

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Here is an assurance which any reasonable person would accept. It shows how stupid I was to accept it—

Mr Grayden: If you have not an argument, abuse your opponent.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: —and to believe there would not be any variation of the hours until there was consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Rushton: Your own members cannot stand your argument.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: You would know, Mr Speaker, for many years it has been the custom that after the House has been sitting for some weeks and rising at tea time on a Thursday, the Premier of the day consults with the Leader of the Opposition and informs the House, in sufficient time to enable country members to make other arrangements, that on and after a certain date it is proposed to sit after tea.

But no such indication was given to the Opposition in this case.

Mr Grayden: You haven't got much support, have you?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: The only consultation—

The SPEAKER: I urge the Leader of the Opposition to endeavour to avoid tedious repetition on this matter.

Mr Grayden: He would have nothing to talk about.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Mr Speaker, if you will stop some members on the Government side who are preventing my making the point I want to make, there will be no need for me to repeat my remarks. What I want to establish—and I am making this declaration here and now—is that henceforth I am not prepared to accept the word of the Premier on anything.

Sir Charles Court: Well, that is your business. Coming from you, it ill-becomes you.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: After this exhibition, where a definite assurance is given—

Mr Rushton: How many times did you have to apologise to the House for making incorrect statements?

Mr J. T. TONKIN: I remind the Minister that I never hesitated to apologise when I became aware of the fact that I had given incorrect information.

Mr Rushton: You claim everyone else is denying his statements.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Here is the Premier denying his assurance and the Minister is supporting him. The Minister is as bad as the Premier.

Mr Rushton: I have every pleasure in supporting him.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Does the Premier say no assurance was given?

Sir Charles Court: It still stands.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: We are disgusted—

Mr Rushton: They must be—there are none of them here.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: —by the tactics adopted by the Government to the extent of coercing the Chairman of Committees and breaking an assurance given to the House.

Sir Charles Court: That is not true.

Mr J. T. TONKIN: As far as we are concerned, the Government can have it on its own.

Mr Rushton: The Opposition members are all standing outside the door.

Sir Charles Court: They are going to fall in the door any minute—how silly can you be?

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the direction of the House passed on Thursday, the 12th day of September, 1974, I now put the question, That this Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

*House adjourned at 12.13 a.m.
(Wednesday).*

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 18th September, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

TRADE UNION OFFICIALS

Bashing

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

Following Press reports of bashings inflicted on trade union officials, will the Minister confirm that—

- (1) Mr. Robert Cowles was recently observed in a Swanbourne area hotel engaged in a verbal argument with a group of Collie miners, and

- (2) No assault on Mr. Cowles' person or his companions took place?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

I thank the honourable member for giving prior notice of the question to the Minister for Police. His reply is as follows—

- (1) A police inquiry is taking place but is not yet complete. However, according to information available, Mr Cowles was observed in the Swanbourne Hotel arguing with a group of working men. It is not known whether or not they were miners.
- (2) Information to hand indicates that no blows were struck and in fact the only argument that took place was verbal.

QUESTIONS (11): ON NOTICE

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Grants Commission Allocation

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Minister for Justice:

When are the funds allocated by the Grants Commission to shire councils expected to be released?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

The Special Minister of State in Canberra has assured the Minister in reply to his telegram, that the necessary legislation will be introduced early in the Budget Session to enable payment of grants as soon as practicable.

2. WELSHPOOL ROAD

Upgrading

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) (a) In view of the dangerous condition of the Welshpool Road, will the Main Roads Department allocate Commonwealth Aid Roads funds to the Canning Town Council this year;
- (b) if so, how much?
- (2) (a) Will the Main Roads Department continue to allocate funds yearly until the road is considered to be in a satisfactory condition;
- (b) if so, what are the anticipated yearly funds that will be made available to the Canning Town Council for this work?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Council has applied for \$50 000 under the proposed Statutory Grant Scheme and the work has a high priority.
- (2) (a) and (b) Should the Council apply for funds out of the Statutory Grant Scheme for further work in future years, it is expected that application will receive favourable consideration but a decision will depend on an assessment of priorities in relation to other projects.

3.

EDUCATION

National Conference on Isolated Children

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did the Minister for Education receive an invitation to attend a National Conference on Isolated Children's Education held in Brisbane between the 2nd September and the 6th September, 1974?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes"—
- (a) did the Minister attend the conference, or did he delegate any person to represent him; and
- (b) is he aware that not one of the Parliamentary representatives from the electorates of Gascoyne, Murchison-Eyre, Pilbara, Kimberley or North Province, received invitations to attend the conference?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that the conference was attended by a Labor Member of Parliament from a Perth electorate who said he was an observer acting as the Shadow Minister for the North West?
- (4) Who issued the invitations, and paid the fares of the persons attending the conference from Western Australia?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The Education Department received an invitation.
- (2) (a) The Superintendent of Research attended as representative of the Education Department.
- (b) No.
- (3) No.

(4) Invitations emanated from the Queensland Education Department. Fares were paid by nominating authorities and also by the organisers of the conference who obtained Commonwealth assistance for this purpose.

4. WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY

Plant

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Education:

Further to my question of the 12th September, 1974, relating to the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Works—

- (1) What further moneys will be needed to start up the plant when installation is complete?
- (2) From where is it proposed to obtain these additional funds?
- (3) What specific delays were encountered when ordering plant?
- (4) Was the previous Government informed of the twelve month delay due to studying alternate plant?
- (5) Will the Minister table the report on the studies of alternate plant if one was made?
- (6) If no report was submitted, why not?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) None.
- (2) Answered by (1) above.
- (3) The principal item of foundry equipment, a Disa 2013 automatic moulding machine, was ordered on 17th October, 1973. It was to be shipped early July, 1974 for delivery in August, 1974. This equipment has not yet been received, although it has been shipped. It was carried on to Sydney because of the new overseas shipping schedules which by-pass Western Australia on southbound voyages.
- (4) No specific report was made.
- (5) No. It contains matters of a confidential nature relating to the commercial operations of the Industry.
- (6) A report was submitted to the Board of Management.

5.

EDUCATION

Midland Technical School

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that—
 - (a) the "student common room" at Midland Technical school is an old primary school shelter shed, open on one side and unlit;
 - (b) there is no canteen in the school; and
 - (c) the homecrafts room (room 24) at the school is a dilapidated structure, formerly condemned, and an eyesore and fire hazard?
- (2) Is there any intention of providing recreational and refreshment facilities for the 4 000 students who will enrol at Midland Technical school in 1975?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) There are no plans to provide student recreational and refreshment facilities at Midland Technical School for 1975.

6.

ORRONG ROAD

Extension

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the extension of Orrong Road from Kewdale to the base of the Lesmurdie Hill to be undertaken this financial year?
- (2) If so, what is—
 - (a) the anticipated completion date; and
 - (b) the anticipated expenditure?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is "No"—
 - (a) is this road considered a priority; and
 - (b) when is work due to commence?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) See (1).
- (3) Although this work is desirable, it did not have sufficient priority to be included in the 1974-75 Main Roads Department's Programme and it will be reviewed next year.

7.

EDUCATION

Perth Technical College Sites

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Since Perth Technical College is to be rebuilt on a new site, will the present very valuable sites in St. George's Terrace and James Street be sold?
- (2) If so, will any of the proceeds of the sales be used to provide new buildings for existing technical schools at present using antiquated facilities, such as Midland Technical School?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) and (2) A decision as to the future of the site has not been reached.

8.

FAUNA WARDENS

Number and Qualifications

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many full-time wardens are employed by the Fauna Protection Department?
- (2) Of these, how many are actively engaged in—
 - (a) field work; and
 - (b) administration?
- (3) What qualifications are required by the Fauna Protection Department in the employment of full-time fauna wardens?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter for the Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) Twenty, plus two Aboriginal trainees under the Commonwealth Welfare Aboriginal Training Centre.
- (2) (a) Nineteen plus two Aboriginal trainees.
(b) One.
- (3) Minimum educational qualification—Junior Certificate. Generally speaking appointments are made from within the Department of Fisheries and Fauna from Assistant Wardens or Assistant Inspectors who have acquired a sound knowledge and background of Fauna and Fisheries during their service and training with the Department.

9.

HOUSING

Girrawheen, Lockridge, and Bentley: Vacant Units

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Justice:

Will the Minister advise—

- (1) The number and type of State Housing Commission accommodation units vacant in—
 - (a) Girrawheen;
 - (b) Lockridge; and
 - (c) Bentley?
- (2) How many of the vacancies are due to—
 - (a) maintenance; and
 - (b) other reasons?
- (3) The waiting period for accommodation in these areas?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) (a) Girrawheen—Vacant units as at 18/9/74—

	Under Maintenance	Under Allocation	Awaiting Allocation
Flats 1 B/R
2 B/R
3 B/R
B.S.R.
Town House 3 B/R	15	3	39
Duplex 1 B/R
2 B/R	1	....
3 B/R	1	....
House 1 B/R
2 B/R
3 B/R	1*	....
4 B/R

* 9A Aboriginal House.

- (b) Lockridge—Vacant Units as at 18/9/74—

	Under Maintenance	Under Allocation	Awaiting Allocation
Flats 1 B/R	....	....	1
2 B/R	9	5	1
3 B/R	10	13	1
B.S.R.	1	....	....
Town House 3 B/R	4	....	....
Duplex 1 B/R	....	....	....
2 B/R	....	1	....
3 B/R	2	....	1
Houses	....	....	....

- (c) Bentley—Vacant Units as at 18/9/74—

	Under Maintenance	Under Allocation	Awaiting Allocation
Flats 1 B/R	....	2	....
2 B/R	....	1	....
3 B/R	....	3	....
Town House 3 B/R	3	....	....
Duplex	....	....	....
Houses 1 B/R	....	....	....
2 B/R	....	....	....
3 B/R	1*	....	....

* 9A Aboriginal House.

- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) On a wait-turn basis, the Commission is currently allocating accommodation to applicants whose listing date is as under: however, applicants in an emergent or need situation can be assisted ahead of turn.

Waiting Periods:—

		1 B/R Pens. Flats	2 B/R Flat	3 B/R Flat	Town House	2 B/R House	3 B/R House
Girrawheen	....	Dec. '72	Aug. '73	To Date	Jan. '74	April '72	Jan. '74
Lockridge	....	Dec. '72	Aug. '73	To Date	Jan. '74	April '72	Jan. '74
Bentley	....	Nov. '73	To Date	June '73	Dec. '72	Oct. '71	Dec. '72

10. **ROADS***Sand and Gravel Pits: Regeneration*

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister for Health:

Would he ensure that those responsible be commended for the ripping and levelling of all sand and gravel pits adjacent to main and arterial roads thereby assisting in the regeneration of these areas?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

Yes. The Main Roads Department has a continuing programme for this type of work.

11. **DRIVE-IN THEATRE***South Hedland*

The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Justice:

In view of the interest already displayed by entrepreneurs, and the probability that the population will exceed 5 000 by the end of 1975, when will the availability of a drive-in theatre site in South Hedland be advertised?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

Although the Commission is not aware of the interest of entrepreneurs it would welcome the opportunity of discussion with interested parties so that the Commission can determine if it is now appropriate to invite propositions for the development of the drive-in theatre.

FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), read a first time.

RURAL AREAS

Attitude of Federal Government: Motion

THE HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central)
[4.54 p.m.]: I move—

That this House deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas and in particular its obvious lack

of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia.

It would have given me great pleasure to-night to have withdrawn this motion because of the provisions of the Federal Budget. The Federal Government had the greatest opportunity of any Government in our lifetime to do something for the rural areas of Australia, and in particular for those of Western Australia. We have only to read the small amount of space allocated by the Press in this morning's *The West Australian* to the portions of the Budget affecting rural activities, to realise that the Government failed to grasp the opportunity. We see the heading, "Not much for farmers"—which is the understatement of the year! Obviously there was not much in the Budget for farmers, but one would think, looking at that headline, that farmers will stay pretty well on an even keel. It appeared that even though farmers had not been given much, they had not lost much either.

One of the things mentioned in this evening's copy of the *Daily News* is the dairying subsidy, but, of course, this was removed in the last Federal Budget. I do not feel it should have been mentioned in the 1974 Budget because everyone knew of this provision. We also see the report of \$13 million to meet the cost of the Wool Corporation's floor plan reserve price scheme. This money will come from the fund built up by selling wool profitably through the Wool Corporation's plan, so the Federal Government has not given the farmers anything there.

When we look to see what the farmers have lost, we find rural reconstruction is down on the previous Budget by \$17.2 million; we will add the dairy bounty of \$9 million to the list because the Press wants to add it; the superphosphate bounty is \$34 million less than last year; and the only addition is an extra \$10 million for marginal dairy farm reconstruction.

So from 1971 to 1974, the amounts made available for the rural areas of Australia have fallen from \$367.2 million to \$172 million—more than half—and this at a time when the rural industries of the country are facing their greatest challenge.

Again referring to the comments in the *Daily News*, the leader of our wonderful land—one, Whitlam—talks about his Budget and calls it a good start. I suppose if one pushed someone from the top of a

slippery dip that would be a good start, but that is about the only thing one could say about the Budget for the rural industries. The article states—

Mr Whitlam told the House: "We have guaranteed that our Budget will not set out deliberately to create mass unemployment . . ."

And I ask members to note the word "deliberately". To continue—

"It will stimulate employment opportunities. It will reverse the unemployment trend . . ."

What rot! The man is an idiot! He has shown this clearly in the time he has been Prime Minister. By the latest Gallup poll we see that the general public has realised this already, and the public wants to see another election to show the gentleman just that.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You said that before the last election.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Not again!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The total mismanagement of this country by the socialists is obvious.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Rant and bluster!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If the honourable Mr Dans wants to make some statements to support his great and glorious Prime Minister, he ought to speak out loud.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He is your Prime Minister too.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are making the speech, I do not intend to interrupt you.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will show that the people represented by Opposition members are being sacrificed on the altar of socialist philosophy. You have no interest in the working man.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I or the President?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is the honourable member who interjects. The President never interrupts.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I will readily interrupt the honourable member if he does not comply with Standing Orders.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I defer to your wishes, Sir. Those Opposition members who interject show the great lack of knowledge in their party as to who produces the wealth of this country. I heard little "Sir Echo" at the back of the Chamber say, "rubbish", but this is not so. Members of the Federal Government think they know something about economics but they have shown in the drastic 20-odd months they have been running the country how little they do know. They have made no effort to provide incentives to anyone.

I wonder who will suffer as a result of the Federal Government's proposal to reduce the allowable deduction for education expenses. Whose educational opportunities will suffer? Will it be the student in the city, who can catch a tram to his senior high school, or will it be the person who is doing the pioneering work of this country in the north or in the agricultural areas, who must send his child away to attend a five-year high school? With any luck, it will be a six-year high school in the near future.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think the trams have been out for a while.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Well, I will move to buses. The economic policy of members opposite is right back in the tram age; actually, it is back in the horse and cart age. Members opposite do not understand the basic economics of how, from its inception, this country's strength was gained, and how that strength will continue.

Let us look at the crisis which exists at the moment in the rural industry in this State and let me give members some examples of what is happening in, say, the agricultural areas of Western Australia. The people who have developed their farms over a number of years and who have reached a situation where they can be good husbands to their farms are now faced with a deficit. They must contribute all their work; that is nothing. However, even their running costs are a deficit. Do members opposite believe that this is the way to treat an industry which is responsible for between half and two-thirds of our overseas trade? I certainly do not.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What if I agreed with all you are saying? I could not change anything for you.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The complete ignorance of the interjections leave me speechless.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I wish it did.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Hasten the day!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The Leader of the Opposition with his total lack of knowledge can go on speaking; I am quite prepared to stand here until 10.00 o'clock tonight to get my message across to members opposite.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I will not be listening to you.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You will fall over.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Some people fall over and some do not. Some people are so small and so close to the ground that they do not need to fall over.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think you would be like me: you would roll back onto your feet again.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Let me continue with my remarks. These farmers have always endeavoured to produce from their land the maximum amount the land has to offer this country.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I thought you were going to talk about all farmers, not just some of them.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will ignore that interjection because I believe the Leader of the Opposition is already getting fairly tender on a discussion he knows he cannot win. In one case concerning a family farm, in the next week or so three grown sons will walk off their father's farm and go onto unemployment benefits because that farm is making no money and their father cannot afford to employ them. They will go onto unemployment benefits, when with a little incentive they could have carried on and done something useful for the country.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Tell us what happened to the Australian Labor Party guaranteed farm income plan.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are a very good Whip. You are assisting him to make a reasonable speech. He is not doing too well by himself.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Little "Sir Echo" seems to be running around the Chamber. I do not really think the member who continually interjects should ever become land locked. I think he should stay out in the bay and sink himself as low as he is sinking himself by some of the remarks he is making today.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is not very nice.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: He gets very nasty, doesn't he?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The huge loss on borrowed money that many of these farmers face must be recovered from somewhere. Let me give the House an example of a small farm of, say, 600 acres in a 25-inch to 30-inch rainfall area, where the farmer's net produce would return him some \$9 600 on today's market, with the guaranteed floor price operating. His super-phosphate would cost him about \$1 500; his repairs and replacements would cost a minimum of \$400; I have assessed his fuel costs at about \$360 per year, or \$30 a month, which, with the recent fuel increases imposed by the Federal Government, would just about get a person around the metropolitan area once a week; insurance against fire and flood would cost him about \$500; normally, he would borrow against about one-seventh or one-eighth of the value of his property, so I have allowed him \$10 000 for this, on which he would pay some \$1 100 in interest; his shearing costs would be \$2 400, or more; his crutching and drenching costs would be \$1 200 a year; as I believe any private enterprise person probably would have a modicum of life insurance I have allowed him \$200 for

life insurance; I have allowed \$450 for clothing for the farmer, his wife, and his two children—a vast amount which probably would purchase the basic necessities and which would enable the farmer to buy only two pairs of work boots a year and no more; school fees would amount to another \$200; and, hire-purchase on his motor vehicle would be about \$600.

That would leave the farmer with the princely sum of \$690 a year for all the other things, including food. It is a fascinating exercise to go through because, when one considers the wages he would receive in another occupation and the interest which would accrue if he invested the money he had tied up in his farm, one can see that he finishes up with a loss of about \$11 000.

I believe this is a very serious problem. Do we want people to leave their farms and go onto unemployment benefits? It is only a trickle now but within six months these numbers will steadily increase. These people, who wish to produce and work for the country and who are prepared to work long hours should be looked after.

I move from the scene of the farmer to the case of the country businessman. What is going to happen to him? To start with, he will cut his staff down to the bare minimum. But even that will not help a great deal because the retrenched staff will not remain in the rural areas. Usually, they are very good workers, trained to the farmer's needs and, of course, they will be irreplaceable if ever a decent Government gains office in Canberra and provides some stimulation to the rural scene. The country businessman will still have his overheads to consider. He will still try to provide parts although, because of union stoppages, parts are becoming harder and harder to get.

In the last year, the delivery of parts which have been ordered for six or seven months has been systematically stopped by union action and the people who need the parts in order to produce something are denied them.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Charlie said he was going to put things right.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The Leader of the Opposition is parrot-like in his calls about putting things right. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he talk to Mr Whitlam and tell him to get out of being Prime Minister of this country and let us put things right all over the country. We have never seen such a shemozzle in this country as we see today, due on the one hand to pure ignorance and on the other to the total arrogance of people who will never learn. These people will learn, all right, but the cost to this country will be so great that the unemployment rate will astound us all. Never mind the talk of 200 000 and 250 000 unemployed; that will be just child's play because we will have 500 000 or more unemployed if this maniac is allowed to go on.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: What about getting down to some specific cases. We have heard no facts yet. All you have given us are hypothetical situations.

The Hon. N. McNeill: What did Mr Cameron say about unemployment?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The jigsaw can go on. The flow-on from these country businessmen to the manufacturer is quite rapid. People have very short memories; they do not recall the last rural recession when one major Australian firm retrenched 1 600 men in one week.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Where was that?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It was in a place called Sunshine in Victoria.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: What Government was in power then?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am not interested in what Government was in power.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It was a Liberal-Country Party Government.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am interested in getting something done, and getting it done now. The Government that was in power then did something that the present Government shows no sign of doing. The ignorance of people who think they are looking after the worker is amazing. The worker will recognise the fact that the entire community will be affected by the decisions of the Federal Government. Those who can least afford it—not only the tradesmen but also the labourers—will be out of jobs if the rural industries of this country are not looked after in a reasonable fashion.

To a large extent, the farmer can provide for his own requirements. He can grow his own vegetables, kill his own meat, and milk his own cows. But can the tradesman and the labourer in the city do that? Of course they cannot. Because the farmer cuts back his production, less goods will come onto the market and prices will rise. Whom will this affect? It will be the average working man of Australia who will be hit hardest. Does this Government see this? Of course it does not.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What Government are you talking about?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Dans knows that I am talking about Whitlam's mob; that is all one can call them.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You said this Government.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am sorry to have to keep correcting everything the member says; I am referring to the Government mentioned in my motion.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Be specific; I might get confused.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It would not be hard for the member to become confused. All his interjections this afternoon have indicated that he is confused.

Let me now discuss the suggestion of the Deputy Prime Minister to set up a board to help those businessmen who have been disadvantaged by the Government's policies. Has anyone heard of anything so ridiculous? Every man Jack of those businessmen can and will, if given incentive and support, look after his own business.

If the farmers are given incentives and support the businessmen concerned automatically will look after their own businesses. Yet here we have the Deputy Prime Minister suggesting that a board be established to teach the businessmen their job; and I might point out that some of the businessmen have been in business for 20 or 30 years.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: What about the businesses that went broke during the McMahon Government's term of office?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Oh my dear girl! I beg your pardon, Mr President, I should be addressing the Chair, but it is obvious that Miss Elliott does not realise that businesses go broke and bankrupt continuously, but in this case I will go so far as to say that a great many businesses will go broke—indeed I would estimate that as much as 30 per cent of our country businesses in this State will just about collapse—before the middle of next year. This is certainly no grinning matter. The prime responsibility for their going broke can be sheeted home to the repercussions that will ensue as a result of Federal Government policy.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: They went broke under the McMahon Government.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It would be a pleasure to answer people who interject if I were sure they knew something about the subject under discussion.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: If you give us some facts we would be satisfied.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If I gave the honourable member some facts he would not be able to work on them. He cannot work on anything at all except his tongue.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: He is only giving you rant and bluster.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: When I was carrying out a little research on this matter—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It was certainly very little.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Very little indeed.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Those interjections are rather interesting, because at least I have done a little research; unlike some members who without knowing anything about a Bill get up and say, "Though I do not know anything about the Bill I will talk on it."

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell us about your research.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: While in the course of my research I came across something which probably slates home to the right quarter the matter about which I am talking. A little quote I would like to make is, "It takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else you have to run at least twice as fast."

That, of course, comes from *Alice Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll. I am sure that Mr Whitlam must read this a great deal, because this is the policy he seeks to apply to the rural industries of this country.

Let us consider what is needed for the rural sectors of this country of ours. We certainly need support, and when I say support I am talking about assistance to the tune of \$5 000 million. That may seem a great deal of money to some people, but when considered in the context of saving our rural industry it is only peanuts.

In this country today we have an indebtedness to lenders in the rural sector of about \$2 225 million, and this indebtedness is less than the annual rural production of our country. I do not propose to slate this home to any Government in particular, because I believe all Governments have been niggardly in the manner in which they have approached the question of lending to the rural sector.

Some Governments, however, have given us incentives that have been worth while and I have made the point that the rural interests cannot borrow money at a rate which is acceptable to the farmer. We must provide finance so that farmers eventually can take over the marketing of their own products, but the backing for the short term must be there. Too often do we hear complaints that grower-control boards are not grower-controlled. There is usually a pretty fair reason for this; it is that the Governments are paying the money. We know of the old schemes that have been in existence, but it is difficult to evolve a scheme unless the Government gives the backing.

During the rise and fall of prices we should take some of the money which is earned when prices are high and put this into a fund which could back the farmers during the poor times.

Let me mention that South Africa has done the right thing, even though their rural production is one-fifth of ours. As in many other directions when the Government of South Africa sets out to do a job it does it properly.

If I may I would like to quote from the *South Africa Year Book* for 1972. Since 1912 they have had a Land and Agricultural Bank. In that country they have long-term loans which are given to farmers for a maximum of 35 years at an

interest rate of 5 per cent. This is done because South Africa considers the matter to be reasonably important.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Does that apply to all citizens in the country—to blacks and whites?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I do not usually take up interjections, but I would point out that the amount spent on the Transkei development by the South African Government for the redevelopment of farms makes the amount loaned to the white sector look like petty cash. Again I say that unless members opposite know something about the subject about which they wish to interject I would be most appreciative if they ceased interjecting.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I was only asking a question.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: And you did not know the answer.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I find those interjections fascinating. The first honourable member who interjected got an answer in fairly strong terms, but the second honourable member will not get an answer at all because no answer would satisfy him.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You cannot think of one.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The long terms to which I have referred are only part of the lending which is adopted by the Agricultural Bank of South Africa which lends up to 80 per cent of the value of the farm under one of its schemes. There is an intermediate term over moveable and short-term loans for cash flow to the farmers. Loans are also given to agricultural co-operatives. Apart from this loans are granted against machinery, farm implements and farm requisites. All in all this scheme alone lends nearly 5 or 6 per cent more than do all the lending institutions in Australia which lend money for purposes of our rural economy.

I believe we can well take a leaf out of South Africa's book in an endeavour to do something to provide adequate finance for our rural industries. It is interesting to look at the comparisons of the amount of money that is paid by various countries and the term of loan that is given. For example in Canada the loans are up to 70 per cent of the valuation of the farm and are given at 3.5 to 8.75 per cent. In France the long-term loans are given over 30 years at 4.5 to 7 per cent. In Sweden the long-term loan is at an annuity repayment of 75 per cent of the value of the property. All loans are at general bond rate plus an administrative charge of .1 or .3 per cent. We will not talk about the United Kingdom. It is in a mess anyway, because it has a socialist Government. In the United States the short and long term is given at 3 to 5 per cent. In the Netherlands the amount is up to 90 per cent of the valuation—mainly for long-term loans for more than 20 years. No rate is given. And so we can

continue. In South Africa the figure is 80 per cent of the value of the property up to a period of 35 years at 6 per cent.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Read about the United Kingdom. The farmers there are well off.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Before you do can you tell me the date of that publication?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It deals with rural credit in Australia in 1972.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Thank you.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: But rural credit here has not altered much.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I am not disputing that.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If the honourable member had any knowledge of the subject he would not have asked that question.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are so rude you cannot answer a polite question.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have at least had an opportunity to educate us.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the honourable member to continue with his speech.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: In reply to the interjection, in Great Britain loans to farmers are at fixed rates of interest for terms of up to 60 years for land purchase and up to 40 years for improvements. The premature termination of a loan incurs a penalty. A first mortgage on a farm is required as security and the rate is 10.5 per cent. I do not think we should consider the position in Great Britain. We have seen the direction in which Britain's agriculture tends to go, and as its interest rate is twice that of the other countries I thought I would leave it out.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I thought British farmers were comparatively well off.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You must be joking.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: What is needed is support—support and tax incentives. I do not mean that this support and these tax incentives should be given only to farmers; they should also be given to doctors, businessmen, school teachers, public servants and labourers—indeed they should be given to anyone who works in the rural areas. I am sure the Minister for Health will agree that there is no way in which to keep professional people in the country areas although there must be some solution to this problem. I believe tax incentives would be the best means of starting to get people into the country areas.

The next problem concerns fuel and the distances which it is necessary for country people to travel. I do not refer only to farmers; I refer to all people, because it is necessary for us to build up a rural community supported by agriculture or

mining as the case may be; a community which can live in the same degree of comfort as their city cousins. I feel that freight concessions should be granted to prevent groceries and other necessities having to be marked up to such great levels.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I agree.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I believe this need is in the national good. If we are to allow the present situation to continue we will find that farms will wind down and businessmen in the country will go out of business. If I may I would like to quote what Professor Keith O. Campbell had to say about rural production. It is in a publication entitled *Agricultural Marketing and Prices* written in 1973 by Professor Campbell, Professor of Agricultural Economics at the University of Sydney.

[Resolved: That motions be continued.]

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Professor Campbell made one quite profound statement which is the basis of what I am saying this evening. He said—

Rising productivity in agriculture enhances the real income per head of the population at large.

Of course, the opposite is also the case. If rural productivity drops, the real income per head of population at large will surely drop also. Not only does the real income drop, but the money is not available for the needs to which we have become increasingly accustomed. We have no money to update education, hospitals, and community welfare, and all these areas will suffer if the agricultural industries in this country go into a decline.

The tax paid by the rural sector greatly contributes to these things. Admittedly we can reduce expenditure on defence or on any other item, dependent on the Government in power in Canberra; but surely we should make every effort to ensure we get the best productivity possible out of this country.

Surely the average Australian wants to work. He does not want to be prevented from working. The residents in farming and rural communities certainly desire to work and to see something for the work they do. No decent Australian wants to stop working although some people would like to encourage them to do so. I believe we should give country people an opportunity to get on with the job and produce the income necessary for the country if not now, at least in the future.

If productivity declines, what will happen to our balance of payments? Do we isolate ourselves like America has done and encounter the problems America is facing, or do we advance and get on with the job of improving the nation which, incidentally, was founded on that very principle; that is, the principle of being able to work as hard as they liked with an incentive. People in those days were able to develop

their farms or businesses without any interference from Governments or anyone else.

I would like to quote from D. Gale Johnson's *World in Disarray*, extracts from which are found in the *Rural Market Outlook*. Talking about rural protection, Mr Johnson says—

It can also be shown that national income will be greatest if neither sector—

That is neither the primary nor the secondary sector. To continue—

—receives protection. Thus our goal should be no protection at all. But since secondary industry protection accounts for at least 20 per cent of its income, agriculture could economically justify across-the-board protection of about 20 per cent also, until such time as secondary industry protection is reduced.

The interesting point in this is that the protection is across-the-board and yet in this country no Government will abolish protection to industries. We have heard so often about the benefits obtained from protecting secondary industry, but now is the time to talk about giving protection to primary industries. At the moment there is no incentive for anyone in the bush. There is no profit, no tax concessions, and no chance to better oneself. Therefore, why would anyone want to go into our rural areas today except perhaps to study the wildflowers?

What do we require in these rural areas? Do we want people to be receiving unemployment relief so that production is slackened and the residents just move into the cities and create even more problems there leaving a vacuum in the country which will take many years to fill in the way of services and people?

Let the Federal Government give people in rural areas support and incentive to produce more, and this marvellous country of ours will be on the road to progress once again.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [5.37 p.m.]: I second the motion. I am staggered at the Federal Government's attitude to agriculture. In the Budget before last a vicious attack was made on agriculture with the removal of the superphosphate subsidy and the changes in the tax accountancy field to remove the so-called tax deductions for farmers. However, since that Budget a year ago, a disastrous fall in the prices of farm produce has occurred. Wool has dropped by 100 per cent; beef in the last couple of months has fallen by a similar amount, as has mutton; and during this time of course prices have skyrocketed.

To give an indication of these prices, I wish to state that the cost of shearing has gone up by a little over 100 per cent, wages

by 40 per cent, superphosphate by 300 per cent, and interest by 75 per cent. On most grazing properties those four items would represent well over half the total costs. Just the fall in the value of farm produce or the 50 per cent overall increase in costs makes farming, particularly in the grazing industries, completely unprofitable. The farms are now a completely unviable working proposition. I know that many economists are desperately trying to work out budgets for farmers to enable them to stay viable to some extent. However, farmers always seem to live in hope and they are endeavouring to borrow enough money to cover their losses for the year ahead, hoping that perhaps the year after might be better.

One of the frightening aspects is that less and less money is available for borrowing. Money seems to have been completely whittled away by taxation and other Government fiscal measures, and because so many people are desperately trying to borrow carry-on finance, interest rates are being increased more and more. In the last 12 months the rate has increased by at least 50 per cent and it is rather frightening to see the Federal Government is joining in the price hike.

The Development Bank, established to encourage agriculture and the development of this country, has raised its interest rates from 6 per cent to 9 per cent, despite the fact that much of the money has been raised by long-term debentures and bonds. The higher interest rates are not necessarily being passed on to those who should receive it.

The ridiculous situation in many country areas is that farmers cannot raise money to shear their sheep. If they do have their sheep shorn they know that the income from the wool will not carry them through the whole of the next year, but only half-way through the year. Obviously a big catastrophe will occur before next winter.

The Federal Government had its opportunity in its Budget this year to do something to indicate that it appreciated the difficulties facing the farmers. We have heard a lot about the 250c reserve price for wool, but I think that members in the House have had it demonstrated to them amply that this is not a great benefit. The money is only being lent to the wool industry and interest rates are being charged on it. What is more, the wool grower is being taxed an additional 5 per cent to pay back those funds; and this is on top of the normal 2 per cent tax which goes towards promotion and research.

In spite of this so-called 250c price the average prices in today's wool sales were just over 100c a kilo, and, with the additional handling costs, the farmer is probably getting in return exactly the same

amount he received four years ago when wool hit an all-time low of 30c a pound.

Costs have escalated tremendously and the Australian dollar has been revalued twice during that time. In addition the American dollar has been increased in value. Yet the Federal Government has taken not the slightest interest in what is happening to Australia's exports.

The farmers have reached breaking point. The largest exporter of meat in the world is flooding the local market with produce which we have no hope of utilising. People who read the paper carefully will see that at present only local butchers are buying at the sales at Midland, because all the meat normally exported to Great Britain, America, and Europe is not being exported at all.

Many abattoirs have closed. In fact in my local area at Albany during the last seven weeks the office staff has been able to kill all the sheep required for local consumption.

Primary industries are still ignored in the latest Budget. In fact I use the cow cocky's term and say that they are being kicked in the guts. Further steps are being taken to reduce liquidity. Normal money-lending institutions, particularly the life insurance companies, are being hit further by taxation and needless to say this will mean that less money will be available for the private sector as it is being channelled into the Government sector. Less encouragement is given to the investor to invest in this field.

We have also seen an income tax surcharge of 10 per cent being added onto unearned income and rental. So people who would otherwise have lent money will channel their funds into other fields where perhaps they can escape the surcharge. The farmer will find it harder and harder to borrow money, and in many cases he will have to pay more for it. Very often a son takes over from his father and he pays his family a rent on the property. Retired farmers will have to pay an extra 10 per cent surcharge tax on that, so the son will be expected to pay a little more. Once again the charges will go up, even if he is borrowing money from his parents.

Obviously, the farmers must somehow borrow their carry-on finance, and with the inflation of today they have to borrow much more crary-on finance than ever before. Whereas previously they had to borrow only 48c to shear a sheep, they will now have to borrow \$1.05. The effect of inflation is that they will need much more money, and of course the chances of borrowing are becoming fewer and fewer.

While a business or a farm might have quite good assets—if one looks upon a farm as an asset—a business goes broke when it runs out of liquidity. We have seen this with some of our major companies, and we will see it with our farm-

ers. Already farmers have had to sell some of their capital assets in order to carry on. At any sale in a country area, cows and calves are being sold for \$70 or \$80, less than half what they would have brought three months ago. The farmers have held off for as long as they could. They realised the export markets were glutted and that there was some hope of recovery if the produce could be kept off the market. But no effort has been made to help farmers through this difficult stage, and with liquidity problems they have had to dump their produce on the market.

It must be obvious to everyone that the Commonwealth Government is determined to break down the capitalist private enterprise system. Whereas formerly Australians were able to own assets, the Government is determined that the assets will now be Government-owned. We are moving towards the commune. The primary producer and the small businessmen who support him in the country town and, indeed, in the city, represent private enterprise, but I am afraid their chances of survival in the future are very low.

I wonder how many members have had an opportunity to look at the capital gains tax, which was announced only yesterday. I have endeavoured to do some arithmetic on it. Unfortunately, not one example has been given by the Press or the Government, so I am unable to verify my figures; but I think it would be worth outlining to the House the exercise I have done.

I have taken the example of a farmer with a farm worth \$100 000. It is a one-man farm. I suppose Esperance would provide farms with the lowest capital outlay, and the figure for Esperance would be nearer \$200 000 than \$100 000, but I will work on the figure of \$100 000. I was going to be foolish enough to say the inflation rate would be 20 per cent. Obviously it will be higher than that, as in the coming year the Federal Government is budgeting for 30 per cent. So the farm will be worth \$120 000, assuming a 20% inflation and that the farmer's assets will keep up with inflation. So at the end of the first year the farm will be worth \$120 000, at the end of the second year \$144 000, at the end of the third year \$171 000, and at the end of five years, with the lower rate of inflation we have had this year, the farm will be worth \$208 000.

If the farmer had to sell the farm because he was going broke, and it was put on the market, he would have to pay one-third of that increased value in taxation. In other words, he would have to pay additional tax of \$36 000. If he died, there would then be the problem of paying probate, which would reduce the value of the farm to exactly half. The worst thing that could happen is that the size of farms would be cut in half and farmers would become a peasant population.

Let us look at the situation in Esperance, which is a region where farms are being developed. Once again I give the example of a farm worth \$100 000 with some virgin country which is being developed. The farmer could add \$100 000 to the value of the farm by clearing more land and so on. Once again, the same inflation factor is present and through the five-year period the value of a \$100 000 farm is again increased by \$108 000 as a result of inflation. The additional \$100 000 of value added by development would be taxed at full tax rates—66 per cent—and the increased value by inflation would be subject to capital gains tax of 33 per cent, which means after five years the farmer would have a tax bill of \$100 000.

I wonder what effect this will have on agriculture and businesses. Where is the incentive for anyone to do any work with this invidious tax? I give that as my interpretation on reading the Budget speech. Unfortunately, no examples have been given to us. The ridiculous part of it is that it was stated in the Budget speech that it would not be possible to give full information on the capital gains tax until March of next year. The Commonwealth Government is introducing a tax but cannot say how it will work. However, from the outline that was given in the Budget speech, that is my interpretation of it.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It sounds a bit like the Liberal Party's policy speech.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: The farmer often puts up with low returns on his capital but perhaps he does so in the hope that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow and that the farm will increase in value. Perhaps that is his incentive to continue farming and run the risks he does. That incentive has now been removed. No incentive at all is left for the farmer to continue to try. When the effect of the capital gains tax and the 10 per cent tax on unearned income is realised, perhaps the farmer will throw in the sponge and say, "Let the Communists take the country."

We are really beginning to see the true colour of the present Federal Government. The last straw has been added to the farmer's back and the effect will be disastrous. I do not need to add to what Mr Lewis has said. He pointed out the difficulty which all country areas will experience. I do not think farmers will go broke in one movement but they will certainly go broke over a period. They will find it harder and harder to borrow money because the person who lends money always wants security. The first thing the bank manager says is, "Show me your budget so that I can ensure you are viable." The chances of showing a viable budget today are absolutely nil. There will obviously be major repercussions throughout the whole country. Apart from anything else, I am very disappointed that we will see all that

has been put into this country over nearly 200 years destroyed so quickly by one Government.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [5.55 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion. In the main, the two previous speakers have spoken only about farmers and the communities in which they live, but the motion refers to rural areas and primary industries. I will therefore touch on mining and the general problems which have been brought about and amplified by the policies of the present Federal Government.

I consider that the policies introduced by the Federal Government have been drawn up by impractical men who have socialist theories which sound very good and would appeal to a great number of people, but unfortunately the theories are impractical. The Ministers of the Federal Government have totally ignored the advice they have received even though they have been given practical examples to indicate what their policies will lead to, what similar policies have done to other countries, and the problems they are causing to the people who are making the money for this country. I therefore say the Ministers of the Federal Government are impractical theorists.

In 1973 a motion was moved in this House seeking to reinstate the living-away-from-home allowances for isolated children. The State Government made a promise to give assistance in this direction, and the first part of the assistance has already been given; so the present Government is making good its promises.

During the debate on the motion for the reinstatement of the allowances it was pointed out that the Federal Government grant of \$350, plus the second grant of \$350, and the third grant of \$304 meant that the people who live in isolated regions and remote areas in this State would not be able to qualify for the second and third parts unless they had an income in the vicinity of \$4 500 per annum. I pointed out at that time that the people in remote areas who earn an income of that amount are farmers and private businessmen. No wage earner can qualify for the second and third parts of the allowance. The only people who can qualify for the second and third parts of the living-away-from-home allowance are the children of farmers in isolated areas who can prove they have suffered a loss, which will not be hard to do under the present policy, or the children of people in business who could show they had suffered a loss. That is how impractical the theories of the Federal Government are.

In speaking to the motion in 1973 I said—

In 1971 I made a submission to the Federal Government indicating the plight of these children.

They were the isolated children in the remote areas—in the rural and major primary producing areas of the State.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That was during the life of the McMahon Government.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I said further—

In 1972 this was followed up by a submission from the Isolated Parents and Children's Association.

In November, 1972 the Federal Government of the day—

That was the McMahon Government. To continue—

—proposed a \$400 per annum living-away-from-home allowance without a means test. This was to be paid in conjunction with, and supplementary to, the State allowances I have already mentioned. However, this did not eventuate because, as we all know, a change of Federal Government occurred.

On the 27th December, 1972 I made a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Education and pointed out the plight of these people.

That is, those who live in remote areas of this State. I continued as follows—

In a 30-page submission I made several points, a few of which I will mention briefly. I commented that when the progress of a newly-formed community was hampered in development by laws, rules, and regulations, that cannot allow it to enjoy the basic requirements of civilized man—those of food, shelter, medication, and education—the rules or regulations must be changed; otherwise the community will risk collapse. I further pointed out that any community which could not provide primary and secondary education facilities has two fundamental problems; the first being a high cost of living aggravated by away-from-home education costs, allied to which is the breaking up of the family unit; and the second being a dearth of a stable labour force and technicians who cannot afford the education costs or will not break up the family unit to work in the area. I indicated that both problems would help to strangle progress and could even cause the collapse of the whole community.

That is the stage we are reaching now. Even though the Senate Standing Committee on Education was warned of what would happen, the Federal Government has gone along blindly—and when I say "blindly" I mean that it has been given the information but it is blind to facts—to aggravate the situation, and it will cause the collapse of rural communities

and, eventually, the collapse of communities in the cities. I then said—

I further submitted that on isolated families are being placed burdens which involve financial as well as mental strains that could not be tolerated by the average metropolitan dwellers. At that time I suggested that the Commonwealth should allow all pupils, regardless of racial background, to receive an allowance equivalent to that received under the Aboriginal secondary grants scheme if the metropolitan standards of education could not be provided within a reasonable daily travel distance from the homes of the pupils.

At about the same time a submission was made to the Senate Standing Committee by the Isolated Parents and Children's Association; and then on the 29th December the Pastoralists and Graziers Association made a submission to the same committee.

On the 23rd January I wrote to Prime Minister Whitlam asking for his consideration in the allotment of realistic allowances. I also sent to Mr. Beazley, the Federal Minister for Education, a copy of that submission and of the letter. I pointed out just how much was required for a family to live in the areas in my province, and I gave him a copy of *Hansard*, portion of the contents of which I have quoted in the House. I will not quote it again, but will mention the figures involved.

And so it went on. If we look at the situation as it exists today of the cost of education to people in rural areas and consider what the present Federal Government has done to those people, we just cannot find any fabric of logic. I do not know how any Labor member of Parliament, whether he be State or Federal, can justify what the Federal Government is doing to the people in rural areas today.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: "Fabric of logic"; that is a good term. I must write it down.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: There is no fabric of logic in what the Federal Government is doing. I point out that it costs approximately \$1 800 a year to send a child to a private school. In rural areas parents have the choice of sending their children to either private or State schools, but in some cases they are forced to send them to a private school for the simple reason that there are insufficient State hostels to provide accommodation for children who require secondary education. What has the Federal Government done? Bearing in mind that it costs \$1 800 a year to send a child to a private school, it has now reduced the taxation allowance per pupil to \$150 a year. That is a disgrace.

Sitting suspended from 6.05 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Prior to the tea suspension I mentioned the shameful act of the Federal Government in reducing the taxation allowance to \$150, when it costs some parents in rural areas \$1800 a year to educate their children at a secondary school or a senior secondary school. I point out to members that I have represented the people in my province in the correct manner in that I have forwarded my views, ideas, suggestions, and complaints to Federal Ministers. On the 13th February, 1973, I wrote to Mr Beazley, the Commonwealth Minister for Education, and pointed out what effect the 1973 inflation factors had on the cost of living in the north. I mentioned that in the speech I made in this House on Tuesday, the 17th April, 1973, and on page 930 of *Hansard* of that date I went on to say—

I indicated that the cost of living had risen so much that increased allowances would be required even over and above what I requested in the submission I made earlier.

Further on in my speech at that time I said—

Last month the new Federal Government proposed some allowances for isolated children and at first glance they appeared to be pretty reasonable. They were in three parts, the first part being \$350 per annum free of a means test; and the second part being \$350 on which there was a means test.

I mentioned earlier in this debate that I thought the figure was round about \$4 500 but in fact it was \$4 200. I continue to quote from the speech I made in 1973, as follows—

The gross corrected income allowable for a family was \$4,200. A third amount of \$304 was a hardship allowance, but before a family could qualify for that amount the parent had to qualify for the second part which was under the means test of \$4,200 gross.

It appeared to me that the Federal Minister completely overlooked the wage required to meet the cost of living in the north. The allowances were made for isolated children and I have already pointed out that a person needs a very high income to live in isolated areas. I will deal with that point in a few moments.

My earlier submissions to the Minister have now been backed up by an actual summary of the wages paid in the East Kimberley by Government departments. I intend to prove how ridiculous the means test of \$4,200 gross is in relation to the second part of the isolated children's allowances. I will use Kununurra by way of example because, originally, we prepared a cost-of-living report on this town. The average earnings of a labourer

working for the Public Works Department in Kununurra—including overtime but not including any income his wife may derive—is \$5,720 per annum.

I draw the attention of members to the fact that this was said in April, 1973, and of course that figure would be much higher now. I continue to quote—

A carpenter, similarly employed, who works approximately the same amount of overtime would receive \$6,500. A fourth-year clerk would receive \$6,760; an engineer, \$8,450; and a district officer, \$11,050.

We all know that the incomes of all these workers have risen to a much higher amount because of the inflation that has occurred in this country.

Once again I make the point that it is absolutely ridiculous to expect people on wages to be granted the second and third parts of the Federal allowances. It is totally unrealistic to make allowances of those amounts to wage earners. Such allowances should only be received by farmers and businessmen who are in a difficult financial situation.

The recent decision of the Federal Government in reducing the taxation allowance to \$150 is aimed at knocking the private school. If the Federal Government continues with this policy it will mean that the private schools will risk collapse. What will happen to the students who attend private schools? Some of them can attend State schools, but a great number of them have no alternative but to attend private schools. If the private schools collapse this will mean that the State or the Federal Government—it is the State Government at the moment, but I do not know for how long—will have to provide secondary education for these children and this cannot be done, because already we have overcrowded State schools and already we have insufficient hostels conducted by the State Government.

So it can be seen that the proposals in the recent Federal Budget and the disadvantages the Federal Government is imposing on the rural people are completely impractical. Apparently the Federal Government imagines that people who send children to private schools are all silver-tails, but they are not. In many cases they are working people and they are battling to put their children through private schools. Both parents have to work and have to sacrifice many of their amenities to ensure that their children obtain an adequate education. Therefore, the Federal Government is totally impractical in following this policy.

It has recognised the need to provide education for disadvantaged people in isolated areas, and the Commonwealth Government has introduced a secondary grants scheme for Aborigines, but this is not extended to other

disadvantaged people. So it can be seen that the Federal Government is practical in recognising the need for a grant for disadvantaged people—but of course the secondary grant scheme for Aborigines was introduced by a Liberal Party Government—but on the other hand the Federal Government does not recognise the needs of all sectors of the community. It discriminates, because it recognises only the needs in the city and in the metropolitan area.

I have dealt with education and I will now proceed to deal with roads.

The PRESIDENT: I think the honourable member should confine himself to the motion.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: With all due respect to you, Mr President, I am doing exactly that. I point out that the motion reads—

That this House deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas—

and the definition of a rural area is any country area.

The PRESIDENT: I know what the motion says because I have read it.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Thank you, Mr President, but just in case other members may think I have been off the track, I want to assure them that I have not.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is a matter of opinion.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The motion continues—

—and in particular its obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia.

My whole area is dependent on primary production and it is a rural area, and all the people in that area—

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You say that the whole of your area is dependent on primary production?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Yes.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I think you should clarify that, because you have other industries in your area.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I can assure the House that all the area I represent is dependent on primary production, because those small businesses which are in secondary production are totally dependent upon primary production in the area.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Do you reckon that Hamersley Iron is a small industry?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I did not say that, but Hamersley Iron is primary production.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I take the point.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is a matter of definition.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I now refer to the attitude of the Federal Government to roads and rural areas. As we know, roads are an important line of communication for people who are producing in rural areas. In February of this year the Federal Government declared that all the inland roads in the Pilbara were to be placed on a low priority, and if members wish to check this statement they can read a ministerial letter from Mr Jamieson, the then Minister for Works, to the Minister for the North-West at that time (Mr Bickerton). This letter was handed on to the shires in the area and the shires provided me with a copy of it. The letter declared that all northern inland roads were to be placed on a low priority.

So this is another attitude of the Federal Government which does not seem to have changed, because that Government has suggested it will spend vast amounts of money on roads in the north. However I would point out that this is something that had already been agreed to previously when a Liberal Party Government was in office.

The fact is that the present Federal Government has stated it will make huge amounts of money available to the States for the construction and maintenance of roads. I point out, however, that the amount of money it is offering is actually less when it is considered in the light of the mileage of roads that can be constructed. The Federal Government has not increased the grants to offset inflation and this means that we will be able to construct fewer miles of road with the money made available.

I will now refer to the withdrawal of the petrol subsidy.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You sound like the Treasurer introducing the Budget.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I like to deal with matters in this way, because if I do not tabulate the disadvantages caused by the Federal Government it may become a little complicated for some members to follow. The withdrawal of the petrol subsidy from the people in the north constitutes a hardship that should never have been imposed on them. We are not looking at people who have vehicles for pleasure and who look upon them as luxuries, but at people who have to have vehicles as a matter of necessity because there is no public transport available to them.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are going to get another \$13 million from increased registration fees.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It has already been mentioned in this House that the increases in registration fees are to be used for road building. This has been admitted by the Government. I am now speaking of the withdrawal of the petrol subsidy. I am talking about the disadvantages that have been caused by the

Federal Government, and the increase in vehicle registration fees was advocated by the Prime Minister because he said, "If you want to finance your road programme you must increase public service charges", and the Premier of this State, being a responsible Premier, has accepted the words of the Prime Minister and has said, "OK, we must do it, because the Prime Minister has said we will not get money for the development of roads unless we do."

The Hon. D. K. Dans: If I could, I would like to get rid of the State Government, but I cannot.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Because of the action of the Federal Government we find that people in remote areas are now paying 80c to \$1 for a gallon of petrol. They are people who run vehicles as a matter of necessity; they do not just ride around in them to go to the beach or to other places for pleasure.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: People do not need them in the city?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I intended to speak on the withdrawal of the super bounty, but that has already been dealt with by Mr Wordsworth and Mr Lewis. Quite obviously this is another blow to the people in the country. It will increase the price of primary products and will cause further inflation.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: That will drop by 30 per cent next year.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I shall now deal with the sales tax. The present Federal Government says it is interested in decentralisation policies. What a lot of rubbish that is, because in fact it is not interested in these policies. That is evidenced by the results of my approaches to the Federal Government to introduce an equitable sales tax system which will not force country people to pay sales tax on freight. The Federal Government has ignored those approaches, and in fairness I must say the previous Federal Government has also done the same.

It is ridiculous for the Federal Government to claim that it believes in decentralisation. That Government is blowing its own trumpet; and proclaiming loudly how much it is spending on decentralisation. I should point out that it is only expending the money in the fields which have been created by the Federal Government. It is not interested in the private people who have accepted the knocks in developing the country. It seems to be more interested in its own projects, like the Albury-Wodonga project.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And also in urban development.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It is fine to talk about urban development, but we want to see it implemented in a balanced

way, with help being given to the primary producers who are creating the wealth for the urban areas.

I now turn to the question of capital gains. In an endeavour to understand the meaning of this term I rang the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation today and asked for an interpretation of it. The Deputy Commissioner of Taxation was very helpful; he pointed out that the department was still trying to arrive at a final determination on the interpretation of the capital gains tax.

Mr Wordsworth has given a fine example of what could happen under the capital gains tax. It will hit the country people more than the city people, unless a country dweller happens to be a professional investor. If such a person makes a capital gain he will have his capital gain taxed, but if he sustains a capital loss then the loss will carry on *ad infinitum* until he makes a capital gain to offset it.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: This person could be a farmer with a block of flats.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: How about the small man whom the Federal Government professes to look after, and who has just one capital asset and probably the only one he has saved for in his lifetime? It will hit the small man the most, and he may not have any chance to invest further in order to make a capital gain. He will not be interested. Thus, he will not have a chance to recoup by way of a capital loss. That will kill incentive for the small man in the private sector.

If a person with a capital investment dies, it must be taken into account in probate. For that reason the surviving spouse will wind up in debt unless he or she is able to prove that the property as at the 17th September, 1974, was worth a certain amount, and without any great degree of inflation he or she will not lose much under the capital gains tax as long as he dies within a few months of the 17th September, 1974.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It would be an advantage for people to die!

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The surviving spouse cannot carry on the capital gains tax into a capital loss situation that might arise at a later date. The surviving spouse cannot do that because the capital gain provision dies with the owner of the property. So, the surviving spouse has to pay an enormous amount in probate, as well as the capital gains tax, but he or she cannot in any way recoup this through a capital loss. This requirement to pay probate could break the surviving spouse.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How many more items do you wish to refer to in the Federal Budget before you finish your speech?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am selecting only a few items. I am sure that when the honourable member gets on his feet he will support this motion if he has

any feeling for the people of the country areas—the people who provide the wealth of the city. That is the only thing which any logical person can do, regardless of his party politics.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not think I will be getting on my feet in this debate, because I do not think I can do any good whether I agree or disagree.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Because of the attitude of the Australian Labor Party, we know that Opposition members would be embarrassed to speak in this debate. I am sure they will not participate in it, because they would be too embarrassed to let the people know about their attitude.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I will compare your remarks with those made by the Federal members of Parliament, as recorded in the daily Federal *Hansard*.

The PRESIDENT: If Mr Dans wishes to have a say he should get to his feet and make a speech later on.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am sure that the Federal member representing the district to which I am making reference will not get on his feet in the Federal Parliament and oppose what the Federal Government has done to his electors.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not care whether or not he does.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Of course, the Australian Labor Party does not care what happens to the people of the country.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not care whether Mr Collard, the Federal member, gets up, or what he has to say.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Members who interject in this manner must be prepared to accept replies which reveal the true facts. Opposition members are not likely to participate in the debate on the motion. What is more, they could not care less about the people in that area of the State, or for the people in their own electorates who eventually will be affected by what the Federal Government is now doing.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: A great many people will be affected, irrespective of what the Federal Government does.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I now turn to the subject of mining incentives. If the Federal Government abolishes the 20 per cent tax concession that is granted to people who engage in the search for and mining of minerals that are in short supply, then we must look at the logic of the move. Why are those people mining copper, bauxite, mineral sands, and other minerals given the 20 per cent tax concession? The reason is that Australia needs these metals. Regardless of the Government in office in Canberra, Australia has need of people to search for and mine these metals, because of the shortage. What will happen if there is no tax incentive? Those people will discontinue their search for these minerals. They will fiddle

around with mining, in an endeavour to suit their income for the year, to meet the industrial problems, and to cope with the industrial unrest that might arise. Such people will not have any incentive to mine those metals just for the good of the nation.

I shall now deal with something I mentioned earlier. I intend to show that the Federal Government has ignored my pleas on behalf of the country people and the remote areas of the State. In this regard I shall quote a letter which I wrote to the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) on the 9th June of this year. It is as follows—

Dear Mr Whitlam,

Recent press statements dealing with the meeting between you and the State Premiers have disclosed that your decisions have increased the disparity gap between country and city people.

That was before the Budget. Let us see what has happened since. My letter continues—

From the press statements, your cabinet and advisors do not seem to recognise that the nation's wealth depends on an active work force within productive country communities. This rural work force supplies the work force in the cities with the primary products for sustenance and manufacture. The cities are our commercial, trading and manufacture centres when viewed in the parameters of economic development.

I consider your decisions to be incorrect if you think your impositions on country residents will check inflation. The impositions such as increased postal and telecommunications charges plus airport charges—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you like what you have written?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I do not like it. I wish I did not have to write the letter; and if we had a responsible Federal Government there would not have been any need for this letter, or for the next one which I shall write in the same vein to point out to the Prime Minister that he is ignoring the representations on behalf of a fairly large area.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Have you written to Mr McMahon also?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I have written to Mr McMahon in respect of matters with which I disagreed. I will do the same in future and write to the Prime Minister of the day to make representations on behalf of the people in my province.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What did Mr McMahon say?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: A few red herrings are being drawn across the trail, but I shall ignore them.

The PRESIDENT: I would like the honourable member to stick more strictly to the motion.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I deplore the attitude of the Federal Government. I say there is an obvious lack of appreciation by the Federal Government of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia; and I am doing that now. To continue with my letter to the Prime Minister—

—the drastic cuts on road grants and the abolition of the country petrol subsidy will force many families to quit the country areas for the city. This will increase our city problems in a nation which is already excessively urbanised.

To correct the situation caused by your decisions I ask you to increase the Taxation Zone Allowances to a realistic level. The last adjustment was made 15 years ago.

Unless you can agree to this necessary adjustment, I consider there will be an unprecedented flow of people from the country areas to the cities. If employers try to correct the situation with their own action by the offer of higher incentive payments then their products cost will be inflated. If this happened some overseas contracts could be lost to the detriment of the Nation.

Your consideration and approval of a realistic Taxation Zone Allowance will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,
W. R. Withers,
Member for North Province.

That letter should have made the Federal Government aware of the mistakes it was making. If the Federal Government was aware of what other socialist Governments had done to their countries, and if it had taken notice of what the socialist Government did to Yugoslavia in the 1960s, it would be aware of the same sort of thing happening in Australia.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What has the Yugoslavian Government to do with the Federal Budget?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The honourable member should be able to see the comparison I am making, to illustrate that one Government has admitted its failure in this connection, and the Federal Government of Australia is following the same track. If the honourable member thinks I am wrong I hope he will get up and tell me so when he participates in the debate. I hope that members of the Opposition accept my challenge.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are you suggesting that I am not game enough to participate in the debate?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am not saying that. What I am saying is correct, because I am putting forward facts.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: If I do rise to speak I will not debate the position in Yugoslavia.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The Federal Government has not taken notice of what another socialist Government did in the 1960s in Yugoslavia. What the Yugoslavian Government then did amounts to almost the same as what the Federal Government is doing in forcing the country people—

Point of Order

The Hon. D. K. DANS: On a point of order, although I believe the honourable member should have a fair go, I cannot see what Yugoslavia has to do with the motion before the House.

The PRESIDENT: Neither can I. I would ask the honourable member to stick to the spirit of the motion.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: With due respect, in relation to the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia, I wish to draw a comparison with the Yugoslavian Government, and I have mentioned the part of the motion to which this refers.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Would the honourable member please stick to the spirit of the motion? I cannot see that what has happened in Yugoslavia has anything to do with the motion before the House.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: With due respect, as yet I have not said what happened in Yugoslavia with which to draw a comparison with the actions of the Federal Government so I will omit the word "Yugoslavia" to meet your requirements, Mr President. I will say that in another country run by socialists the country people were forced out of the country areas and into the cities in the same way as the Federal Government is setting about doing at this moment. The country to which I have referred realised its mistake in the 1970s and found it could not support itself because of the action it had taken. The same thing will happen in Australia and that, Sir, is what I am worried about. That is also the reason I am speaking this evening.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Did Mr Whitlam answer your letter?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is what I am waiting for.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Mr Whitlam passed my letter on to Mr Crean who, on the 12th August, 1974, replied as follows—

I refer to your representations of 9 June 1974 to the Prime Minister

concerning an increase in the zone allowance. As you are aware, the Prime Minister has asked me to reply on behalf of the Australian Government.

Previous correspondence has outlined difficulties associated with your proposals but nevertheless, I shall ensure that they are considered when the zone allowance provisions are next revised.

I do not know when the zone allowance will be next reviewed; there has not been a review during the last 15 years. To continue my case: the current policies of the Federal Government—which have been amplified in the present Budget—will force people to leave country areas because they will have no incentive to stay. Those people will not continue to battle but they will go to the soft life of the cities, and that is exactly what has happened in the other country to which I have referred. That country has already experienced what we will experience. The country in question cannot support its population because it does not have sufficient primary production.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: This other country: What kind of agriculture does it have? Are they peasant farmers or are they farmers similar to those in this country?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: To bow to your ruling, Mr President, I will not mention the particular country.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think the people in that country ride around on donkeys.

The PRESIDENT: I would point out to the honourable member that I did not give a ruling. I merely asked him to stick to the spirit of the motion. I do not know how many times I have to say that I wish him to speak to the spirit of the motion. I might add that the interjection from Mr Dans is quite disorderly.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Thank you, Mr President. I want to say that in any country, if the people leave the country areas and productivity drops, the productivity of the city areas also drops because more and more people lose their jobs. When the number of people in the country areas decreases production also decreases. When those people move to the cities jobs must be found for them and, unfortunately, much of the land previously used for market gardens is taken up for urban development thus making it even more difficult for the populace to be fed. It is also found that when production drops not only is there not enough food to feed the populace, but there is also insufficient primary produce for the factories to manufacture. As I pointed out earlier cities are the centres of commerce, trade and manufacture.

What has been done to country areas today, by the Federal Government, will fall heavily on the shoulders of the city people because they are more dependent

on the produce of the country than are some of the people who live in the country. Some of the country people will be able to feed themselves from the land whereas the city people may not be able to do that. I feel that if this should happen—and I think it will happen—it is possible that our unemployment figures throughout the nation will reach 500 000.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: And 30 per cent of the country businesses will be bankrupt next year!

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I do not think that will be a healthy situation. The Federal Government has budgeted for a 22 per cent inflation rate when only last year it was warned by the Leader of the Opposition, in the Federal sphere, that there would be a 20 per cent inflation rate by the end of 1974. However, the Government scoffed at Mr Snedden.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Who would not?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: The Federal Government said, "What rot; how foolish, how would you know?" Unfortunately, the members of the Federal Government did not realise that they were not practical people, and they were pushing the socialist ideology.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Does the honourable member think Mr Snedden would have controlled inflation?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: When I was a teenager—as I think is the case with most teenagers—I thought that socialism was a good idea and I thought it sounded idealistic. However, it is not until one gets out into the world one finds out the true position.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Would the honourable member like to know how to control inflation on the world scene?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I have not covered all aspects of the Budget in relation to this motion, nor have I covered all the points which could be raised. However, I am sure other members will debate this subject and I look forward to hearing the viewpoint of members of the Australian Labor Party in this House. I hope they will prove me wrong and I challenge them to do so.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. V. J. Ferry.

TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and passed.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEME ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 12th September.

THE HON. S. J. DELLAR (Lower North) [8.08 p.m.]: This Bill seeks to amend the War Service Land Settlement Scheme Act, 1954-1972, and it has my support. At present the Rural and Industries Bank administers the Act in Western Australia and it is the agent for the Australian Government in Western Australia. The Rural and Industries Bank controls the perpetual leases under the scheme, and handles the necessary administrative functions required by the Act.

At present it is a requirement of the Act for the Minister to consent to dealings relevant to perpetual leases under the administration of the bank. This is a time-consuming exercise, as the Minister pointed out, and there could be occasions when the Minister was absent for one reason or another which could cause a subsequent delay in processing matters relating to the scheme, and that could cause hardship.

The object of the Bill is to amend the Act to speed up and streamline procedures by delegating, to commissioners of the bank, authority to consent to certain dealings mentioned in the Act. These were mentioned by the Minister and it is not necessary for me to repeat them.

We have no objection to the amendment to the Act. In fact, as late as 1973 the then Minister for Lands (the Hon. H. D. Evans) agreed to this delegation of authority to be given to the commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank. The Minister also said that Crown Law advice was to the effect that the Act and the regulations would need to be amended to give effect to that decision. This Bill provides the necessary statutory authority and, with those brief remarks, I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [8.10 p.m.]: I thank the honourable Mr Dellar for his contribution to the debate and his support of the Bill. There is no need for me to comment further except to say that the Bill will streamline proceedings and save a lot of extraneous work having to be done by the Minister. I commend the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

METROPOLITAN REGION TOWN PLANNING SCHEME ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 12th September.

THE HON. S. J. DELLAR (Lower North) [8.14 p.m.]: I would like to indicate to the Minister that, perhaps, we are not as happy with the provisions of this Bill as we were with those of the previous Bill which had a reasonably speedy passage through this House.

The present measure proposes to amend the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act. As the Minister stated when he introduced the Bill, this appears to be a small amendment to the Act. However, if this amendment is passed and becomes part of the parent Act the result could be far more reaching than one would imagine from a simple reading of the amendment, and from taking notice of what the Minister said.

The amendment proposes to amend subsection (1) of section 33 of the parent Act, and its aim is to reduce the number of sitting days during which any substantial amendment to the town planning scheme, or the metropolitan region scheme, must be laid on the Table of each House of Parliament for any objection to be raised.

Of course, these conditions also apply in respect of a plan of development or a new scheme of town planning. Naturally, this new period to lay the scheme or the substantial amendment before both Houses of Parliament applies after the statutory advertising has been carried out and a minimum period of three months has passed for the receiving of objections to any plan of development, regional scheme, or amendment.

It is now proposed to reduce from 21 to 12 sitting days the period that a substantial amendment to a scheme must be laid before both Houses of Parliament. I hope I am reading the measure correctly and that my statement is right when I say it refers only to a substantial amendment to a scheme. I have no real objection to the reduction in the time limit, but I do have certain queries which have arisen from my study of the Act and this amending Bill. I also query the need for the change.

At page 1436 of *Hansard* the Minister, when introducing the Bill, had this to say—

The reason for this proposed amendment is that one of the obstacles encountered in bringing land speedily on to the market for urban purposes is the length of time involved in making major amendments to the metropolitan scheme.

So we see that the main concern of the Government is to streamline procedures and to allow land to become available more readily.

In answers to questions asked in another place it was revealed that since the inception of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act in 1959, on only

two occasions have any substantial amendments to the scheme been laid before the Houses of Parliament; that is, in September, 1968, and April, 1973. On just these two occasions in 15 years have substantial amendments been placed before Parliament for approval or rejection. And yet, the major reason given for reducing this period from 21 to 12 sitting days is to enable land to be brought onto the market more speedily.

In fact, in the 15 years since the Act has been in force, on only four occasions has the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority issued a certificate under section 33(1) of the Act to say that the proposed amendment was not considered to be of a substantial nature. Bearing in mind that in 15 years there have been only two occasions when a substantial amendment has been placed before both Houses of Parliament, and only on four occasions has the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority seen fit to issue a certificate to say that the amendment was not of a substantial nature, I simply cannot see how this reduction of the period from 21 to 12 sitting days will make land available more speedily.

Another point is that if the number of sitting days is reduced as this Bill seeks, only one month will then be available for any organisation or member of the public to further object to an amendment. A person may have objected when the scheme was first advertised, and perhaps as a result of his objection, substantial amendments were made to the scheme. In fact, this could have happened five, six, or even nine years previously. After the plan has finally been through the circuit and been approved with substantial amendments, the original objector would have only one month in which to object to a substantial amendment made to the original scheme.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: An objector has already had three months—it has to be displayed in an appropriate place.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: It may be that the original objection was accepted only in part, or that subsequent objections from other organisations or people could have had the effect of changing the scheme entirely. This could involve more objections being raised. We are all aware that organisations change their office bearers in the same way that members of Parliament are changed every now and again. Interested parties previously had three months to object to the original scheme, but if this legislation is passed the period of time will be reduced to one month.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: No, that is not right.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: That is the way I see it.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I'll tell you what—you are looking at the wrong book.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Well, I am not really. For the reasons I have just enumerated, I do not see why the Government has introduced this amending legislation. We must remember that when the Minister introduced this Bill he said that the main reason for reducing the period from 21 to 12 sitting days was to bring more land onto the market. However, I believe this measure will create more confusion and problems. I do not think it will solve any of the difficulties the Minister is seeking to overcome.

I ask the Minister: If this amending measure is carried and it is written into the Act, will this period of 12 sitting days refer only to a substantial amendment, or will it apply also to an overall scheme of development or a new regional development scheme prepared to take the place of previous schemes which have been revoked? Perhaps the Minister may be able to answer my query a little later. At this stage I support the Bill, but I require some clarification on the points I have raised before the Committee stage. Opposition members would like to further consider these matters.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [8.23 p.m.]: This Bill emanates from the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning. Like the previous measures he introduced, it demonstrates his lack of experience in this field. He is seeking to speed up subdivisional approvals, but I cannot see that he will achieve his purpose with this measure. Mr Dellar has dealt with the matter most adequately, but I think it should be pointed out that the Bill was referred to as a simple one when it was introduced in another place. However, when the Bill is introduced in this Chamber we find that the second reading speech is quite different from the one given in another place. The Minister for Justice referred to section 6 of the Town Planning and Development Act and to section 31 of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act. He referred also to the fact that this measure proposes to amend section 33 of the parent Act. Obviously the Bill is not as simple as the Minister in another place thought. Either that or he did not thoroughly understand what he is attempting to do—I believe this is the most likely explanation.

It is quite clear from the material quoted by Mr Dellar about the previous occasions on which amendments to these schemes have been brought forward, that there could not possibly be any great delay in bringing subdivisions onto the market because of the provisions of the parent Act. If this is so, it certainly was not demonstrated in the Minister's speech. Probably this is a further cause for complaint because we were told very little detail to assist us to arrive at a decision about legislation the Government is bringing forward.

Section 32 (2) of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act contains the provision that a proposed scheme must lie on the Table of each House of Parliament for 21 sitting days—an effective seven weeks when Parliament is sitting—after it has been advertised for public objection. Perhaps I should read the section of the Act so that members may understand precisely what it says. It reads—

If either House does not pass a resolution disallowing the Scheme, of which resolution notice was given at any time within twenty-one sitting days of that House after the Scheme was laid before it, the Scheme has effect, from and after the last day on which the Scheme might have been disallowed, as though its provisions were enacted by this Act, but if the Scheme is disallowed the disallowance does not affect the validity, or cure the invalidity, of anything done or omitted to be done before the disallowance.

That subsection uses the term "scheme", but I think there is some confusion about the precise meaning of this word. In the context of section 32 (2) it means the metropolitan region town planning scheme in its entirety. We see the same term in subsection (1) of section 33 but it must be interpreted in several different ways. For the information of members I will read out subsection (1) of section 33 of the Act which says—

The Scheme after it has the force of law as though its provisions were enacted by this Act, may be varied or amplified by an amendment to the Scheme or revoked by a subsequent Scheme made by the Authority and submitted and approved in the manner provided for in this Act—

And the proposal is to insert the words after the word "Act". To continue—

—in respect to a Scheme which the Authority formulates and promulgates under this Act, but if the Authority sends to the Minister a copy of the proposed amendment together with a written certificate certifying that, in the opinion of the Authority, the proposed amendment does not constitute a substantial alteration to the Scheme, the amendment is not required to be so submitted and approved.

The word "scheme" is used several times in that subsection. In the first instance it means the metropolitan region town planning scheme but it then goes on to say—

... amendment to the Scheme or revoked by a subsequent scheme ...

This can mean several things; it can mean the scheme as a whole. However, when we talk of its being revoked, it means the whole metropolitan region town planning scheme. Revocation of this scheme means

that we wipe it all out, and start again at the beginning. If we accept the amendment the new scheme will have to lie on the Table of each House of Parliament for 21 days, but that is the only case where the 21-day period will still apply.

I believe that district schemes may be proposed and these are amendments to the scheme, perhaps as required in the Whitfords area where the boundaries of the scheme were extended. Again this is an amendment of the scheme.

So we have those two different circumstances which could arise under the scheme as it exists. The use of the term "scheme" within the Bill is very confusing.

I leave that point for a moment. The Minister referred to section 6 of the Town Planning and Development Act and I believe I should read that section of the Act so that members may gain some understanding of what it is all about. The Minister said—

The Act established the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and required it to make a metropolitan region scheme for the objects and purposes of section 6 of the Town Planning and Development Act.

Section 6 (1) of the Town Planning and Development Act reads—

A town planning scheme may be made, in accordance with the provisions of this Act, with respect to any land with the general object of improving and developing such land to the best possible advantage, and of securing suitable provision for traffic, transportation, disposition of shops, residence, factory and other areas, proper sanitary conditions and conveniences, parks, gardens and reserves, and of making suitable provision for the use of land for building or other purposes and for all or any of the purposes, provisions, powers or works contained in the First Schedule of this Act.

If members look at the first schedule they will find that it covers the entire area of town planning itself. There is nothing that cannot be done within the terms of the first schedule. Section 6 (2) states—

With those objects the scheme may provide for planning, replanning, or reconstructing the whole or any part of the area comprised in the scheme.

Of course, there is a great deal else contained within the two Acts that one needs to study to properly understand the processes of town planning. However, I do not intend to go through all those now. What we are dealing with now is whether it is reasonable to accept the proposition that the Government has put before us. I would say it is not reasonable and that the Bill certainly will not achieve what the Minister has suggested it will

achieve; namely, a speeding up of the process of getting new land and new residential areas onto the market.

I give as one example the West Perth scheme of the City of Perth. This scheme has met with a considerable amount of opposition and has had to be replaced several times. I could instance the situation in my own electorate, the City of Stirling, where a considerable amount of objection has been expressed to proposals in the Scarborough ward which relate to the council's district scheme.

Upon the promulgation of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act, all authorities within the metropolitan area were required to bring forth their district schemes, whether or not they had an established town plan. Originally, that was intended to be done within three years, but the local authorities were able to gain extensions of time. For example, the district scheme of the City of Stirling was first approved in 1965 yet, nine years later in 1974, it still has not been finalised. I would hope that the time is very close when the scheme will be resolved and put into effect.

When a district scheme is being drawn up, it is very difficult for the people in the district to obtain knowledge about what is going on. For some reason, local authorities appear to be loath to let their ratepayers know what the authorities are thinking about; unfortunately, that is a very hard attitude to change. However, finally, the scheme is made public. It receives ministerial approval and from that point there is a minimum of three months—although it can be longer than three months—during which time the people can object to the proposals within the scheme.

During that period of advertisement the people can make objections on the proper forms. These objections are considered by the local authority, which may make changes to the scheme. The entire scheme then goes back to the Minister or, effectively, to the Town Planning Department, or the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, which again studies the objections which have been made. Those authorities may suggest that alterations be made to the scheme and, if that is the case, the scheme goes back to the local authority. However, if they approve the scheme it goes back to the Minister and subsequently is published in the *Government Gazette* and, at the proper time, laid before Parliament.

As I mentioned, strong objections were expressed to certain proposals in the Scarborough ward of the City of Stirling. The people were told that their objections had been satisfied. However, the point is that the people do not get a second look at what changes are made until the matter comes before Parliament. The most active group in the Scarborough ward of the City of Stirling is the Scarborough Ratepayers' Association, which meets once a

month. It could well be that if, as proposed, we shorten to 12 sitting days the period during which people may object to a scheme, the Scarborough Ratepayers' Association may not be able to get a copy of the scheme in time to consider it at its monthly meeting. In fact, the association may not even be aware of the proposals; it may not meet until near the end of the period of 12 sitting days during which time the scheme lies before Parliament. The association may not get the chance to study it; it would depend on whether there happened to be a meeting in that month.

Assuming the association obtained a copy of the scheme and objected to certain proposals contained in it, it would have to find some way of making the relevant authorities aware of the objections. In this case, the only place where objections effectively can be heard is here in Parliament and it would be the duty of members representing that area to bring the arguments of the people here and try to persuade members of this House to alter the scheme. Of course, members may or may not be sympathetic, although one would hope they would be sympathetic.

The people would not have a very long period in which to compose their arguments for or against what was being proposed. Members can see that in this sort of case where a scheme is proposed which will affect a large number of people, problems can arise. We are not talking about small proposals that do not substantially alter a scheme; we are talking about substantial amendments of which district schemes form the most important part. The Bill proposes to drastically reduce the time people will have to study the proposals and I do not believe that is reasonable.

When the scheme is first proposed and receives preliminary approval, we believe that three months is a reasonable time for people to study what is going on. It may be that nobody has any objection to what is proposed; or, there might be only one or two people who feel they will be seriously affected. But once that is dealt with and the scheme receives final ministerial approval and comes before Parliament we then say that, where there are changes in the scheme, nobody knows about these except the council, the Town Planning Department and the Minister, and that the people should have only one month in which to study the proposals and register their objections.

Surely what is reasonable in one case should be reasonable in another. The same number of people is likely to be affected in both cases. Of course, one can understand that if this were something that happened frequently the Minister might have a genuine argument for reducing the time. However, as has already been mentioned, there have been only two cases where there have been substantial amendments and four other cases where the Minister has

disagreed with the proposition that it was not a substantial amendment. In the ordinary course of events, under the Town Planning and Development Act as it now operates and under the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act no delay exists for all sorts of proposals, as long as they come within or substantially within the scheme as it has been laid down.

That applies to most of the things which arise; under these two Acts no delay is occasioned. If a substantial amendment is not involved, as soon as it receives ministerial approval and is published in the *Government Gazette* it becomes law. That is different from the operation of the zoning by-laws under the Local Government Act. Under that Act there is a requirement for a delay of 14 sitting days during which time amendments to the local government by-laws are required to be laid on the Table of the House so that members can register their objections. The operation of those by-laws conforms with the Interpretation Act. So, really, there is no case for what the Minister proposes.

The Town Planning and Development Act and the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act provide for a much shorter period—in effect, almost no delay is occasioned—in the process of approval of changes as compared with the old local government zoning by-laws. If the proposed amendment to the Act were passed, it would mean that people might find themselves seriously affected by a complete re-drawing of the town planning proposals for their district without a reasonable chance of registering their objections. It would take a lot to convince me that after at least 10 years we suddenly should speed up this process.

The City of Stirling scheme was first approved in 1965 yet, nine years later, in 1974, the scheme still has not finally been approved. Yet, at the point where we lay down the scheme under which the people are going to have to live, we propose to say, "Right, we have finished with you. We want to rush the thing through." Surely that is not a reasonable proposition. I believe that Mr Dellar said the Opposition supported this measure; I really cannot understand why.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He forgot to tell you what to do; he forgot to mention what you were doing.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I said we support it subject to clarification being given.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I hope the Minister in charge of the Bill clarifies the position for me.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Impossible.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We know of Mr Lewis' lack of understanding so we will not pursue that aspect any further. Precisely how is the planning process delayed by the requirement in the Act as it

now exists, and to what extent really is it seen that the amendment will speed up the matter? Were there, in fact, a whole series of substantial changes delayed? If there were we have not been told about them, and this information is essential if we are to make a reasonable decision on this proposal.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Only two in 15 years.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is right. One can only be charitable and say that the Minister lacks experience, particularly when he brings this matter to us and tells us that it will speed up the planning process. The statement simply does not bear examination. What we will be doing is to seriously interfere with the liberty of the individual which, I thought, was one of the planks of the Liberal Party platform. When it comes to planning, it would seem that this philosophy goes by the board; that is if at any time it did exist.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You said you thought it did.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I sometimes take seriously what the Minister says, and members on his side say they support the liberties of the individual.

At first glance it would seem that this proposal is relatively small but when we consider the proposal further and find it could seriously affect the lives of individuals it would perhaps appear that it is not really that small at all.

Once the scheme is gazetted the local authority, of course, is free to act within it; and if it does its acts are not invalidated. That is one of the problems, and the long process of interim development orders under which a whole series of zoning changes are brought about within districts will mean that the public is not really given an opportunity to discuss the matter. But once it becomes law and it finally serves its time of 12 sitting days in this House it will be the devil's own job to try to change it. Members have heard me speak about lot 150 Onslow Road, Subiaco.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Do not start that again.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: This is a zoning change made by the local authority and it is extremely difficult for people to change matters like this once they have been established. I think it behoves us to see that the people are given an opportunity to study the whole scheme after it has been through the process, and to raise their objections before we allow the matter finally to become law.

It will only be a relatively short extension of time, particularly when one considers that these district schemes have been in existence since 1963. It is a long time that they have been in the process of being thrown out. There is no compulsion at all for us to rush this through.

I would like to hear more from the Minister in charge of the Bill. He has certainly been given a difficult job to justify its provisions. We do not propose to move any amendments to the measure because if the Government has made up its mind that this is what will happen I do not think we will see any members on the Government side who will throw out the amendment contained in the measure.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Has Mr Dellar mentioned to you how you should vote.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It depends on the clarification we receive.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You are keeping me in suspense. Mr Claughton does not know whether he should support the Bill or not.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You will find out at the appropriate time.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I will be very happy if the honourable member will get up and support me and if those of his political party would express the same point of view. I cannot see how Mr Clive Griffiths is able to support the proposal. It will achieve so little in connection with speeding up the planning process—that is if it will speed it up at all—while on the other hand it may in fact lead to individuals suffering great disadvantages. I believe it has been a waste of our time for this Bill to have been introduced in Parliament at all.

THE HON. CLIVE GRIFFITHS (South-East Metropolitan) [8.52 p.m.]: I have lost count—as I daresay have you, Mr President—of the number of times members have stood up with a Bill similar to this and have said, "This is a simple piece of legislation", after which they have become involved in a tremendously long and difficult debate over its provisions. The Bill contains one simple little clause.

The PRESIDENT: And there is the same old reference to Standing Order 89.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: We have heard Mr Claughton get up and speak about the matter for quite a long time; he has completely confused the issue, and it is a great shame that he sat down before he told us what he was talking about. I would certainly have been interested to know.

I believe the Minister in his second reading speech, which occupied about a column and a half of a page of *Hansard*, was right when he said this was a simple Bill which proposed to make a simple amendment to the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act, because that it exactly what it seeks to do.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It appeared to me to be simple in the first place but when one goes into it it is not quite so simple. Seeing that you have only just picked up the Bill how can you tell us it is?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The honourable member has suggested that I have only just picked up the Bill, but this, of course, is only conjecture on his part. Whether I have only just picked it up or not does not prevent my being able to assess that what the Minister said when introducing the second reading of the Bill is right—that it is a simple Bill which proposes to make a simple amendment to the Act.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: He changes his mind. It was simple in the Assembly but different when it got here.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister certainly did not change his mind when he introduced the Bill here. He was not in the Assembly and he did not introduce the Bill in that House; somebody else did.

At this point I would say that Ministers of the present Government—unlike the Ministers of the previous Government—after introducing a Bill in one House and transmitting it to the other, do not provide a carbon copy of the speech made in the other House as was done by the previous Government. This is where Mr Claughton gets into trouble.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Are you saying Ministers are not entitled to do this?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: We are merely saying we are not following the practice that was adopted by the previous Government when it was in office. All the red herrings that have been drawn across the trail tonight—for what reason I fail to comprehend—have not done anything to enlighten members as to whether they should oppose the Bill as suggested by Mr Claughton, because the Bill simply shortens the time in which members of Parliament can move to disallow a certain major amendment that is proposed to the scheme. It does not have the benefit mentioned by Mr Dellar of taking away the three-month objection period that people have prior to the gazetting of a particular amendment.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I told you that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The honourable member asked the question before he sat down.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You were not listening.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I was, because what the honourable member said has prompted my saying something on the matter. Incidentally, as you have constantly said, Mr President, these rude interjections are disorderly and disconcerting to say the least. The situation is that people have a three-month period in which to lodge objections with the authority.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: No-one disputes that.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: If you had read the Minister's speech you would have seen that to be so.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: After three months members of Parliament have the right—currently within 21 sitting days—to move for the disallowance of a regulation and if either House passes the motion it is then disallowed. It is in fact seven weeks if we sit for three days a week.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is if the House is sitting all the time.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I would agree with what the honourable member has said, though frankly, I cannot see any great advantage so far as the speeding up process is concerned.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: I agree.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: It is obvious we still have one month, because 12 sitting days constitutes one month, that is if we sit every day. We then have an extra month—which makes it four months—in which we are able to decide whether or not a major change to the scheme should be supported or opposed. If a member of Parliament who represents an area where there is a major change to the scheme proposed—and this is the only occasion on which we get an objection period—has not been able to decide within one month whether he will move to disallow the regulations then either he has been asleep, or he has been away and does not know what is going on in his electorate.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: The question is that one person may be quite content within three months.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mr Cloughton has made his speech.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: And a pretty dreary one at that.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are doing no better.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The requirement is not that the motion shall be defeated in one month; it is simply that notice of intention to oppose it should be given in one month or within 12 days as the case will be.

Therefore all the member needs to do within the 12 sitting days is move for the disallowance. As members are aware, the debate on that disallowance can take up a great deal of time so that members would have ample opportunity to research the proposal to ascertain whether or not disallowance was warranted.

I agree that the amendment will not make a great deal of difference, certainly not based on past performances. However, it may well be that as time goes by the necessity to know whether or not major changes would be agreed to by Parliament will become increasingly more important; and it is obvious that if Parliament is about to rise and does not re-assemble for some time, months and

months could go by and the very thing Mr Cloughton pointed out may well occur in the intervening period; namely, that until the amendment is disallowed, it would be perfectly legal for it to be put into effect and local authorities could so act and any action they might take, until such time as the provision was disallowed, would be lawful and legal. Surely in the interests of preventing this state of affairs from occurring, the provision should be either allowed or disallowed as quickly as possible.

I make the suggestion to Mr Cloughton that in the interests of preventing local authorities from using the provisions of the amended scheme, it certainly would be advantageous to disallow it as quickly as possible instead of letting the matter go on for many months.

Consequently I consider the Minister was quite justified in saying this was a simple amendment because it merely provides that instead of 21 sitting days being allowed in which an objection can be lodged, the objection must be lodged within 12 sitting days after the three-month period in which the initial objection can be lodged. Any member of Parliament who cannot make up his mind in that time whether to move to disallow an amendment, is certainly not interested in the amendment at all.

I can see no reason for the Minister to delay the closing of the debate, and so help us get this legislation out of the way.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [9.03 p.m.]: I am grateful to Mr Dellar, Mr Cloughton, and Mr Clive Griffiths for their contributions to what I would have thought would be a better understanding of the purposes of this amending Bill. However, regrettably I am inclined to the view that not all speakers have contributed to a better understanding of it and therefore in particular I am grateful to Mr Clive Griffiths because he has made a complete, concise, and I believe clear and simple explanation of the purposes of the Bill.

Apparently members did not understand what I said originally when I introduced the second reading, so let me restate that this is a simple measure. If Mr Cloughton will refer to my notes he will find that on page 2 reference is made to a scheme or any subsequent substantial amendments to the scheme. What concerns us are those schemes required to be submitted and which must be available to the public in certain places for a three-month period in order that objections may be made.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: That is referring to the three months.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is right, and it is referring to a major alteration or a substantial amendment. These are

the ones which concern us. The circumstances do not apply in connection with a small or minor amendment which is gazetted and put into operation.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I understand that.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I think Mr Dellar does understand the situation, but I am not sure that Mr Claughton understands it.

Let me commence where he commenced. He said that perhaps the situation is the result of the Minister's inexperience, and I presume he was referring to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning. Let me say in this House that no member or Minister would have a greater knowledge of local authorities and a greater understanding of the difficulties in this field than would the present Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning. That disposes of that point.

Mr Claughton also says that there is an obvious conflict between the second reading speech given in another place and the one I delivered in this Chamber. Mr Clive Griffiths referred to this point very appropriately. It has always been my view that speeches made in this Chamber should not necessarily be a straight-out copy of those delivered in another place. I consider that speeches on the introduction of Bills in this House should reflect the views expressed in the debates in another place.

If I understood Mr Claughton correctly, and it was difficult to understand him, he referred to section 33 which is the section this Bill proposes to amend. He also referred to sections 6 and 31.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I referred to section 31. I do not know where you got section 33 from.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I reread the notes again and surely it must be agreed that the explanation is simple. The reference is merely to draw attention to the fact that section 6 describes the objectives of the legislation. I think it would be appropriate for the honourable member to look at that.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Section 6 was referring to the Town Planning and Development Act, if the Minister will read his notes again.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Yes. The notes refer to a metropolitan region scheme for the purposes of section 6 of the Town Planning and Development Act.

Let me turn to section 31 which is to give a better understanding of the procedures required to be adopted in a consideration of a major amendment to a scheme. Surely that is clear.

Another point was raised concerning the meaning of the word "scheme". It was questioned whether it meant a substantial

amendment or whether it constituted a scheme. I think this is referred to in the interpretation of "Metropolitan Region Scheme" or "Scheme" in section 6 of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act. The interpretation in section 6 of that Act reads—

"Metropolitan Region Scheme" or "Scheme" means a town planning scheme for the metropolitan region or any part thereof, including the provisions therein for regulating and controlling the use of the land the subject of the Scheme and the purposes for which the land may be used and includes—

So, in fact, "Scheme" can refer to any part. However, having made that point, I am inclined to agree with Mr Dellar and Mr Claughton that the use of the word "Scheme" can be a little confusing. It makes an understanding of the Act a little difficult. In my view it has also become a little difficult to understand whether the "Scheme" is referring to the total scheme or whether, in fact, it is referring only to a portion of it because the interpretation in the Act indicates that the word "Scheme" can apply to any portion. However, for the purposes of our discussion the scheme is referring to the substantial amendment.

Mr Claughton raised another point and I think he was referring to particular amendments of which he had some personal knowledge. He said that delays were occurring and people were being denied an opportunity to object. Therefore, I think I ought to make it clear that in the procedure laid down—as Mr Clive Griffiths has explained—there is a period of three months during which objections may be lodged. Once those objections have been lodged, they will be considered by the local authority concerned and then may well be referred to the Minister for consideration. I would like Mr Claughton to study section 31, paragraph (h) which reads—

(h) Before presenting the Scheme to the Governor for his consideration, if the Minister is of opinion that any modification made to the Scheme by the Authority is of such a substantial nature as to warrant such action, he may direct the Authority to again deposit the Scheme as so modified, or that portion of the Scheme which is so modified, for public inspection at such time and at such places as he directs.

If a modification is made as a consequence of objections being lodged, then the Act provides for the scheme to be lodged again. I think Mr Claughton was indicating that this provision was not available.

Let me get back to the point I made first. We are merely providing a very simple amendment. Perhaps it does not

warrant a Bill of its own, but I will not enter into a discussion on that point. However, it may well be important for the reason I gave originally and which Mr Clive Griffiths emphasised; that in fact while there may well have been only two occasions over a period of 15 years when an undue delay occurred as a consequence of the provision of 21 days, we believe it is important to reduce the period from 21 days to 12 days because this involves a saving of three weeks. Consequently, on every major amendment which is subjected to this treatment, a saving of three weeks could be made in the processing of it.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: What is three weeks when it has been going on for, say, nine years?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I do not really see the relevance of the interjection because we have schemes of all types.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You are doing your best to justify the proposal, but it is really pretty difficult.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Mr Claughton has asked me for an explanation and I think I have covered every point to which he made reference. I am saying that the purpose of the Bill is simply to provide for a saving of that three weeks, but the saving may well be more. Let us take the autumn session of Parliament as a case in point.

We will take a hypothetical case. A major amendment could be submitted during the autumn session of Parliament, which might last six weeks. That is not sufficient time in which to consider a major amendment, quite apart from the extension to which Mr Clive Griffiths referred, when in the event of a motion for disallowance the debate could go on for goodness knows how long. But apart from that, an autumn session of six weeks would not be sufficient to meet the requirement of 21 sitting days. Therefore it seems to me not to be an illogical move to submit this amendment to the Parliament.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are now talking of a simple amendment to the Bill?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Yes.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Did you mention that in your second reading speech? Were you then considering it as being only a simple amendment? Nowhere in your second reading speech did you say this was a simple amendment.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Perhaps I did not.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You said you understood it was a simple amendment, but you did not say so.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Perhaps I did not say so. I accept that I may not have described it as a simple amendment to the Act which is provided for in this Bill;

but whether it was necessary to say that is doubtful, because of the subject matter of the Bill itself. It has only one operative clause.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I said when I first looked at it, it appeared to be simple, but when one relates it to the Act it is not as simple as it looks.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: It might well be somewhat complicated and confusing and might appear to involve a much wider issue, but only if one ventures into fields to which no reference need be made. Mr Claughton launched into a discourse over the whole area of regional town planning. Had we confined ourselves to saying the amendment will cut down the period of three weeks in which major amendments to the town planning scheme will be laid before the Parliament, I think we would have dealt with the matter a good deal quicker.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—16

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. H. W. Gayfer	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. R. J. L. Williams
Hon. A. A. Lewis	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. G. E. Masters	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. M. McAleer	Hon. V. J. Ferry

(Teller)

Noes—8

Hon. R. F. Claughton	Hon. R. T. Leeson
Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. D. K. Dans

(Teller)

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. R. Thompson

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 33 amended—

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: At the conclusion of my remarks in the second reading debate I asked the Minister for clarification as to the effect the amendment would have in regard to the Act. I am not sure that he gave me that explanation. I asked a definite question whether the amendment would apply only to substantial amendments or whether it would also apply to regional schemes. Does the 12 sitting days requirement apply to all schemes—new schemes and schemes which are initiated to replace schemes which may have been revoked—or does it apply only in the case of a substantial amendment?

As I said earlier, when I first looked at the amendment it appeared to be a simple one. Mr Clive Griffiths made a great fuss

about it and said as far as he was concerned it was a simple amendment and should not have taken up so much of the time of the House. I wonder what would have been the situation had this Bill been introduced 12 months ago when the previous Government was in office, and whether he would then have jumped up and said it was a simple amendment which we should accept. I am sure the honourable member would not have done so.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is a presumption.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: That is my opinion of what the reaction of the honourable member would have been under different circumstances. I asked for clarification of that point. That was the only reason for our opposing the second reading, not with any great hope of defeating it. I seek this clarification because in my study of the Bill and relevant Acts I am not clear whether the amendment from 21 days to 12 days relates only to substantial amendments to an existing scheme or whether it relates also to a regional district scheme.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I thought I was making an explanation when I referred to section 6 of the Act, the interpretation section, wherein "Scheme" is defined as meaning "a town planning scheme for the metropolitan region or any part thereof". That is the first point I make.

My second point is that inasmuch as this clause seeks to amend section 33, which refers to "the Scheme", we must bear in mind the interpretation of "Scheme" in section 6. So it can apply to the scheme itself, or to a part of it, or to a major amendment. However, we must also bear in mind the balance of section 33(1) which says that if the authority sends to the Minister a copy of the proposed amendment and the proposed amendment does not constitute a substantial alteration to the scheme, the amendment is not required to be so submitted and approved.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: That is quite clear.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: On my reading of that, it will apply only to a scheme or a part of a total scheme which can by virtue of the interpretation be described as a scheme for the purposes of the Act. The constant use of the word "scheme" tends to be somewhat confusing.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You are saying it refers only to a substantial amendment?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is right, by virtue of the reference to section 33. We will have a better understanding of it when I say it refers only to a substantial amendment. That is what the Bill is all about. It refers to major amendments, by virtue of the fact that the amendment

applies to section 33; and, bearing in mind the interpretation of "Scheme", it can have a much wider application. It is specifically a major amendment which we are discussing in the Bill.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is quite obvious that the Minister does not understand the processes that take place. It also appears highly unlikely that members on my side will obtain any more information than has already been given. I asked to what extent the planning process is now held up that it should require this amendment. It has not been shown that the planning process has been at all hindered. It has not been shown that there is any delay because of the 21-day requirement.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It is three weeks. Why do you not listen?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Perhaps I could sit down and Mr Heitman could tell me where the delay is occurring.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Nobody could tell you anything. You cannot understand—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): Order! The honourable member will address his remarks to the Chair and interjections will cease. The Hon. R. F. Cloughton.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I would like the Minister or someone in authority to tell us these things. Can he demonstrate that delay is occurring because of the existing provision? In 15 years there have been two substantial amendments, yet we are told the Act must be amended to speed up the planning process. It is sheer nonsense.

If the Minister can say that X number of substantial amendments are coming forward which it is desired to rush through, then that would be a reason. But that has not been said. The necessity for the amendment has not been shown. As for speeding up, where will that occur? The objection period for the City of Stirling scheme closed back in February, and I am not aware whether that district scheme has been brought before the Parliament.

The Hon. N. McNeill: So what?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Where is the delay? It certainly cannot be caused by the requirement in the Act; it must be occurring somewhere else. I do not know how Mr Clive Griffiths understands this. He is saying the amendment is all right.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): Order! I again remind the member that he will address his remarks to the Chair.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, Sir. It has not been demonstrated that any speeding up will occur. A substantial amendment could come before this Chamber during the present session, and even if

the period is 12 days we have no guarantee sufficient sitting days to deal with it will be left in the remainder of the session. If we wish to ensure that substantial amendments go through then we must start firstly with the local authority; it must ensure that it does not delay the matter. Then when it gets to the Minister his department must do its job and ensure it does not cause delay; and when the matter comes before us at the beginning of a session it will go through within the time required.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What is your point?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: What is the point of the legislation? The Government is saying that instead of the period being seven weeks or four weeks, it will be three weeks.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: It could go on until next session.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It could, but even if we pass this Bill we cannot ensure that will not happen.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: It is less likely though, you must admit that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Government could be creating a serious disadvantage because those people who are aware of the scheme may lodge their objections within the three-month period, and changes may be made; but someone else who was not affected by the original scheme may be affected by those changes and he will not have the opportunity to object until the matter comes to this place.

We are not talking about fiddling matters. Most of the subdivisional requirements necessary to get blocks onto the market do not require the use of this section of the Act. We have had two substantial amendments to the Act in 15 years. That shows this Bill is not necessary. Our time is being wasted, and this is almost a confidence trick.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Dear, oh dear!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is almost a confidence trick for us to be told this Bill will speed up the process, because it will not. I would like to hear from the Minister some real information about how schemes are being delayed by this requirement at the moment, and how many are likely to be delayed if the Bill is not passed. I do not think he will be able to give us that information because it does not exist.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Section 33 provides for the amendment of a scheme, and that is why it is to be amended by this Bill. Section 32 (2) refers not only to amendments, but to any part of any scheme, including any new scheme. The reason this Bill amends section 33, which applies only to amendments, is to leave the 21-day objection period for new schemes; otherwise the Bill would amend the words

"twenty-one" in section 32 (2). The explanation required by Mr Dellar is that section 32 (2) applies to new schemes, and section 33 applies to amendments to schemes.

The purpose of this Bill is to leave the 21-day objection period in respect of new schemes, but to provide for a lesser period—12 days—for any amendment to a scheme. I think that clearly answers the question Mr Dellar posed.

This is a simple amendment into which all sorts of extraordinary things are being read by Mr Cloughton.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: And by me.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, I would at least put Mr Dellar on a higher rung because his remarks were not quite so extraordinary. He asked some perfectly legitimate questions. I believe the Minister answered his questions, and I am sure I have clarified the matter. However, Mr Cloughton continues to go on about this speeding up, which was referred to by the Minister.

The Hon. N. McNeill: No, Mr Cloughton was referring to delays.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: We were told that is the whole purpose of the Bill.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, he is certainly contributing to the delay in the passage of this Bill. As time goes by and the population of this State increases, so it becomes more necessary for speedier decisions to be made in respect of major changes to the scheme. Surely that is straightforward. It stands to reason it will be not only necessary but desirable for the amendments to be achieved speedily. I repeat it does not remove the initial three-month objection period.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I didn't say it does.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I was not looking at Mr Dellar; I was looking at Mr Cloughton.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Are you talking to him or to the Deputy Chairman?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am speaking to the Deputy Chairman; he is the only person who is not interjecting at the moment. The Bill provides that members of Parliament may move to disallow an amendment to a scheme in either House of Parliament within 12 sitting days, which cannot be less than one month. Therefore in effect we still have four months in which people may bring to the attention of Parliament their objections to any amendments.

I think Mr Cloughton is incensed with a desire to prolong the debate on this Bill. I am sure he has no foundation for his argument and that he is wasting our time.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: When introducing the Bill the Minister said—

This Bill proposes to reduce from 21 to 12 the number of sitting days during which any substantial amendment to the Metropolitan Region Scheme must lie before each House of Parliament.

He then went on to say the provision will apply to a scheme or schemes. That was my initial understanding, but when I considered the matter further I became unsure and I wished to have it clarified. I thank Mr Clive Griffiths for his concise explanation. Had the Minister made such an explanation earlier perhaps I would have been satisfied. If the Minister can say that the Bill applies only to substantial amendments then some of my doubts may be dispelled. Although I still would not be happy with the Bill I might perhaps be prepared to say no more about it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: If I have contributed in any way to any confusion which may exist in Mr Dellar's mind I am prepared to offer an apology. I am grateful to Mr Clive Griffiths for his additional explanation. I stated clearly in my second reading speech that the Bill proposes to reduce from 21 to 12 the number of sitting days during which any substantial amendment to the metropolitan region scheme must lie before each House of Parliament. I am not aware that I need add any more to those words. If that explanation was not understood, or if my subsequent explanation took any significance from the words I used originally, then I apologise. I hope the position is now understood; that is, the purpose of the Bill is to cover substantial amendments.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I take it you are agreeing with the explanation of Mr Clive Griffiths?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He had better do so; it is right.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am emphasising the words I used in my second reading speech.

Mr Cloughton has referred at length to delays—"Where are the delays; where will they occur in the future?" I refer again to my second reading speech in which I said—

The reason for this proposed amendment is that one of the obstacles encountered in bringing land speedily on to the market for urban purposes is the length of time involved in making major amendments to the metropolitan scheme.

It is part of the total strategy. Surely that is straightforward. The very thing Mr Cloughton has been putting on a performance about is that it is taking years for these amendments to be made.

It is part of a total strategy on the part of the Minister to try to speed up this whole process to bring land speedily on to the market. I do not know what else I can say.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I take it the Minister does not agree with what was said by Mr Clive Griffiths.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Cut it out!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I wish the Minister would say so, because it will make a significant difference. Perhaps if I go over the ground again the Minister may say whether my interpretation is right or wrong and then we may be further along the road to clarification. Section 32 of the Act refers to the scheme, and in this case the scheme is the region scheme.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Yes, the whole scheme.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes, not part of it, but the whole metropolitan region scheme.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Yes, bearing in mind the interpretation given in section 6.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Section 32 has two subsections, in which it is stated the scheme or the scheme as so modified shall be open to public inspection. In this case the word "modified" refers to the situation where the region scheme has been planned, thrown open for inspection, and objections have been heard and, because of those objections, some amendments have been made. That is the region scheme so modified. We are not talking about a district scheme, or parts of the metropolitan region scheme. Will the Minister agree it is the whole scheme?

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is what it says; the scheme, as so modified.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 32 reads—the Scheme together with the report of the Authority on the objections made to it . . . shall be laid before each House of Parliament within six sitting days . . .

We have that part clarified. Subsection (2) of section 32 provides—

If either House does not pass a resolution disallowing the Scheme, of which resolution notice was given at any time within twenty-one sitting days . . .

The 21 days mentioned in that subsection refers to the whole metropolitan region scheme; not any district scheme, or parts of the region scheme. Then section 33 of the Act goes on to refer to amendments of the scheme. Is that right, Mr Minister?

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is what I have been saying.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Previously I asked if the Minister agreed with what Mr Clive Griffiths said on this. I take it that the Minister does not agree.

Mr Clive Griffiths gave us a different interpretation, and if the Committee is confused I think it is up to the Minister to clarify the situation. As I understand it section 32 refers to the whole scheme, and section 33 deals with amendments to the scheme.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is exactly what I said.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member had better read *Hansard* to check what he did say.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You are the only one who says that I did not say that.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: The further you go the worse you get.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If we look at the amendment to section 32 proposed in the Bill—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: There is no amendment to section 32.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The proposed amendment to section 33—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: That's good! We have now got back to the amendment to section 33.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is good to know that Mr Lewis is wide awake and listening.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: With your voice we could not get to sleep.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Clause 2 seeks to amend subsection (1) of section 33 by substituting the word "twelve" for the word "twenty-one" in line 3 of that subsection.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: In that proposed amendment we are talking of revocation. Section 33 speaks of amendments and of revocation. We are speaking of substantial amendments, and any amendments that do not fall into that category do not require to be laid on the table of the House. There are two situations. There is the requirement when the scheme is wiped out and we start again. That is the only instance where the 21-day period will apply. Perhaps the Minister can tell me whether he agrees with me.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You get me a little confused I must confess. I do not understand the point of the exercise.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is perfectly right; the Minister does not understand it, nor is he able to explain it. In fact, he is not able to justify the necessity for this Bill being brought before us. I do not think the Minister responsible for preparing the Bill understands it either.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): I draw the attention of the honourable member to Standing Order 89. He has canvassed this ground several times and unless he comes to the point shortly I shall have no alternative but to sit him down.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I think members are entitled to have this matter clarified.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It has been clarified.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I have asked the Minister to let us know whether the period of 21 days will apply only to a metropolitan region scheme.

The Hon. N. McNeill: This has nothing to do with the Bill.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: We are seeking to amend section 33, and there are two situations. There are amendments to the scheme and a revocation of the scheme. If the amendment in the Bill is agreed to the 21-day period will apply only to a revocation of the whole metropolitan region scheme. Is that right?

I now proceed to the amendments of the scheme. This is where the proposed amendment will have the effect of reducing the time in which people will have a chance to examine what is taking place. Again I would like the Minister to say whether that is a correct interpretation.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams): The Minister cannot answer the honourable member whilst he is still on his feet.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: A further question which I asked previously and which I ask again, because an answer has not been given, is: Where is the justification for this Bill? It has not been demonstrated that any delay in getting land more speedily onto the market will be obviated by the Bill, as printed.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I now understand what Mr Cloughton has been trying to say all evening, and at least we are making progress. It is a pity he sat down earlier this evening before he told us what he was talking about. However, again Mr Cloughton must look at the interpretation in section 6 of the Act which states that the metropolitan scheme means a town planning scheme for the metropolitan region or any part thereof. So that does not necessarily mean that the existing metropolitan scheme has to be revoked before section 32 is again applied. In other words, section 32 can still apply to another scheme introduced in some other part of the region.

Further, the region will be altered from time to time. That part of Western Australia now referred to as the region happens to be the region for the time being. Next week or next year that can be altered and therefore it will be necessary to bring into operation another scheme under this legislation. In those circumstances the period of 21 days will apply. I return to what I said previously; that is, that section 33 simply relates to major amendments to the scheme. I repeat that if the desire had

been to change the number of sitting days during which action could be taken to move for a disallowance, and if this amendment was meant to apply to other than major amendments, the Bill before us now would have referred to an amendment to subsection (2) of section 32.

However, because the amendment does not mean to apply to new schemes as such, and applies only to the amendment of such schemes, section 33 is the one to be amended. I think we could go on and on but at this stage I will toss in the towel.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Mr Claughton seems to be making an issue of whether this applies to a revocation of a scheme or to an amendment of a scheme. Once again I do nothing more than to refer him to the words of the amending clause; that is, clause 2 which we are currently debating. We are referring to a proposed amendment to a scheme; there is no reference to a revocation, so I will leave it at that.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I do not see any point in carrying the debate further at this stage. I simply ask that the Minister, during the third reading stage, should clarify the points we have raised. He has told us that the Bill applies only to a substantial amendment to a scheme, but I am wondering whether a revocation is an amendment or something more substantial.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: If it were a revocation, the period would be 21 days. Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.01 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 18th September, 1974

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

WATER SUPPLIES

Dunsborough and Quindalup: Petition

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [4.33 p.m.]: I present the following petition from residents of Dunsborough and Quindalup—

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned residents in the State of Western Australia, do herewith pray that Her Majesty's Govern-

ment of Western Australia will support the extension of a reticulated Water Supply to the Dunsborough and Quindalup areas.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

The petition contains 63 signatures. I have read the petition and it does conform with the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

The petition was tabled (see paper No. 236).

QUESTIONS (41): ON NOTICE

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Urban Farms: Financial Relief

MR BATEMAN, to the Minister for Local Government:

In view of the extreme financial hardship, brought about by the increase in council rates, to urban farmers whose land was rezoned from rural to urban by the introduction of the Canning-Armadale corridor scheme—

- (a) are amendments being planned by his department to the Local Government Act to give financial relief to these urban farmers;
- (b) if not, why not?
- (c) if so, when will the amendments be introduced, and what relief can be expected?

MR RUSHTON replied:

No. Section 548 (3a) of the Local Government Act at present enables councils to grant relief by imposing a lesser rate on urban farmland.

The Government has implemented its policy commitment and has created the Rate Review Committee to look into the whole question of rating, etc. The terms of reference are—

A committee of inquiry to inquire into all forms of rates and taxes attached to land valuation and in particular to examine—

- (1) What are the anomalies of the present system of valuations used for—
 - (a) land taxes;
 - (b) metropolitan region improvement tax;
 - (c) local authority rating;
 - (d) water supply, sewerage and drainage rating?
- (2) Can the anomalies be rectified? If so, in what manner?