

The headline was, "Workers offered pay cut... or sack". That is the grisly alternative—a gun at their heads. It goes on to say—

Employees at Pilkington ACI's glass plant in Dandenong have been asked to accept a cut in pay to keep their jobs.

The company said yesterday that the newly opened float glass plant would close for at least eight weeks and possibly 10 weeks.

Further on it says—

He said: "We have talked to the unions in terms of less take-home pay for all by reduction of over-award payments, as opposed to no work for some."

A company official said last night that if this offer was rejected, at least 100 and possibly as many as 200 employees would have to be laid off. The total work force at the plant is 490.

The official said that the company was expecting a reply from the unions this morning.

As soon as there is an economic downturn, who is expected to pay for it? The unfortunate working man. Working men are human beings, after all, and they deserve better treatment than that.

Mr Sodeman: A chance to exhibit true socialism. I will explain it for you. Their mates would not have been out of work.

Mr FLETCHER: The honourable member might not have been in the Chamber when I referred to some of the new arrivals who make rather vindictive comments. I suggest members keep their cool and do not take things so seriously but listen to the sensible comments from this side of the House.

Mr Sodeman: I was also here when you said you did not mind interjections as long as you could capitalise on them.

Mr FLETCHER: As usual, I have five times more material than I can use in the time available to me, but I hope I have made the point to the other side of the House that Australia is in trouble. The Federal Government is not finding it easy. It is taking remedial and unpopular measures. I also say that if an election were held now it is conceivable that we would be defeated unless the population of Australia took into account the grisly alternative of having the Leader of the Liberal Party as a Prime Minister and a querulous schoolboy representing the Country Party. What prospect would Australia have in a situation like this?

While there is economic trouble or a war, Labor will be there to try to pull the country out of it; and as soon as the crisis

has passed the same old crowd will come back to exploit and create a situation such as the one we have now inherited.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Dr Dadour.

House adjourned at 10.47 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 24th October, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE

1. EXMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

Fourth-year Classes

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Further to my question of the 17th September, 1974, has a decision been made for the provision of fourth-year classes at the Exmouth school for the commencement of the 1975 school year?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is "No", will the Minister treat this matter as urgent in view of the uncertainty which exists for parents who will have to make alternative arrangements?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

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

2. TOWN PLANNING

Whitfords Shopping Development

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

Would the Minister advise the reasons why the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority rejected the proposed shopping and community centre at Whitfords as reported in *The West Australian* on the 23rd October, 1974?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority advises it has not rejected the concept of a town centre at Whitfords. In this context, under the provisions of the metropolitan region scheme, the MRPA can consider only the matter of retail shopping space. The other elements in this proposal—commercial, community, recreational, etc. facilities—are not matters requiring decision by the authority.

The basis on which it rejected this specific proposal was that the difference between the retail component sought by the consortium and that which the authority was prepared to approve was so great that it rendered the proposal as a whole, impracticable. It clearly required replanning and therefore resubmission. For that reason and that reason alone, the proposal was rejected rather than modified.

3. MINING

Halls Creek Coal Deposits

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

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Chairman of Western Mining Corporation Ltd. told the annual meeting of shareholders in Melbourne on the 17th October, 1974, that he hoped that the Halls Creek coal project would become active during the year?
- (2) What coal occurrences have been located in the vicinity of Halls Creek?
- (3) What are the prospects of this project?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) The Western Mining Corporation's announcement referred to a coal deposit at Hail Creek in Queensland.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

4. PETROL TAX

Method of Levy

The Hon. V. J. Ferry for the Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Minister for Health:

Further to the report that the States of New South Wales and South Australia have introduced a State Government levy on petrol sold in their States—

- (a) at what stage of distribution is this tax imposed;
- (b) is it to be applied to all petrol sold, whatever its ultimate use;
- (c) are primary producers exempt in the same manner as they are exempt from the Federal Government tax on diesel fuels providing they are used entirely on the primary producer's property?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (a) to (c) An Act has recently been passed by the Parliament of New South Wales to prohibit any person from carrying on the business of

selling petroleum products as defined in the measure, unless he is the holder of a license.

The measure makes provision for the issue of licenses upon payment of prescribed fees.

It is understood that South Australia is to introduce similar legislation.

Until copies of the New South Wales and South Australian legislation are received and studied, it is not possible to supply the information sought by the honourable member.

5. LUPINS

Price and Export

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

- (1) What is the price that lupins have been forward sold—
 - (a) abroad; and
 - (b) to local consumers?
- (2) What percentage of the expected crop is covered in (1) (a) and (b)?
- (3) What are the terms of delivery and payment of (1) (a) and (b)?
- (4) What is the expected—
 - (a) first payment; and
 - (b) second payment?
- (5) When can producers expect a second payment?
- (6) What is the expected cost of marketing a tonne of lupins?
- (7) From what ports will lupins be exported during the coming season?
- (8) Will freight deductions be on a basis of freight cost to one of these ports, or to "nearest port" to the producer?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

The Grain Pool has advised as follows—

- (1) (a) \$90 per tonne f.o.b.
- (b) No forward sales have been made. Home consumption price is \$90 per tonne f.o.r.
- (2) (a) Thirty thousand tonnes, which is an anticipated 50 per cent of expected deliveries.
- (b) No local sales to date by board. The board has approved farmer contracts with local processors for 9 000 tonnes.
- (3) (a) Payment is on arrival of the vessel at destination.

- (b) No local sales as yet. For small orders payment will be cash with order.
- (4) (a) First payment is at present being negotiated with the Rural & Industries Bank.
- (b) Depends on receipts and further sales.
- (5) Depends on receipts and further sales.
- (6) The Seeds Marketing Board has agreed to a Grain Pool charge of 75c per tonne.
- (7) Mainly Geraldton and Fremantle.
- (8) The "nearest port" for the producer.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AUTHORITY BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [2.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

In moving the third reading of the Bill, I want to record that I was a little remiss yesterday when replying to the second reading debate as I omitted to thank Mr Perry for his remarks. I thanked Mrs Vaughan and Mr Williams, but I overlooked Mr Perry's contribution which I felt added greatly to the debate. I thank him for his comments.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Convicted Inebriates' Rehabilitation Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education), and passed.

2. Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill.

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

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Amendment

Amendment made by the Assembly now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (the Hon. J. Heltman) in the Chair; the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The amendment made by the Assembly is as follows—
Clause 2.

Page 2, line 1 to line 21—To delete the clause and substitute a new clause as follows—

Section 20A added.

2. The principal Act is amended by inserting immediately following section 20 a new section, to stand as section 20A, as follows—

Power to borrow money.

20A. (1) The Board shall have power to borrow money upon the guarantee of the Treasurer of the State for the purposes of carrying out its powers and functions under this Act.

(2) The Board is authorized with the prior approval in writing of the Treasurer to borrow money upon such terms and conditions only as the Treasurer approves.

(3) The Treasurer is hereby authorized to so approve and to give the guarantee, including the guarantee of interest, in subsection (1), for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State.

(4) Any moneys borrowed by the Board under this section may be raised as one loan or as several loans and in such manner as the Treasurer may approve, but the amount of the moneys so borrowed shall not in any one year exceed in the aggregate such amount as the Treasurer approves.

(5) Before a guarantee is given by the Treasurer under this section, the Board shall give to the Treasurer such security as the Treasurer may require and shall execute all such instruments as may be necessary for the purpose.

(6) The Board shall use all moneys borrowed under the power conferred by this section for the purposes of carrying this Act into effect.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I move—

That the amendment made by the Assembly be agreed to.

This amendment is nothing like as formidable as it appears on the surface; indeed, it probably originated from a comment made by the Hon. R. F. Claughton. When speaking to the second reading stage of

the Bill, he asked what limits were to be imposed on the borrowing of the Art Gallery and what security would be offered in respect of its borrowing. I answered that, as it was a statutory body, the normal limits and protections were imposed which, at the time, I thought to be correct, as indeed did several other people. However, when the matter was pursued, it was considered advisable to insert this clause to protect the Treasury in the unlikely event of the Library Board going beyond the normal type of commitment that the Treasury could handle. I suppose it is an indication of the care with which many of the remarks made by members are checked. I thank Mr Claughton for having raised the matter and I apologise for having inadvertently given him an incorrect reply.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I thank the Minister for the recognition he gave me; I am pleased to see that the Government took notice of my remarks. It seemed to me that one of the dangers of the amending Bill was that it gave the Art Gallery power to borrow without clear indication from where the guarantee for those funds would come. Obviously, it has been thought prudent to ensure that the Treasury becomes the guarantor so that there will be absolutely no hazard to the stock of the Art Gallery. I am pleased to see that the Government studied my speech, and made the necessary amendment which, of course, I support.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

Report

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

INDECENT PUBLICATIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (the Hon. J. Heitman) in the Chair; the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6 put and passed.

Clause 7: Section 10 amended—

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not want to pursue this at length; I simply refer to this matter in association with succeeding clauses. It is under this section that the classification of a publication is made.

Subsequently the items are gazetted, and the information is published so that members of the community will be aware of the restricted items. The provision in clause 8 governs registration, and persons so registered will be supplied with lists of classified material. It seems to me that a continuing problem will be created. If a newsagent does not intend to sell classified material he does not have to apply

for registration. In the distribution of material a newsagent might be offering for sale a particular issue of a publication which might have become classified, although the previous issue had not been. I shall deal with this point when clause 8 is under discussion.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8: Section 11A added—

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: In the second reading debate I raised two points which dealt with proposed section 11A(1) and proposed section 11A(7). The first provision refers to persons selling publications, and the second provision refers to people selling restricted publications.

I turned to the parent Act and I found two definitions, one being a definition of "publications" and the other a definition of "restricted publications". I am satisfied in my own mind that the queries which I raised in my second reading are covered by the Act.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Under the provision in clause 7 the process for classification of material can apply to any particular issue of a publication. If a newsagent normally receives a certain publication which is not restricted, and then receives an issue subsequently which becomes restricted, he will not know that it is restricted until the information is gazetted. It may be a publication in respect of which no complaints have been raised previously. For that reason he would have no cause to believe that he is selling a publication which has become restricted.

A newsagent may sell what he believes to be nonobjectionable material, and accordingly may not feel obliged to become registered. In that case he would not receive lists of restricted material. Clause 8 sets down the conditions governing registration, and provides that persons "may" register, and not "shall" register. Proposed section 11A(7) states—

A person shall not have in his possession for sale any restricted publication unless he has been registered under subsection (1) of this section.

If a newsagent is not registered and receives a publication which has become restricted he would be committing an offence and would be liable to a fine of \$100.

I do not know how we can get over this difficulty, except by doing away with censorship completely. If such a case does arise how does the Government intend to deal with it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The honourable member has highlighted a problem which exists under a great number of Acts. This is a question of definition and common-sense application. Some

newsagents will sell only reputable publications, but occasionally one might find a picture in one of these publications which some people consider to be a borderline case. An instance of this was the delightful poster showing a married couple showering together, and bearing the inscription "Save Water, Shower Together".

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: How do you know they were married?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I know they were married because the woman had a wedding ring on her finger. This was not a pornographic poster; it was a rather humorous one. We have to rely on people to administer the Act wisely. If, for instance, *The West Australian* suddenly publishes a picture which somebody considers to be pornographic, those administering the Act would not institute a prosecution against the newsagent selling the publication.

If one made a diligent search of Acts one would find many cases where the imagination could be stretched, and one could be led to believe that those administering the legislation were harsh and unconscionable, and that members of the public would be placed in difficult circumstances. It is difficult to frame an amendment to cover this sort of case. In my belief great care is taken by the Government in the administration of laws.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am not criticising the explanation the Minister has given. The provision in the clause is a permissive provision, and says that people may register, but in practice registration could be made compulsory. Unless a newsagent is registered he will not receive gazetted information, and for that reason he will leave himself open to prosecution under this legislation. I repeat that the effect of the legislation is not permissive, but in practice it will compel all newsagents to register.

The second effect it may have is that newsagents who feel that \$25 is too high a price to pay, may institute their own form of censorship, and this could quite easily reduce the range of their publications and limit the material offering to the public. This could have a more serious effect in the country areas than it would in the city where people have access to a wide range of outlets.

I also ask whether it is the intention to police the exemption of the registered premises or outlets; or will the police give more attention to those they know are not registered, so that the people who do not register may find themselves in a more invidious position than the others; because the police might feel by not registering they are attempting to avoid the provisions of the Act and, by doing so, they may be trying to set themselves up as a sly outlet.

These are one or two of the concerns I feel about the legislation. Finally I wonder why the Government has chosen this par-

ticular method to disburse information. Why is it necessary to have the statutory requirement to register? Why should there not be an invitation to the people to have themselves placed on the mailing list; or for them to be informed that lists of these restricted publications can be distributed for a fee?

I should have thought this would have fitted more into what is said to be the philosophy of the Government, than the arrangements set out in the legislation. People should receive the publications and with the help of the wholesalers and the distributors we would know where to go. In this way it should not be difficult to circularise the people concerned and tell them these are the provisions of the Act, and that the Government is prepared to send them a list of gazetted material if they apply to be placed on the mailing list.

I cannot see why that should be a difficult process. It would certainly provide less cause for objection than the registration requirement in the Bill, which makes it compulsory.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will deal with the points raised by Mr Cloughton and take them all together. I take it for granted that in this measure we are dealing with something we all accept, because successive Governments have legislated for this purpose. Yet, we all know it is only a matter of opinion. What one person may regard as pornographic may be quite tiresome to another. What one person may consider to be sexually exciting may be found to be monotonous by another.

We are dealing with a matter of opinion ranging from those who consider there should be no censorship at all to those who consider there should be severe censorship. Generally the question is reduced to the degree of censorship there should be.

The Government has tried to give as wide a degree of choice as possible. To ask a bookseller who sells nothing but religious tracts would be absurd—and I now refer to the Salvation Army bookseller in Pier Street. By the same token, in my own town there is a young couple who are staunchly involved in the Anglican Church. They sell books, periodicals, and magazines of a religious nature, and one would not expect them to register. We also have the commercial undertakings which sell *The West Australian*, the *Daily News*, the *Women's Weekly*, and the like. They might also exclude themselves by not registering.

If a newsagent is in the habit of buying an assortment of the more salacious journals and magazines that are published, he would be in some trouble if he did not register.

I think the Bill before us provides a reasonable way to handle the matter. Lists will be sent to the people concerned to inform them of the journals, papers, and any published material that are considered to come within the scope of the legislation

and which in their opinion may have a particular appeal so far as its pornographic content is concerned.

This seems to be a reasonable way to handle the situation bearing in mind that we are dealing with a matter in which opinions differ widely, and in which the degree of opinion also differs widely.

It is possible that some people will see such material and find no interest in it at all, while others will get upset that it is being offered for sale.

The other point I wish to make is that I would like the police to operate in the same way as they do now on a number of similar types of subjects; and I refer to the action they take when a complaint is made. We have all had this explained to us from time to time, where a member of the public writes in and says that at such-and-such an address is to be found some horrifying material. The police will promptly take action on such a complaint. That would be the normal course of action that would be taken by the police. The complaint may, of course, take them to a wider field than merely a newsagent.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not quite sure I completely understand what the situation will be and no doubt the Minister will enlighten me if I am incorrect in what I believe the situation to be.

It seems to me there are some publications which are to be listed as restricted publications. What will happen is that on registration by the newsagent he will receive from the authority a list of these particular publications. This will inform the newsagent that such publications have been included in the list, and if he contravenes what he is permitted to do in such circumstances he will be liable to be charged with an offence.

That is how I understand the position. It seems to me that what happens in practice with respect to a newsagent receiving publications is that he receives a great bundle of them from one of the distributors—they are all wrapped and tied up—and he goes to his place of business and opens up the bundle in the morning when out pops an article describing the name of the publication and what it contains after which the newsagent proceeds to put the bundle on his shelves for sale.

The newsagent certainly does not proceed to read the publications because they come out in such huge quantities from the various suppliers that he would not have time to peruse them even briefly. It seems to me that if the publications are coming from a distributor in the town, the publisher would have already received instructions from the authorities that publications A, B, C, and D were on the restricted list, and it should be a simple procedure to have them so marked on the list the distributor sends out so that the newsagent will know which are the restricted publications. If the publication is so

classified that it cannot be sent to newsagents in any circumstances, it will not be on the list at all, so there is no place for it on the distributor's invoice.

I would like clarification of that point before I continue. Can restricted publications be sold under certain circumstances or can they not be sold under any circumstances?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: If they are so declared, they can be sold under no circumstances.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That fixes that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The example given by the Hon. Clive Griffiths would apply to some newsagents.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: To every newsagent.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Such a publication certainly would not go to the Methodist Book Depot which sells religious publications. It would go to some newsagents.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Having established that fact, of course the publication would not go to the Methodist Book Depot because it is not a general newsagency. However, the number of newsagents is certainly far greater than the number of shops of the type about which the Minister has spoken. Perhaps in this town there might be a dozen shops of that kind, whereas there are hundreds of newsagents who sell general publications.

The distributor has a large form on which are marked all the publications he is going to sell. The majority of publications are sent on a sale or return basis, and every month the newsagent has to enter all the publications he is returning on a large return form. A publication which is restricted and which is not permitted to be sold would not be on the form. So if the distributor sends to the newsagent a publication which is not on the list or which is pencilled in on the printed form, under the Bill now before us the newsagent could become liable for having it in his shop.

The current situation is that he must sell the publication before he is liable, but the provisions of this clause of the Bill make him liable if the publication is on his premises. It would be reasonable to assume that any publication on the premises of a newsagent is intended for sale and it would be difficult for him to say, "It came in my bundle of newspapers this morning", whether or not he had a list of restricted publications from the authority. It would also be difficult for him to get rid of it at short notice.

I have reason to question some of the tactics adopted by the Police Department in obtaining grounds for prosecution under the present circumstances. I think on occasion they use questionable tactics with a view to embarking on a successful prosecution of a newsagent. I do not want to

be misunderstood. I am one who thinks our censorship laws should be more stringent than they are. I am not suggesting there should be an open slather as far as these publications are concerned, but I believe there should be a limiting factor on the tactics adopted in an endeavour to prosecute someone simply because he has been sent a restricted publication by the distributor.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: What would happen if someone posted it to him?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: According to the Bill, if it is found on his premises and is suspected to be for sale, he can be prosecuted. I am not suggesting people should not be prosecuted in some instances, but the newsagent is not always in a position to dictate which publications are sent to him, whether or not they are on a printed list. He cannot control what is inside the bundle of newspapers which he receives and opens up every morning.

I spent some years in a business of this nature and I know the type of material that comes to a newsagent and what he has to do. Under the existing situation, if a newsagent receives some periodicals or publications which he feels should not be sold or which are pornographic and he does not want to sell them, he can leave them out in his back storeroom, and when the return form comes in he enters them on the form and his account is credited for those publications. I make no further comments at this stage.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There might have been some justification for the remarks of the Hon. Clive Griffiths in the situation under the parent Act, when little or no action could be taken against anyone but the newsagent. The unfairness inherent in the Act in its application to newsagents, because they alone could be tackled, is being corrected in the measure now before us and the problem he has told us about seems to have been at least eased to a great extent. The newsagent does not need to go through the list to see whether the publication is on it because paragraph (a) of the clause says—

- (a) notice of every publication or class of publication which the Minister has determined shall be classified as a restricted publication and notice of any variation or revocation of such a determination;

I doubt whether there are two or three members in this Chamber who could not name publications which are on the list. Anyone but blind Neddy would put them on the list.

I have never managed a newsagency, but I understand the principle is that one rips off and keeps only the name tags, and the publications can be disposed of straight

away. The police are left in an invidious position because the newsagent is able to say he does not sell the books in his back room. But if a customer wants one of the books it is sold to him, and this continues until the police come along. This is an impossible situation. We must be able to enforce the law. We have established the Police Force to protect our community, so surely we should not make life completely intolerable for the police; and by the same token we should not make life intolerable for the citizens of our State.

Under the Bill publishers will be just as liable as newsagents are. It is interesting to note that only 17 shops in the State have availed themselves of the offer to be sent lists of offensive material. If we are to have censorship laws we must be able to police them. Unless a positive amendment or suggestion is put forward I think the Bill should remain as printed.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister said that a publication on the restricted list could not be sold under any circumstances.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Of course, there is an exception for research or something.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I asked whether there were some circumstances in which restricted publications could be sold legally by a person who is registered. However, new subsection (7) says that a person shall not have in his possession for sale any restricted publication unless he has been registered under new subsection (1). I take it that if he is so registered he may sell any publications on the restricted list.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not intend to oppose the measure, I merely seek clarification of what it means in relation to newsagents. Under new subsection (7) only those who are registered may have restricted publications in their possession for sale; and unregistered newsagents who receive a restricted publication are immediately liable to be fined \$100. The provision possibly was framed in that manner for the reason I indicated earlier; that a newsagent may receive a publication before it is examined and placed on the restricted list.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There are two classes: the completely banned publication and those which may be sold on a restricted basis.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The restricted publications are those which may be sold but not displayed in shops?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is right.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Then an unregistered newsagent may not have restricted publications in his possession, even if he does not display them or wish to

sell them. I am trying to imagine the process which will take place, because we have not previously tried to control this matter at the wholesaler or distributor point.

Each week a vast number of publications are released, and someone must have the task of examining them. Who will do that? Will any change be made to the present arrangements? Material could arrive at a newsagency and be sold before the committee has an opportunity to examine it and decide whether or not it should be restricted.

I think the Bill is an honest attempt by the Government to alleviate the difficulties which have been experienced, but there still appear to be some problems which will have to be ironed out. What will be the degree of inspection by police officers? One of the chief complaints of newsagents is that they are almost living in dread of a visit by the police because they cannot be sure which of their displayed material will be the subject of a complaint. A newsagent recently complained that material under his shelves was seized. The situation has been quite unsatisfactory.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Perhaps the difficulty is that we are not referring to the parent Act. The committee must be composed of not less than three or more than seven persons. When material is declared restricted its sale to anyone under the age of 18 years is forbidden. Under the Bill its sale will be totally forbidden in unregistered shops.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: That confirms the point I made; that it is more or less compulsory for newsagents to register.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, if they intend to sell this material. I know one fellow with a confectionery and tobacco shop who sells newsagency material as a sideline. He had in his shop a bench as long as the Table of the House, but a good deal narrower, which was covered with a series of tabloids which made anyone as elderly as I am feel ashamed that such material should be displayed in public, because small children were often in the shop. Such material should not be available for children to read or purchase. It is now no longer in the shop, because someone complained about it. However, that is the type of situation this measure will ease.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9: Section 12A added—

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: During the second reading debate the Minister indicated the prime object of the Bill was to provide suitable provisions to enable the police to tackle the problem.

My main objection to the Bill is centred in subsection (1) of proposed new section 12A which this clause seeks to add to the

Act. This new subsection will deal with a situation where any police officer at any reasonable time will be able to enter premises without any further authority and search for and seize any publications which appear to him to be indecent or obscene.

I do not think this provision should be inserted in the Act to the extent that is intended, because in subsection (2) of proposed new section 12A, if a justice is satisfied that a complaint on oath sworn by members of the Police Force is reasonable ground for suspecting that indecent or obscene publications are being kept by a person for the purpose of gain, he can issue a warrant authorising any police officer to enter such premises and use whatever force may be necessary to search for and seize any publications which appear to that officer to be indecent or obscene.

We could have a situation where a newsagent may have publications on his premises and any police officer, at any reasonable time—which I would imagine would have to be during normal trading hours—could enter those premises, pick up three or four publications and say to the newsagent, "To me these appear to be obscene and I am going to take them away." There may be some necessity for this, and perhaps the Minister may be able to convince me that this is so. I say that keeping in mind, particularly, the authority a police officer would have under subsection (1) of section 12A.

I made the point during the second reading debate that it is not difficult for a police officer to make a complaint on oath to a justice that, in his opinion, an article, which is likely to be obscene or indecent, is being sold or being kept on certain premises.

I think in another place a poor example was given that a police officer could, perhaps, on his way home on Friday night enter a newsagency, browse around, and then say to the newsagent, "I will take these two or three publications home with me to see what I think about them, and if I do not find anything wrong with them I will return them on Monday morning"—the implication being that the police officer could have a weekend's free reading. I do not think that that actually would be done. I am certain that such a police officer would have to report to his senior that he had taken action to seize certain publications in a newsagency. Whether the police officer would be obliged to return them to the newsagency or hand them over to his senior officer, I do not know, but in my opinion I think he would have to take them back to his office.

I think it is obvious that a senior officer would have to make a decision on whether the publications were obscene or indecent. In the circumstances I cannot

see the necessity for authority to be granted under subsection (1) of proposed new section 12A.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Mr Dellar's explanation of the clause is reasonably accurate. The type of premises he is talking about in proposed new section 12A(1) will embrace the ordinary type of printing works and the like, and in the hours that those premises would be open for business a police officer could be sent to investigate a complaint. It is considered reasonable that he should be able to remove articles or publications that come within the indecent or obscene category which he finds displayed on the premises, or available for sale to children under 18. He would register them in the proper way and report the case. At all other times, in regard to that type of premises, it is considered proper that the normal procedure for obtaining a search warrant should be followed. I take it there is no argument in regard to subsection (2) of proposed new section 12A.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: In the first instance it could be a shop, warehouse, or ordinary printing works.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Some members of the public have access even to a warehouse that either sells, purchases, or distributes publications. They are open places of business. I agree that in view of the fact the Bill intends to include cinematographs, visual and audio tapes, wire recorders, and the like, a hotel room, or a private residence could be used for normal trading, but it is still considered desirable that a warrant should be obtained to enter these places. Therefore, I repeat, that I understand there is no argument about subsection (2) of proposed new section 12A.

Under the provisions of this legislation, in view of the nature of the business being conducted, action would have to be taken fairly quickly. Any business of which we are speaking would be open to the general public and although we are conscious that the proprietors of such business should be protected in regard to a search warrant, it is considered that, in the circumstances, if such conditions were to apply it would be an unreasonable hindrance to the prosecution of justice.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I would like to know whether it is intended that both parts of this clause apply to shops conducted by newsagents. It seems to me that they do, and also that both new subsections (1) and (2) apply to warehouses and other selling centres.

When I read the Minister's second reading speech I thought that one subsection referred to wholesale distributing premises, and the other referred to retail shops. I do not think that is what the Minister said, although it was my impression that this might be the intention.

To me it seems that subsection (1) of proposed new section 12A applies equally to a newsagency, because it reads—

Where the business of selling or distributing publications is carried on in any premises . . .

This means that a member of the Police Force can go in at any time during reasonable hours, search those premises and seize the publication. That seems to apply to both wholesale outlets and newsagents' shops.

Proposed subsection (2) is slightly differently worded, but it also applies to both types of places. It refers to reasonable ground existing for suspecting that indecent or obscene publications are kept for the purpose of gain, which presumably means they are kept for the purposes of sale, exhibition, or showing in some manner, thus presumably including films. Yet the subsection refers only to publications and does not seem to include films.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It does under the definition.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Earlier in the Bill there is a definition of "article" which includes cinematographic or other type of film, tapes, etc. At the same time this subsection refers only to obscene publications and not to articles.

My interpretation is that the provision is aimed at allowing the police to enter any premises—whether wholesale or retail—during business hours and to seize obscene publications, but not blue films or tapes; and outside business hours the police may do so provided they obtain a warrant. That is my interpretation, but I would be glad if the Minister would correct me if I am wrong.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: My opinion is the same as that of Mr Medcalf. I believe that the provision refers to the sort of premises which normally, and day after day, are used for selling. This would include warehouses, newsagents, publication houses, and the like, and any entry would be restricted to the normal trading hours of those businesses. I would imagine that "at any reasonable time" would include the period just after the shop closed if the staff were still there, although that would be a matter for a judge to decide.

Proposed subsection (2) I believe refers to those places as well, but only outside reasonable times; that is, during unreasonable times, or the hours when the premises are normally closed to the public. In that sense I believe it includes those places which are also the subject of new subsection (1). However, it goes beyond that to places which might be intermittently used for the sale or distribution of publications, such as hotel rooms and the like. It was my belief, until the point was drawn to my attention that the definition in the Bill was of "article".

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The definition becomes "publications and articles".

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: But it does not read "publications and articles", does it?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It will in the definition.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I would not like to give an opinion at this stage as to whether articles are included. Perhaps this matter should be referred to someone whose proper title is "honourable and learned" for an opinion. It is my understanding that it had been intended to extend the provision beyond publications to include articles, tapes, and the like.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.04 p.m.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I support the valid point raised by Mr Medcalf. Clause 9 provides that material—and this can include periodicals and weekly magazines—can be seized from wholesalers and publishers. I see a problem in that the material may not be examined in time for normal despatch to customers, and I hope that will not occur.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Proposed new subsections (3) to (7) deal with the matter raised by Mr Cloughton.

Getting back to the point raised by Mr Medcalf, a "publication" does not include "articles". Articles were left out of proposed new section 12A because it was felt policemen would not be in a reasonable position to know whether or not films or tapes were of a pornographic nature. Articles are left to police warrant and action on complaint by people who have seen such films or heard such tapes. They are handled in a different manner.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It occurred to me that it might be desirable for the police to have power to seize films and tapes. The clause refers to indecent or obscene publications kept for the purpose of gain, which includes selling and also exhibiting. Therefore, I assumed it would be desirable for the police to have power to seize blue films or tapes which might be displayed in premises such as nightclubs. Such articles can be kept on premises but need not necessarily be for sale whereas they could be used for the purpose of gain.

It is a reasonable proposition for the police to be able to seize articles when they have reasonable grounds for suspecting they are kept for the purpose of gain. I appreciate the point raised by the Minister that the police would not know whether the films were blue. The police would have some knowledge beforehand, as a result of normal practice or a tip-off. However, I believe the Minister said that blue films can be seized under other powers.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Referring to the use of the word "sale", I assume that to be not inclusive but exclusive and

to mean that if a citizen liked to collect a library of films, tapes, or books for his own private use, and he did not exhibit them, no action would be possible against him. That is my interpretation.

I am reminded that many years ago I found myself in such a library in Singapore while looking for books to carry into a prison camp. Needless to say, I did not take any books from that library, but I did take some from a more formal library. The library consisted of quite a large room and it was nicely furnished. The excellent shelves were full to capacity with beautifully bound and published books, and not one of those books was without pornographic content. I assume that if one kept a library such as that, for one's own "enjoyment", one would not be subject to action under this proposed new section. I have been advised there are other ways of dealing with the problem of blue films.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: This Act provides that a person who sells blue films, who makes money out of blue films, or who deals with them in various ways, commits an offence and can be prosecuted. I am not objecting to that provision because I believe it is right if the films are indecent or obscene. However, I am surprised that the power to search premises under warrant—this is what I am referring to—and to seize publications, does not include the power to seize blue films. If this provision appears anywhere else, I have not been able to find it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Neither have I.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: It may well be that this operation will follow the normal course; when a policeman suspects someone has committed an offence, he will then swear out a warrant. Perhaps it does not need to be included in this proposed subsection. The mere fact that the Bill contains a specific provision enabling a policeman to go in and to seize indecent publications raises the question why we do not have a specific provision in regard to blue films. The policeman is required to have a warrant under proposed subsection (2). Proposed subsection (1) has no application to the matter we are talking about, but subsection (2) refers to places which keep these publications for gain; that is, newsagents, wholesalers, nightclubs, and distributors. As the Minister quite rightly said, the provision does not refer to a person who has his own private collection of indecent publications; it specifically refers to people who keep the publications for gain.

As I said earlier, if one sells a publication, I suppose then it was kept for the purpose of gain. However, I believe this refers to the people who intend to exhibit that publication. I cannot understand why the opportunity was not taken to include the articles which are specifically referred to in this Bill.

For the first time in legislation relating to indecent publications, this Bill includes a reference to additional articles, such as cinematographic or other types of film, videotape, gramophone records, wire, recording tape, or other devices. Indeed, the long title of the Bill is to be amended to include the words "and Articles".

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: From my reading and the discussion I was able to have a little while ago, I must say I share Mr Medcalf's surprise. I was advised that a decision was made that if the Committee feels strongly about this matter and wishes to add the words "or articles", I should not raise any serious objections. However, it is believed at this stage the provision should be left as it is as the words are included in other clauses.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I appreciate the point made by the Minister. I do not propose to move an amendment to add the words "or articles", because the Minister has indicated the committee is not empowered to deal with articles.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: From my advice, yes.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I hope the Minister may be prepared to give some further consideration to this point. If we add the words "or articles", to this provision, we may need to add them in several other places. I feel we would end up confusing the issue. I hope the Minister will consider the matter.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: As we cannot complete the third reading stage today, I would like to say that serious consideration will be given to this point over the weekend. We can then recommend the Bill at the third reading stage if it is considered desirable. I will make any necessary explanation then.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Like Mr Medcalf, I do not think I should attempt to amend proposed subsection (2) which seems to cover the person who is registered and who has received indecent or obscene publications and retained them in his possession.

Under subsection (7) of proposed new section 11A, a person who is registered would not be committing an offence if he had restricted publications in his possession. However, if such a person continues to retain such publications, he would then become liable under proposed section 12A, and he would be subject to the penalties prescribed at a later stage.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 and 11 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

SOIL CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [4.25 p.m.]: I rise to support this Bill which is to amend the Soil Conservation Act. The Bill provides for the appointment of a deputy commissioner of soil conservation, a deputy chairman of the Soil Conservation Advisory Committee, and to extend the size of that committee to include representatives of the Department of Mines and local government.

Obviously it is necessary to have a deputy commissioner to administer the original Act when the commissioner is away because of ill health or long service leave.

Many of our farmers will look to this legislation to see whether it will provide a little stimulation to soil conservation efforts in this State. Undoubtedly the matter is of great importance, but until now it has not received the recognition it requires.

The commissioner is the chief of the soils division of the Department of Agriculture and he has a small staff of five, mainly employed in clerical duties. However, the Department of Agriculture has a larger soil conservation service which has a chief, 17 advisers, 16 technicians, and seven field technicians. Obviously this is a fairly large department when one considers its total membership.

The parent Act provides that the commissioner must make an annual report, and that it shall be tabled in both Houses of Parliament. This report must go first to the Director of Agriculture, and we find the director has incorporated this report in the overall annual report of the Department of Agriculture. Perhaps the report of the soil conservation service may lose something when it is included in such a wide comprehensive report as that of the Department of Agriculture.

Soil conservation is now considered to be part of environmental protection, and it is taking on great importance in this field. In this area of soil conservation the branch advises on coastal dune control and safeguards the quality of water supplies, etc.

In the 1973 report we see the following comment—

There was no general water erosion problem during the relatively light rainfall winter of 1972.

As paddock feed became depleted, a severe wind-erosion-prone situation developed, aggravated by the false break to the season in many areas,

particularly the south-eastern wheat-belt and coastal areas from Albany to Esperance.

Of course, it is this area which concerns me. The report continues—

The most concentrated area of damage was the Jerdacuttup district, south-east of Ravensthorpe. The May 8 wind blow was probably the most extensive single erosion event caused by wind in the history of agricultural development in the State.

Indeed, Sir, that was a very dangerous time; the erosion was obvious at Esperance and on the light sand plain on the south coast. We had this major erosion problem over a matter of a few days. It was the first time that this area had been subjected to winds of this kind.

The PRESIDENT: Would the honourable member please identify the publication from which he is quoting, for the purposes of *Hansard*.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: It is the Department of Agriculture Annual Report for the year ended the 30th June, 1973. I was quoting from page 13.

At this stage, many people had a few doubts about the development of the sand plain, when this vast amount of damage could be done over a few short days. Fortunately, most of the country now has recovered; undoubtedly, the department played a small part in this. However, the recovery was brought about mainly by the husbandry of those who owned the land. I think this indicated that we require a rather more cautious approach and that in some cases we should be using the soil conservation orders for which the original Act provides. I wonder how often an actual order has been given to a property owner to force him to take soil conservation measures.

We are seeing some work being done in this respect in the north. A case in point is the Ord River scheme, where soil conservation simply had to take place for the dam to be successful and, of course, last year the Pastoral Appraisal Board imposed conservation measures east of Carnarvon. I believe this is probably a good thing, but we would all concur that guidance is better than an order. However, I feel we do not seem to be getting strong enough action on the entire matter of soil conservation. It is a very urgent and vital matter and I hope the mere fact that this Act is being upgraded indicates that more thought is being given to the subject.

Quite frankly, it is a disgrace for people to drive through the wheat belt and see the vast amount of soil erosion which has taken place. On practically every gully there is a lack of cover and signs not only of erosion but also of salt encroachment. I am glad to see there is an amendment on the notice paper which deals with the matter of salt encroachment.

One also sees in this area very few soil erosion schemes being put into effect. While many farmers endeavour to do something, action needs to be taken which will embrace the entire area. One of the chief ways we are controlling erosion caused by excess water is by the use of contour channels, which do not permit the water to run down the gullies and drain away. However, such schemes need to be implemented in co-operation with all farmers, the shire councils, and the Department of Main Roads.

I remember using a contour channel to take water away from a gully where erosion was occurring. I directed it around to the next main road and dumped it there because I could do nothing else with it, and the water caused just as much erosion on the road and on the other side of the road as it did on my property. Obviously this was a time where co-operation throughout the whole district was required.

I believe there is need for legislation to force co-operation between farmers. Shire engineers and, indeed, the Department of Main Roads need greater training in this respect. I cite the instance of a road which runs near my property; the road travels over what is called the Saddle Back, 40 miles east of Esperance. Members may believe it or not, but the Department of Main Roads installed a table drain half a mile long on sandy soil with a fall of about 300 feet. The devastation that created was staggering; but the department did not worry; it just put the drain in and no effort was made to try to do anything with that water.

I believe the public is becoming a little more vigilant in this matter in trying to prevent soil erosion occurring, and before it can become a problem of major consequence. We have game wardens and voluntary flora wardens and I believe we should have a bit more public interest in the entire problem of soil erosion. The original Act provides for regional advisory committees, but I do not know how many of these committees are in existence. Certainly, I have not heard of very many although I do know of one particularly active group in Katanning, where farmers, shire councils, and others have co-operated to try to overcome some of the problems they face, particularly in relation to the making of roads.

However, these committees have not become universal throughout the State and I feel there is a need for more consideration to be given to setting up more advisory committees.

I refer members to the situation in Victoria where soil conservation competitions are conducted. Farmers compete for the Onslow Cup—probably the most sought after trophy in the rural areas of that State. The competition is conducted, firstly, on a regional basis; regional finalists then compete for the State award.

A great deal of publicity is given to the winners of the various areas; their properties are visited on field days and their works are highlighted in various publications. Unfortunately, we see very little of that type of interest displayed in this State. Most of our work seems to be done on a theoretical basis.

I notice in the report of the Department of Agriculture that the department is leading the field in research on the effect of wind on some of our soils. The department has conducted some rather original research into the matter of measuring soil erosion by wind, using an ordinary household vacuum cleaner. In the same way it is doing a lot of work on the effect of rainfall intensity on the soil and, of course, is investigating the matter of plant tolerance to salt, on which quite a lot of experimentation is being carried out.

However, I believe we must try to achieve co-operation with the farmers, and to do it fairly quickly. Undoubtedly, the soil is this State's greatest heritage and the manner in which we husband this resource will be of great consequence for future generations. While I do not wish to hark back to Federal policies—

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: There would be something wrong if you did not.

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH: Yes; I think we must point out the difficulties that have arisen as a result of the Federal Government reducing the tax deduction allowable on soil erosion prevention. I use the phrase "tax deduction", although it is used rather loosely. Of course, it is not a deduction from taxation, or of the amount one must pay in tax; it merely means a reduction of taxable income.

It is rather shocking that when a farmer tries to do something to prevent soil erosion on his property, he is not allowed to deduct that expenditure in the form of a normal business deduction. Undoubtedly, this will lead to many difficulties. It will be a lot harder to persuade farmers to do anything on this most vital issue. This change of policy by the Federal Government, in conjunction with some of its other policies, will probably lead ultimately to the starvation of one million people because in the future the husbanding of the soil will be the limiting factor as to how many people can be fed in this country.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice [4.40 p.m.]: I thank members who have contributed to this debate; in particular, I refer to the comments of Mr Wordsworth. I cannot supply him now with the information he requested. I am not sure whether he was really asking a question, but he referred to the operations of the various advisory committees and wanted to know how many

committees were in existence. Also, of course, he drew attention to the need for greater co-operation in the implementation of soil erosion control methods; I am sure all of us in this Chamber would agree with that philosophy.

I will convey his remarks to the Minister for Agriculture, and will convey to the honourable member the comments of the Minister. Before concluding, I indicate to members that I have an amendment standing on the notice paper in my name. Members will be aware that the Minister in another place gave the Opposition an assurance that the amendment would be moved in this House. I do not think it requires any elaboration, but if elaboration is necessary I will attend to it in the Committee stage.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. Clive Griffiths) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 4 amended—

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 34—delete the passage "municipality". and substitute a new passage as follows—

municipality"; and

(d) as to the interpretation of the words "Soil erosion", by adding after the word "works", being the last word of the section, the passage ", and includes any deterioration of the soil which may be detrimental to those activities or works and is attributable to salt encroachment".

This amendment will expand the interpretation of the section to include salt encroachment. I note that Mr Wordsworth mentioned this aspect during his remarks on the second reading stage. The question was discussed in another place and an assurance was given by the Minister for Agriculture that the amendment would be moved here. If the Committee requires further elaboration on the amendment, I will be happy to provide it.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 7 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with an amendment.

RURAL AREAS

Attitude of Federal Government: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 22nd October, on the following motion by the Hon. A. A. Lewis—

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.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.46 p.m.]: I believe the motion that has been moved by Mr Lewis is a very appropriate one. Both the mover, and the members supporting the motion, have expressed their views; and these were no more than a reflection of the situation, the feelings, and the emotions of the people of Western Australia, and more particularly of those engaged in or associated with the rural industries.

As this place is a representative House of members of the community, in my view it is quite appropriate we should debate a motion of this nature, and more particularly that the motion should have been moved. I say that, because the Opposition was at some pains to say—when a matter directing attention to the shortcomings or failings of the Federal Government was raised—it should not be debated in this Chamber.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I did not say that at all. I said you had every right to debate it.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am perfectly well aware of what the Leader of the Opposition did say.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I was the only speaker from this side of the House on the motion.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I agree. I am sure the honourable member will not disagree with me that it is a view that has been expressed in debates, even if it was not on the motion itself.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You have to be right!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: It is quite appropriate that this matter should be discussed. To suggest that it should not be dealt with in this place is to deny the people of Western Australia the right to exercise their voice through their representatives, when they are concerned about the matter.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It has been that important that not one word has appeared in the newspapers!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: As the Leader of the Opposition so astutely observed a few moments ago it is well for one to be right. I suggest he reflect on those words when he makes that kind of interjection. In fact, there was some reference in the

Press to the subject matter of the motion. I think Mr Lewis and other members will be able to confirm that.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Not in the newspapers delivered to my home.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am not sure that is necessarily a measure of the importance of the subject, or of the significance of the debate in this House. A great many words of wisdom expressed by members of this House do not see the light of day through the medium of the Press. Of course, that does not detract from the importance or the significance of those words.

Because at one stage in the debate I was taken up on one point when it was claimed I said it would be useless to raise a subject like this in the Federal Parliament, I would point out that even if the subject has not been raised in the Federal Parliament the question has been well and truly laboured and a great deal of attention has been directed to it. I need to do no more than make reference to the many defensive statements which have been made by the Federal Minister for Agriculture and other members of the Federal Government in support of their stand. However, it is not my purpose to endeavour to add to the justification for this motion.

I was challenged by the Leader of the Opposition to give just one instance of where the State Government has done something to confer benefits on the rural industries of Western Australia. The very first thing of advantage to the rural industry was the change of Government in 1974. It was not only the fact that the Government changed, but in that change there came into office a Government which was far more understanding and possessed a far greater knowledge of the plight of the rural industries. There is, in fact, far greater sympathy for them, and that must be abundantly clear.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It is abundantly clear; especially in view of the taxing measures imposed on country people!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: The Leader of the Opposition can journey along that track if he likes.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There are six Bills on which I can journey on in this manner.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: The honourable member is not likely to draw me in with his interjection. He knows perfectly well the circumstances under which those taxes and charges have been levied. The circumstances are very closely, if not directly, related to the subject matter of the motion.

What the rural industries and the primary producers wanted was an understanding of their situation. As I said previously, the previous Tonkin Labor Government certainly had no rural policy; and neither had the present Federal Labor Government, and it was prepared to admit this.

The Whitlam Government applied what we presumed to be stop-gap measures. It was not only a lack of a rural policy, but also a lack of special knowledge of the specific branches of the rural industries. That was another cause of disquiet and discontent to the rural people of Australia. Here was a Federal Government elected by the people, but it had no policy in relation to the rural industries. What will it do for this or that primary industry? It is not a case of what it will do for them, but what it will do with them!

The Hon. R. Thompson: I did not see any indication in the policy of the Liberal Party that it would do something for the workers of our country.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: There is one factor which is common to both aspects—the workers and the rural industries. I do not believe the people engaged in the rural industries belong to a class which just looks for Government assistance and support. This is not their way of operating. I have not known a time in the agricultural history of this State when these people were looking less for support and subsidies than in recent years. In fact, they realise that subsidies and protection are not the best climate in which they should conduct their industries.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: The workers are not subsidised. They only get a fair reward for their labour.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: The honourable member says the workers of this State are not subsidised. Has he ever heard of the tariff system?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: How does that affect the take-home pay of the workers?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: The honourable member tried to say that with some satisfaction. The Leader of the Opposition gave a figure relating to the support which he claimed the rural industries were in the process of getting from the present Government; he mentioned a figure of \$311 million. Yet, Mr Cooley says there is no support for the workers.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I said the workers do not receive subsidies from the Government.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I should point out firstly that the farmers are subsidising the workers. Some member on this side—I do not know whether it was Mr Wordsworth or Mr Perry—was asked how the subsidies were applied. The fact is that one of the effects of a subsidy is to reduce the cost of living of the people who use the products that are subsidised. It is not just a subsidy for the farmer, but also one for the consumer. For instance, the dairy subsidy is not a subsidy to the dairy farmer; it is granted so that the people can obtain dairy products at far more reasonable prices.

In view of the reference to the figure of \$311 million, I wish to refer to the assistance that has been given to the motor industry. Some two years ago the motor industry in Western Australia received assistance—I do not claim to be absolutely correct in giving this figure—in excess of \$300 million in one year. It may be said that was support for the industry through the tariff system; but it was also support for those who were engaged in the motor industry. It had direct relationship to the assistance given to those who worked in the industry, including those who Mr Cooley claimed did not receive any subsidy. The whole basis of the tariff system is to protect the industry and those engaged in it. I do not disagree with the tariff system, and I have never been anti-tariff in my attitude.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You should tell Mr Cooley about the home consumption price of wheat.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I could tell him a great deal about what the Labor Party has done, and what it has not been able to live down. Many years ago a Labor Minister for Primary Industry made a disastrous wheat agreement with New Zealand, and we all know what that cost the wheat farmers of Australia. The farmers have never forgotten that agreement.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I do not know how you can relate that to subsidies given to workers.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: What happened at that time was that the agreement was drawn up by a Labor Government—the last to precede the present Whitlam Labor Government. The farmers have not forgotten that agreement. Possibly some of the younger ones might have, or those who were not aware of what it did or what the succeeding Whitlam Labor Government would do when it came to office 23 or 25 years later. We find that the Whitlam Government today is doing the same as the previous Labor Government did.

I stress this point: the greatest assistance that the rural industries of Australia can obtain from any Government is an understanding by the Government of their position. They want the Government to engender confidence in their industries and to develop a climate in which they can operate to the best of their ability. How much of that have they had from the Federal Government in the last two years? I suggest very little.

These are not my words alone, because members of the Opposition, members on this side of the House, and the people of Western Australia are aware that thousands of farmers cannot be wrong; similarly, thousands of others who have some knowledge of farming are not wrong in their criticisms of the Federal Government.

Likewise members of the Federal Cabinet will not be wrong in their acknowledgment; and they have been quoted in this

debate as having said that such-and-such a thing was the wrong thing to do; that it was wrongly applied. Mr Cooley has made reference to the tariff situation.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You made the reference.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I apologise, Mr President, it was I who made the reference, but it was in reply to an interjection that was made by Mr Cooley.

One of the greatest things the Whitlam Government could have done with respect to tariffs was to review the tariff system completely on a selective basis. This would have certainly pleased me and also a great many farmers in Australia; if not all of them.

This was one of the earliest examples of the Federal Government's complete bumblefootedness, because it merely applied the 25 per cent cut in tariff; and boy! is that Government now trying to face up to the difficulties that have arisen.

Relatively speaking this has been of little advantage to the farmers. This is a pity, particularly when it could have been of tremendous benefit if it had been applied on a selective basis.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You can be wise after the event.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: There are a great many people who were wise before the event. It is not the first time I have been through the experience of Labor Governments wanting to impose import controls when there have been other avenues open to such Governments.

The greatest benefit to the farming world, and to the farming community in Australia, would be, of course, a climate of confidence in which the industry could operate. Part of that climate would be encouraged, and farmers would benefit greatly as a result, if money could be made available. This would have untold beneficial effects on farmers and could do nothing but good.

It is well known that the farming industry is not only the greatest investor in the resources of the country, but it is also one of the greatest users of money and credit. Farmers are the first people to be affected when there is a credit squeeze or a liquidity problem. In such circumstances rural industries suffer a great deal. Perhaps we could put up with the abolition of concessions and so on if we could rely on the availability of funds. Like any other business the farming industry must necessarily suffer if these funds are denied to it.

As we all recall, this of course happened when the Whitlam Government came into office. Part of this process was, of course, caused by the control of capital inflow. The Whitlam Government felt it could not

have multi-national enterprises taking over the country investing in it, because that would be inflationary. That Government has, however, woken up to the fact that a restriction on capital inflow has created a terrible situation and has well and truly prevented us having an availability of funds and is contributing to a run down in overseas balances. There is little doubt that the present state of the rural industry is the direct result of the policies adopted by the Federal Government.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It has done more than any other Federal Government.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: One of the greatest shortages that has ever been experienced by the rural industry up and down the country is the nonavailability of money and credit. We find ourselves in our present position because the restriction on capital inflow contributed greatly to a lack of enterprise and development in Western Australia. This had an immediate effect on the operation of our rural industry. There is no question about that.

One of the early expressions of the Labor Government was its own admission that it had no rural policy. This was something to which Miss McAleer referred when she mentioned the appointment of the Coombs committee to inquire into the continuing expenditure by the Commonwealth Government.

What a story that told! Not only was it significant that the report was published and reported, but the subjects which would have a direct impact on the rural industries in Western Australia were put into effect either administratively or through the budgetary items. The whole purpose of it was to save money.

One of the factors that has concerned the farming community of Western Australia so considerably has been the denial of the necessary funds to that community. The funds in question have been diverted into other areas, and particularly into areas of large population where—on the Federal Government's own admission—the voting strength of Australia lies; and how this paid off for the Federal Government during the last election!

To quote again Mr Cooley's illusion, it was not a case of being wise after the event. A lot of people were wise before the event and directed to that purpose the hard-earned revenue which the agricultural industries of Western Australia put into funds either directly or indirectly, and these funds were then diverted into all sorts of other avenues throughout the more densely populated areas of Australia. Perhaps the funds were needed in those areas; I will not deny that. But if there had been a realisation of the real worth and value of the primary industries the funds would not have been directed in this manner because

there would have been some appreciation of the great difficulties in which the people were being placed.

I would like to quote my personal experience. Last year for the purpose of farm development I had budgeted for \$1 000 for land development work; it was something which sorely needed doing on the property. I considered I would have had funds available to do the work in question. In the meantime the Federal Budget came down and any concession there might have been was lost, and I had to say to the person with whom I had contracted to do the work that the fact of the matter was that I could either pay him or pay the tax—I could not do both.

Since the Commissioner of Taxation is much less understanding than the man with whom I had contracted I did not get the work done. This must have been duplicated many hundreds of times throughout Western Australia; and members can imagine the effect it has had on the rural community—and not merely the farming community—who rely on such work being done. There were a great number of people to whom these concessions were being denied. It was not just a case of denying them to the farmer but to the whole community which is so directly dependent on the prosperity of the industry.

Mr Wordsworth referred today to the application of that same principle in terms of soil erosion and soil conservation. To me it is most incredible and certainly inconsistent that a political party and a Federal Government, which appears to put so much stress on the environment and conservation, will deny the very direct and most effective means of conservation to the rural environment.

Let me now refer to some of the things which came out of the Coombs report which, in fact, have been put into effect. I think Miss McAleer referred to one or two of these particular items. I would like to recount them to the House.

I have not a complete list with me but I can recall a great many of them. I now mention the fertiliser subsidy on phosphate and nitrogen fertiliser to which the Leader of the Opposition made reference last night when quoting a letter he had received from Senator Wriedt. It would probably be as well for me to refer to the particular words used at the time because this would be useful to illustrate the attitude—and once again I believe attitudes are most important—of the Federal Government. I would now like to refer to the material quoted by Mr Thompson from the correspondence he received from Senator Wriedt. I quote with apologies if it is incorrect, as follows—

A further, and in the long term potentially important, limitation of

input subsidies of taxation concessions is that they encourage an imbalance in the use of inputs.

If this is not economic jargon, as distinct from practical rural economics, I would like to know what is. I continue to quote—

If the problem is that the input's price is rising, i.e. it is becoming scarcer, a subsidy encourages freer use of a commodity that the market suggests should be used more economically. Moreover, it discourages research into methods of substituting for the input or for using it more efficiently and discourages the adoption of management practices which economise in its use—the more nitrogen fertiliser is subsidised the more it will be used, in place of a legume crop or pasture, with possibly adverse consequences for soil structure.

That is a highly scientific statement! It is nothing more than a paternalistic expression of the Federal Minister, who thinks he is all knowledgeable and all wise and can tell the farming industry of Australia how its farms should be run. Does anybody suggest that farmers, with all their experience, do not know how to use their phosphate? They must know how to use it correctly. I will admit there can be an uneconomic use of fertilisers, particularly of phosphate.

This, however, is surely no reason for the Federal Government to say that it is not going to grant a subsidy because farmers do not know how to use fertiliser. That Government wants to talk to farmers about clover pastures and the use of legumes and seems to think that the farmers do not know at what rate to use their phosphate. That happens to be one of the economic inputs in which there is taxation relief.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: In that case you do not lose.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I wonder whether the honourable member realises the increase that has occurred in the price of fertiliser from last year to this.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: He would not know.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I venture to say the honourable member does not know. Once again this is not merely a case of the cost to farmers alone, and they should not be forced to pay these amounts. That is not the whole point. However cynical others might like to be—and I am not one of them—I would indicate that farmers honestly and genuinely believe their function is to produce and farm their country, to the best possible advantage of the State, of the national interest, and their own personal interest.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Would you agree that super is becoming a scarce commodity?

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Where is that?

The Hon. R. Thompson: Worldwide.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is not why the bounty was removed.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: What I do recognise is that phosphate and phosphate rock are most valuable commodities and they certainly become far more expensive at their source in Australia than should be the case.

To that extent it is scarce because it is not readily available. I suppose one of the greatest things that could happen to this country would be to find the deposits in Queensland are in commercial quantities and can provide a great source of superphosphate for Australia. To that extent I am prepared to acknowledge there is a degree of scarcity.

But, of course, that is not the reason for the abolition of the superphosphate bounty. The reason is the diversion of funds once again. Let us consider what Dr Coombs and his committee thought about it. They thought it was uneconomical use of the Federal funds—not uneconomical use of the people's money. He did not put it that way. It has been suggested it is not the Federal Government's money; it is the Australian taxpayers' money which is being used. Without the subsidy, the operations of farming will become more uneconomical, production will fall off, and everybody, right through from the farmer upwards, will suffer as a consequence.

I could refer to other things which have a very material effect upon the farming community. One which is very close to my heart is the provision of telephones. What did the Coombs report say about that? And what did the Postmaster-General do as a consequence of that report? He said that continued operation of rural automatic exchanges was uneconomical and it was unfair that the metropolitan subscriber should be called upon to support the uneconomical installations. One or two alternatives were suggested, one being to do away with the rural automatic exchanges, and the other to make the subscribers pay more for them.

I know of a group of people 14 or 15 miles from the centre of a district who had applications in for 10 years or more pending the time when there would be sufficient subscribers in the area—17—for a rural automatic exchange. Unfortunately for them, the Labor Government came in, the Coombs report was put into operation, and instead of being called upon to pay the normal connection fee of \$50 or \$60 those farmers received notification that they would have to pay up to \$1 200 for a telephone. Because many of them cannot provide that amount of money as a direct outlay, they still have no telephones.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Some farmers have to pay \$3 000.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Yes, but I am speaking about a place which is barely 70 miles from the city. How can anyone defend the Federal Government on a motion such as this? It is completely indefensible. I could mention many other matters which the Federal Government fails to understand, all of them contributing to the financial outlay or costs of the rural industries of Australia and certainly adding to the hardships involved in their continued existence.

In very recent days I have seen an economist's report which said something similar to what the Leader of the Opposition quoted from Senator Wriedt. It said the rural industries in Australia are not really too badly off when one looks at the economic statistics; they have had their moments in the last year or two; the wheat price is not bad at the moment; a year or two ago the wool price went up, rather surprisingly; it is true beef is down a bit now but last year it was not bad, so that should carry them through. Do such people ever bother to look at the individual circumstances of the farmers? They are facing up to the situation and contributing to the Treasury. Last year cattle were at \$150 or \$200 a head and, you well know, Mr President, they are now getting a return of \$50 to \$70 a head for similar animals if they can hold them. This is the climate which has been forced upon us.

I referred earlier to the effect which the shortage or unavailability of money has had on the farming community. The same situation applies with interest rates. The effect of interest rates on the business community, the house owner, or the would-be house owner, is no less and no more than that on the farming community, except that the farmer has to obtain money in order to operate his business, and if money is available he must pay much more for it. This is a direct consequence—

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Do you not hold your Federal people to blame somewhat for the interest rates? They rejected the Finance Corporation Bill when the Australian Government was trying to control interest rates in some way. I am speaking about the latter part of 1973 when the Finance Corporation Bill was defeated in the Senate by your people.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Would it have been of such tremendous advantage in preventing the situation we have at this time?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I thought it might have had some control over interest rates in 1974 if that Bill had passed through the Senate.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am not sure it would. While I am prepared to acknowledge that the interest rates follow the bond rate, on the determination of which the Commonwealth does have a very great influence, if not the only influence, the bond rate is simply a reflection of the commercial and business circumstances at the time. The Commonwealth Government may be forced to recognise that such-and-such a situation exists and in order to keep pace the bond rate must be adjusted. I therefore wonder whether the Finance Corporation Bill would have had any bearing on the matter.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I think it might have controlled the ceiling.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: True, but when one applies artificial restraints how does one assess whether something else will break out in another direction as a result? I am prepared to admit one needs to know a tremendous amount about the manipulation of finance and the fiscal policies of a country in order to apply artificial restraints of that kind without having them closely followed by repercussions which were not anticipated. I believe that is one of the weaknesses and fallings of the Commonwealth Government at the present time; in order to implement its policy it has imposed restraints and has been insufficiently wise to recognise that in so doing it will cause great pressure in other directions. In my opinion, that is exactly what has happened.

However, that is a diversion into a highly economic area which is certainly closely related to the motion and the plight of the rural industries in Western Australia. I come back to the point that it is not only protections, supports, and subsidies about which the farming industry is so discontented; it is the lack of provision of a great many other concessions or facilities which should be available if we are to achieve reasonable production in Western Australia.

Last evening the Leader of the Opposition, when referring in this House to aid for India, mentioned the inability to produce the goods. I think he also made reference to Mr Whitlam's acknowledgment in the United Nations that Australia could have a great opportunity to be a food supplier for the world, particularly for the under-nourished and under-developed nations. What a glorious opportunity he might be missing right now! There is no question that we have a unique opportunity available to us, of which we could be taking advantage right now had the economic climate in Australia been favourable to our farmers. They do not need prompting. All they need is an air of confidence in which to conduct their business and a correct understanding on the part of other people of the work farmers are endeavouring to do.

I find it quite incredible that the Federal Government should pursue its policies in the present state of affairs. It continues to be to me a source of wonder—in fact, of great curiosity—as to whether the Commonwealth Government is doing it deliberately as a means of breaking the power, influence, and viability of the rural industries, or whether it is doing it out of sheer ignorance. I find it difficult to believe it is a matter of sheer ignorance; I do not believe anyone could be so ignorant. One can only assume, therefore, it must be at least partially deliberate. I would like to understand. Perhaps, once again, it is a case of destroying the fabric and making the people dispirited—as they certainly are—for some political end. I leave that with a question mark after it.

I believe the motion of Mr Lewis was well put, and that there is really no case to justify any opposition to it. The subject matter has been canvassed. I think it should be highlighted even more, but I hope my remarks have added something to the debate.

That brings me to my final point. At some stage the Leader of the Opposition asked me whether, in the event of the motion being passed, I intended to forward it to the Federal Government. He has probably since realised that whether or not the motion is passed is in the hands of the House.

The Hon. R. Thompson: With a two to one majority I do not think it could be defeated, do you?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I would be surprised for many reasons—not just numbers.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Regimented numbers, too.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is not the point. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition has not seen me or Mr Lewis going around the Chamber bludgeoning members into supporting the motion, as though the sympathy of members were not very much with it. I think it illustrates that clearly the Opposition has no sympathy for this situation or for the motion; and that, I believe, is what the motion is all about. I repeat that what happens to the motion in the event of it being passed is in your hands, Mr President, and in the hands of this House. It is the responsibility of the House and I am sure it will be directed to the most appropriate place. I support the motion.

THE HON. D. W. COOLEY (North-East Metropolitan) [5.29 p.m.]: I did not intend to begin on this note but after listening to the Minister for Justice my heart is almost bleeding in sympathy for some of the members of this House who have been affected by the Federal Government's rural policy and are facing great difficulties in running their properties and holding their seats in this Chamber.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do you not have two jobs?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: How do I have two jobs?

The Hon. G. E. Masters: You are President of the TLC.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is a completely honorary position. What members on the other side of the House do not realise is that they have become blinded by their own propaganda.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: That is brilliant, coming from you.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I did not intend to begin on this note, but I met a group of farmers in Bunbury, one night. I have previously referred to them.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I think you called them "half drunk farmers' sons".

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, and that is what they were. I asked them how they would like to be residents of the North-East Metropolitan Province and live on a quarter-acre block and work at a bench for eight hours a day and bring home a pay packet of \$69, the minimum wage. If farmers had an understanding of that situation they would not be so critical of the position of workers in this State; but this is the basis of the motion.

I will come back to where I intended to start my speech. It is the intention of Conservative State Governments in this country to drive a wedge between working people in city areas and the people who live in rural areas.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Don't you realise the Federal Government has divided this country?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Members of Conservative parties are driving a wedge between city and country people.

The Hon. T. Knight: If you say a thing often enough you end up believing it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is the intention of the Conservative Governments to do that. This motion, which was resurrected in the last couple of days after being buried for almost six weeks, was submitted on the 19th September, only two days after the Australian Government presented its Budget. I can understand that in a period of only two days Mr Lewis could not have absorbed all the benefits which will flow from that Budget. However, surely after almost six weeks, and after witnessing some of the actions taken by the Australian Government, he should understand that the situation has changed—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: For the worse.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —since he presented the motion to the House. The motion is being debated for the specific purpose of attacking the Australian Government, and also for the purpose of covering up some of the shortcomings of

the Government of this State. There can be no question about that. The motion was presented to us in a manner which would indicate the present economic situation is something peculiar to Western Australia and Australia; but all members of this Chamber know, and all thinking people in the community at large know, that the economic crisis is a world-wide problem and a product of the capitalist system. There can be no question of that.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Who did you get your speech notes from, Bob Hawke?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: We will come to him and to some of the statements made in other places by the colleagues of members opposite. I submit a worldwide war is being waged against adverse economic conditions, and it ill-behoves any of us to criticise the efforts being made to fight it. Members opposite would be doing the nation a great service if, instead of confronting the Federal Government, they co-operated with it and endeavoured to overcome the economic crisis.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You don't know that—

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I know all about Mr Lewis; I know he has been told to present this motion to the House, because its wording is not in keeping with the intelligence he displays. This is a party motion produced in this place by Mr Lewis simply because he has the loudest voice and can make himself heard better than most.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member please address the Chair?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I will, Sir, but I do ask you for some protection against the unwarranted interjections.

The PRESIDENT: I will afford the honourable member whatever protection I think he needs.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: What this country needs more than anything else at the present time is a concerted effort to overcome our economic problems.

The Hon. N. McNeill: True.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: We should all be fighting this problem, but the Conservatives are not trying to solve anything; they are simply trying to bring down the Federal Government. That is not their role.

The Hon. N. McNeill: It is bringing itself down; can't you recognise that?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: What members opposite should recognise is that the present Australian Government has been elected to office twice in a period of less than two years by the people of this country. It has been elected to office for a period of three years and, in a democratic system, it is entitled to see out that period. It is not the role of members opposite to

try to bring down the Federal Government; it is their role to criticise that Government and to say where it is going wrong. But they are trying to bring it down with motions like this in an effort to win back the Government benches in the Federal Parliament.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It is pleasing to know that you think the motion is of such great significance.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is not only the motion; it has been the continual policy of the Conservative parties since December, 1972, to try to bring down the Australian Government. Members of those parties have not been able to accept electoral defeat and to face a situation in which a Federal Government with a political philosophy different from theirs can govern for three years. That is the whole problem and in the process of being unable to accept defeat they are endeavouring to bring down the Australian Government and to create chaos in respect of the economic situation. Members opposite have no defence of their position in that respect.

The thing we need least of all in Australia is a motion such as the one Mr Lewis has moved. I can understand Mr McNeill's position, and I say that quite sincerely. There is no question that everyone recognises rural areas and farming communities are experiencing problems, but are not the same problems evident everywhere else? Are rural people the only ones who are suffering? Has the situation been brought about entirely by the Australian Government? Of course not; it has been brought about by overseas and other influences which have affected the economic situation in the whole of the western world. Members opposite close their eyes to that fact simply because they cannot bear to be out of office in the Federal sphere. In a democratic system it is only right and fair—and members opposite should recognise this—that after a certain period a change should occur.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Don't you want to get back into Government in this State?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Of course we do. I have no objection to members opposite criticising the Federal Government when that criticism is justified; but the whole aim of the Conservative parties in this country is to bring down the Australian Government, and this is particularly evident in this State and Queensland and, to a lesser extent, Victoria.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What about the Northern Territory?

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: He hasn't mentioned that.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: They haven't had time yet.

The Hon. N. McNeill: They didn't do too well in Broken Hill or the ACT, either.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If this is the type of business this House has to deal with, I think it would be better if we went into recess so that we could carry out our duties in our electorates instead of wasting time here.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You were critical because the motion was buried for six weeks, and now you say we should not deal with it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The respective State Governments, regardless of their political persuasion, have an obligation to the nation to recognise that the Australian Government has been properly elected in accordance with the will of the people. There can be no denial of that situation. If the State Government feels it is not receiving a fair go from the Australian Government in respect of the allocation of funds, then it is entitled to be critical. I point out the State Labor Government was critical of the McMahon Federal Government when it considered the State did not receive a fair deal. But that is where the matter ended; the previous State Government did not go on and on as this Government does.

I come back to my point: The sole purpose of motions such as this is to endeavour to bring down the Federal Government.

The Hon. N. McNeill: It is in the national interest.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Whether a Federal Government is good or bad, it is elected for three years and members opposite should recognise that. If they do not recognise it and if they bring down the Australian Government and their parties are elected to office, they will not remain in office for three years because they have not the leadership, the ability, or the qualifications in the Federal sphere to sustain a Government for three years.

Members opposite are endeavouring to introduce a dangerous situation. They want a Federal election in May of next year, which would make three elections in three years; and if the Conservative parties won such an election they would not see out a full term, so we would have four elections in five years, and that is inherently dangerous for the nation and its democratic processes.

The PRESIDENT: Order, please! I have been very tolerant with the honourable member, and I would like to hear something from him in connection with the motion before the Chair.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr President, I was pointing out that the purpose of the motion is to attack the Federal Government in connection with its rural policies; but that is not its only purpose.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Oh!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Clowns laugh at anything.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You ought to know.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The motion seems to me to be in two parts. Firstly it deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas; and, secondly, it deplores the obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia.

I come back to the point that the motion was introduced on the 19th September, two days after the Federal Budget was delivered. Are members opposite saying by virtue of the motion that no benefits flowed to rural areas as a consequence of the Federal Budget? Are they saying that in the Budget the Australian Government did not provide relief and succour to the thousands of Aborigines in this country who were completely disregarded by the Liberal-Country Party Government for 23 years?

The Hon. N. McNeill: We were the first to appoint a Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Are members opposite saying in this motion that the thousands of pensioners who live in rural areas were disregarded in the Federal Budget? Are they saying that the thousands of school children in rural areas were disregarded in that Budget? Are they saying that the people who need hospitalisation and health services in country areas were disregarded in the Budget presented by the Australian Government this year? When considered in that context the motion has no credence at all. It was presented by a member who resides in a country area and who, I submit, has tried to obtain some kudos in his electorate or in his local newspaper in order to show that he is doing his job as a member of Parliament.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What a magnificent statement.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Let us consider the benefits which have flowed to people in rural areas. Do not forget that when a Federal Budget is presented it is not presented for the sake of city people alone. The Budget contained a 32 per cent increase in Government spending substantially aimed at improving the quality of life of the people of Australia in respect of education, public transport, hospitals, roads, sewerage, conservation, Aboriginal advancement, and social welfare. The planned expenditure on education—\$28 million—is an increase of 78 per cent over the 1973-74 figure. Does not some of this money go to rural areas?

The Hon. J. Heitman: They took away the \$400 income tax deduction for education expenses, and gave back \$150. That was a big help.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I will come to that in a moment if the honourable member will be patient.

The Hon. N. McNeill: It is not helping the 130 000 unemployed, is it?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, it is, and if the State Government gave the system a chance to operate it would see the benefits which are flowing from the Federal Budget in connection with consumer spending. The Australian Government is not giving money to people who stash it in banks or invest it in land and other things.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Worth-while things.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is promoting consumer spending, which is a means of relieving unemployment.

The Hon. N. McNeill: And very inflationary.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not think spending in this area is inflationary. The Liberal Party wanted to budget for a surplus. We contended that we should budget for a deficit and make more Federal funds available in this area.

The expenditure on education in 1973-74 was 245 per cent more than in 1972-73. In 1972-73 the expenditure on education was only \$2.4 million. Did not some of this money go into the rural areas as well as into the cities? Did not the country people benefit from this extra expenditure? Therefore, how, according to the terms of this motion, can members on the other side of the House deplore the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas?

On health, there was a 32 per cent increase in expenditure.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: With costs well above that.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: A sum of \$28 million was spent on hospitals and health facilities right throughout the nation.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: And we are still behind the eightball!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: How much was spent the year before on hospitals and health services? On health, \$2.4 million was spent. How much was spent on hospitals and health services in the last year of the McMahon Government? If the Minister for Health cannot tell me, I will tell him. That Government, in its last year of office spent absolutely nothing on health and hospital services. Therefore, not much benefit was gained by people in the rural areas in that year.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: What a lot of nonsense!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Why is it nonsense? The honourable member cannot refute that in the last year the McMahon Government was in office absolutely nothing was spent on health and hospital services.

The Hon. N. McNeill: From what are you quoting?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Budget figures for that year. In the last year of the McMahon Liberal Government nothing was spent on health in this State. If Mr Baxter does not know that, he should.

Let us now consider housing, and the people in the rural areas who would benefit from the provision of houses. The present Australian Labor Government will endeavour to establish the Australian Housing Corporation to provide direct loans to families who need such assistance in rural areas to obtain houses. Therefore how is it valid for members on the other side of the House to say in this motion that we deplore the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas? How can that be said when the present Australian Government has provided this type of finance in rural areas? The Australian Government intends to spend \$54.5 million to provide land to families at a fair price. But I do not think that suits many of the Liberals who sit on the other side of the House, because that policy will offend land developers, banks, lending institutions, and so on.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Just quote that figure again.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Australian Government intends to make \$54.5 million available to provide land for families at a fair price. This has been allocated by the Australian Government so that families may be able to purchase their own land. I hope the Minister's Government will take advantage of this, because Don Dunstan's Government in South Australia is taking advantage of it and, as a result, land prices in that State are considerably lower than they were previously. Land is being made available to people who are on low incomes, and this money is also being spent to benefit those who live in rural areas.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Most of it will be spent in the Eastern States; I do not think there will be much coming to this State.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: This money will help to subsidise family breadwinners in rural areas.

The Hon. N. McNeill: And did not the Australian Government waive the benefit that young couples may obtain by accumulating savings for homes?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: And did not the Australian Government subsidise home purchasers to the extent of granting a taxation deduction in respect of the interest that is paid on mortgages?

The Hon. J. Heitman: That has not affected them yet; it may in the future.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: But those taxation deductions will be allowed and people will get the benefit of them in the

forthcoming taxable year. Yet this motion states that this House deplores the Federal Government's attitude to rural areas.

The Hon. N. McNeill: We do, too.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Those facts are true. Further, such concessions bring benefit to people other than those who are on low incomes, because these concessions range from people earning \$4 000 a year to those who earn \$14 000 a year. It is unfortunate that some members on the other side of the House are outside that range because of the increases they have been granted in their salaries. The same would apply, of course, to those who sit on this side of the House. However, the point I am making is that \$14 000 a year is quite a substantial income.

It is refreshing to see the Australian Government providing financial assistance to overcome the problems that face those people who are trying to obtain satisfactory finance for housing. This assistance is extended to people in rural areas also. Therefore, when we consider that the Australian Government is making this finance available, how can we agree to a motion which states that this House deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas? Also, under its social welfare programme, the Australian Government is passing many benefits on to pensioners.

The Hon. T. Knight: We do not want social welfare. We want employment for all those who are out of work at the moment.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The honourable member does not fully understand the position. All that has been done by the Australian Government is to stimulate consumer spending, and this will have the effect of overcoming the unemployment problem. If an increase of \$5 a week is granted to pensioners—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You could be kidding 150 000 people who are out of work.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Apparently the honourable member does not accept the facts that are set out in the Federal Budget. The Australian Government is taking steps to solve the problem of unemployment.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: But it is getting worse.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr Griffiths will eventually discover how the benefits will come about. Will not people in the rural areas enjoy the benefits of an increase of \$5 in the old age pension? When the basic rate increase was made it brought the old age pension up to 25 per cent of the average weekly earnings. The present Australian Government promised to do this in the first three years of its being in office. However it implemented

that policy within 18 months after taking office, and the pension basic rate is now \$31 a week.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It has not implemented it yet.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, it has. The only step the Australian Government has not taken is to confirm that any increases in the future will follow an automatic adjustment of the average weekly earnings. Members on the other side of the House need have no fear that that will be done, because when the Labor Governments make promises they keep them. Also, the benefits that will flow from its policy will be enjoyed not only by city dwellers but also by those who live in rural areas.

I would like to remind members on the other side of the House that this figure of 25 per cent that has now been reached is the highest figure since a Labor Government was last in office in 1948. In that year the figure was 25.6 per cent of the average weekly earnings. Under the Conservatives the figure reached a peak of 24.4 per cent, one year after the Labor Government went out of office, in 1950. The figure reached its lowest ebb in 1971. In that year it was 19 per cent. That was a year before the Labor Party went into office in Canberra. This highlighted the difference between Labor Party policy and Liberal Party philosophies. Yet the honourable member who moved this motion is suggesting that this House should say that it deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas.

The Government in this State has had a majority in this House for a long time, and the members of the Liberal and Country Parties who were in office in the Commonwealth Parliament for 23 years showed complete disregard for the interests of the people in the rural areas who are suffering as a result of not receiving sufficient social benefits.

The Hon. J. Heitman: The reason that the old age pension is being increased is that it has to follow inflation.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That is not a valid argument. We have to have regard for the purchasing power of money and not for the actual amount. I maintain that an old age pensioner has more purchasing power today than he has ever had since the last Commonwealth Labor Government went out of office.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: The pensioners do not think so.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If the Minister looks at the figures he will realise that that is the true situation. Further, the percentage of the old age pension to the average weekly earnings is much higher than it was previously, having regard to the deductions that are made from the average weekly earnings. I think

that today the old age pension on that calculation would be around 28 per cent of the average weekly earnings.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Let us talk about the motion.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I heard a great deal of talk from Mr McNeill—

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: From all of them.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —and from Mr Lewis, the honourable member who introduced the motion. What about the taxation concessions that were granted in the Federal Budget? In speaking to the motion I am thinking of the people in rural areas. Do not those taxation concessions benefit the people in the rural areas? Mr Lewis has a one-track mind and thinks only of farmers when he speaks of rural areas. He does not think of the thousands of people living in rural areas who are on moderate incomes. I think they were far from the honourable member's mind when he moved this motion.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The towns of Collie and Manjimup come within my province. I suppose the people living in those centres are not on moderate incomes?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not think the honourable member would get a very good vote in those towns.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Tell us about these tax concessions.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Had the honourable member taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the Federal Budget programme it would not be necessary for me to tell him about the tax concessions. Also, had he understood the Federal Budget programme I am certain this motion would not be before the House now.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Tell us about the tax concessions that are granted to the rural community.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The tax concessions will benefit not only those who live in the city but also those who live in the country. What about the tax rebates that have been granted under the Federal Budget? There is a 40 per cent deduction for dependants. I suppose the honourable member completely understands that.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I doubt whether anybody in the country has ever heard of it.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: When people received their take-home pay they would understand what it is all about, because they would realise that they had a substantial increase in their pay packets after the Federal Budget was introduced.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You are assuming those in the farming sector still have jobs.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: A man with a wife and two children on a minimum wage of \$3 600 per annum, under the old system was entitled to a deduction of \$832 for dependants, which brought his taxable income down to \$2 768.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Will you tell me how many people in rural areas today are working at that rate?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: In reply to the honourable member I can cite as examples those men in country areas who are working on railway tracks, on roads, and in other places.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I do not think any of those men would be working for that money, would they?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If the honourable member had stopped to listen, I was about to say that this concession affects people who earn up to \$8 000 a year. I am giving an example of a person who is earning \$3 600 a year and who is resident in the country, having a wife and two children to keep. Under the old system his taxation deduction for dependants was \$832. His taxable income was \$2 768. He paid a tax rate of 19.6c in the dollar, and he received a concession of \$163.

Under the new system he gets a taxation deduction of \$832 for dependants and of this figure he is allowed 40c in the dollar which gives him a concession of \$322. The additional benefit to such a wage earner is \$170 a year, or \$3.26 per week. Therefore, should members on the other side of the House deplore the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas when we realise that people are enjoying benefits of that nature?

As I indicated earlier, this does not apply only to those on low incomes, but also to those earning up to \$8 000 a year.

The Hon. N. McNeill: And in view of inflation, that is the lowest they ought to get.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: What? Does the Minister mean \$8 000 a year?

The Hon. N. McNeill: I am talking about the tax rebate.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Minister's party did not give them any concessions when it was in Government.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Didn't they?

The Hon. N. McNeill: Of course they did.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You are talking rot.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The point about this rebate is that it is the Government's intention to apply it over the whole range of incomes, so that it will apply also to the person on \$6 000 who has to keep a wife and two children.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You will still pay more tax even with the rebate.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr Wordsworth will be paying tax for as long as he is on this earth, and someone will be paying on his behalf after he has departed, too.

I think it was Mr Heitman who referred to the horrible attitude of the Federal Government in reducing the education allowance from \$400 to \$150. My heart bleeds for those people in country areas who have extensive properties and who send their children to select private schools.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I thought I would get that kind of response. What about those who live in rural areas and have low incomes? The benefits from the Budget will far outweigh any disadvantages they might suffer if they have the remote opportunity to send their children to select private schools.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Utter rot!

The Hon. N. McNeill: You hate those select schools!

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Where does Bob Hawke send his kids?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not know.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: When you are talking about tax rebates, you refer to the man working on the roads, but as soon as you talk about school concessions, you refer to the select schools and the bloke on a huge property.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If because of some miraculous event the people working on the roads can send their children to a select private school, the benefits from the rest of the Budget would far outweigh the disadvantages.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Don't you believe it!

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: That applies in rural areas as well as in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: That shows you have the same mentality as those handling affairs in the Federal Government.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: My intelligence would be at least equal to that of the honourable member.

The Hon. N. McNeill: What about those in remote areas who send their children to hostels?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: My heart still bleeds for those people who can afford to send their children to select schools! It has been estimated by the Federal Minister for Education that two-thirds of the children in Australia have less than \$200 per annum spent on them for education, so we are disadvantaging only one-third.

The Hon. N. McNeill: So 30 per cent are affected?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, and a large number of them would not be affected at all when we have regard for the income their parents would earn on the return for their labour.

Another item which grates on those who would introduce or support such a motion as this is the capital gains tax. This would be another reason people would be wanting to get rid of a Government which has the interests of the disadvantaged and underprivileged people at heart.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Are you interested in employment?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The honourable member was either not listening or was not here when I dealt with that matter.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Rural industries generate employment

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The Federal Government has departed completely from the system of indirect taxation, and this would be of benefit to people in rural areas as would be the abolition of the television license. I suppose they do have televisions in rural areas.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: We cannot afford them.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: We are still waiting for television.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: The attitude of the Federal Government is completely contrary to that of this State Government in respect of its increases in the license fees for motor vehicles, and in refusing to give people on basic pensions a concession in respect of those licenses.

The Hon. T. Knight: That is not so.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You are supposed to be talking to the President you know.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I do not think I can let this debate conclude without referring to an insulting remark made by Mr Lewis which was not retracted and for which he was not called to order. I am referring to his reference to the Prime Minister being an idiot.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: From some of the things I have heard, I would say that that is probably a complimentary remark.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr Lewis thinks that he is an idiot, despite the fact that he has risen to become Prime Minister, is a Queen's Counsel, and an eminent person in other fields.

The honourable member's remark was an insult to the people who supported the ALP in the last two elections in this country, because the implication is that the person those people elected as leader is an idiot.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I think a lot of them would agree with me now.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: What an insult it was, especially when we take into consideration all the problems of the Liberal Party prior to the time when the present Australian Government took office. We can all remember the ridiculous statements made both inside and outside this country and now, for the very first time in the history of this country, we have two Prime Ministers sitting on the back benches of the Australian Parliament.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: There might be another soon.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I could not imagine that ever happening.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You mean they will throw him out altogether?

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What about when Cairns or Bob Hawke takes over?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am talking about facts now, and it is a fact that two ex-Prime Ministers are sitting on the back benches of the Australian Parliament, and this would not happen anywhere else in the world.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: It would not happen anywhere else in the world?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is a great reflection on the party to which the honourable member belongs.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What has that to do with the motion?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: If the honourable member will allow me to continue instead of bull roaring so that my voice cannot be heard—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You poor fellow.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —he will find out. I am trying to say that despite all the irresponsible and stupid statements made by McMahon inside and outside this country, no-one could possibly call him an idiot or anyone who has risen to become Prime Minister, and this includes even Gorton who with his shortcomings—and they were plenty—could not be classified as an idiot.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Whitlam has none?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I will not refer to Mr Holt because we do not want to say anything disrespectful about the dead. We cannot even say it about Sir Robert Menzies who was responsible for the cruel policy of sending boys to Vietnam to be slaughtered in their hundreds.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: What has this to do with the motion?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: We could not classify him as an idiot. It is a crying shame that such a statement should be made in this House as was made by Mr Lewis. However, it is in line with the

sort of statement that we read in the Press yesterday. I am referring to the heading, "Top union men called parasites".

The PRESIDENT: I would like the honourable member to get back to the motion.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: It is related to it. That statement was made by a little nincompoop who would not be capable of polishing the shoes of the man to whom he referred. I am referring to the Liberal Whip in another place who made that statement about hard-working colleagues of mine being parasites. It is in line with what Mr Lewis said about the Prime Minister of this country.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: He was talking about someone else. I will stand by my statement.

The PRESIDENT: Will the honourable member please continue?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, I would like to carry on.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I thought you had been carrying on for some time.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Time is running out because I want to comply with your wishes, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You are not complying with my wishes. I am here for as long as the House sits. I want to make that perfectly clear.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I am sorry. I will conclude by saying that this is not a good motion and it does no credit to this House. I do not think it will go very much further than this House, but it is rather a part of a deliberate policy, as I indicated earlier, in an endeavour to bring down a Government, and it is another little wedge in that respect. It is very mischievous in its content because it creates a great deal of division in the community. It is turning people against people, and farmers against unions. Soon it will be brother against brother, and family against family; and when that occurs—

The Hon. N. McNeill: It will be the responsibility of the Labor Party.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: —we will have an unstable Government in this country. Democracy depends entirely on a stable Government.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Unstable government did not exist before your Government came into power in Canberra.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Always previously in this country once a Government has been elected it has remained in office for three years, because that is its term; but that is something members opposite cannot understand.

In conclusion I believe the motion should be defeated or remain buried as it has been on the notice paper for the last six weeks.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. S. J. Dellar.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 24th October, 1974

The SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (17): ON NOTICE

1. LAND AT MAYLANDS

Use by Traffic Authority

Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Police:

Will he please table a plan indicating the land use proposals by the suggested new traffic authority on the Maylands Peninsula?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

No such plan is available. The authority, when formed, will be directed to look at what use may be made of land on the Maylands Peninsula.

2. *This question was postponed.*

3. HOUSING

Septic Systems: Faulty Construction

Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is he aware that a particular building constructed under a State Government contract was not completed to plan in that a certain sewerage connection was omitted? The work not done was the installation of a connecting pipe between a prime and secondary septic tank, resulting in a requirement, in the interest of public health, for the pumping out of sillage from the overflowing prime septic tank.

(2) Whether his answer is "Yes" or "No" will he advise, as the building is now privately owned—

(a) under normal Government construction contracts is there a time limit with respect to a claim to "put right";

(b) would such an omission be considered as the responsibility of the contracting authority, the contracting builder, or the installing plumber;