

only recommend that those Ministers give earnest consideration, without delay, to despatching a Western Australian delegation to Portuguese Timor to investigate the trade possibilities.

MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [3.55 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

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

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough-Premier) [3.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 1st August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.57 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 1st August, 1967

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

QUESTIONS (9): ON NOTICE CARAVAN PARKS

Applications for Sites

1. The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) How many applications for approval of sites for caravan parks in the metropolitan area have been received by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority during the last 24 months?
- (2) How many of these applications have been approved?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) 21.
- (2) 9 approved.
4 awaiting determination.

LAND RESUMPTIONS

Principles of Valuation

2. The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Minister for Mines:

What are the principles of valuation adopted by land resumption officers of the Public Works Department when valuing land, property and improvements for—
(a) negotiation; and
(b) resumption?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Where an element of compulsory taking is present the basis for assessment of compensation adopted by the department is the same for negotiated purchases

and resumption under the Public Works Act and is set out in section 63 of that Act.

Broadly what has to be ascertained is the value of the land or the claimant's interest therein as at a specified date without regard to any increase in value occasioned by the proposed works. Interpretation of the term "value" is established as "value to the owner" in contradistinction to "value to the resuming authority." The valuation and assessment thus comprises the following components:—

- (i) market value (ascertained according to authenticated principles of valuation);
- (ii) any additional value to the owner if such can be established as not included in market value;
- (iii) disturbance, some items of which are specified in paragraph (aa) of section 63;
- (iv) loss in value of remaining adjoining lands by reason of severance and injurious affection;
- (v) an allowance not exceeding 10 per cent. of the assessment ascertained under (i) to (iv) for compulsory taking.

RENTAL AND PURCHASE HOMES

Waiting Period, Completions, and Outstanding Applications

3. The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What is the waiting period for the allocation of homes to—
(a) rental applicants;
(b) State Housing Act purchase homes;
(c) State Housing Act purchase homes where the applicants have their own land; and
(d) war service homes?
- (2) What number of homes were completed in each of the years 1964-65, 1965-66, and 1966-67, for—
(a) war service;
(b) purchase; and
(c) rental?
- (3) What number of applications are now outstanding for—
(a) war service homes;
(b) purchase; and
(c) rental homes?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) (a) Applications received for the Perth area in November, 1964, and for Fremantle and Midland in May, 1965, are receiving attention.

In country areas the applications receiving attention vary from district to district.

- (b) Applications received for the Perth area in January, 1965, for Fremantle in May, 1965, and for Midland in July, 1965, are receiving attention.
- (c) Finance is available immediately for eligible applicants with their own land.
- (d) There is no waiting period for finance under the War Service Homes Act other than time taken to process applications.

(2) (a) 1964-65—

Supervised or inspected by State Housing Commission	174
Other new homes financed	326
Total new homes	500

In addition, financial assistance was given for the acquisition of 518 other homes.

1965-66—

Supervised or inspected by State Housing Commission	118
Other new homes financed	223
Total new homes	341

In addition, financial assistance was given for the acquisition of 473 other homes.

1966-67—

Supervised or inspected by State Housing Commission	143
Other new homes financed	159
Total new homes	302

In addition, financial assistance was given for the acquisition of 434 other homes.

- (b) 1964-65—927.
1965-66—909.
1966-67—591.
- (c) 1964-65—652.
1965-66—1,044.
1966-67—667.
- (3) (a) No applications are regarded to be outstanding since all are processed immediately upon receipt. See answer to (1) (d).
- (b) 5,750.
- (c) Families 7,505.
Single units 1,291.

OIL AND IRON ORE

Royalties

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

Will the Minister inform the House of the total amount of revenue received to the 30th June, 1967, by way of royalties from—

- (a) oil production at Barrow Island;
- (b) iron ore projects?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The following total amount of revenue was received for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1967, by way of royalties from—

(a) Oil produced at Barrow Island— West Australian Petroleum Pty. Ltd.	\$62,760.50
(b) Iron ore projects— Dampier Mining Co. Ltd. (Cock- atoo and Koo- lan Islands) ...	\$434,677.95
Western Mining Corporation Ltd. (Koolan- ooka)	\$246,581.44
Mt. Goldsworthy Mining Ltd. (Mt. Golds- worthy)	\$717,882.42
Hammersley Iron Pty. Ltd. (Mt. Tom Price) ...	\$980,863.91
Combined Total	2,380,005.72
Combined Total	\$2,442,706.22

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Report

5. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Local Government:
- (1) When is it anticipated that the Local Government Assessment Committee will complete its investigations and report?
 - (2) Will this report be placed before Parliament?
 - (3) Who will decide the implementation of the report—Cabinet or Parliament?
 - (4) If Parliament is to consider this matter, will it be in this session?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) By early December.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) This will be dependent on the recommendations in the report.
- (4) No.

LAND

Soil Conservation and Salt Encroachment: Research

6. The Hon. J. HEITMAN asked the Minister for Mines:
- (1) For the years 1965-66, 1966-67, and 1967-68, what finance has

been made available for research into soil conservation and salt encroachment?

- (2) How many were employed, directly and indirectly, in this important work for the years 1965-66 and 1966-67?
- (3) Is there to be any increase in the number employed in 1967-68?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) For the years 1965-66 and 1966-67, total expenditure by the soil conservation and soil research sections of the soils division was \$142,135 and \$183,269. In 1967-68, expenditure is estimated at \$225,867.

Of these amounts it is estimated that approximately \$15,000, \$30,000, and \$35,000 were, or will be, spent on research activities related to salt encroachment and soil conservation.

- (1) At the 1st July, 1965, 14 graduates were employed in the soil conservation and soil research sections of the soils division. On the 30th June, 1967, the number was 18.

In both 1965-66 and 1966-67, two graduates were directly, and in 1966-67 one indirectly, engaged in salt land research. In 1966-67 one graduate was directly, and 10 extension officers indirectly, engaged in soil conservation investigations.

- (3) Allowance has been made in the 1967-68 staff estimates for an increase in the soils division staff of two graduates and four field assistants. In addition, an experienced research officer will return to duty after two years overseas, and action is being taken to advertise for two graduate positions and six field assistant positions which are current vacancies on existing establishments.

EDUCATION

Swimming Pools; Subsidy

7. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

Since the Education Act was amended in 1965 to provide for subsidies to private schools for the construction of swimming pools, what private schools have taken advantage of this provision, and what amounts were granted?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

St. Hilda's Church of England School for Girls, \$2,000; Clontarf Boys' Town, \$2,000.

STAMP DUTY AND ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Repeal of Legislation

8. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

Because the measures have caused steep rises in prices for foodstuffs and all essential commodities in rural areas, will the Premier take steps to repeal the Stamp Act, No. 67 of 1966, which imposed a tax on all sales of goods, and also the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, No. 69 of 1965, which increased haulage charges on all goods carried to and from remote areas of the State?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:
No.

BUILDERS REGISTRATION

Complaints to Board

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

- (1) For each of the years ended the 30th June, 1965, 1966, and 1967, what were the total number of complaints by home builders against registered builders submitted to the Builders' Registration Board?

- (2) What was the number in each year that were found by the board's inspector to be justified complaints?

- (3) Apart from instructions to rectify the complaints, in how many cases for each of the years mentioned did the board take further action against the registered builder concerned?

- (4) In view of the increasing number of young people having homes built, is it the intention of the board to increase publicity in regard to its existence and function?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) For the 12 months ended 30/6/65—400.

For the 12 months ended 30/6/66—450.

For the 12 months ended 30/6/67—443.

- (2) For the 12 months ended 30/6/65—311.

For the 12 months ended 30/6/66—353.

For the 12 months ended 30/6/67—423.

In 1966-67 phone complainants previously recorded as complaints were requested to advise if they had mentioned the problem to the

builder; if answered negatively, then this preliminary step was requested. It was found, therefore, that the complaints ultimately received were where a dispute had in fact arisen.

- (3) It is the board's policy to have remedial work carried out where appropriate, and thereby achieve satisfaction to the owners. Therefore on the nine cases where full board inquiries were carried out, one deregistration resulted.
- (4) The matter of increasing publicity in regard to the board's functions will be considered by the board at its next meeting.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Personal Explanation

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [5.3 p.m.]: I desire permission, Mr. President, to make a personal explanation.

The **PRESIDENT**: Permission granted.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: On the 26th October, 1966, during the course of my second reading speech on the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Bill, I read a letter from Stockholm dated the 20th October. The letter was written by Dr. Helge Berggren, Director of the Eastman Dental Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, and one of the most prominent dental men in that country. Among other items of information in this letter was a statement to the effect that fluoridation of Norrköping's water supply had been resumed. I regret to inform the House that this statement was due to a misunderstanding on the part of the informant and is incorrect. Although the matter, in itself, is not of major importance, the implications are such that some explanation is warranted.

The position, as I understand it, is that Norrköping is a small town in Sweden and the local council had been fluoridating the town's water supply for several years. The legality of this action was challenged and the Supreme Court ruled that it was not in accordance with existing Swedish law. Soon afterwards a special law was passed by the Swedish Parliament to remedy the situation and enable local authorities to fluoridate under certain conditions. Norrköping thereupon applied for and was granted permission to resume fluoridation. Dr. Berggren, therefore, understood that this had been done, but later discovered that the resumption had been held up, largely for engineering reasons.

None of the information available to me from Swedish sources implies in any way that the delay is due to a change of attitude towards fluoridation. I apologise for any misunderstanding I might have caused by reading the letter at the time.

The Hon. R. Thomson: You were adamant at the time.

The **PRESIDENT**: Order!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The letter was as I read it.

The **PRESIDENT**: Order!

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition), leave of absence for six consecutive sittings of the House granted to The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery (South Metropolitan) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by The Hon. N. E. Baxter, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings of the House granted to The Hon. A. R. Jones (West) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 27th July, on the following motion by The Hon. F. D. Willmott:—

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

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

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.6 p.m.]: Mr. President, it was Mr. Willmott who had the privilege of moving this motion, and he discharged the high honour which was given to him with credit and ability. He put forward his views on the progress made in the establishment of pine forests in this State in a forthright and capable manner. I congratulate him on the efficient manner in which he presented his speech.

The Governor made reference, with regret, to the passing of our colleague from another place, Mr. George Cornell. In Parliament, George Cornell probably will be remembered principally for his great wit. He will be remembered by his electors for the fine service he gave to them; but he will be remembered most of all by the people who, when conditions were not as they should have been, and the going in life was at its hardest, found the sincere friendship and ability of George Cornell available to them. Parliament has lost one of its best and greatest representatives.

When speaking to the Address-in-Reply last year I took the opportunity to mention that I had hopes the Government would soon institute a system of two sessions of Parliament in each year. The Premier, in a reported article published some time later, appeared to treat the suggestion rather lightly, and indicated that he did not give very much credit for the sincerity with which the argument had been put forward.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is not right. He did not treat it lightly.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The impression I gained was on that basis.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think you gathered the wrong impression.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The issue is becoming stronger as time goes on. I noticed quite recently a recommendation from a Country Party conference was that this matter be given serious consideration by the Government. Of course, we of the Labor Party still believe in the system of two sessions of Parliament each year.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You didn't believe in it when your party was in office.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: It is a long time since we were in Government and a good many people who were in Government at that time were not able to do very much. I warn the Minister not to be too confident.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It will be a long time yet before you are back in office.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: However, my thoughts on the two sessions are at least the same as they were last year.

Two of the most pressing problems in this State are the scarcity of building blocks and the difficult housing situation. Referring to land, I propose to read some extracts from articles which have appeared in the Press over the last two years. On the 20th March, 1965, an article appeared in the *Weekend News* which reads as follows:—

We're Stricken With Land Fever

Here's a gloomy example of "progress." In W.A., land speculation has put the dream of a reasonable home in a reasonable suburb beyond the reach of most young couples struggling to establish themselves.

A 17-year-old office boy confident that he was buying two blocks of land that would cost him £1,500—if he kept them long enough to pay for them. A small businessman bought another piece of land . . . for £8,000, and a syndicate of land developers closed a deal for £50,000

All of them—and thousands of other West Australians—were caught up in the greatest epidemic of land fever ever to sweep Perth.

The fever has made many people rich, but it was also described by a leading town planning authority this week, as "a grave social and economic problem." It has caused an artificial housing shortage which for many people is as severe as that which occurred after the World War.

The fever has sent the price of land in many suburbs up by 50 per cent in the past two years.

It has altered the economics of home ownership so much that many young couples must despair of living in their own homes in an average suburb of their choice.

Consider the dilemma of a couple who earn £26 a week—slightly above average wages, and beyond the limit at which they could buy or rent a home from the State Housing Commission.

Two years ago they could have bought an acceptable block of land in Morley, a suburb of no pretensions at all, for £600-£700, or less than six months wages.

Today the same block would cost about £1,000, according to real estate agents with experience of the area.

In nearby Dianella the price rise is even more discouraging.

Two years ago blocks were also about £700, but today our young couple on £26 a week would have to spend nearly the equivalent of a year's wages to buy a block . . . £1,500-£1,600.

An article appeared in *The West Australian* on the 5th April, 1965, under the heading "Urban Land Prices and Speculation." Part of it reads as follows:—

"God's air is available to all," said the young married man. "You can bathe for nothing in God's ocean."

"But you're up to your eye-brows if you try to get hold of a piece of God's land."

Unfortunately, neither God nor his earthly representatives hold the title deeds to the kind of land in the Perth metropolitan region wanted by young marrieds.

Many people—including some town-planning authorities—contend that much of it is under the control of mammon. Speculation on residential blocks is forcing up prices, they say.

Is land really too dear?

Finding a yardstick for measuring the price of land against other factors in the economy is difficult, if not impossible.

Probably the most reliable measure is to consider what percentage land represents in the total cost of a home; and here only generalisations are possible.

In pre-World War days, the percentage was something like 10. Today it

is approaching 30 (20 per cent. is accepted by home-builders as the desirable maximum figure).

On this basis, a bigger proportion of a young man's savings must go into land. It takes him longer to save for his place in the sun.

Or he might have to be satisfied with cheaper land in a new area.

If he pays a high price for land in an area where homes are expensive, he feels he has to build an expensive home on his block—otherwise he will never realise the true value of his land if he has to sell.

At about that time we had a visitor to this State, Mr. G. M. Glaskin, a very prominent writer. He said, under the heading "Writer Says Land Values Too High"—

A sandhill on City Beach is becoming more expensive than a villa on Spain's Costa Brava, according to W.A. writer G. M. Glaskin.

Speaking on the Channel 7 programme "Viewpoint" last night he said soaring land and building values were the most noticeable change in Perth since he was last here four years ago.

"I wonder how young couples wanting to marry can pay these prices," he said.

"If they want cheaper land they have to go so far out of town that it costs them a fortune in fares."

An alarming trend was developing in 1965, and this trend had serious consequences for the people who were being forced to buy land upon which to build homes. That trend has developed still further, as we can see from an article in *The West Australian* of the 7th April, this year, under the heading "City Beach Block Goes Up \$2,000 In a Day." That article reads—

A land speculator who bought a City Beach block at the Perth City Council's land sale last Saturday, put it up for sale the next day, after adding \$2,000 to the purchase price.

Mr. R. Moore, a salesman for a Scarborough estate agency which is selling the block, said the owner was asking \$10,700.

He had bought the $\frac{1}{4}$ -acre corner block for \$8,700 at the auction on Saturday as an investment.

Further on the article states—

"The owner of the block was advised that he would be wise to put up the block for sale on Sunday because there had been so many people at the auction and interest was high," Mr. Moore said.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It would be interesting to know whether the block was sold.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: It would be interesting to know who purchased it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You can find that out if it was sold.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Under the heading, "Planners Propose Move to Beat Speculators," *The West Australian* had this to say on the 22nd April, this year—

The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority is considering the release of thousands of acres of deferred urban land in the metropolitan area because of the amount of zoned residential land being held by speculators.

The M.R.P.A. chief planner, Dr. David Carr, said yesterday that there was an urgent need for housing.

If land could be developed with essential services, it would be released.

Industrial development and increased migration had accelerated the need for housing far beyond the 1955 estimate of the growth of the metropolitan area.

Houses had to be built and if the government policy allowed already zoned residential land to be held undeveloped, other land within the scheme had to be provided.

If genuine builders and the owners of deferred urban land presented a workable plan of development there was a chance of the land being released.

The government should consider some action to force the development of residential land, Dr. Carr said. A surtax on the vacant land might help.

Further on the article had this to say—

The authority has agreed to open 600 acres of deferred urban land at Sorrento and the Canning Shire Council is negotiating for the release of more than 1,000 acres in Canning Vale.

Armada wants land re-classified for a complex of about 1,000 houses, a shopping centre, schools and high-density flats and patio-type buildings.

Two areas in Balcatta, totalling 185 acres, adjoining a proposed industrial area have been rezoned from deferred urban.

Again, on the 24th April, under the heading "Few Young People at Land Auction," *The West Australian* had this to say—

Auctioneers had prepared seats for 400 people at the sale of 26 building blocks in Wembley Downs on Saturday morning, but more than 600 people arrived. They filled an open marquee and stood six-deep around the sides.

However, there were few young people in the crowd, which bid briskly to complete the sale within an hour.

The blocks on gently sloping or level ground and covered with jarrah trees and blackboys, sold for an average

price of \$7,715—more than \$2,000 above the average upset price for each quarter-acre block.

The highest price paid was \$8,700 and the lowest \$6,900.

The article goes on to state—

Bidding, which was conducted in pounds and not in decimal currency, was rapid.

Clusters of bids were made for the upset prices, but these were quickly thinned out to the few buyers who were prepared to pay more than \$6,000 or \$7,000.

Seven of the blocks were bought by a building company.

A spokesman for the company said homes would be built on the blocks and would cost between \$17,000 and \$19,000.

Under the heading "City Beach Auction: Public Pays \$447,700 For 54 Lots," *The West Australian* had this to say on the 3rd April—

The Perth City Council realised \$447,700 on Saturday when it rationed out a small parcel of ten acres at City Beach.

About 800 people streamed on to the site for the auction of 54 blocks which averaged \$8,291—an increase \$1,158 on a similar sale a year ago.

Sales of City Beach and Floreat Park land have brought the council \$5,201,206 during the past 38 years.

If the council maintains its present rate of rationing out its endowment land and prices keep going up, it stands to gain another \$10,000,000 in the next 15 years.

The article continues—

Children frolicked in the sand as hopeful parents took up positions in and round the tent to make a bid. Land and building speculators were there as well, one buying five blocks, another five or six and a third three sites.

Many buyers of single blocks said that they were genuine home builders. But having to pay so much for a block meant that they would have to wait, in some cases years, to save enough to build.

Further down it states—

Obviously many present considered the prices too high. There were several requests to start the bidding at lower figures and a number of times the auctioneer was urged to bring the hammer down instead of looking for more bids.

The lowest price of \$6,400 followed laughter and confusion when a person made a bid and then called out: "April fool."

Such was the demand for the land that when a block was auctioned a second time because the first buyer could not finance it, the price went up \$200. At this first auction the bidding reached \$8,900 and at the second it went to \$9,100.

On the 28th June, under the heading "Scarcity of Land Blamed on Planners," *The West Australian* had this to say—

Current town-planning practices were responsible for the scarcity of housing blocks in Perth, Mr. C. G. Dudley, federal president of the Real Estate and Stock Institute of Australia, said yesterday.

He admitted there was a scarcity of housing blocks. To continue—

He said the block shortage in desirable western and northern suburbs had been created through existing zoning regulations.

So long as desirable areas remained vacant in these localities, demand would continue to keep prices high for what was available.

"If the supply can meet the demand, prices will remain at a reasonable level," he said.

Mr. Dudley was commenting on motions expressing concern at high land prices which will be put to the annual State conference of the Liberal Party next week.

The article continues—

He gave two other reasons for the current land prices:

Most land was sold by auction and it was an auctioneer's legal and ethical duty to secure the highest price. The level of prices was entirely in the public's hands and they paid what they considered the land was worth to them. The same trading law covered the purchase of most other goods.

The greater demand for land in the western and northern suburbs, rather than areas south-east of the city.

Mr. Dudley said there were fairly big areas of crown land west and north of Perth. Any move to subdivide and develop this land would assist in satisfying public demand.

He was aware that there were vacant lots, particularly to the south-east of the city, but there was little demand for this land. It was mostly flat and uninteresting, parts were bare of trees, and the water table in many places was high.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Apparently they all want to live at City Beach.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: In *The West Australian* of the 28th July there was a reference to the Women's Service Guilds seeking an inquiry on high land prices

and, in this regard, *The West Australian* had this to say—

The Women's Service Guilds of W.A. will ask the State Government to appoint a select committee to inquire into conditions relating to land subdivision, sale and purchase.

The article went on—

The high cost of home sites could be responsible for the fall in the birth-rate and the rise in divorces.

In addition there was a series of articles dealing basically with the sharp increase in the cost of land and this high cost, in turn, must have an effect on the price of homes. There is a close relationship between those two aspects, and on the 19th February, this year, the Leader of the State Opposition (The Hon. J. T. Tonkin) had this to say—

The State's housing shortage is worse now than at any time since 1953, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Tonkin, claimed yesterday.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: So it is.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The article went on to state—

"The housing position is worse than 14 years ago," he said.

"Private investors have almost ceased to build family homes for letting, and are concentrating on flats for childless couples.

The resulting shortage is being aggravated by the increasing number of migrant families, and bears hardest on the neediest section of the population."

Mr. Tonkin went on to say—

The only practical way to improve the housing situation is for the Government to make more money available for S.H.C. homes, and for the Commission to sell blocks at reasonable prices.

In the *Weekend News* of the 4th March, this year, under the heading of "Housing Crisis Hits W.A. Families," we find the following:—

An acute housing shortage is developing in Perth, and is likely to get worse, according to industry leaders.

Already it has meant that:

For families seeking rental homes, rents have risen sharply, few landlords will accept families with children and waiting lists with the State Housing Commission have lengthened rapidly.

For families seeking homes to buy, building costs are climbing sharply, land prices are rising again and the gap between deposits and first mortgages is widening.

The shortage is hitting hardest at low-income families, particularly migrants, who cannot afford the \$16-\$20 a

week rents demanded—even if the houses are offered when there are children.

This week a migrant family of six was re-united when a woman offered them accommodation, but until then the father had been living in a hostel for men, the mother in another for women, two older children were in a Child Welfare Department receiving home and the two younger in Ngai-a.

A little further on the article states—

Waiting time for a rental home near Perth is now 28 months, compared with 23 months six months ago and 20 months 18 months ago.

For purchase homes the waiting time is two years, an increase of two months in the past six, and of 12 months in the past 18.

These waiting times are only approximate, and vary from suburb to suburb.

Then, on the 16th March, this year, the *Daily News*, under an editorial headed "Government has failed," had this to say—

If energetic development of the State is the feather in the cap of the W.A. Government, then surely housing marks its greatest failure.

For most people there are few things more basic to their family needs than the family home. For most, no purchase or business arrangement throughout their lives will exceed the importance of buying a house.

So in many ways it is fair to judge the welfare of this State in terms of such things as housing, not just by general economic development.

By this test W.A. is not the golden land it appears to be by other tests. Indeed, there is a considerable amount of misery caused by lack of wise planning on housing and housing sites.

If W.A. has become a land speculators' paradise this can only be at the expense of most people.

It is not good enough for Housing Minister O'Neil to say that he needs \$5,000,000 more of Commonwealth money a year for his own building activities. Quite apart from all this, the Government has failed over the years to check the appalling cost of land in this city.

The State Housing Commission does not function in a way which would provide effective competition for speculators and so check prices.

This very failure of the Government causes the Commission to come under even greater pressure for homes—pressure from people who would otherwise build privately.

Let the Government tackle the housing problem with the fervour it has devoted to general development

and the sorry mess of land speculation and housing shortages could soon be defeated.

In *The West Australian* of the 27th April we find the following:—

Canberra Is Remote From Housing Needs

Whether Western Australia has a housing problem or a housing crisis depends very much on the point of view.

To Housing Minister O'Neil, looking at the broad picture, the State's expansion and the big increase in migration have created a problem. To families who cannot get proper housing, it is a real and demoralising crisis.

The State government's record is reasonably good on paper. The housing commission has provided 27.8 per cent. of W.A. housing needs compared with the national average of 19 per cent. government homes.

However, the significant point of Mr. O'Neil's address to the Canning division of the Liberal and Country League is his statement that the housing commission is, to a degree, an instrument of social welfare.

This is an elementary truth to which the Commonwealth government has paid only lip service. As virtually the only provider of low-cost rent and purchase housing, the S.H.C. is the main buffer against hardship arising from expansion policies from which the Commonwealth is the main beneficiary.

Yet Canberra appears to regard housing finance primarily as an economic weapon, injecting money to stimulate employment in the building industry or sitting pat when the economy is booming and the need for housing is greatest.

In Western Australia, the Federal government has not even attempted to maintain the status quo. There has been no compensation for a drop of nearly 25 per cent. in war service allocations to W.A. in the past five years. However logical the tapering-off may be, it represents a serious decline in the State's total housing effort.

Despite Mr. O'Neil's statement that the amount of money available to the S.H.C. has increased each year, the commission's capital income last year was only 9.6 per cent. higher than it was five years ago, while the government's total loan raisings had increased by 22.9 per cent.

Government housing is therefore losing ground to other public works and the main reason is Canberra's refusal to approach the problem on the basis of community need.

The argument that the State is entitled to cut back on other development and use as much of its loan money

Early in April we had the situation of one of the churches coming out with an article stating that because of the crisis in housing for migrants it was proposing to restrict sponsorship of such migrants. The article, which appeared in *The West Australian*, was dated the 6th April, 1967, and reads as follows:—

The Anglican Church in W.A. will not sponsor any more British migrant families to the State till there is housing for them, or unless they can afford to stay in a guesthouse.

The Church's migration chaplain, the Rev. Michael Rowdon, said yesterday that the housing problem was critical and the authorities should stem the flow of migrants till the situation eased.

The migrant hostels were full, he claimed.

"We are inviting people to come here with fantastic advertisements in English newspapers about the opportunities in W.A., but we haven't the humanity to see that they have housing," Mr. Rowdon said.

He called for co-operation between the migration authorities and the State Housing Commission.

"We want more migrants. We want more housing. But there does not seem to be any overall policy between these two departments to work out a programme to cope with the situation."

S.H.C. arrangements for people with big families were inadequate.

There were many families with up to six children which needed accommodation. Church-sponsored families were interviewed in England and nominated only if members of the family were likely to make good migrants.

Dissatisfaction had been expressed by the migrant community at Medina.

The houses were adequate if parents arrived with three or four children who were growing up. But if they were young children and more came, the houses were too small.

Some families, though they already had a full house, had opened their homes to other migrant families till the newcomers could find a place.

Again, on the 6th April, the following appeared in *The West Australian*:—

The Methodist migration chaplain, the Rev. Lloyd Semple, said the accommodation problem had never been as critical as it was now.

"If the problem is not eased we shall be more reticent about accepting sponsorship for migrants," he said.

as it likes for housing is specious. It is one of the big weaknesses of Commonwealth-State finance in Australia that any State faced with the extraordinary demands of sudden development is automatically put in the position of robbing Peter to pay Paul.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Have you had a look for yourself at the comparable construction tables over the last 10 years?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The construction tables are not very impressive if compared with the growth of population. These tables can be misleading, in my opinion, when considering the statistical growth of house building and the greater amounts of money that can be spent on this work.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That means you have had a look at them.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The difficulty in this issue is that we tend too much towards the statistical rather than the factual side. If it is true that more and more applications are building up with the State Housing Commission—and this is quite true; it is not denied—and if it be true that the waiting time for people to get houses is becoming greater, and that the cost of land is continuing to rise, as it is, then we have a problem which is common and which must be faced.

I was very disappointed to find that in the Speech delivered last Thursday there was only the most meagre statement made on the question of land, under the heading of "Development." It was said—

The keen demand for Crown land has continued during the past year, when more than 4,000 applications were received for more than 1,000,000 acres released for selection.

This did not deal with the problem I have been talking about this afternoon, which relates to housing needs in the metropolitan area; housing needs for individuals throughout the State. The same thing was said with regard to Government action in connection with homes. We were given the building figure of the State Housing Commission, but beyond that very little information was supplied.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You will no doubt tell us the remedy before you sit down.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Keeping to the subject matter before us, and the points I have mentioned—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do not tell me my interjection is not on the subject matter.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The problems of the availability of land at a reasonable price and home purchase are closely related. It appears to me that in the Governor's Speech the Government has not indicated any positive action with reference to these problems.

Amendment to Motion

Whilst I support, in principle, the motion moved by Mr. Willmott, I feel an addendum to the motion has become necessary; and I therefore move—

That the following paragraph be added to the motion:—

However, it is our duty to inform Your Excellency that we, the members of the Legislative Council, are very much concerned that the Government has allowed a crisis in housing to develop and has made no serious endeavours to prevent the price of land from continuing to rise, with the result that many families both indigenous and migrant are obliged to pay extortionate rents and suffer much hardship and prospective home-builders are being frustrated.

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

House adjourned at 5.43 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 1st August, 1967

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

CONDOLENCE

The Late Mr. G. M. Cornell, M.L.A.: Motion

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [4.32 p.m.]: I move—

That this House desires to place on its records its profound sense of the loss sustained in the passing of the late Mr. George Meredith Cornell, a member of this House, and that an expression of the sincere sympathy of members be conveyed to his widow and family by Mr. Speaker.

It is unnecessary for me to say that we were all very shocked at the untimely death of the late member for Mt. Marshall, Mr. George Cornell. Mr. Cornell had represented the electorate of Mt. Marshall for some 19 years in which time he established himself so firmly that, so far as I am aware, he was never opposed. Anyone who travelled through that electorate would quickly appreciate the fact that George Cornell was a highly respected and well-supported member of the Legislative Assembly. We know he attended to the duties of his electorate in a conscientious manner and was ever-ready to assist and give advice whenever it was requested.