

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Tell us something about the average capitalist.

Mr. GRIFFITH: There are, however, people who wish to violate our laws and whose endeavour it is to make arbitration a positive farce by defying the laws of arbitration—and these people go unpunished! His Excellency's Speech makes mention of the fact that the Government will introduce a Bill to amend the Arbitration Act, and I trust that the measure will be brought before Parliament in good time and that it will have the desired effect. To those union leaders who provoke industrial unrest and endeavour to make arbitration a farce, I say: "Go back to work and if you have a grievance, take it to the Arbitration Court. When that court has issued its finding, you should be satisfied to accept its verdict."

Mr. Lawrence: Perhaps the court is not infallible.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Let us keep on working and try to preserve Western Australia as the great place in which to live that it is today.

Mr. MANNING (Harvey): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 5th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.7 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 5th August, 1952.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

DEMISE OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI.; ACCESSION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

Message in Reply.

The PRESIDENT: I have received the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

The Governor has the honour to advise the Legislative Council of Western Australia that he has received the following acknowledgment by the Assistant Private Secretary to the Queen to the resolutions of condolence and congratulation passed by the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia:—

Her Majesty desires me to convey through you her warm and sincere thanks to the members of the Legislative Council in the Parliament of the State of Western Australia for their resolutions of condolence and congratulations, which have afforded Her Majesty the utmost encouragement and support and which she very greatly appreciates.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Election of Hon. J. A. Dimmitt.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: I move—

That Hon. J. A. Dimmitt be elected as Chairman of Committees.

Question put and passed.

CHAIRMEN (DEPUTY) OF COMMITTEES.

On motion by the Minister for Transport, resolved:

That, in accordance with Standing Order 31A, Hon. W. R. Hall, Hon. A. L. Loton and Hon. H. S. W. Parker be elected as Deputy Chairmen of Committees during the current session.

QUESTIONS.

TOWN PLANNING.

(a) *As to Kwinana Area.*

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Have Kwinana and surrounding areas been town-planned? If so—

(a) by whom;

(b) what are the town planning qualifications of the person concerned?

(2) Should the answer to No. (1) be "No", will the Government give immediate instructions for an "outline plan" of the sub-region to be drawn up by a competent town planner?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2): The proposed Kwinana township is being planned by Miss M. Feilman, B.A., Dip. T.P. (Dunelm), A.R.A.I.A. and A.R.I.B.A., architect and town planner.

(b) *As to Appointment of Commissioner.*

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

Is it a fact that the Government is about to appoint a town planning commissioner? If so—

(a) what are the terms of appointment;

(b) has this position been advertised throughout Australia?

The MINISTER replied:

Inquiries are being made in England by the Agent General and the Co-Ordinator of Works and Industrial Development as to persons likely to be suitable. Upon receipt of information from these gentlemen, consideration will be given to the matters about which the hon. member's questions are concerned.

(c) *As to Overall Plan, Fremantle-Kwinana.*

Hon. H. HEARN asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the large scale projected developments in the area extending from Fremantle and including Kwinana, is an overall plan of the area to be prepared by a qualified planner?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes, when a planner is appointed.

NORTH-WEST.

As to Air Freight Subsidy on Butter.

Hon F. R. WELSH (for Hon. H. C. Strickland) asked the Minister for Transport:

Since the withdrawal of the air freight subsidy on butter to Marble Bar and other inland centres in the North is imposing heavy expense and hardship on residents, will he take action to restore the subsidy immediately?

The MINISTER replied:

Under the present circumstances, the Government is unable to increase the substantial subsidies being paid on air transport to and from the North-West and Kimberleys. The amount paid in this connection, for the year 1951-52, was £16,057.

HOSPITALS.

(a) *As to Site Areas at Kwinana and Bunbury.*

Hon. H. HEARN (for Hon. J. G. Hislop) asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it correct that the Commissioner of Public Health has requested that an area of 50 acres be set aside for a hospital site at Kwinana?

(2) If so, is the Government satisfied with the 15 acre area site for the new Bunbury hospital?

(3) If the answer to No. (1) is in the affirmative, will the Government consider transferring the site for the Bunbury hospital to the adjacent available site of 50 acres?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The request was for 20 to 25 acres to meet future requirements for all health services.

(2) Yes.

(3) The plans for Bunbury are for a hospital of 100 beds expandable eventually to a maximum of 175. The area is adequate for this. This will increase the present provision from 90 beds to 265 beds.

(b) *As to Maternity Ward Charges, Kalgoorlie.*

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it a fact that in the case of a multiple birth in the maternity ward of the Kalgoorlie hospital the parents are charged an extra 21s. per day for the additional child?

(2) If the answer to Question (1) is in the affirmative, would the Government give instructions to delete this charge?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) An error was made at Kalgoorlie, which has been adjusted.

PRIMARY PRODUCTION.

As to Base for Calculating Contemplated Increase.

Hon. C. H. HENNING asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is the Government adopting the aim of the Australian Agricultural Council to raise primary production within the State 20 per cent. in five years?

(2) If so, what is the base year and production in the base year of—

- (a) butter fat;
- (b) cheese;
- (c) processed milk;
- (d) wholemilk;
- (e) any other milk products?

(3) What is the expected production of the previous items in the target year?

(4) What methods is the Government to use to increase production of dairy products?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied:

(1) The Government supports the aim of the Agricultural Council for increasing primary production.

(2) Milk for all purposes—51.7 million gallons.

Butter—15,574,087 lb.

Cheese—1,728,217 lb.

Condensed and concentrated milks—12,150,000 lb.

(3) Target 1957-58—

Milk for all purposes, 61,000,000 gallons including 17,920,000 lb. butter and 1,792,000 lb. cheese.

(4) (a) New areas brought into production through war service land settlement and other settlement schemes and a greater area will be irrigated.

(b) By extending development on existing farms.

(c) Improvement of pasture not yet fully developed.

(d) Improved husbandry on dairy farms including, in particular, greater fodder conservation.

(e) By increasing extension services.

HOUSING.

As to Costs of Erection, Willagee Park.

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Minister for Transport:

Will he supply the cost per house of the following types of houses erected at Willagee Park—

- (a) local prefab.;
- (b) Austrian prefab.?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) Estimated cost erected on site, including fencing and paths—£2,266.

(b) Estimated cost erected on site, including fencing and paths—£2,593.

TRAFFIC ACT.

As to Charges Against K. A. Beale.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

Will he lay upon the Table of the House the file and all papers relating to the prosecution of Kenneth Arthur Beale, of 138 Watkins-st., South Fremantle, on charges under the Traffic Act?

The MINISTER replied:

No. These papers contain matter of a nature confidential to the Police Department. However, the file will be made available for perusal by the hon. member, should he so desire, at the office of the Attorney General.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 31st July.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [4.55]: I happen to be in the unusual role this afternoon of speaking first after the mover of the motion, whereas I am generally one of the laggards, tailing behind. I do not know whether the change will make any difference, but I hope not. It is rather astonishing when one looks around the Chamber at the commencement of each session to note the changes that have occurred in a short space of time. This year is no different from previous ones.

In recent times there have been substantial changes here at the beginning of each session. I can recollect that in my early days in the House we would see the same old faces, year in year out. It is rather remarkable to glance at the various photographs in Parliament House, and see the changes that have taken place. Just recently I looked at the 1944 photograph—only eight years ago—and I think that of the 36 members whose photographs appear, only nine now remain in the Chamber. That is a remarkable change of 27 members in eight years. That is quite different from what obtained when I first came here.

As a matter of fact, now that I have lost my old colleague, Harry Gray, I am the only one of the three musketeers of the West Province who represented that area for many years. When I came here in 1928, I made the third of the team and we stood shoulder to shoulder until 1947—a matter of 19 years without a change—when Mr. Kitson accepted the Agent Generalship and went to London. For a further five years I had Mr. Gray as a colleague, and I can say with very sincere feelings that I miss my old friend.

One other feature is that the passing of Mr. Gray from membership of the House leaves me as the father of the House on the floor. You, Sir, are the only

one in the Chamber who has been here longer than I have. Although I happen to be the father on the floor of the House, I do not know that I will take up the role of scolding or advising members, although I would dearly like to give some advice to Mr. Cunningham because of a couple of Press statements I have noticed in recent months.

I do not like to see a member usurping status that he does not possess. I hope Mr. Cunningham will take what I have to say in the spirit in which it is given, irrespective of political leanings. I do not like to see members go off the right track. I think the hon. member has gone off the track so far as these notices are concerned. I will read them, and members can decide for themselves whether or not my judgment agrees with theirs. On the 4th April, in the "Daily News", we find this notice—

The first section of a drill to bore the huge Koolyanobbing iron ore deposit, 34 miles north-east of Southern Cross is due to arrive on the site at the week-end.

Announcing this today, Mr. Jack Cunningham, M.L.C., said that drilling should start in about four or five weeks.

He added that the Mines Department planned to bore the 32,000,000 ton deposit of iron ore known as Dowd's Hill, which was part of the Koolyanobbing range.

Later, on the 6th June, a further statement appeared in the "Daily News" to this effect—

Sixteen graders will be working on the Coolgardie-Esperance road this year to get it into order for the summer.

This was announced today by J. Cunningham, M.L.C.

Graders would operate south of the 8-mile black stretch from Coolgardie through to Esperance.

I would say that those notices would come under one of three headings. Either the newspapers wanted to cut down on the notices handed in by the hon. member; or, secondly he made them with ministerial approval; or, thirdly, as I mentioned earlier, he was usurping a status he does not possess.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Which of those do you think it might be?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know, and I am not prepared to hazard a guess. I merely mention this fact so that the hon. member might do the right thing in future. When a member gives a statement to the Press, he should acknowledge where the information is obtained. I do not think any member of Parliament can say that certain things will be done. The usual procedure is to say that he has been

notified by the Minister concerned that such and such a thing will take place. No member need lose any credit by adopting this procedure.

The commencement of anything to be done is the responsibility of Government departments and the right way is for the announcement to come through the Minister of the department, who generally makes the announcement through the member for the district. But its source is always indicated. It is possible that a notice such as I have read could have a boomerang effect on the member concerned, for we all know that very often Ministers are not able to carry out promises they have made; and if a member publishes the fact that certain things will be done and they are not done, then it can come back on him.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I thought you said that in spite of your seniority you were not going to scold members. You have started by doing so.

Hon. G. FRASER: This is an exceptional case! I will take this opportunity of saying a word of welcome to the new members and congratulating the old members who came through the battle of the ballot box successfully. We know that it is always an anxious time for us, in spite of what we might say to the contrary, and in spite of the fact that we might consider that we have "had" this place. Most of us want to come back and I am sure that those who have come back will be welcomed with open arms by all members. To new members I say that I hope they have as long a stay in Parliament, as I have had. I do not think I could wish them any better than that.

Whilst I am a great one for sticking to old customs, there is one custom which I think should be altered. I refer to that of asking a new member to move the Address-in-reply debate on the opening day. This was brought to my mind very vividly on the last opening day, more so than on any previous occasion. I was one who told the hon. member concerned beforehand not to continue his speech after 4 o'clock, as otherwise he would be very unpopular. The reading of the Speech this year, the swearing-in of members, and the inquisitiveness of those members who asked so many questions on opening day—

Hon. H. L. Roche: I wonder who they were?

Hon. G. FRASER: —meant that the hon. member who was moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply did not rise to his feet until 3.55. I have often been to the races and at times when the race has been delayed, I have seen the various horses sweating at the barrier. I can well imagine how the hon. member felt last Thursday, particularly as he did not rise to his feet till 3.55, having previously been told that he would be unpopular if

he continued after 4 o'clock. Altogether I think the hon. member spoke only for 15 minutes, but long before he had completed his speech a number of people in the gallery left the Chamber. I would like something to be done about those people who come merely for afternoon tea. A good many of them leave before they should, and something should be done to stop the noise which ensues.

The PRESIDENT: For the hon. member's information, steps were taken to prevent this.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am very pleased to hear it. Taking everything into account, it is too much of an ordeal to ask a new member to move the Address-in-reply. One other feature is that the hon. member is fresh from victory at the ballot box and has probably a number of things to speak about, whereas the time he has on the opening day is generally about a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes. This does not allow him to extend himself. Summing up, there is no justification for keeping to the old custom of asking a new member to move the Address-in-reply. Whoever might be the Government next year, I hope this will be kept in mind.

To my sorrow the Governor's Speech this year departed from the usual procedure. I think it is the 25th Speech since I first came into this Chamber, and up till now it has always taken the form of recounting progress made in industry—that is, in agriculture and so forth—and at the end mentioning legislation it is proposed to introduce in the coming session. On this occasion there was a departure which I hope will not be repeated. I refer to the paragraph which reads as follows:—

The harmonious relationship existing between employer and employee in this State in recent years has been marred by the prolonged metal trades strike. Despite the fact that work has long since been resumed in other States where the strike originated against the Galvin Award, this defiance of the law in Western Australia continued. My advisers suggested that settlement of other issues involved in the strike might be arranged by a mediator, but reiterated their firm determination that the question of margins must be decided by the Arbitration Court. It is known that this strike received strong Communistic support. Attempts to disrupt the State's economy and inflict suffering and hardship on our people must be resisted with all the strength at our command and a Bill will be placed before you to strengthen the law in this connection.

I will not argue whether that paragraph is true or not. The point I am making is that this Speech is known as the Governor's Speech and it is wrong for any

Government to have a Speech drafted which may in any detail involve the Governor in a local political argument. I think it was ill-advised to include a paragraph of that description, and I hope it will not be repeated.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: You are scolding again!

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not scolding any member, but only the Government which was responsible for it. The Governor is a man of the people, and this Governor particularly has endeared himself to the populace of this State notwithstanding the short time he has been here, therefore I resent very strongly any attempt to drag him into a political controversy. If that paragraph does not do so, it goes dangerously close to it. I hope that will not be repeated in future.

Personally, I am pleased with that portion of the Governor's Speech which refers to the appointing of a Royal Commission to investigate the Kindergarten Union and its activities. For the past two or three years I have spoken on this subject during Address-in-reply debates. I have been hammering at getting greater financial assistance for the various local committees which, incidentally, obtain the finance with which to actually run the kindergartens. So I am pleased that something is being done. It was my intention to move for the appointment of a joint Select Committee to go into this question, but a few weeks ago I heard that a similar move was contemplated in another place and I let the matter rest there.

I think the reference of the matter to a Royal Commission is far better than the appointment by Parliament of a joint Select Committee. I would like to mention one or two phases of the activities of the Kindergarten Union. Up to 1946 the assistance granted by the Government was £2 per child paid direct to the local committee running the kindergarten. An approach was made to the then Minister for Education, Hon. J. T. Tonkin, for a greater amount to be made available. Mr. Tonkin agreed, and the Wise Government increased the rate to £4 per head.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Was that an annual payment?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, and that payment was made direct to the local committee. About a couple of years ago some alteration was made in the constitution of the Kindergarten Union and commencing from last year, or the year before, the Kindergarten Union took over the payment of teachers and the £4 subsidy by the Government was paid direct to the union. I might mention that previous to this, the local committee, out of the £4 per head paid the salaries of the teachers. Further representations were made and additional advances

granted to the union. Members will recollect that I asked that any further payment by the Government should be made not to the Kindergarten Union but to the local committees who actually are the ones that have to raise the money.

Up till last year with the alterations of the payment to the Kindergarten Union when the salaries of teachers were taken over, a levy was made by the union and the charge which the committees had to find was £4 15s. per year per child. In the middle of last year, a further alteration was made by the Kindergarten Union and in about the second term of the year it was decided to raise the amount to be charged to the various local committees from £4 15s. to £6 15s. per child. When the charge was made it was made for the whole year.

That meant that when the local committees received their bill for the third term—that is, the last term—last year, it was at the rate of £4 15s. per child plus the full £2 rise, which was made retrospective to the 1st January of last year. I am putting it mildly when I say that all the local committees were in a flat spin when they received that bill for £2 per child for the last quarter. The kindergarten of whose committee I happen to be president has 30 children. In the third term we had our ordinary bill of approximately £47, plus another £60, which made a total payment for the third term of £107.

That was bad enough, and we feared that we would have very great difficulty in financing our work at that rate. As a matter of fact, we are keeping open just from term to term. But worse was to come. This year we find that the union has decided that the charge per child shall be £13 5s. per year, and that is the basis on which we are paying at present. The only alteration that can be made will be dependent upon the appeal that is being launched this month or next month by the Kindergarten Union. If a tremendous amount of money is raised through that appeal, some reduction of the £13 5s. may be made to the committees. But we have reached the position where we are absolutely desperate. The amount we have to pay for 30 children is £130 per term. That has to be raised by the small local committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: A term or a year?

Hon. G. FRASER: Per term. Our bill for the 30 children is £130.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Per quarter.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. That means that for 30 children attending our kindergarten we have to raise £390 this year. On top of that, there is the other expenditure, which I would say would amount to at least £100—and I am giving these figures after checking our balance sheet—which would make the total £490. That

is without taking into account any new equipment we might buy for the kindergarten. Is it any wonder that in those circumstances we are financing our work from term to term and hoping that something will turn up to provide us with finance to meet our bills? We are hanging on in the hope of some move being made this year by the Government, or Parliament, or someone that will provide some assistance for those committees that are battling so hard to keep kindergartens open.

Hon. L. Craig: Where will the money come from?

Hon. G. FRASER: The Government is paying a pretty large sum to kindergartens. I did see the figure. I will not say that I am correct, but I think it is something like £17,000.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: That is right.

Hon. G. FRASER: But the whole of that goes to the Kindergarten Union.

Hon. H. Hearn: They must have some consolidated funds.

Hon. G. FRASER: No. I hope I am not giving secrets away, but I think that the last balance sheet I saw, at the last committee meeting, indicated that there was an overdraft of £5,000 or £6,000. That is why I am anxious for some investigation to be made regarding what portion of the money granted by the Government to the Kindergarten Union is going to the union itself and being absorbed, apart from the payment of teachers' salaries, at the top.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: What do they spend it on?

Hon. G. FRASER: Student teachers. There have been a number of letters in the paper as to whether there should be two-year or three-year students at the college. It is points like that which will have to be ironed out, and the way they are ironed out will determine whether many of the kindergartens operating to-day will be able to carry on.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The union imposes a lot of restrictions.

Hon. G. FRASER: Naturally the constitution of the Kindergarten Union ensures that the union is on the right side. The local committees have raised money and furnished the various kindergartens and—

Hon. R. J. Boylen: At what age is a child admitted?

Hon. G. FRASER: Generally from three to five years of age. All the furnishings of local kindergartens have been provided by the local committees. If any of those kindergartens failed, the furnishings would become the property of the union. There are many centres—my own included—which cannot continue beyond this year if £390 has to be found; that is, unless

something is done to relieve the situation. In the event of our kindergarten having to close, all the furnishings and toys and everything else, the cost of which amounted to a tidy sum, would become the property of the union.

Hon. J. McL. Thomson: And you have paid for it yourselves.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so. If our kindergarten closed, there is the possibility that we could open a play centre, which is much less costly to run.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: And just as useful.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not going to enter into an argument on that point at the moment. I do not know whether that is so. Many people say that play centres are more useful. It is a debatable point whether play centres or kindergartens are doing most good. But unless it were provided otherwise by the good graces of the Kindergarten Union, we would not have any furnishings, and would have to raise money to provide them in the event of our establishing a play centre. I hope all those points will be cleared up. I consider that kindergartens and play centres deserve all the support it is possible for us to give them.

Hon. L. Craig: What do parents pay?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am glad the hon. member raised that point. Until a few months ago this movement was known as a free kindergarten movement. But some months ago the various committees were asked if they would delete the word "free" because right through the years contributions have been sought from the parents. I do not know what happens in other centres, but we are in an industrial area where people have not too much money though they have many children. Perhaps the fact that they have a number of children is responsible for their not having much money.

We have told the directors that in no circumstances must a child be refused admission, whether its parents can pay or not. Although we have deleted the word "free," we are still adopting that procedure. Up to the last couple of years, generally a couple of shillings per week was paid. That was called milk money and covered the cost of the milk and fruit supplied each day to the children. At certain times of the year milk is now supplied by the Commonwealth Government and that has lessened the burden on local committees to some extent.

But although milk is not now a charge on local committees, except for about three months of the year, all kindergartens have had to ask parents to increase their weekly payment. I think that at present we are asking parents to pay 3s. 6d. per week per child. But people with two or more children cannot afford to pay more than 3s. 6d. and we would not in those

circumstances refuse to take the other children. I believe that parents are paying 5s. and 6s. per child in some areas; and I have heard—though I have been unable to verify the statement—that some kindergartens are charging 10s. per child. If they are to finance their work under present conditions, it is necessary for them to make some heavy charge of that kind.

I am hoping that the economic management of kindergartens will be gone into by the Royal Commission and that from the inquiry something practicable will be evolved so that this work can be carried on in all areas of the State in which it is desired to provide that type of education.

There is another part of the Speech of which I would like some clarification. It reads as follows:—

A scheme introduced to rationalise metropolitan bus services will have the ultimate object of reduction of administrative costs, better utilisation and maintenance of vehicles and standardisation of types.

The paragraph contains no mention of reduced fares! I would like the Minister for Transport to clarify that statement. I do not know whether it is intended to deal with what I have in mind: that is, the need for a little more co-ordination of services throughout the city. Although I was born in this State and have lived here practically all my life, public transport, has reached such a condition that I would not know where to go to catch buses for certain places.

All along St. George's Terrace, from William-st. west, there are umpteen buses leaving for different destinations. If one wants to catch a bus to a certain place, one has to walk down to a spot opposite the Treasury building. To catch a bus to another spot, one has to go to Wellington-st. whence buses depart from either side of William-st. Other buses set off from Stirling-st.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They are just like the Government departments: they are everywhere.

Hon. G. FRASER: One cannot even go to the one terminus to catch different buses to the same destination, because buses leave from both Wellington-st. and Stirling-st. for Leederville. After all the years I have been here, I do not know where to catch buses for certain districts. How then can we expect strangers to do so?

Hon. L. Craig: Who expects strangers to know these things?

Hon. G. FRASER: At least we could make it easier for them not to get lost, and enable them to ascertain readily where to find transport to wherever they want to go. Transport around the city is absolutely chaotic, and I am hoping that

what appears in the Governor's Speech regarding transport has some relation to a greater degree of co-ordination than exists at the moment.

Another feature of our transport system to which I wish to draw attention is the fact that we have still done nothing to give some protection in the way of shelters. I am hoping that that is one item included in the mysterious paragraph that appears in the Speech.

The Minister for Transport: That is being taken up with the Perth City Council.

Hon. G. FRASER: Can we hope for something to be done in the near future to overcome that difficulty?

The Minister for Transport: We are hoping so, but it is mainly a council responsibility.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then we will still have a hope that something will be done. I want to say a few words about one portion of my district—Kwinana.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Where is that?

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member will know soon enough, because he will hear quite a lot about it before long. I am a little disappointed that I have not had a copy of the reply from the Minister to my questions regarding Kwinana. My recollection is that the answer given was an evasion. I asked the following questions:—

(1) Have Kwinana and surrounding areas been town-planned? If so—

(a) by whom;

(b) what are the town planning qualifications of the person concerned?

(2) Should the answer to No. (1) be "No," will the Government give immediate instructions for an "Outline Plan" of the sub-region to be drawn up by a competent town planner?

The reply was that the townsite was being planned by Miss Feilman.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: And the qualifications were given.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. I did not ask merely about the townsite. The important point is what is being done with regard to the sub-region and not the townsite, which is only portion of the area. I am a little afraid of what will happen at Kwinana, because of the unpreparedness of the Government from the town planning angle. It seems to me that the Government is adopting the same old attitude: "Let the district grow, like Topsy." I hoped we had passed the stage where we would allow that sort of thing to occur and that we would by now have learnt our lesson from the costly blunders made all over the State in the past. I thought that in these days

of enlightened town planning the Government would have had the whole of this new area planned before any move was made to commence construction in it.

The Minister for Transport: It is being planned.

Hon. G. FRASER: By whom? That is the question I asked, and I have had no answer to it.

The Minister for Transport: I think the answer given indicates that certain of the plans must of necessity await the decisions of the Co-ordinator of Public Works and Industrial Development.

Hon. G. FRASER: This is a new district that has to be built up and certain things must be done within three years. Within that time 330 houses per year have to be built there, and other things have to be done. I understand that water services and roads are under construction and that a railway is to be built—

Hon. H. L. Roche: Are not all roads to lead to Kwinana?

Hon. G. FRASER: All this is being done without planning and yet we were told by the Minister, in answer to a member's question—he evaded my question—that it would all be fixed up later on. What is to happen in the meantime? If mistakes are made now, they will have to be rectified later at a cost of many thousands of pounds.

The Minister for Transport: These things are part of the overall plan.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is what I asked the Minister about.

The Minister for Transport: I am telling you.

Hon. G. FRASER: Who made the plan?

The Minister for Transport: The Co-ordinator of Works, and Miss Feilman is doing the townsite part of it.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is not correct. I have made investigations into this question.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Then do you know the answers?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, and that is why I asked my question. One often knows the answer before asking a question but on this occasion I was truly seeking information. As I understand it, the only portion of the Kwinana planning that Miss Feilman is dealing with is that relating to housing or the townsite. Good heavens above, I could do that myself.

Hon. H. L. Roche: You are not bad, are you?

Hon. G. FRASER: We know that the attitude in the past has been, "Here is a block of 100 acres. Right; let us cut it into quarter-acre blocks with a chain road between them." That has been the idea up to date. What is the use of giving

a town planner powers that confine him to planning a townsite and that let him have no say with regard to the surrounding areas?

The Minister for Transport: I think you will find that that is not the case here. Certain questions depend on the plans of the industrial development people.

Hon. G. FRASER: That brings me to another point. We have in this State a town planner with the highest qualifications and in the case of Kwinana, which is a rush job, that town planner could have been asked for an outline or overall plan for the whole region, but nothing of that kind has been done. The Minister tells us that there is an outline or overall plan; and if that is so, I assume it has been made by a civil servant with no qualifications as a town planner. Is that not a stupid way of going about it? There has been a great waste of money in all the towns in this State during past years owing to lack of proper planning, yet here, with this new area to be developed, we find the same old blunders being made again.

The Minister for Transport: I can assure the hon. member that that is not so and that the whole matter is being carefully planned.

Hon. G. FRASER: Planned by whom?

The Minister for Transport: The Co-ordinator of Public Works and of Industrial Development and his co-adjutor are doing the necessary overall planning, and Miss Feilman has been allotted the portion on which she is now engaged.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, a portion that I could do. The overall planning is the important part and it should not be done by amateurs. I have the highest respect for Mr. Dumas and the others mentioned by the Minister, in regard to their own particular spheres, but I do not think—apart from that—that they know any more about town planning than I do.

The Minister for Transport: I would dispute that.

Hon. G. FRASER: The important thing in town planning is to have the whole question mapped out beforehand and all the services co-ordinated.

The Minister for Transport: That is what they are doing.

Hon. G. FRASER: No. The Government first of all made an agreement with the oil company and said, "We will give you this area." Then they negotiated with the Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. and said, "We will give you this other area," and now the Water Supply Department, the Electricity Commission and the Railway Department are all putting in their services independently, according to their own ideas.

The Minister for Transport: Not at all. They are doing it to a co-ordinated plan.

Hon. G. FRASER: The whole thing is being done by these different people independently—

The Minister for Transport: No.

Hon. G. FRASER: —instead of there being an overall plan. We find that the oil refinery, the steel mill and the cement works are to be established in various places and apparently the Government is then going to plan the rest around what has been done without planning. There have been enough mistakes of that kind in the past, and I thought the Government would have shown a bit of gumption in regard to a new area such as this.

The Minister for Transport: The hon. member will be surprised at what has been planned.

Hon. G. FRASER: I asked for information and was practically told that nothing had been done. I hope I am wrong, because I do not wish to see this new area spoilt—as so many other places have been in the past—through almost complete lack of planning. Late in the day as it now is, I hope the Government will do something definite in the matter of planning the Kwinana area. Apart from the industries to be established and the homes to be built at Kwinana, we must not lose sight of the necessity to retain sufficient food-producing land, and I maintain that a person with the necessary qualifications should have been appointed to do the planning.

Mention of Kwinana brings me back to the old subject—Fremantle harbour. There have been notices in the Press that, because of developments at Kwinana, there is now no necessity for upriver extension of the harbour. I believe the first intimation of that by a Minister of the Crown was given at a smoke social, or something of that nature, and since then there have been one or two other references to it in the Press. I would like the Minister for Works to make a public statement of the Government's intentions in relation to Fremantle harbour. I read in the Press the other day that the Government intends to build a wooden railway bridge down there, so apparently we have been cut down from a £20,000,000 harbour to a wooden railway bridge!

I was hoping that we would eventually have something substantial there. The only thing I regret in my public life is that I was one of the representatives of the Fremantle district who agreed with the Minister for Works—in the depression years—to a wooden structure for the Fremantle traffic bridge. We were told at that time that it would last for 20 years and that it could be built for a sum that would amount to only two years' interest on the cost of a steel bridge, so we weakened and allowed it to be built. We were informed that at the end of the 20-year period a new steel bridge would be constructed.

Hon. H. Hearn: But it turned out to be like some of our temporary buildings.

Hon. G. FRASER: It seems that we are now to have another wooden bridge in addition to the traffic bridge.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Is it to be a permanent-temporary bridge?

Hon. G. FRASER: Had we insisted on the building of a steel bridge at that time, we would not, since then, have had all the worry about upriver harbour extension. Having been forewarned in that regard, I earnestly hope that on this occasion a steel bridge will be built for the railway. If that is not done, there is no doubt that the political representatives who succeed me in the West Province will have further headaches on the question of bridges at Fremantle. I ask the Minister for Works to make a definite announcement in this regard. The people of the area concerned are unable to repair their houses because they do not know what is to happen and there has been no definite ministerial statement on the question, apart from one or two odd references to the effect that Kwinana has altered the upriver extension scheme and that a railway bridge will be built near the present railway.

I know the Government appointed a committee some months ago to examine the question and that the Minister is awaiting its report, but surely he knows where the new bridge is to be placed. To me, as a layman, it seems that any alteration will not bring it east of Stirling Highway; and if the Minister would make an announcement as to what areas are likely to be effected, the people of that district would know where they stood. They have been more or less under a cloud for four or five years and some indication from the Minister would let them know whether they should go ahead with alterations or renovations that are necessary to their properties.

Then again, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister for Works to the shocking state of some houses owned by his department in Stirling Highway, North Fremantle. No one travelling from Perth to Fremantle along Stirling Highway could have any trouble in picking out these cottages, as they are the worst-looking buildings on the main road. If they were owned by a private person one would be inclined to call him a rack-renter for taking rent for them. Until a decision is made with regard to the new bridge it would be useless to spend money on those houses, but since Pt. Brown is not now to be the site of the bridge, the department should renovate these premises. The Government has known the decision regarding Pt. Brown for at least six months, yet nothing has been done to improve the appearance of these cottages.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: When did the department acquire them?

Hon. G. FRASER: A couple of years ago. In ordinary times such places would probably have been condemned and pulled down, but they are too valuable for that to be done today. In those circumstances I hope the department will do something to brighten up both the exteriors and interiors of those buildings. The verandahs are built right on to the footpath along Stirling Highway. At one time these verandahs were fitted with railings but, through old age and rotting of the timbers, those railings have disappeared and the houses look particularly dilapidated. So I hope the Minister will have something done to brighten up and repair these places.

Hon. G. Bennetts: All Government buildings are the same.

Hon. G. FRASER: Possibly so. We know the Government is poor but there is certain necessary work that should be done. This afternoon I asked a question about Willagee Park because I have been anxious to find out exactly what these houses will cost. I had an idea that the Government did not know and I could understand that in the case of the Austrian prefabs. However, I think something definite in regard to price, etc., should be known about the local prefabs. They are timber framed buildings and if a man is forced to live in one of them the rental makes a hole in his pocket. The local prefabs cost £2 10s. a week to rent and they are four-roomed places with a half-verandah on the back. The Austrian prefabs are also four-roomed houses, and the rent is £3 2s. a week.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: They are £3 14s. in Derby.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but the two places are entirely different. When the amortisation of these places is worked out, on a 53-year basis, at £2 10s. a week in the case of the local prefab, simple arithmetic gives us a figure of £6,890, and for the Austrian prefab, at £3 2s. a week, a sum of £8,543. It seems to me that in estimating costs the Government is greatly exaggerating, or intends to make a wonderful return from the erection of these houses. I am hopeful that some attention will be given to this matter, because to ask people to pay £2 10s. and £3 2s. a week rent will deprive them of some of the necessities of life. I ask the Minister to examine the position more closely and, if possible, reduce the rent of these places.

I know that the average Commonwealth-State home being erected these days costs about £2 10s. to £2 15s. per week rental, but we were given to understand that these precast houses were to be erected at a lower figure than ordinary houses, and if that is so then these pre-

fabs should be available at a lower rental. Most of the people renting these prefabs are in the unfortunate position that they have no option; they have to occupy these houses and pay the high rentals. I know the experience of one man who resided at the Naval Base flats. He paid £1 a week and occupied a reasonably good flat, worked at the power house and was able to travel to and from work with ease. When these houses were erected at Willagee Park, he was told that he had to occupy one of them and, instead of paying £1 a week for a flat within walking distance of his work, he had to pay the extra rental and use two means of transport to reach his place of employment. I am hopeful that some investigation will be made or, if investigations are in progress, that they will be accelerated and the costs correctly assessed, and thus more suitable rentals can be charged.

About five or six years ago, in 1946, I think, I noticed in the Press an advertisement stating that land in the Applecross, Mt. Pleasant, Bicton and Palmyra areas was to be sold by the Melville Road Board because of non-payment of rates. The advertisement covered about 1½ pages. A large number of people were interested and intended to go to the sale with the idea of purchasing some of the blocks. Just prior to the sale, in about February, 1947, an amended notice was inserted in the paper, and this notice covered only half a page. It appears that the other blocks, not listed in the second advertisement, were taken over by the State Housing Commission.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Was that in February, 1947?

Hon. G. FRASER: That would be about the date. I have no objection to the State Housing Commission taking over these blocks, but I am perturbed about the fact that recently a number of them were sold by the State Housing Commission to the War Service Homes Commission, and it, in turn, has sold them to applicants under that scheme. I have a list in my pocket of all the blocks taken over by the State Housing Commission, and I also have a list showing the rates outstanding on each block at the time of sale.

Originally, the blocks were taken over by the State Housing Commission at a price which covered the rates owing, plus a small sum for advertising—I think about £3 a block—and one or two other items; it would be safe to say that £10 would cover all the incidentals. I have had a look through the lists of the Applecross and Mt. Pleasant areas, and the average rates owing on each block would be approximately £26 to £30. Not long ago I was at Applecross, and I spoke to a young fellow who was building a self-help home with money advanced by the War Service Homes Commission. He told me that he

had bought the block from the War Service Homes Commission and this was one of the blocks that had been withdrawn from sale and taken over by the State Housing Commission. I asked him what he had paid for the block, and when I tell members the price, some of them, who are keen businessmen, will say that the State Housing Commission has done a good job and shown good business acumen. I cannot agree with that point of view. The Commission purchased the blocks for approximately £30 to £40, and this young fellow, an ex-serviceman, paid £175, and he told me that the block next to it was sold for £200.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Ned Kelly had nothing on them!

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: Had they put any roads through the area?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, the roads were constructed by the Melville Road Board and paid for by the ratepayers of that district, because it was one of those areas which had been subdivided before 1928—before the Town Planning Act made the company concerned responsible for the roads.

Hon. H. L. Roche: It is a good job they are clamping down on the activities of the Housing Commission.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have always stuck up for the Housing Commission and I will still do so, but I do not agree with it in this instance.

Hon. L. Craig: Suppose they had sold the block to the applicant at cost price and he had resold the block next week for £175. What would you have said to that?

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Two wrongs do not make a right.

Hon. G. FRASER: I would not say anything to that. When we passed the State Housing Act, we gave the Commission permission to buy and sell land, but we did not set it up as an estate agent.

Hon. L. Craig: Nor did we set it up to make gifts to applicants.

Hon. G. FRASER: Nor to make huge profits out of the people.

Hon. L. Craig: They have to be one or the other.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is not a business concern.

Hon. L. Craig: Then it is about time it was.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not agree with the hon. member, and I am surprised that he considers the Commission should be allowed to rob ex-servicemen.

Hon. L. Craig: It is not robbing them.

Hon. G. FRASER: Of course it is.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Surely the hon. member does not believe in State business concerns.

Hon. G. FRASER: My only safeguard in making these statements is that the man told me he paid that price for the block. However, I have the list from the Melville Road Board office, and alongside the number of each block is shown the amount of rates owing and the amount paid by the State Housing Commission in each instance.

Hon. L. Craig: Things have changed.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is no doubt about that.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The Government could not just take them over; they must have come up for auction.

Hon. G. FRASER: Possibly they resumed them.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Then the owner would get a notice.

Hon. G. FRASER: They were blocks being sold for non-payment of rates.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: And they would have to go up for auction.

Hon. G. FRASER: Those particular blocks were not put up for auction.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Then they were resumed.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member can look at the papers and see the notice in "The West Australian". I can also show him the list of all the blocks taken over by the State Housing Commission in the Bicton, Palmyra, Applecross and Mt. Pleasant areas, and alongside the number of each block is listed the amount paid. However, I have only the word of the person who bought the block to which I have referred, and I am prepared to accept his word when he says he paid £175 for it.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: A cheap block!

Hon. G. FRASER: It may be, but the point is that we did not establish the State Housing Commission to make profits.

Hon. L. Craig: They are making a hell of a loss, though!

Hon. G. FRASER: We established the Commission to provide homes for the people, and there is no reason for it to charge these high prices for blocks, especially when it sells them to ex-servicemen.

Hon. L. Craig: The poor old Government must make a loss and no profit!

Hon. G. FRASER: I believe that the profits would go to the State Housing Commission because, as far as I can recollect, the War Service Homes Commission has to sell blocks to its clients at almost the same price it pays for them. Later, I intend to ask a question on this matter in an endeavour to have full information and the relevant files laid on the Table of the House. I intend to do this so that members can see for themselves exactly the amounts paid for these blocks and how much profit the Commission has made.

Hon. L. Craig: I see nothing wrong with it.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think it is an absolute scandal. These people are being overcharged, and the amount of overcharge should be refunded to them. Over the years, many members in this Chamber have been keen to end controls, and on many items this has been done. In the building industry there is what is known as a rise-and-fall clause included in all contracts, and if that were omitted, probably 90 per cent. of our builders would go out of business. I do not want to see that come about, but something will have to be done, and done quickly because there are many men, as there are in other professions, who take advantage of it.

In order to impress upon members how serious this question is, I intend to give them an actual illustration. A builder was given plans and specifications in March, 1950, and he quoted a price of £1,550 for the job. The building was to be a timber-framed house of four rooms and, in order to suit himself, the builder did the job in various stages and it took two years and two months to complete. He then submitted to the purchaser a bill which included a rise of £494. Just imagine, an increase of £494 on a house originally estimated to cost £1,550! I ask members: How can anyone finance a home under such conditions—a home that has taken two years and two months to build and is loaded with a liability of £494 on the original cost of £1,550? The lifting of controls has been tinkered with during the year.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: There have been increases in wages.

Hon. G. FRASER: The increases in wages would not explain the fact that the house has taken two years and two months to build. These contractors are holding home-seekers in the hollow of their hands. During the war years we talked of cost-plus, but this rise-and-fall provision is an absolute gift to builders, and it is our duty to find some way to overcome the difficulty, which is a growing one.

I called on the secretary of the Builders' Guild to ascertain whether anything could be done and whether that body could take some action. The secretary said, "We are not interested in the price." I said, "Not interested in the price?" He replied, "No. If there is any complaint about the structure, we are prepared to investigate it, but we are not interested in the price." I mentioned the £494 under the rise-and-fall provision on a home costing £1,550 and he said that that was about reasonable. That is all the satisfaction I could get from a body which I thought existed to protect the public.

Hon. L. Craig: What would have been the rise in the basic wage during those two years?

Hon. G. FRASER: I suppose it was substantial.

Hon. L. Craig: Equal to £494?

Hon. G. FRASER: It may have been, but because of the laxity that exists, a builder may contract to erect 100 houses and take five years to complete them, and because of the time occupied in their building, the purchasers are penalised by the rise in prices over the period.

Hon. L. A. Logan: The provision stipulates fall as well as rise.

Hon. G. FRASER: Can the hon. member say that in the next couple of years there will be any fall in prices? I have devoted much thought to this matter and I should like some help from members with a view to overcoming the existing unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Hon. L. Craig: Could not there be a clause setting a limit to the time in which the house should be built?

Hon. G. FRASER: That is the only way of overcoming the difficulty that I can see, but members might be able to suggest other ways. For the building of war service homes, there is an arrangement with the Master Builders' Association to complete such homes within nine months, but how effective has it been? A builder merely has to apply for an extension of time on the ground that he has not been able to get the requisite bricks and the building operations have extended over 18 months. We must find some ways and means to overcome the difficulty. I do not want to penalise the builders; with the prices soaring as they are, there must be some provision in the nature of rise and fall.

Hon. L. Craig: It would not be necessary now to wait for two years.

Hon. G. FRASER: The case I have mentioned is not an isolated one. Probably every member knows of similar instances. In the latest issue of "The Sunday Times," a complaint from Wembley was published relating to war service homes. The number of instances could be multiplied many times.

Let me explain the unfortunate position of a man with very little capital who attempts to build a home. He goes to the bank or other institution to make arrangements for finance. He has the price quoted for building the home and makes a reasonable allowance for rise and fall and arranges finance accordingly. In the case I have quoted, when the man received a demand for £494, he went to the bank, and the only additional money the bank would advance was £50. I found that the man had set aside for rise and fall about £200 and I told him to be on the safe side by allowing £250. He did so, but then, as I have explained, he received a bill for £494.

Members will appreciate the difficulty of that man's position, seeing that the house had been built and the bank would advance no more than an additional £50. Nobody can estimate what money would be required to meet the rise and fall of costs. I suggested to this man that his best course would be to ask the builder what he could do, and finally the builder agreed to knock off £100. Nobody can tell me that, when this sort of thing happens, there is not a ramp somewhere. No builder is a Father Christmas prepared to make a present of £100 to a client.

So I say the position is serious and I repeat my request that members give consideration to it with a view to finding ways and means to protect such people. I am inclined to agree with Mr. Craig that the only way to meet the situation would be to provide a time limit in the contract. Then the client could foresee to a reasonable extent what was likely to happen and make provision accordingly.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: If you attempted to provide a time limit, you would get no tenders at all.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then the builders would have to go out of business.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: It would be impossible to fix the price.

Hon. G. FRASER: I realise that.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: Did the contractor supply an account showing the items that made up the £494?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but unless a man was a Philadelphia lawyer or a mathematician, he would be unable to follow it. Even a man with knowledge of building operations could not check up on what had occurred during the two years and two months. The Guild offered to submit the items to some of their experts for an opinion as to whether the charges were unfair but it needed no expert to realise that. There are several other matters with which I should have liked to deal, but I observe that members are giving anxious glances at the clock.

Hon. H. L. Roche: You have five minutes yet.

Hon. G. FRASER: This is my maiden speech as Leader of the Labour Party in this House and I know that Ministers are anxious to ascertain what we may do. For their information I shall say that, provided the legislation brought down is considered by us to be in the best interests of the people of the State, it will receive our full support, but if it falls short in this respect, members will hear from us in a manner that cannot be mistaken.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.