

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 8th August, 1967

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

## QUESTIONS (11): ON NOTICE

### PILBARA AND KIMBERLEY STATISTICAL DIVISIONS "Per Capita" Production, and Government Expenditure

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

- (1) What was the value of production from various sources in each of the Pilbara and Kimberley Statistical Divisions for the year ended the 30th June, 1967?
- (2) What was the *per capita* value of production in each division?
- (3) On what population figure are the *per capita* values calculated?
- (4) Excluding Main Roads Department expenditure, what amounts were spent from—
  - (a) Consolidated Revenue Fund;
  - (b) Loan funds;
 in each division?
- (5) What was the amount of expenditure *per capita* in each division?

### Expenditure on Native Welfare

- (6) What was the amount in each division of Native Welfare Department expenditure?
- (7) Is the aboriginal population included in the population figures used to calculate *per capita* expenditure?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The Deputy Commonwealth Statistician advises that complete statistics of value of production are not available by statistical divisions and that insufficient information exists on values of individual items of production in these areas to enable reliable estimates to be made based on aggregate figures of quantities produced.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).
- (4) The Government's accounts segregate expenditure in the north-west which refers to the whole of the State north of the 26th degree of latitude and embraces the statistical divisions of Kimberley, Pilbara, and north-west and part of the central statistical division. No finer subdivision is available nor is it practicable.
- (5) to (7) Answered by (4).

## BUILDERS' REGISTRATION

### Complaints to Board, and Inspectors Employed

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

With reference to my question on the 1st August, 1967, relating to the number of justified complaints received by the Builders' Registration Board for each of the three years ended the 30th June, 1965, 1966, and 1967, against registered builders, will the Minister advise—

- (a) On how many occasions was the same builder involved—
  - (i) two times only;
  - (ii) three times only; and
  - (iii) more than three times?
- (b) How many inspectors are employed by the board?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) (i) On 63 occasions was the same builder complained against twice.
- (ii) On 25 occasions was the same builder complained against three times.
- (iii) On 72 occasions was the same builder complained against more than three times.
- (b) Two inspectors are employed full time by the board.

## ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

### Method of Collection from Interstate Hauliers

3. The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Can the Minister advise the House if there has been an improvement this year in the collection of road maintenance tax from interstate hauliers?
- (2) Is the present method considered satisfactory?
- (3) If not, is a different plan envisaged?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Payments made by interstate hauliers for the last three months totalled \$21,292, compared with \$31,851 for the same period last year.
- The reduction is due to a decrease in the number of interstate operators coming into Western Australia. No doubt the launching of a large number of prosecutions against interstate hauliers for failure to pay charges has acted as a deterrent to those who have previously been using our roads without contributing to their upkeep.

- (2) The present method of collecting road maintenance contributions was adopted in eastern States after careful consideration of High Court judgments as the most practicable and satisfactory method to avoid conflict with section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. The same system operates in Western Australia with the exception that it applies to vehicles exceeding 8 tons load capacity instead of 4 tons as in the Eastern States.
- (3) No.

### OIL AND IRON ORE

#### Royalties

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

What are the respective quantities of oil and iron ore which produced the royalties quoted by the Minister in reply to a question on Tuesday, the 1st August, 1967?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The quantities of oil and iron ore which produced the royalties quoted in reply to a question on Tuesday, the 1st August, 1967, are as follows:—

- (a) Oil produced at Barrow Island—502,084 barrels.

- (b) Iron Ore Projects:

Dampier Mining Co. Ltd.  
(Cockatoo and Koolan)  
—2,756,507 tons.

Western Mining Corp.  
Ltd. (Koolanooka)—  
554,728 tons.

Mt. Goldsworthy Mining  
Ltd. (Mt. Goldsworthy)  
—1,497,266 tons.

Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.  
(Mt. Tom Price)—  
1,583,402 tons.

### VENEREAL DISEASES

#### Incidence and Notifications

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

Pursuant to the Health (Venereal Diseases) Regulations, 1943, made under the Health Act, 1911-1942, will the Minister inform the House how many—

- (a) males; and  
(b) females

for each of the previous five years have been notified and dealt with as follows:—

- (i) Request for medical certificate—form (1);  
(ii) Warrant for compulsory examination—form (2);  
(iii) Warrant for apprehension and detention of person suffering from venereal disease—form (3);

- (iv) Warrant for apprehension and detention of person suffering from venereal disease—form (4);

- (v) Warrant for (apprehension and) further detention of person suffering from venereal disease—form (5)?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

It is not possible to provide all the information which the honourable member seeks, as the relevant records prior to 1966 have been destroyed. Records for 1966 and 1967 (to the 31st July) disclose the following:—

- (i) Requests for medical certificate (form No. 1):

1966: 3 males and 13 females.

1967 (to the 31st July): 2 males and 11 females.

(Note.—During this combined period an additional 31 notifications (comprising 28 males and 3 females) were received but could not be dealt with because of incomplete information, false addresses, etc.)

- (ii) to (v) Warrants, etc.):

1966—Nil.

1967 (to the 31st July):—  
Nil.

6. *This question was postponed.*

### SUPERPHOSPHATE

#### Mixing, Texture, and Delivery

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

- (1) What method is used to mix trace elements with superphosphate at C.S.B.P. works at Geraldton?

- (2) Is the lack of uniformity in the texture of the superphosphate, which varies from a fine powder to pebble size, peculiar to the C.S.B.P. works at Geraldton?

- (3) What steps have been taken to improve the uniformity of the texture of superphosphate at all works?

- (4) As it is thought that the rate and method of delivery of superphosphate is inadequate for the size of the districts being served, what steps are being taken to improve the method so that both rail and road transport can be loaded with either bulk or bagged superphosphate at the same time?

- (5) Is there any guarantee that early deliveries of superphosphate will not set hard when stored?

- (6) Will local committees be set up at each superphosphate works to handle delivery releases for the 1967-68 plan of deliveries?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Trace elements are added through calibrated feeders to the superphosphate during process or on despatch.
- (2) Care is taken at all works to produce a product which has a range of particle sizes most suitable for both top dressing and drilling.
- (3) Technical control and research continue at each works towards providing the best possible product to meet the needs of the district's farmers.
- (4) Over recent years substantial equipment to despatch the increased tonnage in bag and bulk has been added. Last year a new bulk loading conveyor and new adjustable bag loading chutes for road trucks were provided at Geraldton. This year further improvements to meet the expected increase in bulk deliveries will be made.
- (5) In expectation of increased early deliveries, superphosphate will be available which should be a free running product at time of use.
- (6) The operation of the distribution plan is not expected to require the establishment of local committees.

#### NOISE IN INDUSTRY

##### *Survey on Goldfields*

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

In reference to the occupational noise and hearing loss survey being conducted on the Goldfields—

- (a) How many men have had audiometry since the commencement of the survey to date?
- (b) How many were found to have a hearing loss due to noise?
- (c) To what places, and on how many occasions, did the Perth team visit?
- (d) How much time is the nursing sister able to devote to the survey?
- (e) When is it anticipated that the hearing conservation programme will be complete, involving all the men for the first time?
- (f) What figures are available showing decibel exposure on underground and surface employees in their various occupational classifications?
- (g) Are the men given the result of their audiogram for their particular information?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (a) 889, to the 30th December, 1966.
- (b) 505 of 819 men examined have a noise-induced hearing-loss pattern audiogram.
- (c) Kalgoorlie - Boulder and Norseman: 13.
- (d) Two half-days per week and is available at all times for consultation.
- (e) All men who volunteered have been examined and this phase of the programme is complete.
- (f) Noise levels, surface and underground, in the neighbourhood of machines and machinery to which the different occupational groups are exposed are available, together with an appreciation of their day to day exposures.
- (g) No. Where indicated after examination or on request a report is sent to his own doctor.

#### COURTHOUSES

##### *Bridgetown: Site and New Building*

9. The Hon. V. J. FERRY asked the Minister for Justice:

- (1) What progress has been made towards the securing of a suitable site for a new courthouse in Bridgetown?
- (2) Is it possible to say when this new courthouse may be built?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Negotiations for the acquisition of land on the corner of Steere Street and Spencer Street, Bridgetown, are proceeding. It is expected that the negotiations will be finalised at an early date.
- (2) Provision has been made in the draft programme of works for the current financial year for the building of a new courthouse, police station and quarters, but as no allocation of loan funds has yet been made for works of this nature, it is not possible at present to say when the work will be undertaken.

#### NOISE IN INDUSTRY

##### *Survey amongst Farmers*

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

- (1) Is it a fact that a hearing survey will be made among farmers by a team consisting of ear, nose, and throat specialists, to ascertain the cause of their deafness?

- (2) If so, when will it commence?  
 (3) Will the Minister give early priority to farmers in the Salmon Gums district who have shown a considerable interest in the subject and have requested a survey?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

(1) No.

The answer to (1) being "No," (2) and (3) do not require an answer.

### WATER SUPPLIES

*Bullfinch and Campion: Provision*

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

With reference to water requirements between Bullfinch and Campion—

- (a) Is there a possibility of any reticulated supplies to a portion of the area being provided for during the financial year 1967-68; and  
 (b) If the answer to (a) is "Yes," how much money will be spent, and what distance and diameter of pipeline will be constructed?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) There are no proposals to reticulate farmlands in the Bullfinch - Campion district during the 1967-1968 financial year.  
 (b) Answered by (a).

### QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

#### MARKETING OF POTATOES ACT

##### *Contraventions*

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH (Minister for Justice): I have here the answer to question No. 1 asked by The Hon. V. J. Ferry on the 2nd August. Have I your permission, Mr. President, to read it?

The PRESIDENT: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The questions and answers are as follows:—

##### Questions

- (1) How many convictions have been obtained over the period the 1st January to the 31st July, 1967, against persons contravening the provisions of the Marketing of Potatoes Act?  
 (2) What has been the nature of these offences?  
 (3) How many legal actions are pending against alleged offences under the Act?  
 (4) What is the nature of the alleged offences?

##### Replies

- (1) 46.  
 (2) 35 cases for taking delivery other than through the board.  
     6 cases for obstructing officers of the board.  
     5 cases for planting potatoes without a licence.  
 (3) 46.  
 (4) 6 cases for taking delivery other than through the board.  
     3 cases for obstructing officers of the board.  
     37 cases for planting potatoes without a licence.

### POTATOES

#### *Licenses and Acreages*

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH (Minister for Mines): I have here the answer to question No. 7 asked by The Hon. V. J. Ferry on the 2nd August. Have I your permission, Mr. President, to read it?

The PRESIDENT: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The questions and answers are as follows:—

##### Questions

- (1) What were the totals of increased licenses granted to potato growers by the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board for each of the potato-growing districts for the 12 months period ended the 30th June, 1967?  
 (2) During this period—  
     (a) how many established growers were granted increased acreages;  
     (b) how many new growers were granted licenses; and  
     (c) what were the total acreages of cancelled growers' licenses for each district?

##### Replies

- (1) Manjimup—60 acres.  
     Metropolitan—2 acres.  
 (2) (a) 170.  
     (b) 11. In addition, 11 transfers were approved by the board.  
     (c) The total acreages in respect to cancelled licences for each district are as follows:—

|              | acres |
|--------------|-------|
| Metropolitan | 1     |
| Dardanup     | 36    |
| Marybrook    | 13    |
| Benger       | 11    |
| Donnybrook   | 8     |

In addition to the foregoing, licences lapsed in relation to 216 acres.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY***Amendment to Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 1st August, 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.

*To which The Hon. W. F. Willesee had moved an amendment—*

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.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [4.58 p.m.]: This Government came into office in 1959. Since that time the Labor Party in this House has sought to amend the Address-in-Reply on seven different occasions. They were on the 1st July, 1959, the 2nd August, 1960, and the 16th August, 1960. A further attempt was made on the 23rd August in that same year, 1960. In 1961 an amendment was sought on the 8th August. Then there was a long lapse of five years until the 4th August, 1966, and now we have the motion which is before us at the present time.

On each of these occasions the subject matter of the amendment has sought to add words to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. It has therefore sought to give His Excellency a message of censure of the Government.

In the first place it is most interesting to note that when amendments to the Address-in-Reply have been moved on previous occasions no mention has ever been made in the subject matter of land or housing. So one can only assume that up to the present the Labor Party has never been aware of a crisis in housing and, obviously, there could have been no crisis

in respect of land. Therefore the crisis apparently must have occurred in the six, seven, or perhaps eight months since the House last met.

I think we should analyse the amendment before the House so that on this occasion we can understand the true basis of the censure. To my mind, judging from the wording of the amendment, there are two main points. In the amendment moved by Mr. Willesee point No. 1 is that the Labor Party seeks to establish that there is a crisis in housing at present—

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Don't you think there is?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH:—and point No. 2 is that it is sought to establish that the Government has made no serious endeavour to prevent land prices from rising. My only conjecture is that since reading the Press and observing that an identical motion—except that the words "Legislative Assembly" can be substituted for the words "Legislative Council"—has been moved in another place, this is a political move to bring the Government of the day under censure for what the Opposition considers is an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

I intend to deal in some detail with housing because, although I have been removed from the housing scene as Minister for Housing, I gained some knowledge of the subject whilst I held that portfolio over six years of the Government's being in office. I will therefore deal with housing and my colleague, the Minister for Local Government, will address you, Sir, on the subject of land, because this is a matter that comes within his portfolio.

Without any shadow of a doubt or any fear of contradiction, if we compare the activities of the present Government with the activities of the Government in power from 1953 to 1959, it is quite ridiculous to assert there is a housing crisis at the present time. This Government has never denied there is extreme pressure on its capacity to meet the increasing demand for schools, hospitals, and public works of all kinds. This afternoon Mr. Stubbs addressed a number of questions to me relating to Kambalda, which are to be placed on tomorrow's notice paper. I think I could have given the honourable member the answers to most of his questions this afternoon. I merely draw attention to this centre because it represents another one of the increasing demands that are being made on the Government as a result of the ever-increasing and expanding economy which the State is experiencing at the moment.

The pressures that are exercised on the Government's capacity to meet these demands are a direct result of policy, and the successful and increasing tempo of Western Australia's development. The situation in 1967 is much more satisfactory, as I am sure all members will agree, than if migration and the population were

at a standstill, and if the State's industrial activity was at a low ebb. If this were true it would be an unsatisfactory state of affairs, and, further, if our unemployment figures were different from what they are at present that also would represent an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

At the moment, however, as you know, Mr. President, the picture in Western Australia is completely the reverse. It is absolutely unnecessary for me to substantiate the evidence which is all around us illustrating the State's buoyant economy. There is evidence also in the assertion that the rate of development in Western Australia is outstripping, by far, the national average rate.

The use of the word "crisis" to describe housing problems is, in my opinion, doing little more than throwing the word into the ring and, having done that, saying, "You prove there is no crisis." No doubt the word "crisis" will take up headlines in the Press to greater effect, if that is so desired, than the use of the words "problems," "pressures," or "difficulties." Obviously the word "crisis" is used so that it will ring and make it appear that something is extremely wrong with housing.

The Government does not deny for a moment that we have pressures and problems, but I certainly intend to refute the implication that a crisis exists in Western Australia. In the remarks made by Mr. Willesee in support of the amendment, he relied heavily on cuttings from newspaper articles. What puzzles me is that although the Leader of the Opposition and I have obviously read the same newspapers, it appears that we read different articles published in them. I would therefore like to elaborate on that point.

I listened to Mr. Willesee who, for the benefit of members of this House, quoted articles he had read in the newspapers he mentioned, and I listened to his telling us the dire distress in which Western Australia appeared to be. I have had another look at some of the newspapers referred to, and I note that in *The West Australian* dated the 1st February, 1967, the following heading appears:—

#### Increase In W.A. Home Building

The article then goes on in these terms—

Home building in Western Australia, including flats and owner-built houses, is expanding according to the latest statistics for the December quarter.

It then goes on to describe the expansion in housing. Another article, published in the *Weekend News* of the 4th February, 1967, reads as follows:—

#### More houses, flats go up

The building rate in W.A. continues to rise steadily, according to figures issued this week by the Commonwealth Statistician.

I will not bore members with all the details of that article, but they can be read by them if they so desire.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Is that private or Government building?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The article to which I have just referred deals with the overall situation, which is the situation I intend to deal with, because I think the problem of housing cannot be segregated and we cannot say, "This is a matter regarding which the Housing Commission should do this, and this is another matter regarding which the private sector should do that." Therefore the problem of housing is one that must be dealt with by considering it from every angle.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The Government is not doing its job on that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will continue with my story and show the honourable member what the Government is doing. This point is fundamental in all housing legislation throughout Australia, as the legislation provides that not only will money from Commonwealth-State loan funds be apportioned to building houses by the State housing authorities in each State, but it also stipulates that the private building sector shall construct houses because, as Mr. Strickland knows full well, 30 per cent. of the Commonwealth-State housing funds is channeled through the private sector for that purpose in accordance with the law.

In another article published by *The Australian* the following appeared:—

#### Housing approvals rise by 24pc

New building approvals by local government authorities showed further signs of healthy improvement last month.

That article was published on the 23rd February, 1967. Another appeared in *The West Australian* of Friday, the 17th March, 1967, which reads—

#### W.A. Housing Boom, Says Association

The boom in housing construction in Western Australia which began in 1963 is continuing and approvals suggest even more buoyant conditions in 1967.

This was followed by another feature in *The West Australian* of the 24th March, 1967. It reads—

#### Big Rise In W.A. Building Last Month

There was a 108 per cent. increase in the total value of buildings approved in W.A. last month, compared with a year ago.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: How many city buildings were included in that total?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know. The honourable member can make his contribution to the debate in time and tell us to what extent the insurance companies are contributing to this total. That

article dealt with the overall situation and it gives the value of the permits and approvals granted. It states that the number of houses and flats approved last month was 1,178, comprising 560 houses and 618 flat units, compared with 555 houses and flats approved in February, 1966, which was an increase of 112 per cent. I am not trying to suggest that these figures relate entirely to housing. As I have said, we have to look at the overall situation.

In the *Daily News* of the 10th April, 1967, the following appeared:—

#### Boom time for flat-builders

The article then quotes the latest figures released by the Deputy Commonwealth Statistician on the number of flats being built.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Who could afford them? Not the ordinary worker!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: In *The West Australian* dated the 29th April this appeared—

#### More Houses And Flats Approved

Canberra, Fri.—More new houses and flats were approved in W.A. during the March quarter than in the December quarter last year.

In another article published in *The West Australian* on the 24th May, 1967, these figures were given—

#### Rise In Buildings

Canberra, Tues.—The value of buildings approved in W.A. in April was \$13,878,000, compared with \$9,105,000 in April last year and \$10,826,000 in April, 1965.

I am merely quoting these articles to indicate that there are two sides to this story and I suggest, with respect, it is not a bit of use Mr. Willesee quoting newspaper cuttings that contain only destructive criticism without fairly quoting the other side of the picture as well. The most recent article I saw published in *The West Australian* of the 3rd August, 1967—a few days after the honourable member had moved his motion to amend the Address-in-Reply—was as follows:—

#### New Homes, Flats, Set W.A. Record

Work started on a record number of new houses and flats in W.A. in 1966-67.

The total was 10,984—an increase of more than 20 per cent. on the figure for the previous year.

The article then continues to indicate the progress of development in this State.

I would have thought that had the honourable member been able to read this article before he moved his amendment he might have found it a little more difficult to carry out his intention, because one cannot get away from these figures. He may have come to a different conclusion rather than try to present to the House the idea that there is a real crisis in housing in Western Australia.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Would the Minister say there is not a real crisis?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister will continue to make his speech.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Will the Minister say there is not a real crisis? He cannot, without telling us a lie, and that is the truth.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will not take any notice of these remarks, Mr. President; I will get on with what I am saying, because I have put up with this for so long. In my hand I have a publication dealing with a survey made by the Economic Research Committee of the Housing Industry Association of Australia. It reports on what is happening in every State in Australia in relation to home buildings. The headings taken from the booklet published by this association read as follows:—

New South Wales—Activity Up.

Victoria—Buoyant.

Queensland—Variable.

Slump in South Australia.

Boom in W.A.

In other words, it simply relates the same sort of thing which the Press, in its articles, has been telling us.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It does not relate to housing.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Nobody denies that the housing situation in Western Australia is not entirely satisfactory, but I am glad the situation here is not as it is in South Australia. I am ever so glad we have a problem just the reverse to the one in that State.

It calls to my mind a comment that was made by an honourable member in this House who, unfortunately, due to indisposition, is not present this afternoon. In 1959, Mr. Lavery was telling the House of the number of houses that were vacant in the Medina area, as indeed there were. At that time I was Minister for Housing and I was obliged to put aged couples into those houses so that they could act as caretakers to protect the dwellings from the activities of vandals.

Mr. Lavery reminded me of this on a particular occasion in this House. I can remember saying to him, "You just wait a while. I can assure you that those houses at Medina will not only be occupied to capacity by men, their wives, and their children, but there will also be an urgent necessity to build more." Can any honourable member tell me that that is not the situation at present? Everyone in this House knows the type of activity that is in the Kwinana area.

Returning to South Australia, I saw in the Press that a lady, whose name is Bettyanne Hopkins, said that migrants on a particular ship really would have liked to be able to disembark in Western Australia, but they had gone on to Adelaide because

the housing situation there did not seem to be such a problem. I can understand this, because I am told that something like 500 new houses have been built by the South Australian Housing Trust and they are empty. So it is no wonder migrants would want to go where they can get housing more readily than here.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: How does that make the situation better in Western Australia?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If we are challenged on this point—and we are—it is well to look at the comparative building programmes and operations of the two administrations—the one at the present time, and the one we took over from in 1959. When we took over in 1959 we had the worst unemployment percentage on record in Western Australia for a long time. In 1959, there were 6,000 people unemployed; and the situation gradually went on until 2.2 per cent. of the work force were unemployed. When the previous Government took over from the McLarty-Watts Government in 1953, the unemployment rate was .7 per cent.; and today the rate is 1.2 per cent., with some 3,700 people on the unemployed list.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Thousands of people were living on balconies.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If there are thousands now—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I meant in 1953.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —there must have been many more in those days. I will not go any further into what is happening in South Australia, but will get down to the situation here. I would like members to look at the total picture of homes and buildings completed in the State from the years 1953-54 to 1959, and from 1959-60 to the year 1967.

In the year 1953-54, the previous Administration built 7,639 houses; in 1955, 9,108; in 1956, 8,344; in 1957, 5,379; in 1958, 6,367; and in 1959, 6,058. In 1959-60, when we took over, we built 6,260; in 1961, 6,413; in 1962, 6,347; in 1963, 7,235; in 1964, 8,751; in 1965, 9,287; in 1966, 8,889; and in 1967, 10,027; which is a preliminary figure. I understand the figure for 1967 will be more of the order of 10,984, but upon this point I cannot be absolutely certain.

Let us complete the picture and have a look at what this meant in terms of money. In the year 1953-54, it meant \$26,280,000; in 1955, \$23,550,000; in 1956, \$18,870,000; in 1957, \$16,550,000; in 1958, \$16,350,000; and in 1959, when we took over, it meant \$13,370,000. In 1960, it meant \$14,850,000; in 1961, \$16,670,000; in 1962, \$19,580,000; in 1963, \$21,690,000; in 1964, \$21,820,000; in 1965, \$22,820,000; in 1966, \$22,290,000; and for this year, subject to my reservation in respect of numbers, it could mean \$22,820,000.

It is of importance to realise that during the whole period, expenditure in regard to war service homes fell from \$8,300,000 to \$5,300,000. Of course, this is something which is beyond the control of any State Government. It is a matter of the demand that is made by ex-servicemen from time to time under the War Service Homes Act.

I make particular reference to the \$23,550,000 in 1954-55 for two reasons. In the first place, the number of houses built in that year has often been quoted as the basis or pattern of housing activity. Well, it was; but we recall the dire effect this had on the stability of the building industry in the years that followed. All one has to do is look at the chart to see how expenditure came down.

This position has also improved. It was stated by the Labor Party, upon assuming office in 1953, that considerable loan funds were available for housing. The facts are that during the years 1953-54 to 1958-59, the average annual allocation made from loan funds to the State Housing Commission was \$10,580,000; but the average annual allocation that has been made by this Government is \$13,700,000.

One can do what one likes with those figures; but they are statistics and can be examined and borne out as a true statement of the facts. I simply say: If it is said there is a crisis now, then I deny it, because there is not.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There is.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I assert there is a heavy demand for houses; and the reasons for that I have already given. Let us now look at the loan funds made available under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, the State Housing Act, the Government Employees' Housing Authority, and special schemes for each year over the period I took previously.

In 1954, the amount was \$11,000,000; in 1955, \$10,150,000; in 1955-56, the crucial year, \$13,870,000; in 1957, \$8,900,000; in 1958, \$8,400,000; in 1959, \$9,000,000; in 1960, \$8,600,000; in 1961, \$8,550,000; in 1962, \$10,250,000; in 1963, \$11,450,000; in 1964, \$12,600,000; in 1965, \$12,650,000; in 1966, \$11,400,000; and in 1967, \$14,400,000.

Members can see that if a comparison is made of the moneys allocated by the two Administrations, the result is very favourable towards the present Government. We could go further and look at the question of waiting times. However, I do not propose to employ the time of the House by going laboriously through the waiting times, how they come about, and what effect they have.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is what we want to know.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the honourable member will be patient, I will try to tell her; but whether she will understand is another matter.



The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I object to that remark. I am not a fool; and I will have the Minister know that I have as much common sense as he has.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sorry; I am sure the honourable member will understand. Waiting times are variable, and always have been. When I was Minister for Housing I found—and I am sure the present Minister and others before him have found the same thing—that what one has on the State Housing Commission's books is a list of people to whom one refers as applicants.

If an examination of the applicants is made from time to time, as is done, it will be found that for hundreds or thousands of people who are applicants, it can never be said they are all looking for a house when it is ready to be allocated. There is a lot of fall-away from the figures on record.

I would like to quote the information supplied to me on this point. The waiting period for rental accommodation in the metropolitan area in 1955-56 was 20 months. In 1956-57 it was 27 months; in 1957-58, 26 months; in 1958-59, 40 months; in 1959-60, 36 months; in 1960-61, 34 months; in 1961-62, 16 months; in 1962-63, 26 months; in 1963-64, 28 months; in 1964-65, 20 months; and as at the end of December, 1966, it was 26 months.

The significant feature of this tabulation is the amount by which so-called waiting times can vary when measured at the same point from year to year—but I will not argue on that. We all know that as housing becomes available, naturally the waiting time will vary.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The waiting time is also dependent on the area.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Indeed it is; a most telling interjection.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I will use it later.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If an examination is made, it will be found that a person can move into a house in one area much quicker than he can move into a house in another area. I suppose one could go from the sublime to the ridiculous and say that if one were to wait for the Housing Commission to allot a house in Dalkeith, then the waiting period would be completely limitless.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I agree.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But it does go to show the point which the honourable member makes: that the waiting time is indeed variable from one particular locality to another.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: The figures you quoted would be the shortest waiting time?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The figures are the average waiting time. I cannot enumerate the districts, but I think it is agreed that in respect of some

areas an applicant does not have to wait anywhere near as long as for other areas. Of course, this has always been the case.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: But none less than 24 months, at the end of last December.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I would not like to agree with that statement. The honourable member means, on the average?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That is the quickest one could get a house on the basis of the waiting time in December?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, not the quickest at all. I do not think the honourable member listened to the point made by Mr. Ron Thompson. The point was that in some cases it might be very much less.

The Hon. R. Thompson: No, I did not say that. I said it would depend on the area.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It can be upward or downward, depending on the area. I think that is a true reflection of the situation.

I have to say to members in this Chamber it is of no use our thinking in terms of what the State Housing Commission does and using that as a yardstick for the whole of the State. The Government of the day has a responsibility in relation to housing, both from the point of view of the activities of the State Housing Commission, and also in relation to the private sector. I do not think this point can be argued at all. Every time the private sector is able to put up a house and make it available to somebody, then another family is housed and the burden is eased in one direction or the other.

It is very essential, indeed, that we regard the two things as a whole. They must not be segregated and the activities of the State Housing Commission used as a yardstick to judge the situation. Whether building is in the form of houses, flats, semidetached dwellings, or big blocks of expensive units, people live in those places according to their means and according to their ability to pay.

The various actions taken by the State Housing Commission in an endeavour to do its job and to perform its functions are many. The stimulation of the building society movement is a very important factor. I give credit where credit is due: this started in the days of a previous Minister for Housing, The Hon. H. E. Graham. He was very interested in the building society movement. In 1963, there were 10 permanent building societies, 27 terminating building societies, and one Star-Bowkett society. In 1967 there were 13 permanent building societies, 178 terminating societies, and one Star-Bowkett society. That is a total of 192 in 1967 as against 38 in 1963. The building societies are indeed performing a very

valuable service in connection with the general housing problem in Western Australia.

Local authorities are encouraged to undertake housing schemes. Joint ventures are undertaken by the State Housing Commission in conjunction with project developers. Some of the Housing Commission land is being made available to project developers who have the capital to build houses.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The price of the land has gone up about 10 times.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Housing Commission is also prevailing upon industry to undertake some home-building activity for its key personnel, and other personnel. The best example I can give is that of the housing in the north-west which has been provided by the companies which are venturing into the various mineral developments in the State. The Housing Commission also raises finance by the sale of assets. Some land becomes too expensive for the State Housing Commission to build on and it is, of course, foolish to try to build the type of house which is available to applicants on this very valuable land. With the proceeds from such sales, the Housing Commission is able to buy more land.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Like Mt. Yokine.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Larger contracts are being let in various places, which not only bring down the overall contract price but also mean that contractors are able to tender and move in quickly to help with the overall problem. Another avenue is the developing of high density projects; and so on. As we progress we will see housing development of a different kind coming forward.

I have already mentioned the building societies and the large assets that they have. They perform a service to their contributors by providing houses for them. The larger building societies have registered record funds from Government and other sources. The Government, of course, contributes 30 per cent. of the Commonwealth-State funds to these building societies.

That is the overall picture. I will return to the point where I started: I do not think for one moment there is a housing crisis in this State. I repeat: there is undoubtedly a demand. There is undoubtedly pressure for more and still more houses. This sort of pressure must continue as long as the economic position is as buoyant as it is today. The more industries we establish the more people we will want, the more people we get the more houses we will need and the more services we have to provide.

It is not just a question of saying that we will build houses to house people. When we build the houses we have to provide schools for the children. Mr. Stubbs

realises this problem, because he has been asking questions about Kambalda and emphasising the way that particular little town is forging ahead. Also, we must have hospitals and all the other facilities which go to make up a community. All these things have to be taken into consideration.

In a minute or two I will ask Mr. Logan to address the House on the question of land. This is a matter which falls within his portfolio and he has a very intimate knowledge of what is going on in the community with respect to land.

I find it particularly puzzling to listen to Mr. Willesee tell us, on the one hand, that land has reached a proportion of the total cost of building which is too high; that is, when dealing with this motion, but when dealing with the matter of the resumption of land by the Government, not only does he want the land price to be sky-high, but he also wants the person concerned to be given something additional.

The Hon. R. Thompson: He wants a fair deal.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I mention this because, as Mr. Ron Thompson knows, we cannot have our cake and eat it too.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: We want a fair deal.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It puzzles me when two trains of thought, and two ideas, emanate from the one argument. I hope the House will reject the amendment moved by Mr. Willesee.

**THE HON. L. A. LOGAN** (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [5.43 p.m.]: When Mr. Willesee was speaking to the Address-in-Reply he mentioned two matters which he said needed some consideration. Firstly, he mentioned the scarcity of building blocks which, in effect, created a high price for those blocks. I think, perhaps, we should have a look at the price of land. We should examine the position to see whether the high price of building blocks is something special, and which applies only to Western Australia, or whether it is worldwide.

I think it will be found that this is a worldwide problem to which nobody has ever found the answer. From 1830 onwards, the price of land has increased according to the affluence of society. The price has nothing to do with the availability of land. Royal Commissions and investigations have been held throughout the world but as yet nobody has been able to tie the price of land to the availability of land. Land is one commodity to which the law of supply and demand does not apply. This has been proved at all the inquiries and Royal Commissions which have been held throughout the world.

Within a fortnight a publication will be available entitled *House and Home*. It is an American journal, and will be on the

printing stocks tomorrow. This publication will be made available to members, and to the public, and it deals with this very subject. I do not intend to deal with the book now because when it comes from the printing office it will be available to members. It is being put out by the M.R.P.A. to show people what is going on in regard to land and the value of it.

As the Minister for Mines has said, there is a need for housing and I agree that land is being sold at high prices. But after all, what do we mean when we refer to the price of land? The cost of land is the price which people are prepared to pay for it on the open market—at auction. Nobody else but the community sets the price of land so what can be done about that? Neither Mrs. Hutchison nor anybody else in this Chamber would put her house or a block of land up for sale tomorrow without asking the market value for it. Nobody here would take a lower price for their house or land.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Listen for the denial.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The community sets the price of land, and it cannot be otherwise. I have heard talk about the scarcity of land creating the high prices being paid for it. My officers have done a terrific amount of research into the value of land and the availability of it in the metropolitan area. If I give members some figures to show the changing values of land in certain parts of the metropolitan area I think they will appreciate that the availability of it has had nothing to do with the increased prices being paid for it.

In December 1953 a block of land in Belmont was sold for £295. I am sorry my figures have not been converted to dollars but I will read them as I have them in front of me. The block was sold again in 1954 for £375, again in 1957 for £425, then in 1960 for £450, in 1964 for £840, and again in 1965 for £950. It was not the shortage of land, or the availability of land, that created the increase in the price of that block over that period.

I have plenty more examples. Another block of land in Belmont was sold for £425 in 1960. It was resold in 1964 for £1,100, and in 1965 for £1,900. In Melville a block of land was sold in 1963 for—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am not sure whether the Minister is in order in quoting figures in pounds as pounds are no longer legal currency. It places me in a rather awkward position.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I can appreciate your position, Mr. President. Although it may take a little more time I can double the figures I have.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Say, "£1,800 multiplied by two."

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In 1963 a block of land in Melville was sold for \$38,000. In 1965 it was sold for \$58,000, and again in

1965 for \$68,000—it increased by that much in one year.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Who creates these prices?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The community.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is the big companies and wealthy people who can afford to pay these prices.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In 1965 it was sold for \$58,000 and two months later it was resold for \$68,000. It is not the scarcity of land that creates the increase in the price; it is the community which creates this increased price.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How big was the block?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is the people who want to buy the land who create the price.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How big was the block of land?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It was a building block.

The Hon. R. Thompson: And it was sold for \$68,000!

The Hon. J. Dolan: Break it down. You must be talking about the city.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am sorry; I should have said \$6,800.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Then all your figures are wrong.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No; when I was quoting the figures in pounds they were quite right. I can correct the figures if members will give me time to do so. The figure for 1963 was \$3,800 and the last figure, for 1965, was \$6,800.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That's better.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: And who creates those prices? The wealthy people who can buy those blocks.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mrs. Hutchison will have her opportunity to make a speech later on.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There was another block in South Perth which was sold in 1953 for \$500; it was resold in 1957 for \$2,730; in 1959 for \$2,920; and in 1964 for \$7,200.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Those very figures prove that the demand is greater than the supply, and you are not creating a new supply, which is the very basis of supply and demand.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I indicated how much one block went up in one year, and the very fact that the price increased to the extent it did proves that it was not the scarcity of land that caused the increase in price; because the same amount of land is available, wherever one likes to go for it.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: There is insufficient land.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Those prices do not prove there is any scarcity. If we look

at the Press articles which Mr. Willesee quoted we will see that most of them refer to sales of land at City Beach—an isolated part of the metropolitan area where, I suppose, a number of people want to live. However, not everybody can live there.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is not an isolated part; it is a select part.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is isolated as far as the metropolitan region is concerned. If nobody will bid or buy at an auction then the price will not go up; and nobody forces people to attend or even bid at auction sales for land.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You could put up much greater areas of land.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It would not make any difference. On the same day as there was an auction at City Beach, 56 blocks were put up at Midland and 26 of them were passed in. The top price was \$1,700 and that land sale was on the same days as a sale at City Beach. That fact did not get much Press publicity and perhaps it would have been better if something more had been published about it in the papers. Then people would have realised that blocks of land were available at reasonable prices.

As regards available land, if members care to refer to the metropolitan regional plan, which was laid on the Table of the House in 1963, they will find that it provided for sufficient zoned land in the urban and deferred urban area for 1,400,000 people; and the area is still zoned in this manner. A total of 80,000 acres for urban and 25,000 acres deferred urban were involved.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell us why people are not building on these blocks of land.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know why they are not.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I do.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know; because in a survey carried out south of the river, and completed in 1965, it was shown that there were 8,700 blocks of land of less than one acre—vacant blocks—on which every service was provided.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What was the price of them?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If we look at the area north of the river I think the position would be just about the same, although there might not be quite so many vacant blocks. Therefore, I think we can say without fear of contradiction that in 1965 there were 15,000 blocks of land available for immediate development—blocks which were serviced with every facility; roads, water, light, and everything else. Since that time the Town Planning Board has approved of subdivisions in both areas, north and south, and throughout the rest of the region, and these subdivisions were greater in number than the approvals for houses in that same period. Therefore, at

that stage, there were 15,000 blocks of land ready for immediate development.

The Hon. R. Thompson: And the reason is they are being bought on hire purchase and the people cannot pay for the houses and the blocks of land at the same time.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I would venture to say that a lot of them are not being bought on this basis; they have been paid for. Many other blocks, too, are being kept for specific purposes, and also for speculation.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Who are the people involved?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Last year when we introduced a Bill to make some attempt to induce people holding land for speculative purposes to sell it the measure was rejected by this House.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is so.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It was an attempt to do something, but the House would not pass the Bill. I am not reflecting on the House, or the action that was taken; but despite that we are told that we have done nothing.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is so.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You two over there are getting on very well together.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: We get on well with you, too.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Housing Commission, too, has made land which is very valuable from a housing point of view available in Woodlands and Karrinyup. This is to assist with the development of housing and to make the land available at the cheapest price possible.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That's a laugh when you talk about Woodlands.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Every block of land is built on. Let us have a look at the situation. Some people want us to go out into the scrub—into the rural areas. If we purchased 1,000 acres of land in a rural zone what value should we place on it? Should we purchase it, or resume it at the price being paid for rural land; or, because we intend to use it for residential purposes, should we pay the same price as would be paid for blocks of land used for residential purposes?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Residential.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is not the slightest doubt that the community provides all the facilities—roads, transport, schools, water, drainage and everything else. Does the honourable member think that we should turn around to a favoured few and say, "You can have this block of land at a certain price because that is all you can pay for it," when we know that in five years' time that person will reap the benefits of all the facilities that have been provided? Whichever way we go we cannot get away from criticism.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: After paying urban prices for rural land.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: On top of all this land that is available, in all the beach resorts there are something like another 4,000 blocks of land available; there are another 2,180 blocks in the areas of four local authorities in Mr. Ron Thompson's area—2,180 vacant five- to 10-acre blocks.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: And what prices are they?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In Cockburn there are 653 five- to 10-acre subdivisions which have been approved and 383 do not have houses on them. In Kwinana there have been 159 of these subdivisions which have been approved and 133 are undeveloped. In Rockingham 153 subdivisions have been approved and 126 have not been developed. In Gosnells the figures are 1,028 approvals and 756 blocks are undeveloped. As regards Armadale-Kelmscott the figures are 903 approvals and 782 blocks are undeveloped, or they have nothing on them.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What do you mean when you say they have nothing on them?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There are no houses—no development.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It does not mean to say there is no development.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is no development whatever. So out of a total of 2,896 five- to 10-acre subdivisions, only 716 have been developed.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Mr. Ron Thompson had better have a look down his way; he has a few more new electors.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I do not need any advice about how to look after my electors. I can do that quite well.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The only area in which these five- to 10-acre lots have been developed is that near the Cockburn cement works. There is some development of these blocks in that area. I shall now refer to certain areas where subdivisions are still taking place, and I mention these things to show that we are doing something.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The trouble is you are doing it in the wrong way and that is what we are complaining about.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: We have been accused of not opening up enough land but we have rezoned 3,826 acres from urban deferred to urban land since October, 1964.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Where is that?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In Midland there were 212.25 acres, and despite the fact that this was gazetted on the 14th October, 1964, the number of houses built is nil. At Coolbellup, on the 14th October, 1964, 382.70 acres were rezoned and the Housing Commission has built 854 houses.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Still zoned as rural?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No. These areas were rezoned from urban deferred to urban. We have not rezoned any rural land from rural to urban. That cannot be done without amending the plan, and such an amendment must come before Parliament. In Balga, 1,270 acres were rezoned and the Housing Commission has built 1,009 houses there. As regards Eden Hill, 245 acres were rezoned but so far no houses have been built.

In Lynwood 100 acres were involved but not a house was built; at Bibra Lake 320 acres were rezoned, but again no houses were built.

The following figures are for 1967 and this would not give anyone a chance to build, except in the case of Osborne Park where 237 acres were rezoned, and only one house was built. The other figures are for June and July of this year. So altogether 3,826 acres have been zoned from urban deferred to urban.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Some of it is University land, which they will not develop.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is not University land.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would ask Mr. Ron Thompson to discontinue interjecting, and I would also ask the Minister to address the Chair and not invite interjections.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The figures I have given concerning the price of land have nothing to do with the availability or the scarcity of land. From the town planning point of view, and within the urban zone, practically every subdivision which has been applied for has been approved, except for those areas where there is a water table or drainage problem and where, of course, approval cannot be given.

We have no power to make people subdivide if they do not wish to do so. I suppose the alternative would be for the land to revert to Crown ownership; but if anybody is game enough to resume all that land and bring it under the control of the Crown I would say to him, "You are a better man than I am Gunga Din." However, I do not think that would be necessary.

Nobody has yet come up with a satisfactory answer to the problem of increased land prices. It is only when we have an affluent society that we find the price of land going up. At the first signs of a depression the price of land is the first thing that falls. This is quite simple to understand when one follows the graph.

There are, of course, other factors which apply when dealing with the price of land in an affluent society. For example, because of the improved purchasing power as a result of working wives people are able to pay more for their land. Apart from this there is also the question of intensive participation in the investment market; and also increased invest-

ment in land due to a depressed share market and the collapse of high interest investment companies. All these factors have a bearing on the price of land.

There is also the question of the national policy on home-building finance. Here again most of the \$500 received from the Commonwealth to assist people with housing finance has unfortunately been swallowed up in increased land prices. Another factor which has controlled land values is the adoption of the metropolitan region town planning scheme in 1963, and the acceptance by estate companies of very low deposits for the purchase of land. We all know that people are able to buy land for a \$10 deposit and a few dollars a month, payable perhaps over a period of five or 10 years. I do not know what the interest rate is; but this all has a bearing on increasing the price of land.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They pay 12 per cent. interest in the area I am talking about.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I think it would be better for people to buy land when they are ready to build. It would certainly be much cheaper for them to do so. I feel it is false economy for a person to buy land now with a view to building on it in perhaps 10 years' time.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That depends on the price of the land and of the state of the economy at the time.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I think it would be better for such people to invest their money in order that it might bear some interest for them. A further factor which is likely to affect land values is the impact of high-pressure salesmanship by estate companies with improved advertising techniques, particularly on television. We all know the tremendous impact this has had. One of the factors which is likely to have a local effect on land values is improved accessibility of certain areas within the region as a result of the provision of new roads or public transport.

I am sure Mr. Ron Thompson will agree with me here, because he has an area in Cockburn where the shire council had a scheme under which it intended to sell land at \$1,000 a block. Before the land was made available its value was not great; but when it was made available its price went up overnight to \$2,000 a block; and it is now \$3,000 a block.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think you are a bit ahead of yourself.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not think I am. I could go on dealing with this matter and show why there has been a rise in the price of land. It is not due to the scarcity of land, as has been suggested, nor is it due to the zoning of the land. All factors must be taken into consideration when talking about rising land prices. It is of no use pointing the bone at any one Government and saying it is respon-

sible for increased land prices. I think we are lucky to have land prices at the figure they are, because this indicates we have an affluent society. I would far rather live in an affluent society than have a depression followed by a drop in land prices. For that reason I cannot support the amendment that has been moved to the Address-in-Reply.

*Sitting suspended from 6.7 to 7.30 p.m.*

**THE HON. J. DOLAN** (South-East Metropolitan) [7.30 p.m.]: I support the amendment which has been moved by Mr. Willesee, and at the outset I would like to refer to three matters mentioned by him. The first is we are very much concerned that the Government has allowed a crisis in housing to develop; the next is that the Government made no serious endeavours to prevent the price of land from continuing to rise; and finally he refers to the fact that many families, both indigenous and migrant, are obliged to pay extortionate rents and suffer much hardship, and prospective home builders are being frustrated.

The Minister started off by making a play on the word "crisis." He maintained there was no crisis in the housing situation. He was not long in making his speech; and eventually he used words which in my book were not correct when he said that the housing boom was continuing. Without in any way being pedantic it is my contention that—whether one speaks from this side or from the other side of the House—one is perfectly entitled to use the word "crisis."

As this amendment is being moved to the Address-in-Reply, I intend to analyse some of the Speeches which were made by Governors over a period of years to find out what has been said about the aspect of housing. In presenting an address, the Government always makes a special feature of the matters to which it wants to draw particular attention; and for that I do not blame any Government, because it is quite fair for it to draw the attention of the general public to the things it is doing in certain directions. I am inclined to think it makes very little reference to matters which it does not want to be featured.

I suppose every member will appreciate that housing and social problems have a connection, to some extent. We find that with people who are well housed and who are happy, the general social behaviour of the family group is good. I would say that one of the contributory causes of some of the social problems of today is directly associated with—and I use the word advisedly—the crisis in housing. This is not only confined to Western Australia, but it applies to other parts of Australia as well.

The amendment states, "We are very much concerned that the Government has

allowed a crisis in housing to develop." I wish to emphasise that we make no complaint whatever about the work that has been done by the Minister for Housing or his officers. I am sure all members agree that the officers are competent, that they treat us with the utmost courtesy, and that they are trying to do as good a job as possible.

I am reminded of the classic reference of an eminent British statesman when he appealed to the U.S.A. for help. He did so in this sentence, "You give us the tools. We will finish the job." I feel the same about the Housing Commission; if it is given sufficient money either it will solve the housing problem or do the work in such an efficient manner that any problems which exist will at least be alleviated.

In my approach to Governors' Speeches I refer to those made by the Governor in the first three years of the office of the previous Labor Government, which assumed office in 1963.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What year was that?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I meant 1953. The applications for housing in all categories approached the 20,000 mark. We would be quite justified in claiming that in that period there was a crisis in housing. This was the picture after being in office for one year. In the Governor's Speech in 1954 the following is stated:—

The number of homes erected during 1953 was 7,642, of which 3,218 were provided under the various schemes administered by the State Housing Commission.

I will stand up to any figures which I quote, and I appreciate that the Minister does not quote figures which are not absolutely correct. However, I should say that we are looking at things through different spectacles, in relation to the figures which are quoted.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What should we do if there is a difference in our figures?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I guarantee mine are correct. The Governor's Speech continued as follows:—

Special attention is being given to the provision of a greater number of homes in North-West towns. A programme has also been prepared for the erection of houses for the native population. The Kwinana housing programme is nearing completion.

The Government has established a Housing Advisory Bureau in the State Housing Commission premises, where plans and specifications can be obtained at a low cost, and advice on a wide range of building problems is given to self-help and owner builders.

The State Housing Act will be amended to provide a new scheme of advances for home builders.

That was the first reference to housing in the Governor's Speech during the term of the previous Labor Government, after it had been in office for one year.

In 1955 a similar story was presented in the Governor's Speech, because the Government considered it was getting to grips with the problem. In the Speech this was said—

Determined and successful effects have been made to improve housing conditions throughout the State and the State Housing Commission last year completed the record number of 4,000 houses.

During the year the State Housing Commission housed 600 families suffering eviction.

The following was stated in the Governor's Speech in 1956:—

The Government has continued to press on with the provision of housing. Last year the State Housing Commission completed 3,696 homes, bringing the total number of completions since the war years to a figure in excess of 23,000.

In the last twelve months over 800 families have been allotted accommodation on account of eviction and other emergent circumstances.

At this stage I want to give the opinion of a man who has graced this Parliament House for approximately 35 years. I refer to The Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, who has a wonderful record of public service, and in whose words I place the utmost faith and confidence. I feel he would not utter remarks which were not in accord with what he considered to be the truth. In the *Northam Advertiser* of the 27th July, 1967, he had this to say—

On becoming Premier in 1953, my colleagues and I inherited a severe housing shortage problem. The then Minister for Housing, Mr. Graham, applied himself with vigor and great capacity to the problem and with the aid of very substantial funds made available to him by me, the Government was able to overcome in three years the more urgent housing needs.

Two aspects have to be taken into consideration in the provision of houses. Not only must there be a good Minister and departmental staff to administer the housing portfolio, but sufficient money must also be provided to enable them to do the job. The article continues—

Unfortunately, since 1959 and especially in the last three years, the housing situation has again become very serious for hundreds of families.

I now turn to the more recent utterances in the Governor's Speeches. In 1965, under the heading of "Homes," the question of housing was dealt with. The reference is in two parts; one is in connection with homes, and the other in relation to

land. I will leave the second part until I get onto the question of land to avoid repetition.

In the 1965 Speech this was stated—

In the past year, 2,100 homes were erected throughout the State by the State Housing Commission from capital funds provided under the authority of the State Housing Act, the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement, the War Service Homes Act, and State Government Departments. These included homes for the new towns of Koolyanobbing and Exmouth. Homes may now be purchased on a deposit of £100 including fees.

It was a good statement and it indicated the Government was very interested in housing.

I now draw attention to the Governor's Speech of 1966. I had a job finding the reference to housing but it is there somewhere. The reference occupies only three lines, and is as follows:—

In the past year, 2,500 homes were built by the State Housing Commission. This was 400 more than in the previous year.

When the Minister quoted figures from his papers he referred to the fact that in one quarter the number of houses provided was a record, compared with the number built in another quarter. It appears to be a question of what records are being created. Suppose this year 100 houses are built, and next year 150 are built. The latter figure will be a record. If in the following year 170 houses are built then that will also be a record. The target which was achieved in the second year of office of the previous Labor Government was the completion of over 4,000 houses in one year by the State Housing Commission, in the overall picture, and that was a record. Compared with this the records mentioned by the Minister fade into insignificance.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I would like to ask you one question.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would prefer the Minister did not at this stage; because while he was speaking I religiously refrained from interjecting. I did not have one word to say in connection with what he was stating. I would be prepared at any time to stand up to the comments I make and the figures I quote, and will also make reference to figures quoted by the Minister, irrespective of whether they concern the State Housing Commission or the overall picture, on which he laid such emphasis. I will come to all that in due course.

Now I would mention the reference to housing in the Governor's Speech this year. It occupies four lines. Had it been printed across the page it would probably have been only two. It states that during 1965-66 a total of 1,750 homes was completed by the State Housing Commission. They are completed homes. A little

further on it is stated that a further 900 were under construction. As in the previous year there were 2,500, I do not know how it can be stated that these records continue to be broken. If a record is broken by the erection of fewer houses in successive years, a peculiar position arises.

I would like to summarise the figures from the Governors' addresses. In 1954, under the previous Government, the State Housing Commission built 3,218 homes; in 1955 there was a record number of 4,000; and in 1956, 3,696 homes were completed. This is an average of 3,638 homes per annum.

Let us take the last three years when we consider a crisis has developed: In 1965 the figure was 2,100; in 1966, when the record was established, 2,500 were erected, 400 more than the previous year; and in this last year 1,750 homes were erected. Therefore in the last three years there has been an average of 2,117 homes built by the State Housing Commission, which indicates that over 1,500 fewer homes a year have been built in the last three years, in comparison with the first three years under the former Government.

In addition I might state that every year it has been in office, this Government has had an average of \$12,000,000 more in loan moneys than was available to the Hawke Government. Therefore the Hawke Government was able to do these things despite the fact that by comparison it had less loan funds with which to operate.

Although I did not want to bore the House by giving all the figures, I feel I must do so. During the Labor Government's six years in office, 17,120 houses were built by the State Housing Commission. In the first eight years of this Government—and they are the only figures I could obtain—15,606 homes were built. Therefore, although the present Government was in office two years longer, 1,500 fewer homes were built.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You know that 30 per cent. of the Commonwealth-State money went to building societies.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: At it again!

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You know that, Mr. Dolan.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: In the previous six years of the Labor Government, the 17,120 homes built was an average of 2,853 per annum, and in the eight years this Government has been in office it has built 15,606, which is an average of 1,951 homes—over 900 homes more per year were built by the State Housing Commission under the Hawke regime in comparison with the number erected by this Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: With virtually 30 per cent. less money.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will come to some of those points later on. At this stage I would pause for a moment to comment on the remarks of the Minister for Local Government concerning land policy.



I will first of all read the second part of the Governor's address given, I think, in 1965. This was the only reference I could find to any land policy of this Government. I will read the relevant paragraph, and then analyse it. It is as follows:—

As part of its policy to assist prospective home-owners to obtain land at reasonable prices for home building, the Government has approved of the progressive release of about 900 State Housing Commission residential lots in several metropolitan suburbs for public sale. The scheme will include provisions to prevent possible speculation in the land.

These blocks were in Woodlands—to which reference was made by the Minister—Churchlands, Dianella, and Yokine; and the sales were to take place over a period of 4½ years so that gradually these prospective young home owners would have the opportunity to buy this cheaper land and thus establish themselves as home owners.

If the Government had accomplished all that, I would not now be condemning the fact that the land policy of this Government has been a poor one. Instead—and I would be quite honestly prepared to do so—I would be applauding the Government for what it had done. More than anyone else I regret that the situation is such that I have to criticise this Government for its actions.

Let us get the picture straight about this land in Woodlands. Eighty acres were bought by the State Housing Commission in 1950 for £100 an acre. Now let us see what went on. *The West Australian* of the 31st August, 1965, after the Government scheme was announced, advertised the terms. It was stated first of all that the minimum deposit was to be 70 per cent. of the cost. This is the way the Government was helping these young home owners! The balance was to be covered by second mortgage and would be repayable over five years with reducible interest rates of 5½ per cent. per annum.

The average value of the blocks was between \$3,500 and \$4,000, but it is easier to calculate on a \$4,000 basis than on \$3,500. The deposit was 70 per cent. on \$4,000—and we must keep in mind the picture of a young family desirous of obtaining a home. First of all that couple must find 70 per cent. of the purchase price of \$4,000, which is \$2,800. That is the start for this block of land.

Then, of course, this couple is immediately faced with the problems of the repayment over five years, and members can imagine what a burden it would be to them, especially if they have their sights fixed on a home, and furniture to complete the house on the block which the Government is doing so much to present to them so cheaply.

The reactions came very suddenly. In the leading article of *The West Australian*

of the 3rd September, 1965—only four days after the terms were announced—the following appeared:—

Where the Government is failing to help young couples most deserving of help is in making the payment terms too stiff.

Thus, what it is doing is not what it promised to do.

Very strong words, I would suggest, coming from our leading daily. On the 3rd September, in the same edition of the paper, a man well qualified to express an opinion—Mr. L. J. Wearne, President of the Real Estate Institute of W.A.—gave his opinion. He went to the trouble of working out the cost to couples to build a house on the Woodlands blocks. I will quote the figures in dollars, following your direction earlier, Mr. President. He said the following would be involved:—

\$15 a week for five years and almost \$10 a week for 20 years after that.

This did not include council and water rates and land tax amounting to about \$1.30 a week.

In spite of the criticism the Government went ahead with its scheme for these blocks and drew from the other daily—the *Daily News*—some comments in an editorial. If we really want to get the views of a paper, we do not turn over a few pages but immediately seek the leading article and the heading of this particular one was, "No Answer to Problem." The article commenced in this way—

The State Government is still doing no better than scratching around the housing problem.

I would interpolate here to say that the writer evidently used the word "scratching" advisedly. To continue—

It seems more interested in maintaining an unsatisfactory status quo than in taking effective action.

The problems of housing in W.A. are simply explained—

I think we can all agree with this, irrespective of the party to which we belong—

Building blocks cost too much and young couples find it hard to save a deposit and get additional finance. The Government's supposed answer is the Woodlands scheme. This had to be a failure because the Government was unwilling to put into it any of the ingredients necessary to make it a success.

Members will recall that Mr. Willesee in his amendment said—

The Government has allowed a crisis in housing to develop.

This article would indicate that Mr. Willesee had very good grounds indeed for suggesting that in his amendment. The article continues—

Instead of providing cheap land—thereby helping also to arrest the

spiralling of land prices elsewhere—it offered the Woodlands blocks at prices comparable with inflated land values and under terms in some ways more burdensome than those demanded by private speculators.

The opinion is expressed in that leading article that not only was the Government failing to do what it promised to do, but also that it was making terms much harsher than those imposed by private speculators. I cannot go along with the Government if that statement is true.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You have some doubts about it then.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: We can generally find out how people regard a scheme by public reaction to it. I do not mean just a section of the public who get on a soap box and raise some issue and get a few to follow them. I mean general public reaction, and this is what was said—

The real value of a scheme such as Woodlands can properly be measured by public reaction to it.

Since the scheme was announced nine months ago 79 blocks have been offered to the public in two groups.

The first group of 50 blocks attracted only 39 eligible applicants.

Members have all seen the rush when blocks are offered for sale at City Beach or anywhere else. People know very well that the blocks will be \$4,000 and \$5,000, but there is always a crowd bidding to get them. In spite of that fact, these 79 so-called cheap blocks being offered by the Government in order to solve the land problem for young home owners, attracted only 39 eligible applicants. The result of the second offering of 29 blocks announced the day before was that only 18 of the 29 had been taken up. The article concluded—

The Government still has more than 800 blocks to be offered under this scheme over the next four years. At this rate—

that is, 39 out of 50 and 18 out of 29—its prospects of unloading these under current terms of sale would appear rather bleak.

I would refer to a recent news item in the paper that a block of land in South Perth was purchased by the Government at what it considered a fair price, this being \$85,000. I think that was the price which was paid, yet the vendors of that block had purchased it just a few months before for, I think, \$60,000. Therefore, the Government admits that a rise of 41½ per cent. in land values over a three months' period is quite fair. That was the comment of the Government representatives.

I make no comment about whether people are entitled to buy blocks for \$100 and sell them for \$1,000, or anything like that. For example, the Minister quoted

one block of land in South Perth which started at a low price and went up and up and up with subsequent sales. I would like to look at that block in order to see where it is situated. It may have been because the Freeway has been built and this provides a much faster access to the city. Alternatively, it could have been a block in a position which would lend itself to the building of flats, which would be highly profitable based on the return which could be obtained from the block of land. In comparison with the original price for a modest home, it could have been quite a good buy.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That happens six times in six years.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: These things could have happened in six years, which makes all the difference whether a block in a certain position is valuable or not. The Minister has referred to thousands and thousands of these blocks of land which have been made available for sale. He would realise that quite a percentage of those blocks could not be built upon, because if a person bought them and then made representations to the local governing authority, he would find he would not be given a permit for various reasons, such as the water table, etc.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They have all been granted.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Miss Bettyanne Hopkins, who is Miss Western Australia and a nice lass, had this to say—

Most of the migrants on the ship said they would really have preferred to disembark here.

Had I been on the ship and had any influence on them, I would have told the migrants that this is an exciting place at which to disembark. However, there are two problems and the Minister referred to one of them. Miss Hopkins said—

But they had to go on to Adelaide where housing does not seem to be such a problem.

That is what the Minister had to say.

Further, I would mention that Miss Hopkins spent a week in London promoting migration. She was right at the heart of it. Her attitude would be, "You want to come to Western Australia and I am here to promote it." Personally I think that a beautiful girl who is putting across sales talk would be able to persuade some people. She says our main drawbacks are housing and job shortages. I am quoting from the article to which the Minister referred and, seeing that he used it, I am quite sure it is fair for me to use it also. Miss Hopkins is quite honest about the situation.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did she say there was a job shortage here?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The article says—  
Bettyanne, who spent a week in London promoting migration to W.A., says our—

I interpolate here to say that as a Western Australian daughter, when she uses the term "our" she means our State. The comment continues—

—main drawbacks are housing and job shortages.

If the Minister wants to say she does not know what she is talking about, why did he quote her in the first place?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do not try to give it a slant which was not intended.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am drawing near to my conclusions and I will not keep the House more than another five minutes. The editorial of the *Daily News* of the 16th March of this year is interesting. I mention that I stick to editorials and I do not find extracts in the back part of the paper.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Like Mr. Willesee and I did?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I did not say that. The Minister has a mind which always seems to find some hidden meaning. I speak quite frankly and I try to choose my words very carefully.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Surely you do not always agree with the editorials!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The editorial is headed "Government has failed" and the words, "housing marks its greatest failure" appear in the first paragraph. We, on this side of the House, consider that over the years the Government has had some failures. If this is its greatest failure as according to the editorial in the *Daily News* it is, I would think that Mr. Willesee could have used an even stronger word than "crisis" in order to sum up just what he, and we, think about the position generally. The editorial which, of course, is in connection with land, said—

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

And further on it says—

—the Government has failed over the years to check the appalling cost of land in this city.

I mention that these words are not my own.

I am coming near to the end of what I have to say and I would like to quote some other items which are of interest in this connection. I am not a bad reader and, in that respect, I would also compliment the Minister on the way he read what he had to say. I refer to some answers which have been given in replies to questions which have been asked so that we can know the true position today so far as housing is concerned. These answers were given by the Minister for Housing himself and, accordingly, I would

not challenge their accuracy. He was asked—

Will he advise the waiting period between the date of lodging an application and the allocation of accommodation in the Perth metropolitan area as at 1st August, 1965, 1st August, 1966 and 1st August, 1967, respectively for—

- (a) purchase houses;
- (b) 3 sleeping unit rental houses;
- (c) 2 sleeping unit rental houses?

I will quote the Minister's replies and it will be seen why we thought the problem had reached such an extent that we felt the attention of the House should be drawn to the crisis. He replied—

As at 1st August, in each year, the periods between application and allocation were as follows:—

- (a) 1965—14 months.
- 1966—23 months.

This represents an increase of nine months. He continued—

1967—31 months.

These were the Minister's replies to the first category of purchase houses. The second category refers to three-sleeping unit rental houses, and I would say that an ordinary family with children of mixed sexes would need a three-sleeping unit house; that is, one for the parents, one for the males, and one for the females. Naturally, there is this demand. To part (b) the Minister replied—

- (b) 1965—20 months.
- 1966—24 months.

This is an increase of only four months, but he continued—

1967—33 months.

The third section of his reply dealt with two-sleeping unit rental houses and his answer was—

- (c) 1965—20 months.
- 1966—31 months.

The figure for 1966 represents a jump of 11 months. The Minister continued—

1967—42 months.

This represents an increase of 22 months from 1965 to 1967.

The Minister was also asked to answer the question—

- (1) How many applications for housing are currently outstanding?
- (2) Of these, what is the number in respect of single unit applicants?

To which he replied—

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| (1) At 30th June, 1967— |               |
| Purchase .....          | 5,750         |
| Rental .....            | 7,505         |
| Single Unit—            |               |
| Aged Women 1,209        |               |
| Working                 |               |
| Women ....              | 82            |
|                         | 1,291         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>14,546</b> |

(2) See answer to (1).

However, the Minister qualified it by saying—

1,777 applications have been duplicated between rental and purchase by applicants lodging dual applications.

This, of course, brings the total of outstanding applications down to over 12,000.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: During the days of the Labor Government, it did not receive applications from single people.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am not going to enter into a crossfire with the Minister, but I want to say that I presume I have the same source for getting figures as he has. I searched diligently to find them and this is the case I have presented.

If the number of applicants outstanding is growing and growing, whether it is for rental homes or for purchase homes, I say definitely that there is a crisis. I would repeat that the home is where the social problems commence. In good homes, where the children are happier and pleased to stop at home because of the environment, a different picture is presented as compared with the position where the housing is bad and the children find it more pleasurable to go to a milk bar or meet their friends somewhere else. This leads to all kinds of problems.

I say definitely that any money which is spent by the Government on housing is money well spent, in the same way as I have always said—and will continue to say—that any money spent on education will be repaid to the Government one thousand-fold. Penny pinching in any way with the building of homes and in making them available to people, or anything like that, leads, of course, to this train of social problems which costs us money. I would like to mention one figure; that is, the \$85 per week which it costs to keep one delinquent at Riverbank. It seems incredible that it should cost over \$80 a week to keep a delinquent.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: And the Teachers Union wanted me to build more!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am not concerned about that, but with the problem with which we are now dealing. I would think that one of the criteria for determining the success or failure of a Government would be how it houses its people. This is one of the things which would mark a Government. In that respect, I consider the Government has not lived up to any of the promises which it offered, nor do I think it has tackled the problems it should have tackled. For that reason I support the amendment moved by Mr. Willesee.

**THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON** (North-East Metropolitan) [8.12 p.m.]: We are going over the same ground all the time, and the position could be summed up in one sentence; namely, that the greater part of the population is unhappy

because of the conditions which exist in the State of Western Australia. This problem is brought about because of the shortage of houses. I consider the Government of today is neglecting its duty by not seeing that houses are provided for the people of the State. These are the hands which make the wealth of the country, and on whom Governments depend for their very existence.

In supporting Mr. Willesee's amendment I mention that the answer I received to a series of questions I asked last week indicates the position in that, insofar as purchase homes are concerned, there has been an average of only 809 homes completed in the last three years; whereas, at this point of time, 5,750 approved applicants are waiting for houses. I understand also it is going to take the Government 6½ years from this date to deal with outstanding applications. Surely this is a glaring example of how the Government is not keeping its last election promise; that is, "Houses for All." The Government has slipped back every year, and the need for housing is getting worse and worse.

I have had some pitiable cases on my books. I mention a woman who has six little children and the only accommodation she had to keep her off the street—and I use this expression factually—was an open verandah which a lady who knew her in her early years had allowed her to use. When one sees this kind of crisis coming, and the Government of the day cannot house the children of the State, it is time the Government gave over and allowed somebody else to step in. This Government has failed to protect the women and children of the State. It has failed to protect the families of the State and, surely, it is the basic duty of any Government to see that its people are housed, clothed, and fed, and to make the opportunities available for this to happen.

When Mr. Graham was Minister for Housing in the last Labor Government he put his prowess to work and eased the situation which existed at that time. The situation when Labor came into office was almost as bad as it is today, but Mr. Graham succeeded in alleviating the suffering which was going on.

As a woman I am protesting against the action of the Government in failing to provide houses for the workers because, by its failure, it has been responsible for filling to capacity orphanages and other institutions that care for children. They are children who have misbehaved themselves because they have been driven on to the streets and confronted with temptation to do many things they would not normally do if they were able to play in backyards of their own. The Government does not deserve to govern the State when it allows a situation such as this to develop.

It is of no use the Minister saying that there is plenty of land on which people can build, because the ordinary working

man cannot afford to pay the prices that are being asked for blocks of land at present. Land prices have gone sky high and far beyond what a working man can pay. It would not matter if a block of land could be obtained for only \$2,000; if a man cannot afford to pay that price he is unable to build a house and, in turn, is unable to keep his children off the streets.

Today the wives of most workers are also in employment but their position is no better now than it was when only the husband was responsible for the family income. Today wives are forced to go out to work in an endeavour to keep a roof over their heads; but they still cannot avoid getting into debt. This is a result of bad government and is a poor lookout for the State.

There are untold riches in Western Australia and the income to be obtained from them has been thrown into the lap of the Government as a result of unforeseen circumstances. I am sure the Labor Government when it was in office would have appreciated being surrounded by similar circumstances. However, what is the use of the State being wealthy and enjoying a general state of prosperity if the people are not enjoying the fruits of that wealth which they, with their own hands, have helped to produce?

I look at this problem from a woman's viewpoint. I know the unhappiness that prevails in many homes because people approach me in preference to a male member of Parliament in the expectation, no doubt, that by bringing a woman's influence to bear I can do more than a man can do. However, I find it is impossible to achieve much. I have even accepted people into my own home in an endeavour to help out in the crisis which the State is facing. Further, when sickness enters a home the position becomes aggravated. The family is faced with greater unhappiness and the children, being neglected, are forced on to the streets where they get into trouble and finally are placed either in prison or in a reformatory. This could be prevented if homes were provided for the people and, in turn, it would bring about happiness throughout the community.

When Mr. Graham was Minister for Housing in a Labor Government he set apart a tract of land for the erection of workers' homes. After the change of Government, however, that land was not used for its original purpose but was sold to private buyers at outrageous prices. As a result no worker could afford to pay anything like the amounts that were paid for blocks of land in that area.

The suffering of the people affects me greatly. Almost daily, sometimes as early as 7 a.m., I am called to the telephone by a person saying, "For God's sake, Mrs. Hutchison, help us, because we are being evicted today." This should not happen

in a State such as Western Australia where we have land capable of producing great wealth, and minerals that can find a ready market. We seem to have everything but wealthy and happy people. Happy homes make happy people, and happy people make great nations and no amount of oratory can dispute that fact.

When I am called to the homes of many of these workers, being a woman I am often called upon to render a different kind of service to that of a male member of Parliament. One of these cases was that of a mother who had been parted from her husband. She had one little child. The place where they obtained accommodation could not take the husband and so the wife, with her child, eventually had to live with her mother. The house they had been residing in was sold and they were told to get out. I advised them to stay put, but they were eventually evicted.

There is no doubt that the Government has failed to provide adequate and sufficient housing. When members of the Labor Party are calling for the provision of more houses they are not merely putting on a show but are endeavouring to point out to the Government that the need of workers for housing is extremely great. There is a great deal of unhappiness and want amongst the workers of Western Australia and it is these men, with their own hands, who are responsible for producing the wealth of the State. It is all very well for the Government to welcome Japanese businessmen and investors to this State, and to make many speeches about the wealth that iron ore can bring to Western Australia. It is not so very long ago that there was no need for us to talk like that. What is the use of all the iron ore if we do not have a happy community? You know I am speaking the truth, Mr. President.

The policy of both the Commonwealth and State Governments is that the majority of the people should own their own homes. Naturally I agree with this policy, but the figures I have given dispute the authenticity of this policy. Apparently it is only being given lip service or, in other words, it is merely a catch-cry. In a country where the Government is asking people to have faith in their own State one would think the Government would be willing to assist those who want to build their own homes and, in particular, those who are in the lower income bracket and who expect the Government to provide homes on the basis of a small deposit and low rental.

At the present time a person desirous of building a home, after paying for a block of land is left without funds with which to build. We know that finance for houses is being channelled through the building societies but those seeking loans from the building societies are required to have 20 per cent. or 25 per cent. of

the cost as a deposit, and no working man is able to meet such a requirement. Why is it necessary, at this point of time, for eligible applicants to purchase homes by this means? The answer to this question lies in the Perth area. The commission is unable to meet the needs of applicants who submitted applications for houses as far back as 1964. This represents a lag, or a waiting period, of two years and nine months.

I visited the Fremantle area last week and people residing there told me they are a little better off, because the processing date is May, 1965; or, in other words, there is a waiting period of two years and three months. In the Midland area, however, the processing date provides that an applicant for a house has a waiting period of two years and one month.

It is understandable that, in the main, those people who are waiting for a purchase home to be allocated to them by the State Housing Commission are paying from \$12 to \$16 a week for flats. The other day I spoke to a man the members of whose family are living in three separate places. One of them is accommodated in a Government home, because the person who rented him a house would not allow any grown-up children in it. There is great unhappiness among the members of that family.

One can imagine the hardship of a couple with six or seven children paying from \$12 to \$16 a week for accommodation. Many of them are living on verandahs only as a result of the good-heartedness of people they know. Members can imagine people living on verandahs in the kind of weather we have been experiencing lately. I am sure if any honourable member of this House could see these people living under these conditions it would give him something to think about.

The housing needs of most of these people is made infinitely worse because most flat owners refuse to accommodate children. This is an undoubted fact. It is understandable that rental homes are not being provided in sufficient numbers and that the programme is lagging, because the Commonwealth Government is not making sufficient funds available to the housing commissions in the various States. We all know that the State can and should be able to obtain a greater annual grant of funds for allocation to the State Housing Commission.

I am also given to understand that the position has been aggravated on account of the State Housing Commission making a number of homes available to migrants. I found out that a man who has only just come out from London has been granted a house by the commission. In my opinion such a person should be part of the Commonwealth Government's responsibility; it should not be the responsibility

of the State Government to provide accommodation for him.

I have already referred to the land that was set aside in the Mt. Yokine area to be purchased at reasonable rates by workers to enable them to build their own homes, but now this Government has opened up the whole area that has sold the blocks at prices which no working man could afford. I have said what I can in protest against the present situation. That is all one can do. There is no doubt that the Government has fallen down on its job and many people in this State are still homeless. As a result the children of those people are committing crimes and filling our institutions. Teenagers especially are glad to get out on to the streets at night when their parents are living in a small flat or in a couple of rooms. Those children have nothing to induce them to remain at home. What follows is that they are charged with stealing a motorcar and so child delinquency is accentuated.

This is a problem which any Government should inquire into with a view to taking steps to remedy the position. Instead of talking about the wealth of the north it should be talking about the wealth which exists among the community and should be ensuring that working men and their families are properly housed and fed. If a family is lucky enough to have a house to rent, the wife, in many instances, is forced to go out to work to bring in sufficient income to purchase other necessities which cannot be bought from the income of the husband. In the light of such circumstances we see land prices rising ever upwards, and this is occurring in a State with millions of acres of vacant land.

Is not that stupid; and is it not stupid that a Government allows such a thing to continue? When Mr. Graham was the Minister for Housing he was successful in overtaking the lag and he was rapidly overcoming the problem when the present Government took office. The people have the right, of course, to change the Government if they so desire, and I hope they will realise the mistake they have made and that next year we will not be begging, in a State such as Western Australia with its vast reserves, for land on which to build homes for the families of those workers who provide the wealth of the country. They are the people who are entitled to a roof over their heads at night.

**THE HON. R. THOMPSON** (South Metropolitan) [8.30 p.m.]: I support the amendment moved by my leader. I listened intently—as did most members—to what the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Local Government had to say, but I found it difficult to understand their reasoning.

Firstly, I will deal with what the Minister for Local Government had to say. He said he was quite happy to see land

prices rising in an affluent society like ours, and he did not know of any solution to the problem.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Have you got one?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes; Labor can always find solutions to these problems as it did during the second World War and in 1953, when the housing outlook for people was grim as a result of the Liberal Government's mismanagement. In less than six years the waiting time for a purchase home was cut down to four months.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You didn't have any migrants.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: A Liberal Government increased the deposit of £50 to £100. Previously, it was possible to obtain a rental home within six weeks of making application. In regard to emergent cases, I have phoned the officers of the State Housing Commission at their homes on a Saturday afternoon. They have come in to their offices at the commission and, if the people concerned were in dire need, they were given keys.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchinson: And they were given accommodation.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Admittedly the accommodation was in areas which were a little down at the time. I am speaking of Medina.

It is ridiculous to say that rising land prices apply throughout the world and that this is a reflection of the economy. At the present time our economy must be very stimulated, much more so than that of Victoria. I say this, because land prices in the largest State of the Commonwealth—a third of the area of the Commonwealth—are higher than they are in Victoria. This can be found in statistics, if members would like verification. I read last Friday that land in Western Australia was dearer than it is in Victoria.

We have the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, which is not doing any planning.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Don't talk rot!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am not talking rot. If plans are changed 11 times in eight years—and the Minister knows this—how can a local authority plan its area? How can land be released? Now I come to the Gerald Road scheme, which the Minister quoted, under which the Cockburn Shire Council intended to make available 750 acres of urban land at a reasonable price. That was the wish, but it did not come to pass for the simple reason that the speculators were the first in. The upset price of this land was from £1,500 per block.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You had better use dollars.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, perhaps I had. I should have said \$3,000. The deposit was \$10, with repayment of several dollars per week at 8 per cent. interest.

At the present time that is the interest with the General Agency Company, but with other speculators in the field the interest is up to 12 per cent. The Minister gave his blessing and signed his approval for the sale of this land, as did the Water Supply Department, the State Electricity Commission, and the various other Government departments through which a plan has to go before it can be put into effect.

What did we find? The people with sufficient capital to build a home, could not do so because four chains is the maximum extension from a water main and, in some cases, the main was a mile away. The State Electricity Commission will not allow any more than three poles per consumer but the electricity was also a mile away. Therefore, the improvement of this land has been held up because of Government mismanagement.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchinson: That is it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will argue this out with anybody, and particularly the Minister.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Any time you like.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Several months ago, seven people in Gerald Road had to contribute several hundred dollars towards an extension of the water main. A few weeks later the department became big hearted and extended the main the rest of the way down the street.

I think it was grossly unfair that these people had to pay for a service while the rest of the people in the street got it for nothing. So I wrote to the Minister for Works, lodging my complaint and asking him to refund the money to the people who had contributed to the scheme. However, he would not refund it; but that is away from the argument I wish to put forward at this stage.

In regard to land subdivision, the planning authority placed deferred rings around urban and rural land, some to be released in the year 1970 and some mark you, Mr. President, in the year 2000.

At the time this legislation was going through this House, I think in 1961, I recall—I am sure Mr. Wise, who is looking at me, can recall this, too, because I was sitting where he is sitting now—having made the statement that the legislation would make millionaires out of some people and paupers out of others. That has proved to be quite true. Since then we have seen a blanket placed over rural land. It is no good the Minister saying that subdivided land is still available, because I appealed to him several months ago for a subdivision of several blocks of land in Wattleup Road, South Coogee.

I was making representations on behalf of an aged pensioner couple who could not afford to pay for the renovations to their house, which was in a shocking con-

dition. They desired to bring it up to the required standard. These people are now living somewhere on the other side of Southern Cross on a farm, and according to what I was told by their son, the house is possibly in a condition equally as bad as the one they vacated.

The Minister would not allow a subdivision of their property to enable them to sell several blocks of land to provide the money to bring their house up to the standard required by the local authority. I have this information in black and white; and it is only one case.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There are hundreds of them.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I took a deputation to the Minister and we listened to a planner tell us why these things could not be done, and what several local authorities wanted to see go on.

The properties of the market gardeners in Spearwood—where there is the greatest amount of land available for subdivision—adjoin. I am referring to properties in Rockingham Road, Hamilton Road, and any other road in Spearwood. These market gardeners have large families and like to live close to one another. Because they occupy rural land, and because the law provides for one house on one title, the owners are not permitted to subdivide. If they were allowed to excise a one quarter acre block as required we would have a continuous line of houses along these major roads.

These people have such services as water, electricity, schools, buses, and everything necessary for a subdivision, but they are not allowed to subdivide. Do members regard that as a common-sense way of dealing with the needs of people?

There are some people who have to purchase their blocks of land on terms extending over a number of years before they can start to build their own homes. This sort of thing is happening not only to the people to whom I have just referred; it is happening to thousands and thousands of young Western Australians. They are buying blocks of land on time payment. The figures quoted by the Minister are quite true; but there is no clear title to this land. However, the moment it is paid for, the people concerned can use the land as a deposit and commence building their homes.

There is another thing I would like to see done to overcome the crisis that is developing. People are now buying land in the Medina and Calista areas because it is being sold at a reasonable figure. I suggest to the Government that the Land Act be amended so that it will not be necessary to auction residential land. The land could then be sold to people, a condition of purchase being that they must construct a home within two years. This should be the case even when land is

bought at auction. In default of this condition, the land would be returned to the Lands Department. The upset price of the land at Medina and Calista is approximately \$900 to \$1,000, and I would rather see people go into the Lands Department to buy a block of land than have them attend auction sales. However, the Lands Department—which is the Government—is forcing up the price of land in this particular area.

All of the land in this area belongs to the Government, because it was compulsorily resumed in 1950 under the greater Kwinana plan. Here is a chance for the Government to show its sincerity by making the land available at a cheap rate to people who are prepared to live in the area.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Are you speaking of Calista or Spearwood?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am speaking of Medina and Calista. There are ways and means of remedying problems. The ex-Minister for Housing says there is no housing crisis in Western Australia. That is an amazing statement, because I have the records to prove there is.

In the year 1966 I had before the State Housing Commission 108 cases requiring emergent or near emergent consideration. Those cases were for the 12 months of 1966. I am not dealing with water pipes, water blockages, bathheaters, and so on when I quote that figure. That figure represents people whose positions were reviewed by the commission or an inspection was carried out by a State Housing Commission inspector.

On the 27th January I took out some figures—that is, for a period of seven months—and I dealt with 112 cases of this nature. So it can be seen that in those seven months I dealt with four more cases than I had in the previous 12 months. I believe that out of those 112 cases to date—the number has probably grown since and may be up to about 125 at the present time—seven people have been given homes. It has not been easy to get those homes, either.

To quote figures here and say that 26 months is the waiting period for the Fremantle area is nothing but a lie, because at the present time the State Housing Commission is dealing with both rental and purchase applications lodged in May, 1965. I will prove that in a moment.

A person whose application was lodged on the 15th May, 1965, and to whom I forwarded the notice to quit from the agent to the State Housing Commission, has been told he will have to wait his turn. This man received a letter telling him he had to leave his premises. Later he received a summons, and still later an eviction order. It is acknowledged in the letter I have mentioned that the person's listing date is the 15th May, 1965. The Housing Commission's reply to that man was, as I have said, that he would have to wait his turn.



We read in *Hansard* that the Minister has stated that the State Housing Commission is dealing with applications lodged in May, 1965. The man to whom I have referred supports his mother, his wife, and a large family. However, no assistance was forthcoming and he eventually took the job away from me because he was completely dissatisfied. Possibly, he thought I was not doing my job, but I had his case before the commission on no fewer than six occasions.

To my knowledge, the State Housing Commission has, for the past 16 months, been dealing with applications—rental applications—lodged in May, 1965—that is, applications which were lodged in May 1965 for rental accommodation. So I am not falling for half of the rubbish that has been put over us tonight; I know differently from personal experience.

Sixteen months ago purchase applications were a month behind rental applications. However, purchase applications have now caught up and both are on the same priority and listing.

I will now refer to emergent approval. I have a letter on my file which I will quote, and I will mention the name of the person concerned so that the State Housing Commission will know I am telling the truth. The name is Tarling, and on the 2nd May this lady was granted emergent approval by the commission. However, she is still waiting. She has two children and is living under appalling conditions. She would have to be, of course, to be granted emergent consideration; but she has been waiting since the 2nd May.

Business concerns are also feeling the strain of having to house workers. One large employer of labour in the O'Connor area—if not the largest, the second largest, employer—wrote to me on the 24th March, 1966. For obvious reasons I will not quote the industry engaged in by these people, but I will quote that part of the letter which concerns this matter. It is as follows:—

Dear Sir,

We are desperately requiring tradesmen for our factory which is situated in O'Connor. During the last 12 months we have lost quite a few tradesmen because of the acute shortage of State Housing Commission rental or purchase homes surrounding the O'Connor industrial areas. At the present moment there are several tradesmen who are leaving our employ unless something is done to assist them.

We are currently engaged in building and have large Government contracts for other units. We also have very large commitments for a large range of Transport equipment, which is needed urgently in this State.

If you could make representation on behalf of any of our employees who are in dire straights for housing, it would be of tremendous help to us in this most difficult position.

That letter was sent to me by the general manager of the company, and any member can have a look at it if he so wishes. It can be seen that it is not only the individual who is suffering but also the person who is engaging labour. I will refer to several cases, one of which concerns a chap who lives in a block of flats in North Fremantle.

He has four children and has been given a court eviction order which, expires on the 14th of this month. The listing date is the 25th January, 1967, but unfortunately he cannot be granted emergent consideration because it would be unfair to other applicants. The letter states that no houses are available, although four children are involved.

This man and his wife are very decent people. He is one of those who have been brought here to assist the development of the State. He is a tradesman, and a very, very good one. He has been to my house at night and to my knowledge he has been out every night in his effort to obtain a house or somewhere to live. Unfortunately, however, he has not found anything as yet and the State Housing Commission has refused any assistance, although he has been given an order from the court to quit his premises by the 14th of this month. Is there anything more emergent than that when four children are involved, one six weeks' old?

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: For what reason has he been evicted?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Because a person has bought the group of flats and is turning it into a large residential for his own needs. In one sense I am very pleased that someone has bought the property because it has been a source of annoyance for many years. It is in John Street, North Fremantle.

I have here another letter from the Housing Commission, dated the 14th December, 1966, and amongst other things it says—

While it is appreciated the family is living apart it is felt the Commission faced with heavy demands for its accommodation must have regard for the many families with housing problems who applied earlier and who are still awaiting assistance.

That file number had a 1961 original listing and a September 1966 second assistance listing.

I have the case of another family. The man concerned is a key tradesman. He took his wife to the north-west and they lived in a caravan. They have two children and they subsequently came south and now he is living in Armadale and his wife is living in Hamilton Hill. Another family

separated! They had an original listing date of 1959 and it is now recorded for the 16th January, 1967. These are the people who made the exciting north-west—the workers who went up there. However, it is not very exciting when they come back and cannot obtain a house for their family.

Here is another case which concerns a family which has been separated. The listing date of this one was the 5th December 1966. Four children are again involved. The man's wages amount to \$38 a week and rental is \$22 a week. Now, does a crisis exist? If the Minister wants the file number it is 9033/66.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: He is not interested.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It can be closely examined in the same way as I have examined it. I will go on with a few more later on, but at this stage I think I should quote from the "To Let" notices in last Saturday's edition of *The West Australian*. The following is some of the accommodation advertised in the paper to which I have referred:—

Mt. Lawley: 2 bedroom unfurnished flat—\$17.50 a week.

Applecross: 2 bedroom duplex, unfurnished—\$24 a week.

Daglish: 1 bedroom part furnished—\$15 a week.

Bayswater: 3 bedroom jarrah and weatherboard—\$17.15 a week.

Bicton: 2 bedroom unfurnished flats—\$17 a week.

Cottesloe: Unfurnished 2 bedroom units—one at \$25 a week, one at \$18 a week, and another at \$13 a week.

Mt. Lawley: \$14 a week for a fully furnished one bedroom flat.

Fremantle: Unfurnished flat for sober single adult—\$6 a week.

Except for the philanthropist who was offering a place rent free from September to Christmas, that was the cheapest flat available. To continue—

North Fremantle: Gents' accommodation—\$9 a week.

Hamilton Hill: 2 duplex apartments with 2 bedrooms—\$18 a week each.

Inglewood: Unfurnished home—\$13 a week.

Maylands: Partly furnished house—\$16 a week.

Melville: 2 bedroom furnished duplex—\$30 a week.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: And most of them will not take children, either.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There are no other houses. The advertisements continue with more flats. How can people afford to pay \$18 to \$25 a week for rent, especially when they have children? How would the person to whom I have referred, and who has been evicted, even if he were permitted to move into a two-bedroom duplex, which would not be big enough anyway, be able to pay that amount?

How is the person who is living in Kitchener Road paying \$22 per week? She only manages to pay it the way Mrs. Hutchison says; namely, by leaving her four children and going out to work part-time as a barmaid. This is what she is doing. This lady does not want to go out to work but she has to do so, because her husband is earning the grand sum of \$38 per week. I could go on in this strain indefinitely. I mention the case of a man, his wife and two children, who are living with the parents. The father is under a psychiatrist and is a very sick man, but unfortunately their application is an "await turn."

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Are you not sorry for the Housing Commission officers who have to face a Government like this?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Another case which I would like to mention and which I have been concerned with in the last few weeks affects people who are living in some of the worst conditions I have ever seen. One could not realise that human beings have to live under conditions such as these. The Fremantle City Council health inspectors carried out a full report and served a work order on the person. This was forwarded to the Housing Commission. In fact, I personally forwarded it. The listing date was the 9th July, 1965. The conditions are the most unhygienic and unhealthy that one could find, and yet it is "await turn".

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: Did the council condemn the house?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, a work order was served.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: It should condemn it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: What I am about to say will possibly touch a lot of people, as it did when it appeared on television and in the newspapers. To both these media I say a very sincere thank you. This has been in the Press, and so there is no harm in my mentioning any names or other information in connection with this matter. The woman concerned has six children and her husband deserted her some years ago. He was supposed to pay her maintenance, but he did not pay it. She was then living in a State Housing Commission home in Hilton Park.

This lady fell into arrears with the rental. On several occasions in 1961 I took up her case with the State Housing Commission. It is obvious that if one is not receiving any money, one cannot pay any money. Therefore, eventually she was taken to court and an eviction order was issued. However she left voluntarily and did not wait for the bailiff to institute proceedings.

The background of this case needs a little more explanation. Her mother-in-law and father-in-law allowed her to live with them for several years. Therefore, members will see that this woman is morally good, she is a good mother, and she had understand-

ing in-laws who knew she was a genuine person.

Because the children were growing up in cramped conditions, she had to find alternative accommodation. This was secured in Orient Street, South Fremantle, where she rented a house at \$7 a week, but later on the rent was increased to \$10 a week.

However, the person who owned this house would not give her receipts for her money. He then served an eviction order upon her, claiming that a pedestal pan had been broken. It is quite true that this had been broken, but I mention that it had been broken for six or seven weeks and had not been repaired. Nevertheless, he took out eviction proceedings against her and ultimately put her out onto the street. I emphasise that this lady has six children. This is Australia, and yet someone is permitted to put six children on a freezing cold night onto the street with all their belongings.

The lady did not owe this person any money, although it was claimed she was in arrears. The only reason why those arrears appear was because the landlord would not come to collect the rent, which he had been doing for several years previously. He said, "I want you out of the house." Needless to say, I had a few words to say to that chap.

However, he did evict her. Although Mr. Kim Beasley, M.H.R. had taken up her case previously, the Housing Commission said it could not provide her with accommodation because she owed money. This was quite true. The lady did owe money. When she was evicted from Hilton Park, the total was \$218. This amount of money was owed to the commission when she was evicted in 1961.

Eventually she received the widows' pension which, I emphasise, is not paid by the Child Welfare Department; and at the time I was dealing with this matter, which was in May of this year, she was receiving the handsome income of \$26 per week. Out of that amount she was paying \$10 per week rental. This left her with \$16 per week with which to feed, clothe, and bring up six beautiful Australian children. They are beautiful, and I mention that I would be proud of any one of them.

On top of that she repaid \$52 to the Housing Commission out of this princely income of \$26 per week which she was receiving. She did not owe a cent to any of the tradesmen who called on her.

What did the commission do? It refused point blank to assist her. The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Tonkin, wrote about the case in his political column. I mention that eventually I felt sorry for some of the officers of the Housing Commission because they did not get much peace from me. When this case hit the Press, two people rang within 15 minutes of the paper being out on the Perth streets and offered to pay the \$138 which

was still owing to the Housing Commission, providing it would give her a house. The Housing Commission said to me at this time that it wanted to see the bill paid first without giving any promise of a house. This is as true as I stand here.

I personally paid the money. I went to the commission after she had received a grilling—at which I was not allowed to be present—during which the commission hauled her over the coals and asked all the personal questions in the world. Usually I do not have anything to say against the Housing Commission officers because in most cases I have found them good, sincere, hard working, and willing to assist people.

However, on this occasion I think they overstepped the mark, because this woman was in a state of nervous collapse when she came away. Admittedly one officer who came in and took over from the first interviewer did the right thing and went out to get her a cup of coffee. He brought the welfare officer in to her.

So it can be seen that despite the fact that this woman had been subjected to this nervous stress for many weeks, the State Housing Commission refused to assist her until the money was paid. If we cannot look after our own Australians better than that, I think that Bettyanne Hopkins, in stating that we have problems in trying to house migrants, is guilty of making an understatement.

If there is no housing crisis in this State, why is it that the Anglican synod last week—I think a report appeared in last Friday's newspaper—is suspending its migration programme to assist people to come to Australia because of the acute housing situation in this State? Further, over the past 12 months other organisations that are responsible for assisting migrants have stopped their activities because migrants are unable to be housed.

I could continue for quite a long time dealing with each individual case, because I have notes on many of them. I will quote a recent one which is dated the 31st July. This involves a woman with two children. She has been deserted by her husband. She is a capable person, and she is seeking accommodation to house her children so that she can obtain employment. The Housing Commission cannot grant her accommodation, so rather than rent a house closer to her place of employment in Perth she remains where she is, out of work, and so she will become a burden on the Child Welfare Department. This means that the finances of the State suffer further loss.

I have notes of another case of 11 people living in a two-bedroom house. Yet, in the face of all this, the Government says there is no housing crisis. I have notes of yet another case of a mother and four children. This woman was flown out from London by the Immigration Department. Within six weeks of submitting an applica-

tion, she arrived in Perth. This was possibly one of the most expeditious moves the Immigration Department has ever made. This woman was brought out to assist her sick daughter. However, the reply to her application for a home is, "No; await turn."

I will now quote a letter addressed to me from a lady in Medina. It reads—

I am writing to see if you can be of some assistance to me. I am a new migrant to Australia. I am living with my daughter at the above address. She has three children, two girls and one boy. They are all sleeping in the one room, as my husband and I have her other bedroom, and my daughter and her husband have the other one.

I have had my name on the State Commission homes list for over one year now. I came out here on a holiday two years ago and loved the country well. I was told if I came back I would get a house in six weeks, provided that my husband got a job in the area. Well I went back to Scotland and packed up my house and the rest of my family and we came back. Well I have been put off and put off. Then my daughter thought of writing to you, as you were the Labor candidate for the area.

I hope with all my heart you can do something for me and my husband as it is starting to break up my daughter's life, as one year is too long for anyone to be staying with someone else in this house. I also hope you will answer this letter.

If nothing can be done my husband and I are going to go back to Scotland as we can always have our house there again, but we both love Australia and want to make our home here. Well I will ask again.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: In what sort of home were they living in Scotland, and what did they do with the proceeds of the sale?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will come to that. I am nowhere near finished with this case. When these people visited the State some three years ago, the waiting period for homes in the Medina-Calista area was six weeks. The waiting period was still six weeks 19 months ago. It was six weeks from the time an applicant submitted his name for a house in Medina before he actually moved in. The reply to a letter from one applicant reads as follows:—

This application is recorded on the Kwinana priority list as from the 10th May, 1966.

I want members to listen to this. I was then advised that although this applicant's turn for accommodation at Medina may be reached it would be appreciated that, whilst the commission had applicants with

young children to be housed, such families had to take precedence over couples without children. In this case there is only a man and his wife, and at this point of time I cannot indicate when the commission will be in a position to give consideration to the application.

The normal procedure is that when an applicant's turn is reached, he immediately receives accommodation. I went to Medina again and interviewed this lady, and she said to me, "I cannot understand it. When I was here previously, I went to the Housing Commission's representative in Medina and he said, 'You return here and, provided your husband gets a job in the area, I will get you a house within six weeks.'" This was a statement of fact and I would not dispute it. In the meantime, however, because of the embarrassingly long waiting periods and the number of applicants waiting for homes, it was decided to alter the policy in regard to allocating houses at Medina.

Previously, if one worked in the Medina area, one could obtain a house in that area. Some 19 months ago, however, this policy was changed. Now people working in Midland, Scarborough, Perth, or Fremantle, who desire to live in Medina, can put themselves on the priority list for a house in that area. This policy, of course, has completely upset the people who are working in the Medina district, because they cannot obtain houses in that area. I think the policy is completely wrong. I agree with the policy which was implemented several years ago in regard to Medina which enabled men who worked in the Kwinana complex to obtain houses in Medina, because those houses initially were built for this particular type of worker. Now that the policy has been changed, anyone can be allocated a house in Medina irrespective of his place of employment.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: The policy was changed without regard to previous commitments?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes. As a matter of fact I objected when I heard of the change in policy. I expressed my objection to the General Manager of the State Housing Commission. I said, "This is wrong. We will have people travelling to Fremantle and even to Perth to their place of work. I know this to be a fact."

So it can be seen that this person, in effect, had the three-card trick put over her, because the policy was changed during the absence of herself and her husband from Australia. Following this, when her turn for a house was reached and she was refused a home, I said, "What about double-unit accommodation?" That is what is commonly referred to as pensioner accommodation. However, they were refused even that by the commission.

I said, "Let us try the Fremantle area."

But we were told there was to be no assistance. I know from the priority list for Medina and the Fremantle area that the turn of the person in question came up three months ago; it is three months overdue, and yet she has been refused assistance. If members would like to read through the couple of hundred letters I have here they are at liberty to do so. I will conclude that aspect of my speech on the case I have just mentioned.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: They can have mine as well.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have here the case of a person who vacated his premises because they had been condemned. He was refused help by the Housing Commission, because his salary was just over the amount which would have enabled him to qualify for rental accommodation. He was not eligible for assistance because of his salary. The person in question has changed his job to enable him to earn a bit more money. The job he has is a most arduous one, but he is doing it for one reason only—and he has told the Housing Commission what the reason is. The position is that this man has an 11-months' old baby who has a hole in the heart. Because of this, he changed his job to enable him to obtain enough money to have his child operated on in approximately 12 months' time.

The condemnation order on this house was made on the 15th May; it is a 30-day order, and the commission has written to the man concerned to say it cannot assist him. This is surely most inhuman, particularly when we have a father who is trying to save sufficient money to enable a life-saving operation to be carried out on his child; yet the commission is not prepared to assist him, because his salary is a few measly dollars over that allowed for rental accommodation. Those are some of the cases which I feel require a closer look by the housing commission.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Are they all deserted wives?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There are only a couple of deserted wives among the cases on my files.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You quoted three or four.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I do quite a lot of work in my electorate in connection with housing. If the honorable member wishes, he is at liberty to read all the cases I have on this file. I would not mind leaving them in your office, Mr. President, if you would like to read all these letters. They certainly make very interesting reading.

The PRESIDENT: I have no desire to take advantage of your offer.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: We have surely reached the point in Western Australia where there should be some thought given

to introducing legislation to control rents and tenancies. We have a different set of landlords today from those that we had in 1955. I know of many foreign landlords who are not even in the country and who are involved in buying and letting houses. I know of migrants from Europe who buy old houses and who charge iniquitously high rents. I mentioned the case of a family with six children who were paying \$10 a week for accommodation which could only be described as a stable. There was also the case of a woman who was evicted from a house which had one bedroom and a kitchen and which was let at \$11 a week. She was being put out because the landlord thought he would get \$14 a week from migrant families who were coming out.

It is time we had a look at what people are asked to pay for accommodation when it is in such short supply. It is absurd to say there is no housing crisis when there are 12,000 people looking for accommodation. In my book that is certainly a crisis.

I support the amendment moved by my leader, though I know it will be defeated by the weight of numbers. I recall several years ago when by sheer weight of numbers my pleas, particularly in connection with the Marketing of Onions Act, were rejected. However, the people recognise what is done by Parliament. The people are not prepared to suffer the injustices inflicted by parliamentary parties, particularly when these parties feel they can put it over the people all the time. When the time is opportune, the people will eventually get rid of the party which is not doing the right thing by the masses, and next February will be the testing time.

**THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND** (North) [9.25 p.m.]: I think those members who have spoken tonight in support of the amendment have covered the ground very thoroughly, and there is nothing I can add in relation to the housing problem in the metropolitan area.

I do wish, however, to draw the attention of members to the fact that a housing crisis also exists outside the metropolitan area. For instance, we have the disgraceful set of circumstances which exists at Port Hedland, for which the Government is directly responsible by not providing houses for people whom it knows will be going to Port Hedland. The companies concerned are certainly supplying houses for their employees; but the Government has been sitting back and saying that the people are well housed at Mt. Tom Price, at Mt. Goldsworthy, at Dampier, and at Finucane Island.

Of course they are well housed; but they are well housed at the companies' expense. The companies provide them with first-class housing at very cheap rentals. But in the town of Port Hedland the housing conditions are disgraceful;

they are absolutely shocking. It is so overcrowded that occupiers of State rental homes have had to take in people who have come up there by caravan—or without caravans—in an attempt to try to accommodate them; and this in addition to accommodating their own families. Members can well imagine just how overcrowded many of these homes are.

The Government has been telling us for more than three years what is going to happen in Port Hedland. It has told us it will burst its boundaries; that the township will run out of land; that we will have to look for land seven or eight miles out. That has, of course, happened, but what has the Government done about it? It has done absolutely nothing. It has not even introduced a water supply system; and some hundreds of houses are required.

The Minister says there is no such thing as a crisis in housing. I suggest the Minister visit Port Hedland, look around the district, and talk with the shire president and the townspeople generally. Not only are they perturbed about the very acute shortage of housing in the town — a situation which has been known for more than three years — but also about the provision of added services, such as water and electricity.

I support the amendment fully, because of the conditions which exist at Port Hedland and which stand out. There could be other towns on the goldfields, such as those where nickel has been found, which are similarly affected; but I can speak only of a place I know. I am sure the Government deserves censure on this question.

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

#### Ayes—9

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. J. Dolan         | Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs |
| Hon. J. J. Garrigan   | Hon. W. F. Willesee  |
| Hon. E. M. Heenau     | Hon. F. J. S. Wise   |
| Hon. R. F. Hutchison  | Hon. R. Thompson     |
| Hon. H. C. Strickland | (Teller)             |

#### Noes—17

|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Hon. C. R. Abbey     | Hon. G. C. MacKinnon   |
| Hon. N. E. Baxter    | Hon. N. McNeill        |
| Hon. G. E. D. Brand  | Hon. T. O. Perry       |
| Hon. V. J. Ferry     | Hon. S. T. J. Thompson |
| Hon. A. F. Griffith  | Hon. J. M. Thomson     |
| Hon. C. E. Griffiths | Hon. H. K. Watson      |
| Hon. J. Heltman      | Hon. F. D. Willmott    |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop    | Hon. H. R. Robinson    |
| Hon. L. A. Logan     | (Teller)               |

#### Pair

Aye.

No

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery Hon. A. R. Jones

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. G. Hislop.

House adjourned at 9.35 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 8th August, 1967

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

### TWO PEOPLE BAY CAMPING AREA: ALBANY

*Closure: Petition*

MR. HALL (Albany) [4.33 p.m.]: I present a petition, containing 896 signatures, to the House from the residents and electors of the Albany region in the State of Western Australia praying that the Two People Bay camping area will not be closed. I move—

That the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

### QUESTIONS (26): ON NOTICE

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

##### *Investigations into Local Authority Boundaries*

1. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) When is it anticipated that the Local Government Assessment Committee will have completed its investigations and made its report at least on the question of local authority boundaries?

(2) Does he appreciate that numbers of long overdue adjustments of ward boundaries are held up awaiting a decision following submission of the report?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) By early December.

(2) There have been no instances of applications for variations in ward boundaries having been delayed.

### JUNIOR AND LEAVING EXAMINATIONS

#### *Publication of Results*

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has it been agreed, or are there proposals, to change the present system of publicising the names of candidates and the results of—

(a) Junior;

(b) Leaving;

certificate examinations?

(2) If so, in what manner?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) and (2) Officers of the Public Examinations Board are working on proposals to supply details of percentage marks and certificates direct to candidates with a copy of overall results to schools. These