. Jamieson: I will send you an autographed copy of my original speech so that you can read it again. When you read it you may understand it and be able to sort out the traffic problem.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Apparently the Minister is saying that the Government intends to go along with his original ideas with no consideration for town planning.

Mr. Jamieson: I am not pushing my own ideas. I have not had any influence in this.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Does the Minister agree that it is better to construct a bus terminal on top of the ground in William Street?

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, because it is not intended that it shall be there permanently.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Does this mean that the Government intends to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a structure that will be pulled down shortly?

Mr. Jamieson: Shortly? It will be there for a reasonable period of time.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I thought the Minister was acting on the basis that it would be there for about 20 years.

Mr. Jamieson: It will be, but there will still be people coming in from Scarborough. Can't you orient yourself at all?

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister has made no study whatsoever of the undergrounding of that bus terminal.

Mr. Jamieson: It would cost thousands of millions of dollars by the time they finished with it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Thousands of millions of dollars?

Mr. Jamieson: Of course it would.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not know where the Minister is obtaining his figures.

Mr. Jamieson: You do not know where we get anything from. You just pluck things out of the air.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Minister has a look at this report—

Mr. Jamieson: Dr. Nielsen said he had not made any engineering study of undergrounding the bus depot; he had not made such a study for inclusion in that report.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If an underground bus terminal would cost thousands of millions of dollars, what will it cost to put a rail scheme along a route which has more difficult terrain?

Mr. Jamieson: But we will not be going through any unsuitable country any longer.

Mr. O'CONNOR: There will be some unsuitable country.

Mr. Jamieson: You are not acquainted with windshield tunnelling like the engineers are. I have to rely on them and they say there will be no problems, because it is done under pressure.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I believe the construction of a bus terminal above ground near the corner of William and Wellington Streets will not fit into the overall transport plan, and I doubt whether this project has been referred to the M.R.P.A.

Mr. Jamieson: It is represented on the organisation that recommended it; it has been represented on every committee we have had.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It has not. The Government has used the M.R.P.A. when it so desired and disregarded it when it suited the Government to do so, and this is what I am complaining about now. If a bus terminal above ground is to be constructed on the corner of William and Wellington Streets, and we are to have parkland through to Barrack Street and the railway from there on, we will have just as much trouble with traffic proceeding to the north of the line in 10 years' time as we have now. One of the statements made in the Nielsen report was that if something does not happen by 1979 we will have traffic chaos. The proposed bus terminal should fit in with the overall transport plan, instead of the Government wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars constructing a bus terminal above ground at the foot of William Street, especially when the Minister himself has stated that it will be pulled down in about 20 years.

Mr. Jamieson: Give or take a few years. You have also referred to the other temporary railway station to which your attention has obviously been drawn time and time again. You have been told that it would not be there for long. You are fitting that into your overall plan and channelling that 20 years ahead and long before then it would be gone, of course.

Mr. O'CONNOR: What would we have done instead of wasting this money on the construction of a bus terminal on top of the ground which does not fit into the overall plan?

Mr. Jamieson: You were going to put the money into a bottomless pit, and you had not researched it one little bit. You had not even looked between the covers of the Nielsen report.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I read through the Nielsen report completely several times.

Mr. Jamieson: In that case it's a pity you did not go to a better elementary school.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Minister wants to make a speech he can do so later. I know that this is a touchy matter for him.

Mr. Jamieson: It is not touchy, but when people are so stupid—

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister is at fault for putting up an airy-fairy scheme such as this.

Mr. Jamieson: I did not present it at all.

Mr. O'CONNOR: You presented it to the House.

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, but it was part of a recommendation under the PERTS proposal.

Mr. O'Neil: We have a temporary bus station and a temporary Government.

Mr. Jamieson: And we have a temporary man like you.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a temporary man he has something more than someone else has. It will cost the Government \$546,000,000 to put an underground railway through the centre of the city, without taking into consideration any of the engineering work involved.

Mr. Jamieson: As I told you, most of the cost is involved with the roadways that would be built in any case. You have the report there and you can obtain those figures from it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The total cost quoted was \$546,000,000, and the roadways are included in it, in the same way as the roadways were included in the figure quoted in the Nielsen report.

Mr. Jamieson: Of course.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister tends to use whatever set of figures suits him at the time. The total cost of \$546,000,000 is five times the cost of the Sydney Opera House, and if the Government were required to borrow that sum it would have to pay a tremendous amount of interest.

Mr. Jamieson: It would not be borrowed; it would come from road funds.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Five hundred and forty-six million dollars?

Mr. Jamieson: Most of that is mentioned in the original Nielsen report and would be provided from normal road funds.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am quoting the figures the Minister quoted to this House, and he referred to a total of \$546,000,000. If the figures are wrong the Minister should make an explanation to the House.

Mr. Jamieson: They are not wrong; that money will come from road funds.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Road funds are a necessary part of this scheme.

Mr. Jamieson: But you are trying to tell me that interest would be paid on this money.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Would you like me to sit down while the Minister continues with his speech, Mr. Acting Speaker?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): No, the member for Mt. Lawley has the floor.

Mr. Jamieson: It is a pity he has.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. O'CONNOR: The scheme for the construction of six miles of underground railway through the centre of the city has been presented without proper thought, because the figures quoted are a complete guess.

Mr. Jamieson: They were not a guess at all. Every figure has been thoroughly checked and can be related to the Nielsen report.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I will see if I can get a packet of bird seed for the Minister.

Mr. Jamieson: I can whistle a better tune than you can.

Mr. O'CONNOR: As I have said, the Minister admitted that the figures he quoted were estimates of what it would cost overseas.

Mr. Jamieson: I did not. I said I had used all figures as a basis; that is, the figures available in the Nielsen report, figures available from overseas and from all sources in order to check our figures. That is what I said.

Mr. O'CONNOR: But there has been no mention of the engineering work.

Mr. Jamieson: You could not do the engineering work.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I think the Government has been badly advised and it has taken on something it cannot finish. The Minister is very touchy about this.

Mr. Jamieson: He is not touchy at all!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I can understand his concern, because when he makes a start on this underground railway scheme and then cannot back it up—

Mr. Jamieson: There will be no problems. It will be completed despite your procrastination.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I believe the Nielsen report was a very good one. It was put forward by competent people after a great deal of thought. It was a report approved not only by Dr. Nielsen and members of his committee but also by the M.R.P.A. in turn when it was claimed that it fitted in with the corridor plan. This is what we want as an overall planning scheme; one that provides not only for one form of transport, but also for overall operations, whether they be rail, road, or air. This is what was recommended in the Nielsen report, in conjunction with the town planning report and the corridor plan.

Mr. Williams: There are not many Ministers present in the Chamber.

Mr. O'CONNOR: No. I suppose many of us would like to be with them, but unfortunately we cannot all be where they are. The Government has only fiddled with the town planning scheme. It has prevented the M.R.P.A. from proceeding in the way that it should. The Government has thrown the town planning scheme into utter confusion. That is one of the reasons that I am speaking this evening in the hope that we can encourage the Government to get back on to the right foot.

Mr. Davies: You are maligning the M.R.P.A., and you have not done your homework.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Have I not? The Minister has made no attempt to deny what was said in the room above this Chamber.

Mr. Davies: I have trouble holding my tongue, but I will speak later.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin) Order!

Mr. O'CONNOR: As I was saying, the actions of this Government have thrown the town planning scheme into confusion. We have only to get on to some of the Wanneroo subdivisions and see what work has been done there, or look into some of the problems in the Melville area to realise what the Government is doing. I am sure the Minister knows to what I am referring.

Mr. Davies: Rubbish!

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister made no attempt to table the files in regard to what was done at Wanneroo and Melville, because he is afraid.

Mr. Davies: I have never been asked to table any file in connection with Wanneroo or Melville, and I ask that that remark be withdrawn, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Will the honourable member withdraw that remark?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I will say that the Minister is not afraid.

Point of Order

Mr. DAVIES: On a point of order, Mr. Acting Speaker, I ask the honourable member to withdraw the remark that I refused to table files. I have never refused to table any files, because I have never been asked to table any such files.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I did withdraw, and if you wish me to withdraw again, Mr. Acting Speaker, I will do so.

Mr. Davies: Now get back to the truth!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I also ask the Minister to withdraw that remark. He has indicated I am not telling the truth, and I ask him to withdraw that remark.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Will the Minister withdraw that remark?

Mr. DAVIES: If the honourable member—

Mr. O'Neil: No qualifications!

Mr. DAVIES: I do not know whether I am entitled to withdraw the remark that was made by way of interjection, but if it was heard I will withdraw it.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The member for Mt. Lawley.

Debate Resumed

Mr. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I believe it was a great pity that the Minister for Town Planning at the time proceeded with the Ritter report because in my opinion the Town Planning Department was operating in a proper manner and the town planning of this State was being organised efficiently.

The officers from the Town Planning Department should be dealing with the matter. Already the PERTS report has been submitted and that fitted in with the corridor system and everyone was happy with it. Competent people who have spent a lifetime in planning agreed with the report and yet it may or may not be thrown down the drain. Whether or not this occurs, 12 to 18 months of planning in this State have been wasted when the Government should have been getting the planning done. As we all know a Royal Commission has inquired into the matter—

Mr. Davies: That was started for mischief's sake, too.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Government should not have been so mischievous.

Mr. Davies: We were not mischievous; another place was.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Because of the way things were being handled in the Town Planning Department the Government saw fit at a later stage to replace the Minister. I think that is an indication that problems existed.

Mr. O'Neil: I think he got the sack.

Mr. Davies: I think the Minister might have something to say about that.

Mr. O'CONNOR: He was replaced and the Minister for Health knows it.

Mr. Davies: You should know the circumstances.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Minister for Health knows them he should explain them.

Mr. Davies: I think the Minister will himself, but I certainly would be happy to do so.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would be happy to hear of the circumstances.

Mr. Davies: If you read the paper you would ascertain the reasons yourself, but you do not want to know them.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Do I not? I do.

Mr. O'Neil: I read the Fremantle supplement of *The West Australian*. Perhaps that contains the reason.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I certainly hope the Minister will give us the reason he was replaced.

Mr. Hutchinson: Do you think the replacement Minister is doing any better?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not think he could do any worse. He is certainly doing the best of which he is capable.

Mr. Davies: We can bear these insults much more graciously than they are given.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It was not an insult. I certainly did not intend it to be.

I hope the Government will stop fiddling with town planning which prevents the department from operating in a fit and proper manner. Before I conclude I ask the Government to get on with the job as soon as the report of the Royal Commission is available. I sincerely hope that that report supports the corridor system because it is an efficient one and allows for a proper transport flow which is essential. I sincerely ask the Government to waste no more time, but to get on with the job and to allow the M.R.P.A. and other authorised bodies to do the necessary planning in this State.

Mr. Davies: You have wasted the time of the House tonight.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Is there a second?

Mr. O'NEIL: I will second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Davies (Minister for Town Planning).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading: Defeated

Debate resumed from the 2nd June.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [8.04 p.m.]: This Bill attempts to provide different means by which to decide the boundaries of local authorities. With all due respect to the member for Cottesloe, a very honoured member in this House, I entirely disagree with the method he proposes. In fact, I believe his suggestion is most peculiar, and it would not work at all.

Let us consider the present situation. The Act provides for the appointment of a Local Government Boundaries Commission comprising three members and the Minister must refer to that commission any matters which deal with the amalgamation of local authorities or the severance of a portion of a district and the

annexation of that portion to the district involved. This is provided for under section 12 (6) (i). Paragraph (j) reads—

The commission shall meet at such times and in such places as the Minister directs and shall afford each municipality and other persons directly affected by the matter before the Commission for consideration, the opportunity of being heard thereon.

Having heard the local authorities concerned and any other persons interested, the commissioner shall report to the Minister, and then the Minister, after due consideration, may refer the matter to the Governor-in-Executive Council.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is right.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: That is the present procedure. The Act provides for an investigation by the commission and that could be a thorough investigation. This would depend, of course, on the commission, and I may deal with that a little later.

The Bill provides that the Minister shall not refer the matter to the Governor until it has been dealt with by reference to Parliament. Proposed new subsection (7) (a) reads as follows:—

(7) (a) Where the exercise by the Governor of a power conferred by this section would result in the abolition of a district, the amalgamation of districts or the alteration of the boundary of a district the power shall not be exercised except as recommended by the Minister and the Minister before presenting a recommendation to the Governor on the exercise of the power shall refer the question of the abolition, amalgamation or alteration to the Commission and shall cause the report of the Commission together with his proposed recommendation to the Governor to be laid before each House of Parliament.

Proposed new subsection (7) (c), which ensures the Minister does not go any further, reads—

(c) The Minister shall not present to the Governor a recommendation which—

- (i) is required to be laid before each House of Parliament and which has not been so laid;
- (ii) is before either House of Parliament and is subject to rejection;
- or
- (iii) has been rejected.

So the Minister's hands are tied until the recommendation has been laid before each House of Parliament. Members are then expected to make a decision on the recommendation. On what information are members of this House or another place to base their decision? The commission

would have been to the area to examine the local authority. It would have heard the evidence from any witnesses who desired to appear before it, and a decision would have been made.

What are we supposed to do in order to ensure we make the right decision? Do we just accept the recommendation of the commission? There would be no value in doing that. Do we refer the matter to the local member for his opinion? This would be the most absurd solution of the lot, and I will use an illustration to verify my statement.

I have in front of me a map of the new Narrogin electorate and the big arm of land that members can see is portion of the Kulin Shire. This is about the most ridiculous boundary we could wish for in the State. It is a long finger of land jutting out into other areas. It is obvious something should be done so will we ask the members of this House or the member for the district concerned to make a recommendation?

Mr. Rushton: Don't you think we have common sense?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The member?

Mr. Rushton: The members concerned.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: That is just the point. Say I am the member for the finger of land jutting out and I have a certain opinion, and the people in the area have a certain opinion. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn represents the area to the north, and he has an opinion.

Mr. Brown: And a good one, too.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The member for Roe represents the area to the south, and he has an opinion. Whose opinion is the House to accept?

Mr. Gayfer: That of the member for Avon—and he'll have it back!

Mr. Taylor: You get 10 out of 10!

Mr. Rushton: There are 48 other members.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: How are those 48 other members to decide?

Mr. Rushton: How do they decide anything?

Mr. Taylor: The point is well taken. It abrogates the whole principle of government.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It does that. The member for Kimberley does not know anything about this area. Are members to go to look at the area?

Mr. Hartrey: No.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Are they to interview the local authorities concerned? From where are they to obtain the information? They cannot obtain it from the local member of Parliament because in this case three are involved, and this could apply in many instances. So that rules out the local

member. All members should go into the area to make the same examination carried out by the commission. That would be all right if they did so, but I cannot see them doing it.

Mr. Rushton: How do we judge on capital punishment?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: What has that to do with this Bill?

Mr. T. D. Evans: It is a pity the member for Dale was not a subject of it.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I now know why members opposite get annoyed with him.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Perhaps the members of this House would decide to appoint a Select Committee to study the matter. Where would it end?

I have enumerated the avenues open for exploration by members. They must make a good decision, but I cannot see any one of those avenues being effective. This is an important matter to those concerned and in my opinion someone with authority must make the decision after hearing the evidence. After all, courts and judges are given the responsibility to make very vital decisions. Therefore surely if we have a good commission—I am not saying we have not at the moment—which makes a thorough inquiry, what better body could make the decision?

Dr. Dadour: Who appoints the commission?

Mr. Taylor: The Minister has the final decision, which is a double check.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I am quite prepared to debate the subject of the commission, but this Bill does not deal with it. If it did I might support it.

The commission comprises an officer of the Local Government Department who shall be chairman—that may or may not be a good thing—and two other persons having experience in local government. Those two persons may have been elected only the previous year and might know nothing about local government. The people to be appointed to the commission must have a thorough understanding of all aspects of local government. They must have had long experience. Perhaps it would be wise for someone with a great depth of knowledge of judicial matters, or in making decisions, to be appointed. It is no good just appointing someone nominated by the shire councils' association, or whatever it might be. Someone might be appointed merely because he happens to be willing to take on the job. That is not the sort of person who ought to be on the commission, and if the member for Cottesloe had introduced something more substantial concerning the commission, his Bill might have been worth while.

I have endeavoured to demonstrate that this is a very important matter to those concerned. All sorts of ideas have been submitted. Some people suggest a referendum of the people concerned should be held. What people should be involved in the referendum? Those people in the strip of land to which I referred?

Dr. Dadour: Yes.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: What about those with whose shire the area is to be amalgamated? What about the people on the other side, or around them? What about the rest of the people in the shire? The whole set-up would be absurd because as soon as a vote had been taken in one section, another section would have to be dealt with.

As far as I am concerned, this rules that one out. I am not belittling the importance of it. There is reason for bringing the Bill before the House, because it is important that people who have a community of interest in a certain area should have, and continue to have, that interest in their local governing body. This is a more personal contact than with their State Parliament. It is something that is theirs. It is vital to them and that is why I feel strongly on this question. We must be sure that we are doing the right thing. To bring a Bill before the House to ask members to decide is the most futile thing we could do. This is not a reflection on members, but it would be of no value unless they made their own inquiries.

Mr. Jamieson: It is getting back to the stage of fixing their own electoral boundaries.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: We have appointed a commission to fix electoral boundaries and that commission is never perfect as far as we are concerned. However it would be terrible for members to fix their own boundaries.

Mr. Jamieson: They used to argue electoral boundaries in this House.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I am sure it would suit each one of us to fix his own electoral boundaries, but this would not work out well from the State's point of view.

I must totally oppose the amending Bill, because I feel it would not serve the purpose for which it is intended. In fact it would lead us into greater problems and difficulties than we have at the present time.

DR. DADOUR (Subiaco) [8.16 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill. I have been rather dismayed at the remarks made by the previous speaker, the member for Narrogin. To my mind this Bill is not the full answer to what I would like to see. As the member for Cottesloe has said, we

would dearly like to have a referendum of the people concerned—the people who are to be annexed or taken over.

As a compromise, it was decided to introduce this Bill which means only one thing; namely, any proposals for boundary changes would be brought before both Houses of Parliament. Each House would then be a forum in which to discuss such proposals.

This is not asking very much. Which-ever side is in Government would have the numbers, but at least contemplated changes would be discussed.

Mr. Taylor: That is not the position. In one House one party always has a majority. Consequently, the Government of the day would not necessarily be able to have its way. There would be always one group to determine where such boundaries would be.

Dr. DADOUR: This would be a good thing, because it would stop many of the changes.

Mr. Taylor: Only one group would decide whether or not the changes would occur.

Dr. DADOUR: When the Minister spoke to the measure he said—

In the opinion of this department the proposal contained in the Bill is a reflection on the capacity of the Boundaries Commission objectively to arrive at a decision in respect of the matter referred to it.

Surely this must be an infallible body! The Boundaries Commission consists of three infallible members appointed by an impartial, infallible Minister!

Mr. Taylor: I think the members of the present commission are, because they were appointed by the former Government.

Dr. DADOUR: I ask the Minister to allow me to continue. The Minister, whoever he is, would always appoint people sympathetic to his cause. I know I would. This is a natural tendency and one failing which we all have. This would tend to make the body far from infallible, and this is the crux of the whole matter.

I can elaborate on this point. In 1968 the Boundaries Commission came to Subiaco at a time when I was a councillor. We were informed that Subiaco would survive and would not get the axe. About two months after that Subiaco got the axe. I accuse the members of that committee of being totally and utterly dishonest. They were directed to do something. It makes no difference who the Minister was or which Government was in office. What worries me is that they were dishonest. They had been directed by the Minister to reduce the number of local

authorities in the State. In those circumstances how could they be honest? If they were honest they would have had to select local governments that were not viable. If all of them are viable how can they reduce the number?

Mr. Taylor: Are you sure of your facts? This was a former Minister, but no Minister would like to be told that he directed the commission as to what it should do.

Dr. DADOUR: The commission was directed.

Mr. Taylor: Directed by a Minister?

Dr. DADOUR: The commission was directed.

Mr. Taylor: The honourable member should be careful.

Mr. Hutchinson: The commission was requested to review all metropolitan municipal boundaries.

Mr. Taylor: They were asked by the Minister to look at the boundaries. I do not think any Minister should be put into that position.

Dr. DADOUR: When the Minister spoke to the Bill he said that the size of a municipality is a test of its value but he would not enter into an argument on the merits or demerits of small or large municipalities. What about viability? Suppose a local authority is viable. These are the questions which we must ask the Minister. What happens if a local authority is self sufficient, well run, and supplies all the needs of the people in that local authority?

Mr. Moiler: They invariably live off the facilities of the surrounding communities.

Dr. DADOUR: A local authority which is self sufficient, well run, and supplies the needs of the people is what I call a viable local authority. Of course other points come into the picture as well. Simply because a local authority, like a juicy plum, happens to be situated between two big authorities, there is a takeover and the fact that the authority is viable makes no difference. In many cases the rates are lower, the council is efficient, and the councillors get along very well with each other with no political antagonism within the council. Yet, that council is doomed to go because, geographically, it is situated between two large local authorities.

I represent the whole of my electorate; two-thirds of it is controlled by the Subiaco City Council and a third is controlled on the south side by the City of Nedlands and on the north side by the City of Perth. I have no hesitation in saying that, as the local member, I will stand by the Subiaco City Council.

Mr. Hartrey: Hear, hear!

Dr. DADOUR: Any proposals by the so-called infallible and impartial Boundaries Commission should be discussed in the forum of the Parliament. Regardless of

what the commission reports or does not report, the matter should be brought to Parliament where I can have my say.

Mr. Hutchinson: The Minister does not have to accept the Boundaries Commission recommendation.

Mr. Taylor: The honourable member may have his say to the commission.

Dr. DADOUR: I want to say in Parliament what I know to be correct.

Mr. Hutchinson: The Minister does not have to accept the Boundaries Commission recommendation.

Mr. Taylor: This is a second check.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order!

Dr. DADOUR: When the Minister spoke to the measure he said—

The proposal contained in the Bill that each recommendation in respect of boundary changes should be submitted to Parliament would have the effect of introducing political antagonism into a subject which is not in reality a basis for a political difference.

This is a load of rubbish.

Mr. Taylor: The honourable member has proved it by saying he would support Subiaco. Obviously he would support his electorate rather than the rights of the case.

Dr. DADOUR: Local government is responsible to the Parliament for every iota of its work. Parliament governs Western Australia. The Minister is confused with the commission which determines the boundaries of the electorates of the Parliament and, in that instance, we cannot and should not have anything to do with the matter. By Statute the electoral officers are the Chief Justice, the Surveyor-General, and the Chief Electoral Officer. The occupants change from time to time, but they are divorced from the Parliament and are able to make their own decisions. We can object to their proposals and we have a certain time in which to do so. However, as a Parliament, we have no further jurisdiction over them. This is the only body which should not be answerable to Parliament; every other body should be. Members opposite want to hide and hope that they will be able to say, "This is not my responsibility." Members opposite are told what to do by the A.L.P. and they do not make up their own minds.

Mr. Brown: Rubbish.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order! I think the honourable member should get back to the Bill.

Dr. DADOUR: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker. I was straying a little from the Bill. Surely the body which fixes local

government boundaries should be responsible to the Parliament. In no way is this similar to the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

Why did the Minister say it is generally accepted that there should be fewer local authorities? We are led to believe it is so that we will get bigger and better ones. Does it cost any more to have more local authorities? Does it cost anything when councillors give their time without any charge? Why do people become councillors and wish to help their local authorities? They become councillors because they wish to put something back into an area from which they have gained something. They have come to like the area and as a matter of civic pride they feel they want to help the people in the district. This is why people become councillors.

Mr. Taylor: No-one is arguing with that.

Dr. DADOUR: This has a great deal to do with the matter. Surely local government means exactly what it says; it is backyard government, no more and no less. People want to be able to contact the local council officers quickly to have their little problems settled quickly. If councils become bigger and bigger we will have fewer councils for a greater number of people. The proportion of representation will change. People will not be able to contact officers of the council as readily, because there will be more people in the local government area.

What has happened in other countries where the local authorities have been made bigger? In fact at times they have been made so large that subsequently they have had to be broken up. Moscow made a mistake by amalgamating local authorities and making fewer and fewer in the city area. Moscow encountered great difficulties. The same thing has happened in London.

I saw the local government system change in Sydney in 1949 but either last year or the year before it had to be broken up into three parts. The reason was maladministration. The authority had become too large and Parkinson's law had set in. Inefficiency resulted. It was taken over by a commission and broken up into three parts. Surely we must be able to learn from other people's mistakes.

The position is that the City of Perth decided it would make its area larger. What did it do? Starting from the mid point of the town hall, the City of Perth drew a circle of a radius of five miles with a compass and everything within that area was planned to be swallowed up. The City of Perth will encounter the same trouble as Sydney did.

Are we not to take any notice of what happened in Sydney? Do we say that it will not happen here? It can happen in

Western Australia. We notice again and again that Parkinson's law sets in when any business becomes too large, especially if it is a Government authority.

My own experience with local authorities has been that I have no trouble at all in finding the town clerk at the smaller local authorities, and no trouble at all in clearing up all my problems quickly. However, when I approach the Perth City Council it can take me as long as two days of continuous phoning to get the town clerk. Usually then it is half-way through the night and he is working back. This must lead to inefficiency and it does lead to inefficiency. I do not blame the town clerk or any other member of the Perth City Council. The fault lies in the fact that the council is too big and the Government proposes to make it even bigger. For these reasons I support the Bill. I have enough sense to know that if a boundaries dispute comes before this Parliament it can be thrashed out between the members, or we could set up a completely impartial authority to look at the issue.

At the moment, the Minister receives a recommendation from the Boundaries Commission and then he puts the recommendation before Cabinet. Cabinet can instigate any changes in local government without the matter going before Parliament. This must be wrong and I am sure all members know it is wrong.

There is another point I would like to raise. Unfortunately the Premier is not here tonight although I hope he will read my comments in *Hansard*—if he ever reads it. The East Fremantle local authority is doomed to go following the report of the Boundaries Commission of 1968. This is a good efficient local authority and yet it is doomed to go. The Premier has represented these people for nearly 40 years. I wonder how he will react when this issue comes before Cabinet. If he reacts as I assume he will react, he will see that nothing happens to this local authority. I would not blame him for this attitude.

We have to be impartial. Therefore, the Premier must react in the same way to the proposed takeover of any other local authority. If he allows the East Fremantle local authority to be swallowed up, I have no doubt he will no longer be in this Parliament.

To my horror I have heard rumblings from various members at different times suggesting that they would like to do away with local government and institute a series of administrators. This would result in the greatest lot of carpetbaggers of all time.

Let us speculate on what happens when a local authority is swallowed up. The first thing is it loses its identity both as a centre and from an historical point of view—it is finished. It becomes a backwater of the takeover authority. We saw

this happen when the local authorities of East Perth and Victoria Park were taken over by the Perth City Council.

Such an area becomes neglected and is represented by fewer councillors. Each councillor is responsible for a larger area and he has to do much more work. The personal touch is then lost.

The crux of this whole issue is the borrowing power of the local authorities. If two or three local authorities are amalgamated into one, the borrowing power is reduced to \$300,000 for the one authority instead of \$300,000 for each. This is probably one of the reasons for the Minister's failure to instigate many amalgamations because he finds he will lose a great amount of borrowing power.

When a local authority becomes too large it also becomes inefficient. I have already described how this happens and I do not think it needs any elaboration. The second point is the loss of the personal touch, and the third point is that the councillors have to give up much more of their time to do the work. Councillors at present act in an honorary capacity but with larger authorities we will probably have to introduce a system of payment to councillors. This will be a retrograde step and it is unnecessary.

The next point is that politics will be introduced into local government. This is what the Labor Party is really aiming at—what it really wants.

Mr. Taylor: Um—

Dr. DADOUR: I am not listening to the Minister. The Labor Party will introduce party politics.

Mr. Taylor: We are not introducing this measure—this Bill comes from your side. You are trying to change the Act you had for 12 years.

Dr. DADOUR: This is the real evil—the greatest evil. If the Minister does not have the brains to work that out for himself, I am not going to help him.

We can imagine a caucus meeting would be held before a council meeting. What a farce! The council meeting would end up almost as farcical as the proceedings in this House at times. This Bill asks for very little indeed, and if the member for Narrogin has not the brains to see that, it is his own fault.

THE ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order! Those were uncalled-for remarks. I order that you withdraw them.

Dr. DADOUR: Yes, certainly.

This legislation provides that before local authority boundaries are altered, the Minister must table the proposed alteration in both Houses so that Parliament may be used as a forum to discuss the matter. This is all that is asked for—very little.

as I said. It does not introduce politics into something which should not be political. The present proposals are political. Government members may laugh as much as they like, but to me this is a political subject.

Mr. Bickerton: This is the Bill of the member for Cottesloe.

Dr. DADOUR: It is no more and no less than a political subject. In my view we must pass this Bill so that we may discuss proposed alterations.

As an elected member it is easy to say, "This is not my doing; the Boundaries Commission was responsible for this." When something is introduced that the electors do not like, a member may hide behind the Boundaries Commission. This is wrong. Every member is responsible for his electorate *in toto* and he must have the fortitude to stand up and do what he thinks is right. It does not matter whether or not he takes sides, he must take part. He is responsible to his electors and he is speaking for the majority of his electorate.

I feel we are dodging the issue if we do not pass this legislation. Our constituents and the ratepayers in the local authorities want to know why they are being pushed about. Why do we let the big chap push the little fellow around all the time? This is all wrong. It is obvious that the Labor Party wants to hide behind the Boundaries Commission. The Labor Party members do not want to accept their responsibilities. The Ministers may laugh about this, but they would be surprised to learn how many people think this way.

Mr. Taylor: The Minister should take the responsibility. I agree that the Government should take the responsibility, and it does. It is not a matter of hiding behind anyone at all.

Dr. DADOUR: Can the Minister tell me that *in toto* the Government is not hiding behind the Boundaries Commission?

Mr. Taylor: The Government takes the responsibility for any change in boundaries.

Dr. DADOUR: I did not elect Cabinet. Cabinet did not elect me. Anything happening in Subiaco is vital to me. If this Cabinet proposes to make any changes without my knowledge or without my having an opportunity to do anything about it, I feel I must get my message over in some way.

I ask the Government what it means by a viable local authority. This is the call card. Does the Minister intend to give us a definition of what makes a local authority viable or not? Does he intend to give local authorities which are not viable a chance to become viable by remedying any deficiencies?

Mr. W. G. Young: Members of Parliament do not know whether they are viable or not.

Dr. DADOUR: They are alive but some members would not know it half the time.

Mr. Bickerton: They would not be that way for long if you were treating them.

Dr. DADOUR: I believe the Government should come out in the open and tell the local authorities why they are not viable and how they can remedy the situation. I believe that the fault really lies within the Local Government Department and not with the local authorities. If the department believes it should have fewer local authorities to deal with, then I say the fault lies with that department and not with the local authorities.

I believe we should all stand for what we feel is correct for our own electorates. As the member for Subiaco I enjoy the privilege of having a great number of tedious little problems ironed out very quickly by the councillors of the Subiaco City Council. Every member of this House has that privilege. The councillors provide assistance openly and irrespective of party politics. Members should think about this before they attempt to hide behind the Boundaries Commission. In all circumstances we must stand up and fight for what we believe is right for our own electorates.

I know for a fact that if the Premier does knock back the East Fremantle local authority after 40 years he will not be re-elected. I have no doubt about this.

I believe that the Minister should definitely come into the open and declare his hand. He should inform the local authorities of their deficiencies and give them a chance. I believe we should have more local authorities and not fewer. Even under the Labor Government the State will continue to grow, although at a much slower rate. More and more responsibility will be thrust onto the local authorities.

Sir David Brand: He is very generous.

Mr. Taylor: I appreciated the remark.

Dr. DADOUR: I said at a much slower rate. Local authorities are being asked to shoulder more responsibilities. Social welfare work is increasing and the local authorities are now asked to employ social workers. They assist with senior citizens' centres and probably homes for the aged will come under their jurisdiction in the near future. There are many more activities which the local authorities will be asked to undertake.

The Labor Party, with its lack of vision, is contemplating reducing the number of local authorities. I cannot see why it came to such a decision because we must take it for granted that even under this Government we will grow a little.

Local government is backyard government. The closer one can get to the people, the better the representation. All members know that they must get close to their constituents or they are not re-elected.

Mr. Bickerton: I think you are close to your person.

Dr. DADOUR: I do not think the Minister is in his right seat.

Mr. Hutchinson: Answer that.

Dr. DADOUR: I sincerely hope that the House will pass this legislation. It is a step forward. Each member will have to face up to the obligations within his own electorate. The member for Narrogin says he would like to see a referendum conducted—

Mr. W. A. Manning: I did not say that.

Dr. DADOUR: I assumed that was his meaning in the early part of his speech. Later on he suggested a much more impartial Boundaries Commission.

I feel that at this juncture I should read a letter if I may, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. A. R. Tonkin). The letter is dated the 24th January, 1969, and was sent by the Town of East Fremantle over the signature of the town clerk, to the Subiaco City Council. I quote—

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the request of those present at the recent meeting between the various local authorities affected by alterations of boundaries in the Local Government Assessment Committee's report, I arranged an appointment with the Hon. J. T. Tonkin, Leader of the Opposition and report as follows—

I informed Mr. Tonkin of the meeting that had been held and who participated and outlined details of the proposed action to be taken by the authorities with regard to having a Deputation to the Minister. I then asked if it would be possible for either himself or another member to introduce a Private Members Bill making it compulsory for a referendum to be conducted of those affected before any amalgamations take place.

Mr. Tonkin asked me to pass on to the representatives that he was prepared to arrange for a Bill to be introduced if the authorities so desired, but whether he introduced the Bill or another member, would be decided at a later date when it could be assessed what would be the best interest of the Bill.

Mr. Tonkin also stated that as the Party favours reference of matters such as this to the people concerned for decision, they would have no hesitation in supporting a proposal that

before amalgamation takes place, the matter should be referred to the people concerned by way of referendum.

I know what the answer of the Government will be; that times have changed and the Government has changed its mind.

Mr. Taylor: That wording is not in the amendment. I am not sure why you are being allowed to discuss it because there is no reference to referendums. You want Parliament to do it.

Dr. DADOUR: That was the attitude of the Premier when he was the Leader of the Opposition. At that time he supported a referendum of the ratepayers in an area about to be taken over. I feel this is the crux of the matter.

Had we thought we would be able to get an amendment concerning referendums through this House, we would certainly have tried to do it. However, we thought we would not have a chance so we settled for the tabling of the reports, and that is all the Bill before us is concerned with.

Mr. Taylor: That is right.

Dr. DADOUR: However, the letter I read out throws a different light on the thinking of those on the other side of the House. I would like to hear what the Premier has to say concerning this matter when he returns—that is, if he returns tonight.

So many questions require answers. I think the Minister has taken note of the questions I have asked. Will the ratepayers or the council be given a chance to make up the deficiencies if necessary? Or will it be a cloak and dagger affair as it is at the moment?

Mr. Taylor: You realise that I cannot speak again?

Dr. DADOUR: I know; that is why I am asking these questions.

Mr. Taylor: You win!

Dr. DADOUR: I do feel that members on the other side of the Chamber have much to think about in relation to this matter. I have given it a great deal of thought. I wondered how best to tackle this problem, and I thought I would be parochial as that is the only way to tackle it.

I would remind members opposite of this point: most ratepayers are electors. They are not necessarily electors for the area concerned, but most of them are electors, and if members opposite have not the fortitude to stand up within their electorates and fight for what they know to be right, all I can say is that they will not be here after the next election.

I had intended to make a further point, but I am afraid I cannot recall it at the moment. However, I will say that this Bill is important to me and I think it is

important to all smaller municipalities which are proposed to be taken over, or which may be taken over. I want members on the other side of the House to think most seriously about what I have said and the arguments in relation thereto. I sincerely hope that a few members opposite may see the light. I see the member for Boulder-Dundas is smiling; maybe he will see the light and do the right thing for a change.

MR. MOILER (Toodyay) [8.51 p.m.]: I wish to oppose the Bill and in so doing I would like to express the opinion that in the 18 months I have been a member of this House we have witnessed much hypocrisy coming from the other side of the Chamber. I would say the introduction of this Bill by the member for Cottesloe highlights the hypocrisy which emanates from members opposite. He was a member of the Cabinet of the previous Government for, I believe, the entire life of that Government, and even though some 10 or so amalgamations occurred during that period not once did he raise a voice against them or make a move to have the procedure proposed in this Bill carried out.

Whilst the Liberal-Country Party Government had control of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, not once did he introduce a measure such as the one he has now introduced. I suggest to the House that, in choosing this time to introduce the Bill, it is nothing more nor less than playing politics. During the last five years of the life of the previous Government there were no fewer than six amalgamations of local authorities and not once did any member of the present Opposition raise his voice against those amalgamations. I do not think any voice was raised by the Opposition at that time because its members believed, and rightly so—

The **ACTING SPEAKER** (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order! The gentlemen in the gallery will please sit down. The member for Toodyay may continue.

Mr. MOILER: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker. At that time the members of the Opposition believed that the commissioners appointed to study the boundaries of local authorities were fully qualified, impartial, unemotional, and uninfluenced by the Government or by members of Parliament. The position would be completely different if a Bill to amalgamate certain local authorities were introduced into this House or another place at the present time. It is obvious we would witness an exhibition similar to what has just been given by the member for Subiaco. The only result would be to satisfy a dozen or more councillors. In the main the people who are strongly opposed to amalgamation of local authorities are

those councillors who would, in all probability, lose their seats on the new local authority that was formed.

Mr. Rushton: That statement is totally unfair.

Mr. MOILER: I will say it again. In all probability the members of a local authority who are most vocal in their opposition to the amalgamation of a local authority are those who will lose their seats on the new local authority following the amalgamation.

Dr. Dadour: You cannot say that about the member.

Mr. MOILER: What member?

Dr. Dadour: The local member.

Mr. MOILER: I cannot follow the honourable member. I could not follow what he was saying previously when he was on his feet.

Dr. Dadour: This is equalising members of Parliament.

Mr. MOILER: At a later stage I will touch on a few of the matters on which the member for Subiaco spoke. It will make my speech a few minutes longer, because I do not generally speak at length. I say what I have to say and then sit down. I agree almost entirely with what the member for Narrogin said. He submitted a common-sense and practical proposition to the House.

Dr. Dadour: You admit his proposition is not entirely unbiased?

Mr. MOILER: I said that I agree with most of what the member for Narrogin said. I believe the commission is impartial and unbiased, and is the only body capable of giving a reasoned judgment, and to suggest that the proposal for the amalgamation of local authorities could be brought into this House for discussion and tossed around at will, is a lot of rubbish.

Mr. Rushton: What about all the other recommendations that are brought before this House?

Mr. MOILER: The commission's recommendations are devoid of political influence. That is what I am saying. It is fair to say the amalgamations that took place under the previous Government would be supported by the majority of residents who are now within the boundaries of the new local authorities.

One of the most recent amalgamations of any size has been the amalgamation of the Swan-Guildford Shire Council with the Midland Town Council. I believe that that was an excellent arrangement. If a referendum were now taken of the people concerned under the new local authority we would find that an overwhelming majority would agree that the amalgamation has been to the advantage of the area and those residing within it.

I wrote a letter to the Secretary for Local Government asking him how many amalgamations had been effected. After supplying me with the information I had requested, his reply concludes as follows:—

In some instances there was considerable opposition to the changes at the time,—

I agree with that statement. This is where a referendum would be useless, because nobody wants to amalgamate. The attitude is: "The devil you know is always better than the one you do not know." I suggest that a referendum on an amalgamation of local authorities would result in amalgamations never taking place; not because a referendum is not reasonable or desirable, but because the people concerned would be against any amalgamation and, as the Secretary for Local Government has said, there has been opposition against such a move. He said—

In some instances there was considerable opposition to the changes at the time, but the larger districts have now proved most satisfactory.

I believe that this was so when other amalgamations took place under the previous Government, and I compliment it for the action it took. But now that those members are in Opposition it is a reflection on the member who introduced the Bill to this House to suggest that any proposed amalgamation should be brought before this House and another place. To suggest to the members of this House that another place should have more authority than it has now to veto whatever we want to do here is ridiculous. Is any member of this House prepared to say that another place should have any more authority than it has now? It has more authority than it should have. To suggest giving it more authority is a shocking reflection on any member of this House. The members on this side comprise the Government party. The Labor Party was elected to govern Western Australia for a period of three years.

Mr. Rushton: The 12 of them!

Point of Order

Mr. MENSAROS: On a point of order, I think that under Standing Order 123 the member for Toodyay has reflected upon the vote in the other House, and he should not do that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): That is correct. The member for Toodyay did reflect on the other House. The point should be taken immediately. I would ask the member for Toodyay to withdraw the remark.

Mr. MOILER: I do not doubt that I did reflect on the other place. Those are my sentiments, but if I must withdraw the remark I will do so.

Debate Resumed

Mr. MOILER: The members on this side of the House comprise the Government party. We have been elected for a three-year term. In regard to the amalgamation which may take place the member for Subiaco has said that we would hide behind the commissioners and so forth. We will front up to the electors at the end of the three-year term, and we will be quite happy to take the consequence arising from any amalgamation.

The member for Subiaco touched on the aspect of how some small local authorities are often very viable and active, and he pointed out their rates were invariably lower than those of larger local authorities. Quite possibly that is the position. I have not studied this aspect. However, quite often local authorities which levy low rates adjoin larger local authorities which provide many amenities for their own ratepayers. These smaller local authorities are parasites on their neighbours, because they are able to keep down their rates by their ratepayers using the facilities—such as libraries, swimming pools, etc.—provided by their neighbouring local authorities. Yet, they boast about their viability and their efficiency.

Mr. Rushton: Which shires have you in mind?

Mr. MOILER: I have no particular local authority in mind. I said this was often the case. If the honourable member wants to check on what I have said he can do so.

Mr. Rushton: You are making the statement. Give us the facts.

Mr. MOILER: I stick by what I said.

Mr. Rushton: That is a generalisation.

Mr. MOILER: I have already pointed out that the member for Subiaco claimed that his local authority is in agreement with the Bill. I imagine that many members have received correspondence from local authorities asking for their support of the measure. In many instances there is a desire by them to retain the *status quo*. The existing members have been elected to the council and they want to retain the position as it is.

The member for Subiaco said that when there is an amalgamation, apparently the smaller area which is taken over becomes a backwater. I can say that this has certainly not happened in the new Shire of Swan, because Midland has obtained a new lease of life, and this local authority has been the subject of one of the biggest amalgamations that has been effected in recent times.

Dr. Dadour: Do you remember the debate on this matter last year when you said it was a unanimous decision of the

councillors that they would support the establishment of the Pacminex refinery there? There were two members of the local authority who did not want it there.

Mr. Brady: The member for Subiaco should not draw red herrings across the trail. He should not talk such rubbish.

Mr. MOILER: I did say that, and it was a unanimous decision. I can produce the evidence to prove that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order! The honourable member should get back to the Bill.

Mr. MOILER: The only other point I wish to touch on relates to the comment made by the member for Subiaco who claims that it is the intention of the Labor Party to advocate that councillors be paid for their services. He said to do so would bring party politics into local government.

Dr. Dadour: I said that was another reason.

Mr. MOILER: I say quite categorically that we already have party politics in local government.

Mr. O'Neil: The Labor Party endorses candidates.

Mr. MOILER: There are staunch supporters of the Liberal Party who are in local government. How can a working man afford to lose a day's pay to attend a meeting of a local authority?

Dr. Dadour: He does not have to lose a day's pay in the case of a small local authority, because the meetings are held in the evenings in most instances.

Mr. MOILER: Who decides when the meetings are held?

Dr. Dadour: The mayor and the councillors. Most of the meetings are held in the evenings.

Mr. MOILER: The honourable member is saying that the councillors decide when the meetings are to be held. These are the people who have been elected as members of the council. Even the local authorities which are now holding meetings in the evenings formerly held these meetings during the day.

Mr. O'Neil: Most local authorities hold their meetings in the evenings.

Mr. MOILER: They may do that now.

Mr. O'Neil: They have always done that.

Mr. MOILER: If members opposite will permit me to continue, I wish to point out that the members of local authorities invariably comprise semi-retired people or persons who can afford to take the time off.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Will the member for Toodyay relate his remarks to the Bill?

Mr. MOILER: I am trying to answer the criticism that has been levelled by the member for Subiaco to the effect that the Government is trying to introduce party politics into local government.

Mr. Bickerton: There would not be any party politics in the Peppermint Grove council!

Mr. Brady: Or the Subiaco or Armadale councils.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order!

Mr. MOILER: Although in the case of some local authorities the meetings are held in the evenings, in my electorate the local authorities hold their meetings during the day. Just as the member for Subiaco likes to be parochial and to worry about Subiaco—

Dr. Dadour: That is not correct.

Mr. MOILER: —I say that the Swan Shire, the Mundaring Shire, and the Toodyay Shire hold their meetings during the day. Even the local authorities which hold their meetings in the evenings have many committees which meet during the day.

Dr. Dadour: No, they do not.

Mr. MOILER: I think the councillors of local authorities are fully entitled to be paid for their services. The opportunity to be elected should be made available to every member of the community, and no-one should be penalised in any way.

Dr. Dadour: No-one is penalised. A person serves in an honorary capacity because he wishes to do so. You are not aware of that, because you have not served in such a capacity.

Mr. Rushton: How does a councillor get paid for his services?

Mr. MOILER: For what sort of service? The member for Dale is being paid and he does not do any more than many councillors.

Mr. Rushton: How do you pay them?

Mr. MOILER: For any lost time and any out-of-pocket expenses.

Mr. Rushton: You have not been in it. You are talking with a lack of knowledge.

Mr. MOILER: I was employed in local government for 10 years.

Mr. Rushton: As an employee, yes.

Mr. MOILER: I was able to have a good look at local government. To return to the point, I can only emphasise once more that I think it is the height of hypocrisy for the member for Cottesloe to introduce this Bill. He was 12 years in Government during which time he was in the Cabinet and he had every opportunity to suggest that recommendations for amalgamations be viewed by Parliament, but he waited until he was in Opposition and then, in order to play politics, he introduced this measure. I think this is deplorable.

MR. HARTREY (Boulder-Dundas) [9.11 p.m.]: I shall not delay the House for very long. I said a few moments ago that I would shed a ray of light on the dark, murky arguments of the member for Subiaco, and I propose to do just that and then cease altogether discussing this quite controversial subject.

The member for Subiaco said it was very difficult to obtain an audience with the Town Clerk of the City of Perth. I wish to indicate that on two occasions in the last two years I have desired to see the Town Clerk of the City of Perth and on each occasion I managed to obtain an audience within 10 minutes without any prior notice or appointment.

Dr. Dadour: You are the Government; I am not.

MR. HARTREY: I was not in the Government or even a member of Parliament at the time, and I do not think I am a person with the slightest influence in Perth. I do not have very much where I come from. I think it is wrong for the honourable member to cast aspersions on the town clerk.

Dr. Dadour: That is not what I said.

MR. MENSAROS (Floreat) [9.12 p.m.]: I wish first of all to reflect on what the member for Toodyay said. He accused the member for Cottesloe of hypocrisy, but he is entirely wrong.

The member for Subiaco read a letter written by the Premier during his time in Opposition, promising certain action which he did not take when in Opposition. Neither did he follow it up when he became the Government, although he had the opportunity and the numbers.

Mr. Moiler: That was suggesting a referendum.

MR. MENSAROS: I am talking about that exactly.

Mr. Moiler: There is no mention of a referendum in this Bill.

Mr. Hutchinson: Nor by the Government, either.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I thought the letter concerned stated that the Premier had indicated that he would sponsor a Bill, and it was not a letter written by the Premier at all.

Sir David Brand: That is what he meant—a referendum.

MR. MENSAROS: The letter will be incorporated in *Hansard*. I commenced my remarks by saying that I am reflecting on the comments of the member for Toodyay, and I think I am entitled to do this. I am not trying to defend the member for Cottesloe who would be more able to defend himself.

Mr. Hutchinson: Is defence needed?

Mr. MENSAROS: Of course, there is another argument against this; that is, that there are differences of opinion. We are not ashamed of this. The member for Toodyay heard the speech of the member for Narrogin, my esteemed friend, and his view is different from mine. There is no need to be ashamed of this. The member for Toodyay knows that the Minister for Local Government was a member of the party to which the member for Narrogin belongs, and he may well have had differences with other Ministers. I do not know because I was not at Cabinet meetings. If differences of opinion did not occur, it would be a very sad state of affairs indeed.

I do not see any hypocrisy in the introduction of this Bill by the member for Cottesloe. In fact, I would submit that those members who seriously believe in what we all confess that we are—a democracy—cannot with any justification vote against this Bill. In fact, my only regret is—and it is the regret of the member for Cottesloe and the member for Subiaco—that the provisions of the Bill do not go far enough. Although the Bill provides for Parliament to have some say in matters of local government boundaries and amalgamation which at present are decided purely by the Executive, this is more democratic than the present state of affairs, but not as democratic as it should be.

I agree with the member for Narrogin but his conclusion should have been different. It is not a matter of discussion by Parliament. It is purely a matter of disallowing the submission of the Minister. I agree with him that it is not democratic enough because a matter which might come up for disallowance would involve only one or two members. If all local government boundaries were to be discussed, then practically all members would be involved, but if a recommendation for amalgamation affecting, for instance, the local authority which the member for Subiaco mentioned, were made, then only two or three members would be involved, as was illustrated by the member for Narrogin. Other members could not be blamed if they did not understand the problems of the particular subject.

Therefore, in my opinion, the Bill is not going far enough, although it is a better step towards democracy than is an Executive decision. All the Bill would do would be to provide for a check by Parliament.

A member might move a motion to disallow the Executive's decision but he might very well remain in the minority despite the fact that his constituents, being the ratepayers of the particular local authority or local authorities involved, would be 80 or 100 per cent. behind him. As members would know the same situation arises with local authorities. A particular question might arise involving only two or three

councillors, but the other councillors might be against what those two or three desire and therefore the two or three would be in the minority.

I repeat: this Bill is a step towards democracy, but not a full step. One must say that local government is not only the first but the most important level of democracy. It is, furthermore, not an artificially cut out parcel of land but most local authorities, at least, are the result of early historical development. Consequently people in a local authority—more so perhaps in the country but even in the city—feel some tie or some common interest—some feeling of belonging. They know each other in the country. They are much better represented by their councillors than are our constituents. They know their councillors personally and the councillors know their ratepayers. Therefore they do not deserve the fate of being abolished as a result of a purely ministerial or Executive decision—not even on the recommendation of a theoretical commission. Such recommendations are not binding on a Minister or Governor in any case.

I submit that these people deserve to be able to decide for themselves what they want.

To a certain degree this Bill tries to achieve more democracy, but only up to a certain degree or level. I, together with the member for Subiaco, would like to see some form of referendum. I know some objections to a referendum have been voiced by previous speakers. It has often been said that this is not practicable and I would go along with that argument at a State or Commonwealth Government level. However, I do not believe it would occur at a local government level because no difficulty is involved. A referendum could be carried out fairly simply by handing an additional voting paper to the voters on the day of the local government election, as is the case with loan ballots. An additional voting paper would not incur very much additional cost.

Mr. Jamieson: How often is a loan ballot held on the same day as an election?

Mr. MENSAROS: In my experience in local government it was invariably held on the day of the election. That has occurred in Subiaco, also. It might be that the Minister has experienced different circumstances. However, it would be absolutely practicable to hold a ballot on the same day as a local government election.

Mr. Jamieson: Local governments usually try to get as far away as possible from the election day for their own political reasons.

Mr. MENSAROS: I do not disagree that this could happen sometimes. Objection is raised that there is no merit in a referendum because only 10 to 30 per cent. of the ratepayers vote. To satisfy this objection we could have some sort of qualified

referendum and say that it was only valid if 50 or 60 per cent. of the ratepayers voted. The member for Narrogin has said that if there were a referendum the position would never change. I think it was the member for Toodyay who said that people do not want to change because they consider the devil they know to be better than the devil they do not know. That could be very true. However, if we take that argument to its logical conclusion, we would do away with democracy altogether. The member for Toodyay, in fact, suggested that we should have a benevolent dictator.

However, in a democracy we subscribe to the majority decision, which might be right or wrong. I will never forget an experience I had many years ago when I studied at university. A professor of political science posed the question whether democracy is the best form of government. He said it is well known that there are more stupid people than clever ones. A democracy is the rule of majority—by simple syllogism it is the rule of stupidity. However, this is a sophism. People have to decide for themselves what they like. Therefore I think the Premier was right in promising a referendum in a review of local government boundaries, as the member for Subiaco told us. That might not have suited our Minister for Local Government at that time but we cannot always be political.

The member for Narrogin wanted to know who to ask at a referendum. I submit that surely he has much more experience and would like to adhere to the principle of democracy. It is only a matter of drafting a Bill so that in the case of amalgamation, or in the case of some authority wanting to integrate another authority, the people subject to the incorporation should be consulted. This could be worked out, and surely it is not an objection.

I want to show this is my contention and I am sorry, indeed, that the Bill does not incorporate this principle of a referendum. I am not ashamed to say that this is the policy of the Liberal Party.

Even this measure, going less than halfway, is better than the present highly undemocratic state of affairs. Recent events, and various announcements, make it opportune and necessary to comment—within the framework of this Bill—on the size and boundaries of local authorities.

Western Australia is fortunate, indeed, to have had an historical development of local authorities, and to have the business of local authorities conducted on a non-political basis. I think the member for Merredin-Yilgarn agrees with me on this point; at least he said so in this House, and I believe he said it with all conviction. I refer to the fact that local government should not be political. I am sure the

member for Merredin-Yilgarn made that statement not too long ago, and I quite agree with him. He is interested in local authorities, and I appreciate his convictions.

Lack of organised political party influence—which, of necessity, would have to be State-wide or Commonwealth-wide—helps councillors to conduct their local authority affairs only in the interests of their particular ratepayers. They are able to govern their shire, town, or city efficiently, irrespective of its size. In my opinion efficiency does not depend on size. In fact, I think the situation is the reverse: the smaller a local authority or an organisation, the more efficiently and the more economically can it carry out its business.

I think it is apparent that the Labor Party wishes to use its short-term opportunity of office to amalgamate scores of authorities. This can be done according to the Statutes, irrespective of what the Boundaries Commission recommends. It can be done by simple Executive action.

Mr. Moiler: The Government has not established another authority; it has been there for years.

Mr. MENSAROS: We can go back to the original arguments. We are not happy about the situation and that is why the member for Cottesloe introduced the Bill. To my mind the situation will lead inevitably to the extension of party politics into local government.

Mr. Jamieson: There are already Liberal Party politics involved, but no Labor Party politics.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order!

Mr. Jamieson: We do not endorse any candidates at Nedlands, but party politics are still involved.

Mr. MENSAROS: I want to be serious. I do not deny—if that is what the Minister for Works has said—that there are local authorities where a majority of the councillors might subscribe to Liberal Party politics.

This can happen the other way round and, indeed, I know of shires where the opposite is true. They are not organised and do not take any advice at all from party organisations. They certainly do not meet together to discuss what they should do according to party politics. They decide in the interests of their own ratepayers.

Mr. Jamieson: The honourable member is more naive than I thought.

Mr. MENSAROS: I challenge the Minister for Works, despite his remarks, to state that there are councils—whether they be in Nedlands, Fremantle, or Belmont—where councillors come together before meetings and discuss on party political lines what they will do. They do not, and I know this very well.

Mr. Jamieson: The honourable member knows everything too well.

Mr. MENSAROS: I am not at all offended if the Minister for Works thinks I am naive. I leave this to the judgment of other people.

I submit further in my argument that party politics would be introduced into local government, not only because it is Labor Party policy or because it has happened in the East, but because of its inevitability when extending the boundaries. It happens easily. I pay a compliment to the Government because it did very well with its publicity in connection with amalgamation. It was a wise policy—one of divide and conquer. The Government encouraged a local authority in the metropolitan area to eat up a smaller one. It then encouraged a bigger one to eat up the previous two. With all this encouragement and after receiving submissions and counter-submissions, the Minister for Local Government can recommend to Executive Council that there should be huge amalgamations. If politics are introduced, what stands in the way of organising that they should be Labor councils? Nothing stands in the way of this. The boundaries could be gerrymandered and the Minister knows they could be.

Mr. Jamieson: Ethelred Gerry would be proud of you.

Mr. MENSAROS: This is what we want to prevent. I know that in some cases members may not be interested, but if the Minister laid a submission for such an amalgamation on the Table of the House I am sure all members would be interested. Even if the interested members comprise mainly the minority Opposition, perhaps they could have an honest supporter in the member for Merredin-Yilgarn who has openly said that he does not want party politics brought into local government.

I say that this Bill intends to prevent remote control of local government. We now have remote control by the Minister.

With all respect to members of the Country Party—and I know that some members of the Country Party expressed a different opinion in another place—I cannot understand why the member for Narrogin wants to oppose this measure. As I have said, it is a question of the remote control of local government. Will the members of the Country Party go back to their electorates and say that they proudly voted for the retention of a remote control? Surely they could not say that they do not want final control to rest with Parliament, and thus with the people, but want the remote control of the Minister, regardless of the party, to remain?

I conclude with what I said earlier: If anyone seriously believes in democracy he cannot vote against this measure.

MR. BROWN (Merredin-Yilgarn) [9.34 p.m.]: The member for Floreat has prompted me to rise to my feet by saying that I have suggested I would not like to see party politics introduced into local government. What I said is that in my years of service with local government I have never brought party politics into discussion and debate. I have prided myself on this fact. I have said this on several occasions in this House and I extend an invitation to members opposite to practice that very activity of not bringing politics into local government.

I believe local government would not want to see this Bill meet with the approval of the Government. The existing Boundaries Commission is a three-man commission consisting of a representative of the Local Government Department and two members of local government. From time to time they have come under criticism and perhaps something could be done to review the commission which has been brought into existence since the introduction of the Local Government Act of 1960.

However, the Bill which has been introduced by the member for Cottesloe would do nothing to improve or enhance the activities of local government.

The recommendations contained in the assessment committee report of 1968 did a great deal for local government. The three-man commission made a submission which the Minister of the day considered. As I have said, this was a submission—they were not directed to bring forward a report and recommendation as the member for Subiaco said. The assessment committee report states on page 2—

The Committee is being set up to prepare a blueprint for the future and is not intended to supersede the present Boundaries Commission constituted under the Local Government Act. This Commission will continue to deal with petitions already received or those likely to be received in the future in respect of boundary variations, but instead of dealing with these questions in isolation, the Commission will have the benefit of the findings of an overall review to assist in its future deliberations.

Members were informed that it was their duty and responsibility as a committee to do this.

A great deal of the report was invaluable to local government and it was indeed unfortunate that the Minister of the day did not consider that some of the recommendations were worthy of favourable consideration—one being the amalgamation of local authorities.

I believe this question must be looked at objectively and there is a need within local government for this type of direction from

Government. Personalities should be put aside so that local authorities can get on with the excellent job of governing the people they represent in a voluntary capacity.

There are in excess of 140 local authorities in our State. When we recognise the vastness of Western Australia and the isolation of population it is a burden for local authorities to carry on with the finances available to them. They must impose rates on the electors to carry out their functions. Indeed, most local authorities depend on handouts from the Government.

Mr. Stephens: The State depends on handouts from the Commonwealth. Are we to abolish the State, too?

Mr. BROWN: In particular, these are from the Main Roads Department. I hope there will be a change of Government in the near future.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWN: I hope the next Federal Government will recognise that there is a direct need for the Commonwealth to make direct grants to local authorities.

Mr. Rushton: That would be a centralist Government.

Mr. BROWN: In this way local government would not have to depend upon handouts. If local authorities are to be expanded and to fulfil their function of giving the services which ratepayers expect, we would not have the bickering that goes on today.

Mr. O'Connor: Who would you blame if Labor were in Government in the Federal Parliament?

Mr. BROWN: I am not blaming any Government. It is merely one of the ills of local government and the Bill before us will not improve the position. When the member for Cottesloe introduced the Bill he said—

I have gone to the extreme in saying what could happen, and indeed people have fears it will happen.

On the one hand the honourable member said he had gone to extremes in saying what could happen and that people had these fears. They are justified in having those fears. What has happened? Nothing. There could be amalgamations of local government authorities.

Mr. Rushton: Why?

Mr. BROWN: The member for Subiaco brought up the matter of backyard local government. There is too much backyard activity.

Dr. Dadour: They have to empty rubbish bins.

Mr. BROWN: If that is the sort of impression the member for Subiaco has of local government—

Dr. Dadour: I beg your pardon.

Mr. BROWN: —in my view, it is not a very favourable one.

Mr. Rushton: Tell us why there should be amalgamations.

Mr. BROWN: Simply to give services to the people whom the authorities represent. It is necessary for them to have the finance to give those services.

Mr. O'Neill: There will be less loan funds if there are fewer local government authorities.

Mr. BROWN: There will be less loan funds but there are other avenues for obtaining money.

Mr. O'Neill: Higher rates.

Mr. BROWN: Not higher rates.

Dr. Dadour: Handouts from the Government.

Mr. BROWN: Not handouts from the Government. There are ways of raising funds for local government without penalising the people. Town planning and housing schemes can be put into operation through special overdrafts beyond the \$300,000 that is available to local authorities. One local authority had a special overdraft of \$70,000 for a town planning scheme. Sewerage schemes can be implemented in this way. There are other avenues for raising funds in excess of the limit of \$300,000. It was not so long ago that the Brand Government increased the limit from \$200,000 to \$300,000.

Mr. Rushton: You have not proved your point. Size does not bring efficiency.

Mr. BROWN: I did not say anything about size. I am talking about this Bill. In my opinion, local government could be better served if there were some amalgamations.

Mr. Gayfer: Which shires in your eastern ward would you amalgamate? You are a representative of 25 shires. Which ones would you amalgamate?

Mr. BROWN: There are only 17 shires in the eastern ward. The recommendations would have to come from people far more experienced than I. There is one matter I question. The assessment committee recommended that Nungarin and Merredin should combine and that Westonia and Yilgarn should combine. These two amalgamations in the eastern ward have been suggested.

Mr. Rushton: Did you support them?

Mr. BROWN: The people did not support them. The people in Westonia said they would prefer to amalgamate with Merredin, if they had to amalgamate with any other shire.

Mr. Rushton: You said you supported the recommendation on boundaries.

Mr. BROWN: I did not say that. It was not a report on boundaries. It was a report of an assessment committee. For the information of the member for Dale, the terms of reference were—

- (a) make an assessment of the resources of each municipality in the State, considering:—
 - (i) area;
 - (ii) valuation;
 - (iii) actual and possible receipts from rates, receipts from licences and C.R.T. Funds, or any equivalent thereto, as well as other grants for roads;
 - (iv) the possibility of further development in the area or of retrogression;
 - (v) the possibility of attracting and retaining adequate staff;
 - (vi) any special problems affecting the district, either long term or short term problems;
 - (vii) the need for any special financial assistance;

Mr. Gayfer: And to encourage decentralisation, I think.

Mr. BROWN: The terms of reference continue—

- (b) consider whether the municipalities throughout the State as at present constituted are able to operate and to have a community interest in financial, statistical and administrative matters that would bind the body of ratepayers in the particular area into a unit of government that is efficient, economical and satisfactory, not only to the local people, but to the Government of the State;

I could read on. Much could be said of the assessment committee's report, which indicates that there is a need for something to be done concerning local government boundaries, employment of staff, and job opportunities.

Dr. Dadour: Are you talking about viability?

Mr. BROWN: I listened to the member for Subiaco for some time, and what he said was far from the truth about local government. I did not know whether he was speaking for or against the Bill. If one were to ask local authorities what they thought about the matter, I think they would say they considered there had been too much political interference with their activities up to the present time.

Dr. Dadour: That is right.

Mr. Rushton: That is right.

Mr. BROWN: Indeed, the Country Shire Councils' Association has recently appointed a committee to look into this very question of ward boundaries. The association feels there is a need for something to be done. The committee comprises the President of the Country Shire Councils' Association (Mr. Frost), a past president of the association (Mr. Mills), Mr. Antonio and Mr. Scott who are members of the association. Councillor W. C. K. Pearce, who is a member of the Boundaries Commission, is also a member of the Country Shire Councils' Association.

Mr. Gayfer: He is a member of many other organisations as well.

Mr. BROWN: He is also a member of the Liberal Party. The member for Avon has reminded me of that.

Mr. Gayfer: I did not say that. I said he is a member of many other organisations as well.

Mr. BROWN: I hope I have conveyed his message to the House.

Mr. R. L. Young: Before you got lost, you were going to tell us why big shires were more efficient than small ones.

Mr. BROWN: I was not talking "get big or get out." That is not my philosophy and never has been.

Mr. Rushton: You said you were all for amalgamations.

Mr. BROWN: That has never been my philosophy and it never will be. I will not use the word "viability" either, as members opposite have suggested.

Mr. Mensaros: If you are against the Bill, what disadvantage do you see in a parliamentary check on the Minister's recommendations?

Mr. BROWN: I listened to a debate last night. The member for Floreat would have to ask about Standing Order 123 if I gave him the answer.

Mr. Taylor: The member for Narrogin did it very well, I thought.

Mr. BROWN: The honourable member would have to appeal to the Speaker to call me out of order if I told him what was wrong.

Mr. Mensaros: Did you not understand the question?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The member for Merredin-Yilgarn.

Mr. BROWN: I would have liked to see Standing Order 123 invoked following last night's proceedings in another place. Mention was made of consideration being given to a referendum.

Mr. Hutchinson: Not in the Bill.

Mr. BROWN: No. It was brought up during the course of debate. I am well aware of how the Town Clerk of East Fremantle and his councillors feel about it.

I am aware of how people feel about all matters that affect their lives and outlook. It is not a progressive move to suggest that this Parliament interfere with the situation that exists at the present time. It does not need the suggested improvement by the amendment of section 12.

Mr. Gayfer: This is where we agree. I was very interested in your argument until you brought up amalgamations. I am not interested in it now.

Mr. R. L. Young: As long as you do not get any bigger.

Mr. BROWN: In certain instances regional development must be considered. Because of their geographical position, places like Corrigin, Mukinbudin, and Northam require sponsoring.

Mr. Gayfer: Bruce Rock will become a suburb of Merredin.

Mr. BROWN: Never did I suggest that Bruce Rock should become a suburb of Merredin. I said there are certain centres which must be developed and which require Government services in these country centres. This type of development must recognise its responsibility to the surrounding areas. Of course, this is just as applicable in the metropolitan area as in the country.

The member for Toodyay correctly said that services are supplied by local authorities. Indeed, the people who supply the services are aware that the electors support them to do this. Everyone must make his contribution. It is not good legislation to say that the Parliament of Western Australia must signify its assent or otherwise to the alteration of a local government boundary.

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [9.51 p.m.]: This is my fourth attempt to speak to the Bill.

When this matter was first raised I was of the opinion that it should not be considered lightly. A great deal of thought was given to the proposal to submit an amending Bill because ever since the introduction of the Local Government Act in 1960 we have had the problem of trying to arrive at a solution to the vexed problem which is the subject of tonight's debate. The problem is to find a satisfactory method of arriving at a decision on the amalgamation of shires or changing of shire boundaries. We have never found an easy solution.

The Boundaries Commission was appointed to solve the problem. As the member for Merredin-Yilgarn has said, it is composed of a representative of the Local Government Department, a representative of the Local Government Association, and a representative of the Country Shire Council's Association.

It appears to me that this Bill has been introduced because of some dissatisfaction with the operation of the Boundaries Commission. I have made inquiries in this regard and I have been unable to discover dissatisfaction to any great degree with the operation and decisions of the Boundaries Commission. I agree with the comment that the Boundaries Commission is acting in a very impartial manner and assuming and discharging its responsibilities very well indeed.

Mr. Fletcher: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPHARLIN: The member for Merredin-Yilgarn referred to the report of the assessment committee. I agree that a number of its recommendations are well worth considering, but I could not agree with his comments that he would support the amalgamation of certain shires. He mentioned the shire of Nungarin which is within my own electorate.

This brings me to the point that a member of Parliament speaks on behalf of the area he represents and on behalf of the local authority councillors. At this point I would state that the councillors at Nungarin have expressed concern and alarm at the suggestion in the assessment committee's report.

Mr. Brown: I did not say I agreed with the report. I said that the report suggested that Nungarin should be amalgamated with Merredin and Westonia should be with Yilgarn.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I thought the honourable member may have had grandiose ideas of taking over more shires.

Mr. Brown: No, that is not the idea at all and the Merredin Shire Council has no grandiose ideas.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I can assure the House that if such a recommendation is made at least one member will very strongly oppose it.

The assessment committee made a number of recommendations and its report is its opinion of guidelines for the best advancement of the State. The task was set before the committee and it made recommendations or suggestions in what it considered to be the best interest of local government. This does not mean that all the recommendations have to be applied but, as I say, the guidelines have been set out for further examination.

Another point I wish to make is that some people are afraid of what may happen. I do not think there is really dissatisfaction with what has occurred so far but a fear is being expressed in regard to future decisions.

Another member made the point that there is no avenue of appeal at the present time. After receiving the recommendation from the Boundaries Commission, the Minister does not have to take the matter

to Cabinet; he may go to Executive Council to seek its agreement to the recommendation. There is a fear that this course may be used to implement certain recommendations of the assessment committee. I agree that this fear is legitimate, and the member for Merredin-Yilgarn made the point that there is room for improvement. The solution may be wider representation on the Boundaries Commission.

Mr. Hutchinson: I think that would be a good step.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I have some doubts in my own mind as to whether the legislation before us is the best method of arriving at a solution to this vexed problem. As the member for Narrogin pointed out, an alteration to boundaries would come before Parliament for a decision. We would have to listen to the members representing the areas concerned, and unless each member of Parliament took the time off to visit the particular area, he would have no first-hand knowledge of the district. It would become very difficult to vote and each of us would have to make up his mind on the information given by the member representing the district. I have some reservations as to whether this is the best solution. I would prefer a widening of the Boundaries Commission by the appointment of more members.

Some members appear to feel concern about this legislation, and councillors in my own electorate have expressed similar views. These people feel there must be a better way to arrive at a decision.

I am afraid I became a little alarmed when listening to the speech of the member for Merredin-Yilgarn because I thought some of his comments indicated that perhaps moves are being made to have amalgamations take place. Until that point I had been inclined to disagree with the member who introduced the Bill.

Mr. Taylor: Can you take it from me that there has been no such move and I am sure that was not implied by the honourable member when he spoke?

Mr. McPHARLIN: Well, that was the impression I gained when he spoke: that he thought the assessment committee made recommendations which could well be followed—

Mr. Taylor: He was stating his personal opinion.

Mr. McPHARLIN: —and that bigger shires could be more effectively administered than smaller shires. I became alarmed when he made those statements and when he mentioned one or two shires in my electorate. Until that point I was inclined to disagree with the Bill, but I am afraid his comments influenced me. During the short time since he sat down I have given thought to this matter and

because of the way the honourable member expressed himself I am afraid that I am going to signify—

Mr. Taylor: May I make a point? Surely you are confirming the statement made by the member for Narrogin: that politics come into it. You are saying that the member for Merredin-Yilgarn was using politics in giving the example he gave, and that has made you change your mind because he mentioned some of your shires. This is the very thing we are trying to get away from. If this Bill is passed decisions will be subject to party politics. That is the very thing we want to avoid.

Mr. Hutchinson: At the present time it is a matter of politics on one side; that is, the Government side, irrespective of which Government is in office.

Mr. Taylor: As every decision by a Government is. So it should be, and so it must be.

Mr. Hutchinson: Not by regulation.

Mr. Taylor: No.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The member for Mt. Marshall.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I shall endeavour to continue my speech. If this Bill were passed—and I think it is quite clear that it will not be passed—as I understand the situation it would be applied only as a last resort after all other avenues had been examined. The member for Cottesloe may correct me if I am wrong, but as I understand the amendment it will be used only after all other avenues have been examined.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is correct.

Mr. McPHARLIN: It would be brought before Parliament only as a last resort.

Mr. Hutchinson: No. Like all regulations they would come to the Parliament and 95 per cent. of them would go through because there are many logical changes of boundaries to be effected under the Boundaries Commission. But where the extra hurdle is required and where the extra forum is needed, Parliament would fill that role and members would be able to say they disagree and to bring the matter forward. But most of the changes would go forward like regulations under other Statutes.

Mr. Taylor: I think you have simplified what is a much more complicated situation.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The member for Cottesloe on one side is trying to make his case, and the Minister is trying to make his case on another side. I am afraid that I intend to adhere to what I said; that is, I became more than concerned when the member for Merredin-Yilgarn spoke. I am afraid that I signify that I intend to support the Bill.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [10.04 p.m.]: I think this is an issue which concerns all those interested in local government. The various members who have spoken have expressed their personal experience of

local government. Certainly the speaker who just resumed his seat expressed his intimate experience of country local government, as did the member for Narrogin; whilst others expressed their experience of city local authorities. I speak as one who is in between. I happen to have had a parent who had many years in local government. Local government is very dear to me. I support it fully because I feel it should remain as the grass roots government.

I consider that the basis of any boundary changes should be to preserve the grass roots nature of local government, and that local government should be based on actual practical efficiency, removed from the intrusion of party politics. That sums up the issues I would like to raise.

I would hope that the member for Narrogin will reconsider his previously stated intention in regard to this legislation. I think it has been presented as a result of fear. Of course, that should not be the case.

We are indebted to the member for Toodyay because he made out that local government was not, in fact, open to all those who wish to represent it.

Mr. Moiler: You are not suggesting it is, are you?

Mr. RUSHTON: Well, let me give the honourable member an account of what happened when I stood for election to a local authority. I was the only candidate to be embarrassed by meetings in the day time, and I fought for the meetings to be held at night. That is the democratic way of doing it. I was elected to that shire.

Mr. Moiler: You could afford to go without a day's salary. Possibly many better men could not and therefore could not stand.

Mr. RUSHTON: The honourable member is making false statements, because when I stood I said that I believed in night meetings so that everybody is eligible to stand for election.

Mr. Moiler: How many of the councillors came out and stood for election at the time you stood?

Mr. RUSHTON: One-third.

Mr. Moiler: So you may have been the only person on that council who wanted evening meetings. You would have had to forgo a day's salary until such time as a majority of members on the council could be persuaded to vote for evening meetings.

Mr. RUSHTON: The honourable member has already made his statement. I am attempting to tell him what actually happened, not what is in his mind.

Mr. Moiler: It is not just in my mind, it is a fact.

Mr. RUSHTON: I stood on the basis that I would be able to attend only evening meetings because I was employed by a concern to which I had an obligation. The meetings used to be held at times when I could not attend. The ratepayers understood this, and within 18 months of my election—and, I might add, after a certain amount of hardship in representing my electors—the members of the council were persuaded that local government should be open to everybody, and we commenced night meetings. I am merely stressing the point made by the member for Toodyay—

Mr. Moiler: You have stressed it; you have made it clear—

Mr. RUSHTON: —that it is open to—

Mr. Moiler: —that a person who is not in as good a financial position as you were in could not afford to lose salary for 18 months.

Mr. RUSHTON: I did not lose salary, because I did not attend.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order! I wonder whether the member for Dale can show me how this is related to the Bill?

Mr. RUSHTON: I am relating my comments to the liberties allowed to the member for Toodyay.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I did not allow liberties to the member for Toodyay. In actual fact, I asked him to get back to the Bill.

Mr. RUSHTON: Well, I think I have made my point. We are talking about how local government and its efficiency are affected by certain amalgamations. At the moment I am basing my comments partly on the efficiencies and the democracy of local government. I defy the member for Toodyay to say that local government is not democratic in the way it has worked up to date.

I am fearful of the future because of the intrusions of the A.L.P. into local government which will make it less democratic. I will prove that the intrusion of that body will destroy local government. I will tell members how the A.L.P. intends to intrude into local government because that is part of its rules.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Is that in the Bill?

Mr. H. D. Evans: Where is this stated in the Bill?

Mr. RUSHTON: There is a certain amount of disquiet among the people—

Mr. H. D. Evans: In what way?

Mr. RUSHTON: —because of the thoughts being expressed and the claim that size makes efficiency. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn spoke in that fashion and he caused concern to the previous

speaker. This concerns me, too, because I have had the experience of seeing where an increase in the size of a local authority does not make for efficiency. I have been in a shire that has grown so fast that inefficiency in its administration has crept in very quickly. This is one of the reasons I am most concerned. One hears many comments from people who have not experienced this so-called advantage of increased size and growth.

Mr. Taylor: It was your side that introduced this factor into the debate. It has not been introduced by us. This is your Bill, and it was not introduced by our side.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am entitled to speak to the Bill.

Mr. Taylor: The Government's idea was that size and other factors should not be taken into consideration when debating this Bill.

Mr. RUSHTON: It is most disconcerting that this thought abounds; that is, that size makes for efficiency. This is what the Bill is all about.

Mr. Taylor: Rubbish!

Mr. RUSHTON: Of course it is. This is why the member for Cottesloe has introduced this legislation; at least to give Parliament a say in this issue. It may well be that we could do without this intrusion. In fact, this is just another regulation that is coming before Parliament. When Government members were on this side of the House they wanted everything brought to the Parliament, but now they do not want anything put through Parliament.

Mr. Taylor: Would you transfer that back again if you got on the Government benches?

Mr. RUSHTON: The Premier has written certain letters that have been most confusing. They must be embarrassing now.

Mr. Taylor: I cannot see why.

Mr. RUSHTON: It is obvious. Let the Executive decide; let the Minister for Local Government decide on these matters.

Mr. Moiler: We have a better Executive now.

Mr. RUSHTON: This is very relevant. We talk about party politics intruding into such matters. It is part of the Labor Party's platform to have candidates selected for local government.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You will be really educated by the time you condense everything that is inside that platform.

Mr. RUSHTON: It makes me extremely wary, because we do not want local government to be subject to A.L.P. direction.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): Order! This Bill does not deal with the endorsement of candidates for local government elections.

Mr. RUSHTON: With all respect, Mr. Acting Speaker, I suggest that this Bill concerns local government and its future.

The ACTING SPEAKER: This is a Bill dealing with a specific matter and I wish the honourable member would relate his remarks to it.

Mr. RUSHTON: With all due respect again, Mr. Acting Speaker, I refer to the action that deals with the deficiencies of local government.

Mr. Taylor: It is not dealing with deficiencies. It is dealing with a decision-making process; that is what the Bill is about—who will make the decisions.

Mr. RUSHTON: It refers to boundary changes and how they will take place. If boundary changes are not related to deficiencies as related by the member for Tood-yay, I do not know what is. The Minister for Labour is drawing a lot of red herrings across the trail.

Mr. Bickerton: The member for Dale is talking a lot of rubbish and a lot of nonsense.

Mr. RUSHTON: We have heard that comment so often.

Mr. Bickerton: And he is misinforming the House.

Mr. RUSHTON: What we are concerned about is the policy of the Government that amalgamations of local authorities should take place.

Mr. Bickerton: Why were you not on your feet when amalgamations took place under the previous Government?

Mr. RUSHTON: What is the Minister for Housing talking about?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The member for Dale will address the Chair.

Mr. RUSHTON: Very well, Mr. Acting Speaker. In referring to local government we saw what this Government is prepared to do in regard to imposing fruit-fly control upon local government. This is a good example of what the Government thinks of local government. It thinks nothing of local government. In fact, it would destroy local government if it had its way. This piece of legislation has been brought forward purely because there is disquiet and concern for local government amongst the people. I am one of those who would hope that this sort of legislation should not be necessary. As one with experience in local government I would hope that party politics would not intrude into local government. A great deal requires to be done to improve local government

but we need not play around with boundaries to achieve efficiency. I would submit that we need a system of internal survey. I could elaborate on that subject, but I know you would not permit me, Mr. Acting Speaker.

A change in the boundaries of local authorities does not achieve anything. I have seen a great deal of inefficiency occur with the growth of local authorities. I have seen a small shire that had very little income but its administration was first class and it managed everything within its means. Boundary changes is a vexed question and we all must keep our minds completely open in an endeavour to do our best for local government, because local authorities are the grass roots of government for the people. If we take anything away from local government we destroy the grass roots that our forefathers planted.

I support the Bill, because at the present time it is freely expressed that we must have amalgamations merely for the sake of efficiency from size. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn spoke on amalgamations and he said something that provoked other speakers to get up and say what they did not intend to say.

Mr. Bickerton: Don't you agree with amalgamations?

Mr. RUSHTON: Not unless it can be proved that they will be of benefit to the community.

Mr. Bickerton: Do you believe that there should be more local authorities?

Mr. RUSHTON: Local authorities are the grass roots of government, and I agree that a great deal needs to be done to improve local government.

Mr. Bickerton: What is grass roots government?

Mr. RUSHTON: Government by the people for the people, and all the rest of it.

Mr. Bickerton: Does that apply in local government?

Mr. RUSHTON: The Minister for Housing should know, and if he does not it is time he did. Local government needs to be improved, but we do not want it destroyed by the intrusion of party politics.

Mr. Bickerton: You would agree with adult franchise for local government?

Mr. RUSHTON: I was going to—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): I suggest that the member for Dale should address the Chair.

Mr. RUSHTON: I thought I was, and I thought that somebody was not interjecting through the Chair.

Mr. Bickerton: I just thought I would like to ask you whether you agree with adult franchise for local government.

Mr. RUSHTON: I believe that the members who have spoken have proved their point. They certainly do not wish that Parliament should intrude further into local government. This is just a question of disallowance if something can be proved to Parliament. It will take some proving, too, because there are 51 members in this House. I believe they would consider any proposal with great responsibility before it was disallowed. If one happened to be alone in an area where the boundaries were changed, it would indeed be a rare occasion if one could gain a majority decision of this House when the matter to be decided was only small and parochial.

Whilst I prefer that we do not intrude into local government affairs, the thought is very widely held by the people that amalgamation—and this certainly refers to the metropolitan local authorities—makes for efficiency. Before I would agree to some of the amalgamations I would like to see certain administrative changes introduced into the local authorities concerned.

It is my intention to support the member for Cottesloe for this very reason; I think at this point of time the Bill provides sufficient time for a full review and for the presentation of a submission to Parliament. If the amalgamation will benefit a local authority it will certainly have my support. I conclude by supporting the measure before us.

MR. W. G. YOUNG (Roe) [10.21 p.m.]: I have sat very patiently and listened to many arguments from both sides of the House regarding what I consider to be a very clear-cut issue. I thought this was an issue to decide who will make the decision when shires are in dispute or in agreement as to their boundaries. In this debate we have seen many red herrings being dragged across the trail. Sometimes the speakers in the debate dealt with the Bill, but mostly they were crossing backwards and forwards over the arguments as to boundaries; but they did not get down to the fundamentals of local government.

As a shire president I have been personally involved in a boundary submission to the Boundaries Commission. I do not know whether all members are aware of the existing machinery. Under this machinery any group of ratepayers may make a submission to the Boundaries Commission through the Minister for a hearing, and this is done on site.

The point I am raising in my argument is that the members serving on the commission can be changed at any time. In this debate we have heard the contention that they may be biased, that there are not enough of them, or that they are party political.

However, they are appointees and they can be changed. If a situation arises where a member of the Boundaries Commission is regarded as being affected by the area involved he can be replaced by somebody else.

The case in which I was involved concerned an area which applied for a reduction in the boundary of a shire. After the Boundaries Commission heard it the case went before the Minister. This was an application by the residents of Hyden. The application for the constitution of a shire at that centre was rejected. The people of that town now agree that the decision was the correct one for the Boundaries Commission to make. At the time when they requested a hearing they foresaw that they could manage the affairs of the proposed shire with the finance available; but since then the position has deteriorated.

In the second case in which I was involved the application was successful. This was a case where the people of Jerramungup asked for a split from the Gnowangerup Shire. When the hearing was completed Jerramungup was accorded the right to form its own shire.

Those who are familiar with the Act will realise that the people of Jerramungup had 12 months within which to take up the option. I pose this question: When does Parliament consider the matter? Do we have to wait for the expiration of the 12 months to ascertain whether the option is taken up before making a decision?

In this case the people of Jerramungup applied for an adjustment of boundaries, and they were successful. However, at the expiration of 12 months they opted not to go on with the proposal. What would happen if this Parliament decided that as the Boundaries Commission and the Ministers had agreed to the proposal, and as everybody concerned was in agreement, the application should be granted? Subsequently the Jerramungup people had second thoughts about the proposal, and taking into account the financial aspect they realised they could not go on with it because to do so would place too great a burden on the ratepayers. Having made a request, and Parliament having agreed to it, they would be expected to abide by the decision of Parliament.

I pose this question: Do we make our decision immediately after the Boundaries Commission has considered the submission, or do we wait for the expiration of 12 months within which time the shire has to exercise its option? If we have to wait for 12 months, then we will be considering evidence which is 12 months old, and in that period the position could have changed drastically.

Mr. Hutchinson: If it was the desire of the people concerned, you would redraw according to their desires.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: That is after a decision has been made on the evidence presented in the first place when they applied for a split. However, on second thoughts the people concerned did not take up the option.

Mr. O'Connor: They have 12 months to do that.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: If we were to consider the matter at the end of 12 months it would be on evidence which was 12 months old.

Mr. W. A. Manning: The regulations could not remain in the Chamber for 12 months.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: In view of the comments I have made I think I have indicated sufficiently that I am not in favour of the measure. There is one other aspect on which I wish to comment, and that was dealt with by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn. I hope he was expressing his personal views in relation to the amalgamation of shires. I hope it was not the view of his Government that amalgamation and the "get big" theory should apply. I think at a later stage in his contribution he said that was not his intention, but it seems to me that the thought is the father to the word and we obviously realise that his thoughts were along the lines of amalgamation. If the *status quo* is maintained I hope it is not the intention of the Government to force local authorities to amalgamate.

I would like to make one point in support of the contention of the member for Narrogin; it is that in cases where members represent areas which apply for boundaries readjustment party politics are introduced. In the case mentioned by the member for Narrogin there was a member of the Labor Party representing one area and two members of the Country Party representing two other areas. What would be the situation if a member of the Labor Party, a member of the Liberal Party, and a member of the Country Party were involved in an area that was under dispute? When the matter came before this House it would be considered on party lines because, no doubt, the parties would support their own representatives. By bringing the matter before Parliament we would not only introduce but also force party politics into local government.

Mr. Taylor: In the Jerramungup and Gnowerangup case probably the only member who would not speak or vote would be the local member, because he represented both areas.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: He would not have a say.

Mr. Taylor: But everybody else would make the decision.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: The point I was endeavouring to make was that we would find that boundary alterations would im-

mediately become the subject of party politics in this House. It is quite possible that an area could be represented by a member from each of the three political parties.

Mr. O'Neill: If the answer is either "Yes" or "No" you could have only two solutions, and not three.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: If the matter had to go before another place, then we could have two Houses in disagreement. We would become further and further involved.

I believe that local government in Western Australia has been particularly free of party politics. I do not agree with some of the assertions made here tonight that members of local government would take their party politics into the local shire board room. They would take them in as members of a political party, but they would not use them in their deliberations to the benefit or detriment of their own local shire. I am certain this has not been the case in the shires with which I have been associated over many years.

Mr. Hutchinson: I quite agree with that.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: We should be making every effort to ensure that local government is not interfered with to any great extent by party politics. I have already indicated I do not support the measure.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [10.31 p.m.]: This Bill is designed to try to cut across an anomaly which exists in the making of decisions when a boundary dispute occurs. I am not in favour of the Bill. I have always been of the opinion—and have signified this—that a referendum, if such could be worked out, would be the answer. I still feel that given time we will be able to devise some means by which to hold a referendum and this would be the answer to the whole problem.

Mr. Hutchinson: It could be, too.

Mr. GAYFER: It would be the answer, but so far we have not been able to work it out even though we have studied the situation in the other States. They all admit it is the answer, but much paper work must be done first.

I just hate the present system under which the boundary changes are made. Having lived through one excision from a shire council—and the member for Cottesloe who was the Minister for Works at the time will know to which shire I refer—I know the problems involved. That excision virtually put the shire into financial difficulties.

Briefly, I was of the opinion that because of the anomalies which have cropped up, thoughts concerning further boundary changes and amalgamations had been placed in the background, but tonight I

find they are very much to the fore. This was indicated in the speech of a Government member.

Mr. Taylor: Would you qualify that? It was obviously a personal philosophy.

Mr. GAYFER: I do not know on whose behalf he was speaking. He may have been speaking as an individual as I am doing.

Mr. Taylor: He was.

Mr. GAYFER: I thank the Minister for the assurance, but I was horrified when I heard the speech because, having lived through one excision, I thought the matter was dormant. However tonight I found that amalgamation is desired, and this made me reflect back on what I lived through a few short years ago.

Mr. Fletcher: We did not introduce the Bill.

Mr. GAYFER: I have said I do not like this Bill. I would like the matter to be solved by referendum. I do not like the Act. However, I intend to vote for this Bill, knowing full well that if it is carried its operation will be short-lived, because no member will have the intestinal fortitude, if I may use that expression, to support any amalgamation suggested by the Boundaries Commission.

This problem is deep rooted in the life of local government and I am afraid we just must overcome it. This Bill is the first move to improve the Act. I have said I do not like the Bill, but I like it a deal better than the provisions in the Act. The only real answer is a referendum. With those remarks I support the Bill.

Mr. Bickerton: Two bob each way!

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [10.36 p.m.]: At the outset I would like to thank all members who have addressed themselves to this legislation. It is obviously a measure which has aroused a good deal of interest and this is right and proper.

I am not sure that all members who have spoken understand the Bill completely, although it is quite a simple one. It was conceived in an atmosphere of fear because moves were mooted concerning bigger local authorities.

We as a party do not want local authorities which are too big. We would prefer them to be smaller.

All of us have read in the media about the Perth City Council wanting to engulf whole local authorities round about its area. We have heard about the Fremantle City Council wanting to take in great tracts from other local authorities.

Mr. Fletcher: The honourable member is wrong.

Mr. Davies: That's that.

Mr. Jamieson: Sit down.

Mr. Davies: Start again.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: We have heard the news that the Nedlands City Council desires to take in a good deal of its neighbouring municipalities.

Mr. Bickerton: The honourable member is wrong again.

Mr. Jamieson: Sit down and start again.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The Nedlands municipality was itself one of those desired to be taken over by the Perth City Council. It is appreciated that all these matters would go before the Boundaries Commission.

Mr. Fletcher: That is so.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Then they would go to the Minister. I was trying to point out that these changes were mooted and there was a certain fear fermenting in local authority areas.

In this atmosphere the Minister for Local Government in reply to a question by the Leader of the Opposition revealed that the Local Government Boundaries Commission has been requested by the Government to review all metropolitan municipal boundaries. One does not need to be a great detective to understand the meaning inherent in that short piece of information. It is with a view to amalgamation.

Mr. Moiler: Isn't that a reasonable proposition—to look at the whole metropolitan area, etc., and carry out any amalgamation in an orderly fashion rather than haphazardly by one shire moving to absorb portion of another?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I was intending to refer to the speech of the member for Toodyay and I will still do so. At this juncture I desire to say I have no objection to one municipality wanting to cede an area to another municipality as long as the arrangement can be made amicably.

I am being sidetracked by the interjection, but if members read part of section 12 of the Act they will find that the Minister may, of his own volition, make adjustments to boundaries. His decision is final. He may consult with the Boundaries Commission but he may decide of his own volition. A Minister has many great powers under the Act.

The present Government has asked the Boundaries Commission to review the metropolitan municipal boundaries. However, I personally do not think, at this juncture, that the Government will proceed to implement the findings of the Boundaries Commission. I do not really believe that will occur, but I cannot be sure. I do not think the Government will do anything before the next election, but how can we, as the Opposition, work on that assumption? We must see the dangers which could possibly arise, not as the Government sees them, and not as the Minister who

represents the Minister for Local Government sees them. We do not want to have forced amalgamation.

Mr. Taylor: Was this your thought after the former Minister instituted an inquiry, and recommendations were made to put aside the decision as being worth-while information? Could not the same position apply with this Government?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: How do we know this will be so? I have to follow the interjection, Mr. Speaker. Can I have a denial from the Minister that it is the aim of the A.L.P.—not necessarily the aim of the Government, but the aim of either the Government or the A.L.P.—to have greater local government authorities? Will the Minister deny that? I do not think so.

Mr. Taylor: It is our aim to have better local government. I ask the member for Cottesloe to be careful about the use of the words, "greater" and "better"—not necessarily greater.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: All right. The Minister has asked me to watch what I say. I said, "greater" and he said, "better." Why not use the present boundaries to make the present local authorities better? Does "better" also have the connotation of "bigger"?

Mr. Taylor: It also has the connotation of "smaller." I refer to the Perth City Council and the City of Stirling.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: It is the connotation of bigger local governing authorities which we do not want. I say again: I do not think the Government will move on this because it is a hot potato in local government circles. I do not think the Government will move before the next State election. However, we as the Opposition cannot be satisfied with that thought, and so the decision was made to introduce the Bill now before us.

I will get onto political hypocrisy, which the member for Toodyay mentioned, a little later. The matter of the adjustment of boundaries is of real concern to all the people, and it is a matter in which we are all interested. Some members have described their views in different terms, and some of my colleagues in the Country Party have disagreed with me in what I want to achieve.

I agree the Bill is not perfect; indeed, what Bill is perfect when presented to this Chamber? I am not aware of any piece of legislation which has been perfect when presented to Parliament. Some faults are always found. We, as legislators, find it difficult to write our exact desires into legislation. However, where this difficulty exists regulation-making powers are included in the Bill concerned. Those powers give the Administration an opportunity to draft regulations which are submitted to Parliament. The regulations are laid on

the Table of the House for a statutory period so that members can determine whether or not they will become law. Most regulations do become law. Those which arouse the ire of members can be the subject of a motion for disallowance. This is a time-honoured tradition and no-one would want to change it. The same principle applies to this Bill.

While talking about this aspect I want to say that the adjustment of boundaries is not an easy matter. The Boundaries Commission can examine the position and then report to the Minister, but the Minister does not have to accept the recommendation. The Boundaries Commission does not always initiate inquiries. The Minister, under the provisions of section 12 (5) of the Act may, of his own volition, raise these points. That situation applies irrespective of the party to which the Minister belongs.

Mr. W. G. Young: That would not be very likely unless a certain area had a particular reason.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: May I remind the honourable member that he may have been talking to the Deputy Leader of the Country Party when I stated that the Minister for Local Government had requested the Boundaries Commission to review all metropolitan municipal boundaries. One does not have to be a detective to realise what the Government had in mind.

Mr. W. G. Young: The previous Minister set up an assessment committee to do that.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Yes, and I was concerned at that time.

Mr. W. G. Young: So was I.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: That was part of my answer to the member for Toodyay.

Mr. Taylor: The member for Cottesloe should have told us at the time. It is no good telling us now.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I had my say in camera.

Mr. Taylor: It is not on record for us to see.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Will I find all the Minister's comments on record when we are returned to office?

Sir David Brand: I would like to see a few of them.

Mr. Jamieson: They are all unanimous, like yours.

Sir David Brand: Much less unanimous than ours.

Mr. Jamieson: I would not say that.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: In a multiplicity of Acts, where it has been difficult to write the exact legislation into a Bill, provision has been made for regulations to be

laid on the Table of the House. That has been one of the reasons for the provision, anyway.

The same principle was adopted by this House recently in the case of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act Amendment Bill. That Bill was amended to ensure that before boundaries could be proclaimed for a water area the plans had to be drawn and laid on the Table of the House. The members of this House took that course because they knew the people were concerned about the boundaries, and they wanted Parliament to be in a position to look at those boundaries.

Some members have raised the argument that not many members of Parliament would know a great deal about matters affected by regulations. However, it is the responsibility of members to research these matters. They have to listen to experts from each side, and enter into the debate—if they so wish—before making a decision. That is our job, and our responsibility.

I have one other comment to make. The Minister and some other members, too, said that this is a reflection on the members of the Boundaries Commission. In fact, I think I heard the word "insult" used. Of course, this is not the position. Was any insult intended to the Water Board which, under the direction of the Minister, administers the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act when the Water Board, with its advisers, drew up an area for the protection of the underground water supply? We said in the Parliament that we wanted Parliament to look at this. We said, "Put it on paper and put it on the Table of the House."

Mr. Taylor: My words were, "A reflection on the capacity of the Boundaries Commission."

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I will use those words if the Minister prefers me to. However, other members used other words and outside the House I have heard the word "insult" used. Please let me proceed on these lines. I certainly did not say that the Minister said that. I would not try to put into his mouth words which he did not say.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: There is no reflection on the members of the Boundaries Commission and certainly no insult was intended. Is any insult intended when regulations made under the Mining Act are laid upon the Table of the House? This is simply a form of Government and indeed it is a time-honoured one.

Members have talked of unnecessary political interference and have said there is no need to bring politics into this. Already there is any amount of politics in the Local Government Act. As a matter of fact the politics in the Local Government

Act are very wide ranging. The powers of the Minister have been criticised very sharply by many people because very great powers exist.

As it is, the politics are on one side—the side of the Government. I am not referring only to a Labor Government but to any Government. One of the greatest criticisms we hear nowadays in regard to politics is that of the great power of executive government. Many say that this leads away from democratic representation of the people who are represented by members of Parliament.

Mr. Bickerton: There would not be any party politics in this Bill, would there?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The power of executive government has been claimed by many to be too great. The measure under discussion would cut down the power in a logical way, much the same as we did with the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act when making regulations for definitions of water areas.

Mr. Bickerton: There would not be any party politics in this Bill, would there? The honourable member is refusing to answer.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I was trying to complete a sentence so that it would read as sensibly as possible in *Hansard*. Now that I have finished, I ask the honourable member to repeat his interjection.

Mr. Bickerton: There would not be any party politics in this Bill, would there?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Well—

Mr. Bickerton: I merely wonder.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: There are certainly politics in it and so I suppose there must be party politics in it. I doubt whether we can talk about local government—or for that matter any legislation which comes before the House—without politics being an integral part of it. Very few pieces of legislation come into this category.

Mr. Bickerton: Before I gave my vote, I wanted to know whether there was any party politics in the measure.

Sir David Brand: I will listen to the answers given to questions asked of you for guidance.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: After that intellectual interlude, perhaps I can proceed. The thought has been expressed that bigger government is better government. I am not saying that this thought has been expressed necessarily in the House tonight, but certainly it has been implied by some. I will not accuse anybody, but outside this Chamber many people believe in this principle. We do not believe in it and, as a matter of fact, in all probability this is where politics come into it. I draw the attention of members to what happened in Sydney where there was a wholesale amalgamation many years ago.

Mr. Jamieson: It is strange that you select Sydney and do not refer to Queensland.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I am talking of Sydney and that is my prerogative.

Mr. Jamieson: It is a good prerogative.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: As a result of this, party politics are deeply ingrained in local government in Sydney, but we do not have that in Western Australia. People who vote Liberal, Country Party, and Labor are involved in local government.

Mr. Jamieson: What about the Adelaide City Council?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: These people do not represent parties but they represent wards in local government, and the party machine does not operate. In any event, there is more of that operating on the Labor side than on our side. Politics do not intrude very deeply.

Mr. Bickerton: Babes in the wood!

Mr. HUTCHINSON: They do not intrude deeply into the actions of councils in Western Australia at the moment despite the foolish laughter and interjections of the Minister for Works.

Mr. Jamieson: Tell us about the Adelaide City Council.

Mr. Rushton: What about the Perth City Council and the Labor Party endorsed candidate?

Mr. Jamieson: In the Adelaide City Council the Lord Mayor was endorsed.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: In order that the Minister for Works does not have the last say, I would like to reiterate that we are very wary of the "bigger is better" philosophy that is current in many parts of the State. This is the wrong philosophy and it is only one of the reasons for the introduction of this measure. Other reasons have been given by my Liberal Party colleagues and members of the Country Party. In our view this leads to a party political machine operating in local government and we do not believe that this is best for the people.

I rather regret that some of my colleagues in the Country Party have resolved to vote against the Bill. I appreciate it is not a perfect piece of legislation. They have their own decision to make and I respect that decision as I respect the decision of members on the other side of the House.

The member for Narrogin said that the Bill contains a peculiar suggestion in regard to tabling. I have already spoken about this. The principle underlying this Bill is one that has been well established in a multiplicity of Acts. The decision does not depend on the Boundaries Commission, as the member for Narrogin said, but on the Minister. I have talked about

section 12(5) where the Minister can originate his own ideas. The Government has decided to have a review of the boundaries of all local authorities in the metropolitan area. The end in view is the implementation of the "bigger is better" philosophy.

The Minister may ask the commission for advice on something he intends to do, but he does not have to accept that advice. The Minister is Executive Government and we all know what that means. Very frequently it comes down to Cabinet Government. If the Minister is strong enough he can get rather controversial matters through the Cabinet virtually of his own will.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Did you have any luck in that regard?

Mr. O'Neil: Not often.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I did not try to arrogate such powers to myself.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Lady luck has not smiled on me in that way too often.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I thought that the member for Narrogin, in part of his speech, was trying to make fun of the Parliament dealing with the responsibility of adjudicating on the Boundaries Commission recommendations and the Minister's recommendations to the Government. All that the Bill sets out to achieve is that the Boundaries Commission's recommendations and the Minister's recommendations to the Governor should be laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. W. A. Manning: The records would be in a peculiar situation when they did nothing about it.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I have already tried to say that the same thing applies to many other points, notably the matter I mentioned concerning the Northam area.

Mr. T. D. Evans: May I be permitted to introduce politics and say it is time?

Sir David Brand: Tell the Premier we are an hour over time.

Mr. O'Neil: We might get off early tomorrow afternoon.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: In my opinion, the member for Toodyay drew some strange and needlessly extravagant conclusions. He said the Bill highlighted the hypocrisy of the person introducing it—and he referred to me—because whilst I was in office during the term of the Brand Government no action was taken to amend the Act in the way in which I now seek to amend it. I fail to see that that is hypocrisy. I have already intimated to the House and to the honourable member that I worked as well as I could to avoid a situation whereby there would be any implementation of large-scale amalgamations.

Mr. Moller: I also said there were six amalgamations during the last five years of your Government's term. They were six occasions on which you could have done something about it.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Those amalgamations went forward without any bother. The honourable member does not understand the Bill. He does not understand what we are trying to get at. In any case, I fail to see that hypocrisy comes into it. It may be that I was remiss in not trying to do more to persuade the Minister for Local Government to introduce an amendment along these lines, but I worked in other ways.

Mr. Bickerton: You were not too successful.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I thought I was rather successful. Therefore, I say the honourable member did not quite comprehend what I was getting at or what the Bill sought to do. It does not do anything nasty to local government. It merely provides another forum whereby controversial boundary changes can be discussed in Parliament.

Mr. Moller: It seeks to nullify any constructive move this Government may wish to make.

Mr. O'Neill: What about the situation of regulations under thousands of Acts?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The honourable member still does not understand the situation.

Mr. O'Neill: I suggest he read the Interpretation Act to see how Parliament operates.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: If the honourable member read my speech he would see that I said from time to time it would be found that boundary changes were necessary. The Bill does not deny that very desirable feature. The Bill makes it mandatory that changes, like regulations, be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. Why should the Legislative Council not have the right to see them? Members of the Legislative Council are elected by adult franchise over a wider area than that represented by the honourable member. They should not be denied the right to make up their minds about the matter.

Mr. Fletcher: They are elected by fewer people.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I think the member for Merredin-Yilgarn spoke very honestly and fairly. He said, among other things, that the Labor Party believed in larger local government authorities. Later in his speech he tended to deny that fact, so I was left in some confusion. This emphasises our fears. We do not believe in the "bigger the better" philosophy.

I agree with the member for Mt. Marshall that the commission should be broadened by bringing in a larger number of commissioners, but I do not think that is quite enough. I think a referendum is possibly the final answer. If we could evolve an appropriate system, that would be a solution, as the member for Avon said. That point has already been discussed. Perhaps a radius might be drawn. This is something that should be looked at.

I am grateful to the House for hearing me out on this matter. I think it is an important subject, and although the legislation obviously will not be carried I hope it will demonstrate that there is tremendous feeling against wholesale amalgamation when local authorities do not wish to amalgamate.

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

Ayes—18

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. O'Connor
Sir David Brand	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Ridge
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Williams
Mr. McPharlin	Mr. E. L. Young
Mr. Mensaros	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Noes—26

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Jones
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Brown	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Bryce	Mr. McIver
Mr. Burke	Mr. Moller
Mr. Cook	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Davies	Mr. Stephens
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Taylor
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. A. E. Tonkin
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. Hartrey	Mr. Harman

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Sir Charles Court	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Nalder	Mr. Graham
Mr. Reid	Mr. May

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

ABORIGINES: WELFARE NEEDS

Inquiry by Select Committee: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 2nd August, on the following motion by Mr. W. A. Manning:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report on conditions and make recommendations regarding the Aboriginal people in Western Australia with particular reference to—

- health and physical needs;
- finance and housing;
- education of children;
- vocational training,

and that the inquiry and reports be dealt with in two sections—

- (1) the South West Land Division;
- (2) the remainder of the State.

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Minister for Education) [11.09 p.m.]: I take this opportunity to indicate the Government's views in relation to the motion moved by the member for Narrogin. I think it is desirable for me to reiterate the matters to which the honourable member wishes to give emphasis. The motion reads —

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report on conditions and make recommendations regarding the Aboriginal people in Western Australia with particular reference to—

- (a) health and physical needs;
- (b) finance and housing;
- (c) education of children;
- (d) vocational training,

and that the inquiry and reports be dealt with in two sections—

- (1) the South West Land Division;
- (2) the remainder of the State.

I say right at the outset that the Government agrees with the member for Narrogin. There is an imperative need for improvement in the general condition of Aborigines in this State. Indeed, the Government considers that some form of objective inquiry into the conditions affecting the Aborigines' wellbeing is desirable and timely. However—

Mr. Hutchinson: That is the key word.

Mr. T. D. EVANS:—at this particular point in time, when this Government has been in office for 18 months, any Select Committee appointed would necessarily have to report upon the administration of the former Government as well as the administration of this Government during its short term of office. As the member for Narrogin suggested, a Select Committee elected from members would be representative of the political thought assembled in this Chamber.

We believe that the dignity of this subject is such that we should not risk the intrusion of party politics to the extent that it would be possible for a majority or a minority report to be brought forward by a Select Committee. The Government feels that a more objective type of inquiry is desirable.

Furthermore, members will be aware that under the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act, statutory status was given

to the Aboriginal Advisory Council. The setting up of this council was the work of the former Minister, the member for Moore.

The council is composed entirely of Aboriginal members. It had been in existence by administrative act for some time and the legislative action recently taken by Parliament endorses the very important principle that the Aborigines themselves should be consulted and given a voice in matters that vitally affect them. At the most recent meeting of this council in April of this year a resolution, No. 40 of 1972, was passed in the following terms:—

The Council resolves to recommend to the Minister that in view of the rapidly deteriorating situation in regard to the health, education, and employment needs and general wellbeing of Aborigines in Western Australia, as in the remainder of the Commonwealth, it is time that a complete and comprehensive examination of this situation should be undertaken.

The Council asks that a Royal Commission be instructed to undertake such an examination in this State.

This resolution, coming from a body of 14 delegates chosen by Aborigines in all areas of Western Australia sitting as a council under its own elected chairman, must be recognised as expressing the responsible and representative view of Aborigines throughout the State.

In response to this request, and also having regard for the motion moved by the member for Narrogin, the Government has decided to undertake a comprehensive inquiry. It intends to appoint a Royal Commission to conduct this inquiry and to make recommendations to the Government, not necessarily in these terms but in similar terms: To examine the present conditions affecting the wellbeing of persons of Aboriginal descent in Western Australia with particular reference to their health, education, employment, and housing needs, and to formulate recommendations for implementation by the appropriate authorities.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Are you going to name the Commission?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: Not at this stage. That would be the prerogative of the Minister for Community Welfare.

It will be seen, therefore, that whilst there is no disagreement with the principle stated in the motion put forward by the member for Narrogin—that is, that there is a need for an inquiry into Aboriginal social conditions—the Government does not agree with the honourable member on the method of inquiry he seeks to adopt.

The Government has reached its decision on the form of inquiry for the following reasons:—

- (a) It has been requested by the Aborigines themselves.
- (b) The Government believes it is exercising a proper responsibility towards the necessity and the right of the Aborigines themselves to be consulted in such matters.

The Government appreciates the sincerity of the member for Narrogin in proposing the appointment of a Select Committee. Indeed, it is grateful to him for focusing attention on the matter at this time as it was already under consideration by the Government.

Members will be aware that before taking office the Government indicated that if elected it would merge the Native Welfare Department and the Child Welfare Department for the purpose of providing a department to render welfare to the total community where necessary. At the same time, special provision was to be retained for long-term planning for the welfare of Aborigines.

Parliament has endorsed this concept, and we now have the Community Welfare Act and the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act on the Statute book and in a very short time we hope this House will pass the Aboriginal Heritage Bill. The Aboriginal Heritage Bill may be regarded as companion legislation, although not necessarily part and parcel of the welfare concept.

Sir David Brand: How long will it be before you are able to appoint a commissioner?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: I trust that an early announcement will be made by the Premier or the Minister for Community Welfare.

For the reasons I have stated, I believe that the Government's decision to appoint a Royal Commission is more appropriate than the form of inquiry proposed by this motion. In the light of the Government's decision, I hope that the member for Narrogin will see fit at a later stage, or at this stage, to indicate that he is prepared to withdraw the motion. Because of its decision, the Government has no option but to oppose the motion now before the House.

Sir David Brand: The member for Narrogin may make a good commissioner.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. McPharlin.

House adjourned at 11.19 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 7th September, 1972

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

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

TRADES HALL BUILDING PROJECT

Government Guarantee

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT, to the Leader of the House:

What is the source of the loan amounting to \$1,900,000 which is to be guaranteed by the Government for redevelopment and building at the Trades Hall site in Beaufort Street?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied: The honourable member was good enough to give me notice of this question the answer to which is as follows:—

The information is of a private nature and therefore the question is inadmissible.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Private nature?

Point of Order

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The question asked by Mr. Willmott touches on a loan to assist the Trades Hall—the A.L.P.—to erect a building. The Government has admitted it will guarantee \$1,900,000 to this organisation. The guarantee, of course, imposes liability upon public funds to the extent of \$1,900,000 if a certain situation arises; in other words, if Trades Hall Inc. collapses and is unable to pay its debts.

In view of this fact, would you not agree with me, Sir, that the action of the Government has automatically made the information requested by Mr. Willmott a matter of public concern, and legitimately a subject on which the public should be informed, through this House, and specifically through the question asked by Mr. Willmott?

President's Ruling

The PRESIDENT: In my opinion the question asked by Mr. Willmott is indeed of public interest and especially of great interest to this House; but the manner in which it is answered is entirely in the hands of the Minister. If he does not give a satisfactory answer, it is not within my province to do anything about it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I gather that you, Mr. President, agree with my contention that it is a proper subject for a question.