

Legislative Council

Friday, the 24th November, 1967

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

TOWN PLANNING

Gosnells Shire Council Scheme

1. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Town Planning:

Can he inform me the stage that has been reached with the Gosnells Shire Council town planning scheme?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

I have dealt with all the objections to the scheme. These have been processed and were being forwarded to the council either yesterday or today. As soon as the council amends its town planning scheme in accordance with my recommendations, it will become law.

MULLEWA-GASCOYNE JUNCTION ROAD

Improvement

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

In view of the importance to the people in the Gascoyne of the road from Byro Station on the Mullewa-Gascoyne Junction Road to Wooramel—on the North West Coastal Highway—will the Minister ask the Main Roads Department to inspect this road with a view to improving it so that it may be traversed without difficulty and danger?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The honourable member was good enough to notify me he intended to ask this question. Although the Main Roads Department opened up this road many years ago, it is still under the control of the local authority, which is responsible for its maintenance and improvement.

TRAFFIC

"Stop" Signs: Installation at Roberts Street-Howick Street, Lathlain Park

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

I will preface my question by saying there was a serious accident in the early hours of this morning at the intersection to which I am about to refer. Will the Government arrange for the urgent installation of "Stop" signs in

Roberts Street at the intersection of Roberts Street and Howick Street, Lathlain Park?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

I have not seen a report of the accident, but I will refer the honourable member's question to the appropriate Minister.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Furnace Oil and Coal: Comparative Costs

The Hon. T. O. PERRY asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What is the total cost of furnace oil used by the Electricity Commissions of New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia, and the Electricity Trust of South Australia?
- (2) What is the total cost of coal consumed by the Electricity Commissions of New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia, and the Electricity Trust of South Australia?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) No published figures are available.
- (2) Electricity Commission of N.S.W. in 1966—\$23,534,569. No published figures are available for the other authorities.

DAMPIER SOLAR SALT INDUSTRY AGREEMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd November.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [2.39 p.m.]: This Bill to ratify an agreement between the Government and the Dampier solar salt company is very similar to other agreements which have been passed by Parliament during this and previous sessions.

I am very pleased indeed to know that the Dampier solar salt company has at last decided to produce salt in this particular location. Members who have been to Dampier—and with the possible exception of one or two most of us have been there—will know that the vast salt marshes which separate Dampier from the mainland at high tide are purely and simply wasteland.

Therefore it is good to see this area being put to some use—the only possible use to which it could be put. These marshes would not be useful for any other purpose unless oil happened to be found underneath. The Bill to ratify the agreement is very similar to the other Bills that have been presented here and which are now Acts. They were short Bills with long schedules covering the conditions and provisions relating to the agree-

ments, and each and every one, whether in regard to iron ore, salt, or for some other purpose, contained a standard clause in relation to by-laws.

Many members of Parliament have voiced disapproval of this clause because they consider it takes away the rights of members to move in Parliament for the disallowance of or an amendment to a by-law in some way or other. Members feel that Parliament is losing some control in this connection. When speaking previously to these clauses I have said that although there is no direct approach to the by-laws, nevertheless there is some approach. The by-laws are tabled and, by way of motion—which would have an indirect effect on the by-laws—any member of Parliament would have an opportunity to raise an objection if he so desired.

If a by-law were objectionable to a majority of members in either House, naturally such a motion would be carried and the Government of the day would have to take a serious view of the result. So, while there is no direct approach, there is an indirect approach to Parliament. Of course, there is a tremendous responsibility on the Minister, the Government, and Executive Council; and it is not likely a Government would approve of a by-law that was likely to result in its being turned out of office, irrespective of whether it be a coalition Government or a Labor Government. Governments do not do things in that fashion.

While I regret that this provision is in the agreement—it will, to a great extent, stultify a member who wishes to express disapproval of a by-law—I think the position is sufficiently covered, because by-laws would not be gazetted unless they were to have some good effect.

This is a very open agreement; and when I say that I mean it is like handing someone an open cheque. There is no compulsion for the company even to commence a saltworks. The Government has signed this agreement with the company, which has until the 31st December, 1968, to make up its mind whether it proceeds or not. I suppose that is fair enough, because if it had to wait until next session, another company might become interested. On the other hand, that is hardly likely because Hamersley's parent company is the major shareholder in Dampier Salt. So it is logical to assume there will be a close affinity between the two companies and, in effect, one could be a subsidiary of the other.

As the Minister has told us, there is a lot of co-operation between the two companies. For a start, the salt company has applied for 28,000 acres of marshland on which it will base its operations to produce salt. Production is estimated ultimately to reach 1,000,000 tons per year, which is a lot of salt. In any case, if the

company is as successful as I understand the Leslie Salt project has been in its infancy, it will not have much trouble in producing that quantity.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Is the evaporation the same in the two areas?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I would say the rate of evaporation at Dampier might be higher than it is at the Leslie Salt marshes, because the limestone island on which Dampier is situated blocks the breeze. Dampier sits in a basin and is completely surrounded by land, whereas the Leslie salt marshes run along the coast. I would think the evaporation at Dampier would be the higher.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: There is more humidity at Port Hedland.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is a hot spot. The 28,000 acres involved in the agreement will be the basis for operations. The rental seems to be pretty light at \$4 per 100 acres. As a matter of fact, it is light; but in comparison with adjoining pastoral lands, it is high. While the price paid for table salt is fairly high, bulk salt is cheap at \$3 or \$4 per ton; and when one has regard to all the circumstances, one cannot quibble at the rental. The Government will collect something like \$1,144 per annum on the present rental basis.

Under this agreement the company has an option on two adjoining areas, one of which contains an enormous amount of rocky country and some ocean. The Minister has told us that the Fisheries Department has asked that this section be not interfered with, so the agreement makes provision that for the next 10 years, experiments and research may be carried out in this area in regard to the habits of prawns, and the possibilities of establishing a prawning industry. This protection is given in the agreement.

The area coloured blue on the plan, which comprises approximately 9,000 acres, is a different proposition. The company, virtually, has a 10-year option over that portion. Why it requires such a long period is not easy to understand. I expect the company would not be saving much rent if it took out the whole lot at the start, but if it is simply waiting to see how the experiments proceed, in case it needs the land later on, I feel that a 10-year option is excessive.

The company should know what it is doing in, perhaps, two or three years. Another provision which is strange, to my way of thinking, is the one which provides that if the Government requires portion of the optional area for some other purpose—for instance, prawning research might prove that something worth while could be done with the area—the Government has to notify the company and the company then has two years to think about the proposition. A private fishing concern could be interested and surely it would not wait two years while the salt company made up its mind. The

company should be able to make up its mind after the first two years of operations whether the venture is economical and worth while, and whether the additional area is required. So, I think that provision is too generous.

As the Minister said, the Government may require the land to establish a new industry and I do not think the optional area should be tied up and protected to such an extent. However, I suppose the Minister will tell us there is a clause which provides for variation and negotiation of the lease, and these matters will be discussed later on. But this provision could have the effect of deterring other industries, such as the fishing industry, from approaching the area.

This is the only anchorage between Port Hedland Harbour and Shark Bay where ships can shelter with safety during the cyclone season. That archipelago provides the only safe shelter on the coast between Port Hedland Harbour and Carnarvon—and that is a long way indeed. Exmouth Gulf is not a safe haven at all. In fact, it is one of the worst anchorages for big ships.

So whilst there is an option—and we cannot do anything about it—I hope if the time ever arrives when the Government feels it would like to have some portion of the optional area, the company will negotiate unconditionally. Of course, the usual provisions are in the Bill to provide for housing. Certain sections of the Land Act will not operate in relation to this agreement. The object of removing the obligation to comply with those particular sections is to facilitate the securing of land for housing and other amenities associated with the residential area.

The Minister told us that for a start the company would proceed with its initial works and would use some of the facilities which are now established at Dampier. One cannot argue with that and one must admit that it is a good idea. For instance, the school and some houses will be used for the time being. As the concern grows it may be necessary for a new townsite to be surveyed, and a new settlement to be established. Such a settlement would not be far from Dampier.

The Minister said that 100 townsite blocks might be required at some future time, and the Government is required to find them. Here again, we find the company is to be absolved from the expense which could be incurred by the State in surveying, laying out, and setting up the townsite lots. Clause 13 of the agreement states that if the company requests the State to do these things, the State shall do them. The company can request the lease of the townsite lots for five years at a rental sufficient to reimburse a reasonable proportion of the costs incurred by the State in the preparation of the land for subdivision.

I do not see why the taxpayers should be required to stand the expense—or part of the expense—incurred for this wealthy company. The company is not short of money. When we consider the shareholders of the Dampier Salt Company we find that Comalco has a 50 per cent. interest—that is, Hamersley-Conzinc Riotinto—British Tobacco Company, 14 per cent.—that company is not short of money—and the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Company has a 4 per cent. interest.

The other shareholder is the Marubeni-Iida and Nissho Co. Ltd. with a 32 per cent. holding. That is a Japanese company and I do not know whether it is wealthy or poor. However, I should imagine it would be pretty well off. I do not think the taxpayers of Australia should be asked to subscribe anything for companies such as these. It is a foolproof venture and cannot go wrong. It will be impossible to lose, and it is wrong for the Government to have entered into an agreement in these terms.

Another provision relating to housing which struck me as being a bit odd was that the company must erect buildings for accommodation for a family, or for single persons, at a cost of not less than \$15,000.

Any building which can be transported to and erected in the north-west for \$15,000 is a very poor structure indeed. The Minister referred to the example set by the Hamersley Company in Dampier. Those are excellent houses, built of brick and air conditioned. These types of houses could be erected in Nedlands or anywhere else because they are very good. However, I should imagine they would cost much more than \$15,000, and probably more like \$30,000. However, that seems to be the minimum.

I hope the Minister will tell us about the labour conditions, because he did not mention anything about them in his speech. I trust, too, he will be able to explain fully what is meant by the wording of paragraph (e) of clause 22 of the agreement, appearing on page 19 of the Bill. I hope we will not see some indentured labour being introduced by the company. It will be looking for all the trouble in the world if it thinks it will get away with the construction of tin sheds in that area.

There are one or two other clauses in the agreement which need clarification. For example, when the time arrives, the Government has to provide some blocks of land, and it is provided that the relevant provisions in the Land Act shall be waived. This means that the blocks can be allotted, leased, or sold directly to the company which can re-lease or sell them to its employees, but to no other person without the prior approval of the Minister for Lands. The company does not have to worry about the transferring of any title deeds or anything else.

Another clause which does not seem to be clearly expressed is clause 13, dealing with housing. In that clause the following words appear:—

... the State will grant to the lessee an estate in fee simple in the land the subject of the lease at a price not exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200) plus Crown grant and survey fees.

It does not specify whether that is \$200 per lot, or \$200 for the whole area of land provided. On the surface it would appear that it is \$200 per lot, and these lots will be provided to the workers of this very wealthy company. In the metropolitan area a worker would need to be in a very affluent position to be able to pay for a lot on which to build a house. Of course, the workers of this company would not have to pay the initial figure of \$200.

The company can sell a lot and it could be sold for \$200 without reference to the Minister or complying with the provisions of the Land Act. Some protection should be afforded the workers of this company who are desirous of buying land. I do not anticipate the company would want to sell the land, but it is possible the company expects that individuals will establish in the area, businesses which the company has no desire to operate. A T.A.B. shop, a wet canteen, a school tuck-shop, and similar premises could be established there.

Arrangements for the establishment of such businesses could be negotiated by the company. As it is obtaining the land for almost nothing it should not be in a position to make a profit whenever land is leased or sold. The land is extremely cheap; one would have to look hard at the present time to obtain a block of residential land for \$200. As I have said, the agreement does not specify whether it is \$200 per lot, or \$200 for the whole area, so the Minister may be able to clarify that point for the information of members.

I notice in this agreement that the royalties are specified in a different way from the royalties in the iron ore agreements. The Minister has told us that the royalties will escalate according to the f.o.b. price of salt. This is a sound arrangement, but I do not think it will amount to much. I have not been able to work out the figure to my satisfaction. What I did notice was that the royalty could not be re-adjusted for the first 14 years of the company's operations. A review of the royalty takes place every seven years, but an escalation in the rate would not begin until that seven years had passed. So the company would always be seven years behind in the payment of any increased royalties. On the other hand, it would be paying the basic royalty for the first

14 years. The royalty amounts to 51c per ton. Spread over a ton of salt, that would not add much to the price of a pound of table salt.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If it were a pound of table salt.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: When the company reaches the maximum figure of 1,000,000 tons, the royalty would amount to only \$52,500, but I should imagine that figure will be reached in the not too distant future. There are grounds for complaint about the formula used for the escalation in royalty. Fourteen years is a long time before any review is made. Instead of the increase being retrospective it becomes effective only from the day following the 14-year period. During the next seven years there is another review so the next increase in royalty would commence after a period of 21 years.

All in all the increase in royalty will not amount to very much, but to keep the matter in its proper perspective I would point out that the value of our pound, speaking in terms of our previous currency, has deteriorated by at least 50 per cent., so one can imagine that at the end of the next 14 years it could have depreciated to an even greater extent, and the State would then be the loser.

In another clause of the agreement I notice the initial period of the lease for the 28,000 acres is 21 years which, at the option of the company, can be renewed for a further 21 years, and renewed again at the expiration of that period for another 21 years. So if the company exercises its option on both occasions the full period is 63 years, at the end of which the Minister—whoever he may be at that time—has the power, under the agreement, to grant a lease for a further 63 years, or for whatever period is mutually agreed upon. This seems a long time. However, I cannot see anything wrong with this provision, because after all is said and done, a great deal of capital will be expended and the company will need some time to recoup its capital outlay.

The Minister has pointed out that there is a provision in the agreement which states that the company shall make available a constant and reliable source of supply of salt that is required within Australia. However, if one reads clause 21 of the agreement the word "shall" does not appear.

The responsibility of the company is quite different from the responsibility of the State. The wording of clause 21 of the agreement is as follows:—

The Company acknowledges the desire of the State to have available a constant and reliable source of supply of salt for use in Australia. To attain this object the Company, subject to the fulfilment of its overseas contracts will use its best endeavours to have such quantities of salt available.

That is quite a different proposition. If there is a surplus after export commitments then the company will make available some salt for use in Australia.

There is one other point to which I draw the attention of the Minister. It is contained in clause 36 of the agreement. A similar provision appears in the iron ore agreements, the potash agreement, and the other salt agreement. This clause exempts the company from any stamp duty chargeable on any instrument executed by the State pursuant to the agreement, granting to or in favour of the company, or any permitted assignee of the company, any lease, license, easement, or right granted or demised hereunder or pursuant hereto.

It is amazing that big companies are exempt from the payment of stamp duty, while the ordinary citizen, the small businessman, and those who transfer land through the Titles Office have to pay stamp duty. I would like the Minister to tell us why the big companies should be treated so generously. I realise that these companies are starting industries, but so also is the person who buys a block of land for the purpose of building a hotel, or the woman, who starts a business in a corner shop. I cannot understand why these big companies, which spend millions of dollars of their shareholders' money in development to start industries, should be exempt. It seems that those who can most afford to pay are exempt, while those who can least afford to pay are not exempted and are required to pay to keep the country going. I would like the Minister to tell us why a company such as this has been exempted. I support the Bill.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [3.15 p.m.]: I thank Mr. Strickland for his support of the Bill which contains the agreement. He must obviously have made a close study of the agreement and dissected it from end to end. To the best of my ability I will endeavour to answer the questions he has raised.

I have said this before, but I think it bears repetition: One must not lose sight of the spirit in which these agreements are entered into. This is emphasised by the concept of the industry which is now being developed at Dampier. Nobody knows better than Mr. Strickland what type of coastline was in the Dampier area before Hamersley started operations. I am sure both Mr. Wise and Mr. Willesee know. This was probably one of the roughest pieces of country to be found on the north-west coast.

Out of it has been shaped a truly magnificent port, at very great cost to the company but at very little cost to the Government. If the Government had to bear the cost of setting up the industry, providing the houses, and establishing all the requisite facilities—such as the dredging, jetty, and wharf—the area would

not have been developed. Such development is beyond the finance of any State Government.

This brings one to the point that if the company is developing land, which heretofore has been useless in the scheme of things—as Mr. Strickland agreed when he said the marshy area behind Dampier was useless and he would be glad to see it developed—then it is up to the State to make some concession to the company, because the State does not become financially involved in agreements such as this. That is a very important aspect to take into consideration. What we are getting from this agreement, from the iron ore agreements, and from the previous salt agreement is progress and development.

As to the requirement to commence operations on the 31st December, 1968, I should point out that there is always a starting date in these agreements—a date on which notice has to be given. This is the essence of the contract, and there must be a starting date. In this case the company is anxious to get to work as soon as the agreement is ratified. Once Parliament agrees, and the Bill is passed, the company will negotiate to get going.

The question of the period of the lease was raised by Mr. Strickland. If one examines the Mining Act one will find that most leases are for a period of 21 years, with the right of renewal for 21 years, and then the lease is terminated, leaving the leaseholder free to apply again.

A departure has been made under this agreement. Under the contract between the State and the company, the State grants the opportunity to the company while the company bears the cost for starting the industry. We contracted out of the Mining Act for a first period of 21 years, followed by two periods of 21 years, and then application is to be made to the Minister as to a further lease period.

If this proves to be a thriving industry at the end of the lease, or at any time during the currency of the agreement, then the company is in a position to renegotiate with the Government.

A question was raised as to whether or not the company should be called upon to pay all subdivisional fees on the land. As I read the agreement, the State is obliged to make available to the company certain land upon which to build houses.

However, it is not obliged to make available to the company all the land, and in the process of the subdivision, the State may want to retain some of the land. Surely it is not unreasonable, if the State is retaining some land, that the company should be asked to reimburse the State for its portion of the cost of the survey of the whole area, taking it for granted, as I am, that the complete survey would be done at the time. In relation to the land which the company will be given, it is a reasonable proposition that it be asked to pay for that portion.

I do not think I need labour the point concerning the minimum standard of housing because both Mr. Strickland and I know the standard of housing which has been established at Dampier. The standard provided for employees on all these mining operations is very good. However, as some minimum has to be stated, the minimum of \$15,000 is mentioned in the agreement. However, I repeat that the companies have provided a standard of housing of a monetary value far in excess of \$15,000.

In respect of the price of land, quite frankly this is a little obscure I agree. The agreement does not stipulate that it shall be \$200 per lot, and one could infer from reading the agreement, that the amount of \$200 is to cover all the land. Let me say two things at this time: I do not know how many housing lots will be involved, but the land at Dampier has assumed a certain value it did not have two years ago, or at the time when Mr. Strickland himself landed on those rocks years ago and found a pretty hard, barren piece of coastline. The only value which applies to that land is the value which Hamersley Iron has given to it and, once again, I do not think this is a concession at which we can cavil. I do not think we could really argue if the company is given the land at a very nominal price for the erection of houses for its employees.

Now we turn to the use of salt in Western Australia. I was not aware of the fact that I had used the word "shall" in my speech notes. I tried to find it, as a matter of fact, to make sure. However, whether or not the word "shall" is used, the way the clause is expressed regarding salt in Australia is not unreasonable. The amount of table salt used in Australia—which is the expression used by Mr. Strickland—is not very great; but salt from a commercial or industrial point of view has assumed a degree of importance in the world, an importance of which I was unaware until last year when I had occasion to study the situation when I presented to this House for consideration the Bill to ratify the Leslie Salt agreement. I then had revealed to me the ever-growing use of salt.

We are fortunate that the climatic conditions on this part of the coastline are suitable for the production of salt. I cannot say with any degree of accuracy whether Dampier would be a slightly better or worse place than some other point on the coast. Suffice to say that the people looking at the various sections of land in the north-west have already had experience and will pick out for themselves the best spots available.

In relation to the agreement, of course, it will be appreciated that there is a definite connection, as I have already said, between Dampier and Hamersley Iron, and I think it is rather natural this company would take advantage of the opportunity

which exists in close proximity to its mother company.

In relation to stamp duty, Mr. Strickland will appreciate I think that the example he drew with regard to the Titles Office is different. He said that when anyone goes to the Titles Office and transfers property from one person to another, stamp duty is paid on the transfer. Of course I agree; but in that case the stamp duty is very easily assessed because the consideration is based on the transfer of land, the contract of sale, or the agreement.

However, in this case it is very difficult indeed to assess the value, and even if the value were assessed the figure would probably be quite high. The stamp duty may be a large amount or a small amount; I do not know. Once again it is reasonable on this barren coast, where a company sets up an industry like this, and virtually hews the industry out of the ground and erects buildings, that this provision should apply. Immediately all this progress is made the land assumes a value which otherwise it would not have had. This is one of the concessions the State is reasonably entitled to give to the company under the agreement.

With regard to royalties, I think I said that basically they were the same as in the other agreement. Clause 10 of the agreement sets out these royalties. It states that on the first 500,000 tons in any year the royalty will be 5c; and then it is so many cents for the next 500,000 tons, and so on. It escalates as the production rate increases.

I have two other points on which I wish to comment. One of these deals with the freedom from labour conditions. I have explained previously that under the Mining Act so many men per area are required to fulfil the conditions. If that condition were to apply in this industry, it could be quite uneconomic. Certain conditions under the Land Act would also make it difficult for a company of this nature. Therefore, in all these agreements it is not considered unreasonable that the company be freed of the obligation.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It refers only to an agricultural lease or a mining lease.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is a lease under the Mining Act.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The labour conditions only cover the Mining Act?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: They cover the Mining Act and any Act in regard to any lease of land within the worksite. I think the remaining point concerns by-laws, which Mr. Strickland brought to our notice and answered very effectively himself.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I did not hear what you said about the stamp duty.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Shall I repeat it?

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Yes, if you would.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: On the question of stamp duty, I suggested, and would say again, that I think this is one of the reasonable concessions the State can be expected to give to the company in the process of the negotiations.

Land which was completely valueless a few years ago has now been given a value. The buildings that have been erected on it are of tremendous value as a result of expenditure by the company. In addition, it is difficult to assess a consideration in a matter such as this. The example Mr. Strickland gave of a man executing a transfer of land under the Transfer of Land Act is not analogous, because in that case we know exactly what the consideration is. It is simply a consideration for the passing of land which has a fixed value and the stamp duty is paid according to the law.

I think that answers most, if not all, of the questions raised by the honourable member. I thank him again for his approach to the agreement and the Bill. Mr. Strickland is a person who realises what these agreements mean to the State and what they are doing to assist in the overall development of Western Australia, and the north in particular.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

LOAN BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd November.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan) [3.34 p.m.]: It is not very pleasant for me to have to refer to an incident that happened a few weeks ago in connection with the operations of the House Committee. I refer, Mr. President, to the meeting of members of Parliament that was held in another place in connection with the closure of Harvest Terrace. With reference to the rights or wrongs of the closure of Harvest Terrace I am not, at present, one bit concerned; but I am concerned with what I intend to convey to the House.

The House Committee is a body which has no party connections, even though the members of it belong to different parties. I have been a member of it for some time. Never at any time have I raised any party political matter nor do I intend to do so.

Members may recall that two years ago at a meeting of all members of Parliament it was decided that, in return for certain of the lands which were under the control of the House Committee, Harvest Terrace would be closed. It was by agreement of all members at the meeting that this should happen. Of course, later on the matter was pursued by the House Committee at the request of members. At the annual meeting this year the matter of the prospective closure was referred to a special meeting. So far, so good; I have no complaints about anything that happened up to that point of time.

A meeting should have taken place of all members of Parliament whose duty would have been to decide whether, in the interests of Parliament as it is constituted at present, or in the interests of posterity and of members in the future, Harvest Terrace should be closed. The matter should have been discussed on that basis. Instead, it was taken to the party room and discussed on a party basis. I raise the strongest objections.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: How do you know what went on in our party room?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: When the Minister raised the matter, he admitted he had taken it to the party room. It was quite obvious at the meeting which was held in another place that this was the case; because, when a division was called, everyone walked to the other side of the Chamber.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Everybody?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: No, there were two exceptions.

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

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I understand it to be true that one of the members who remained had resisted at the combined party meeting.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: You do not know what went on at the party meeting. There was no vote taken.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I do not know what went on at the meeting; but if Mr. Robinson cares to make a denial I will accept his word and sit down.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: It was discussed, but no vote was taken.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Mr. Robinson, I would not bother to explain; because we do not ask what goes on at the party meetings held by the Labor Party.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I consider members should be able to say what they like at party meetings on any subject which is not within the province of the House Committee, which should conduct its operations on a non-party basis. When such matters are taken to the party room it is going completely away from what we have considered to be the spirit of the House Committee. I have no pleasure whatever in referring to the matter, but

it is my duty, as a member of the House Committee, to do so.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: The House Committee had no right to raise it.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will leave it at that. At least I have taken advantage of the opportunity to let members know my opinion on the matter.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: Your party had a meeting last Wednesday, but you did not mention anything about that.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I refuse to discuss what happened at our meeting; but if the member had been present he would have known that I raised objections.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: What about the House Committee meeting? There was no discussion by you if I remember correctly.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Evidently the honourable member did not listen too attentively at the meeting. Mr. Bickerton raised the matter, and I supported him. Mr. Lavery also spoke on the matter, and then it lapsed. I am afraid the honourable member does not listen very closely to what goes on. He should know that there are no party discussions at a House Committee meeting.

This matter is unpleasant, and it gives me no pleasure to have to refer to it. All I hope is that, in future, House Committee matters do not become party matters.

I was interested to read last week that, on Thursday last, a symposium was held in Canberra to mark the opening of Australia's part in the international biological programme. Australia is one of 40 nations involved in a five-year programme. The purpose is to find ways to increase productivity, to feed the hungry, and to improve human welfare. Some of the most distinguished biologists and scientists in Australia were gathered at the symposium and I wish to refer to some of the contributions they made at the gathering. Some members might feel that in one sense these men were critical of some sections of our community. As to whether or not they have a right to be critical, members can make their own judgments. Already in my own mind I have made my own judgment.

One of the four international vice presidents of this biological programme, Sir Otto Frankel, gave the opening address and he had this to say—

Even such unproductive and little studied plants as heath and scrub might tell scientists something more about productivity of plants for man's use.

He then posed this query—

When we have information on the productivity of all sorts of communities and ecosystems may we not discover the weaknesses of our domesticated plants and find others are better fitted to exploit sun and water?

And may we not discover new technologies to make good use of such clever plants?

He referred to the fact that in coming to grips with the problem of the indiscriminate use of chemical pesticides, Australian entomologists in the programme itself will be concentrating their efforts on biological control—that is, the control of pests—by their natural enemies. I will give some examples of that later and I think all members would be acquainted with it.

The second speaker was Dr. Waterhouse, the chief of the C.S.I.R.O. Division of Entomology. He stated that in the programme one of the pests to be studied was the green peach aphid. This is one of the worst crop pests in both our temperate and tropical regions. The use of chemicals to control aphids has not met with much success, and the pests gradually develop a resistance to them.

However, at the same time the insecticides that we use on aphids destroy the pests' natural enemies and, consequently, allow the aphids to reach plague proportions.

Dr. Waterhouse said that most biological control projects had so far been approached in an *ad hoc* fashion, and he referred to notable successes in Australia, one of which was the eradication of prickly pear. Members would be acquainted with what a great economic loss the prickly pear caused not only in Queensland but throughout other parts of Australia, and the problem was solved by the biologists who introduced a little insect known as the cacto-blastis which ate the prickly pear right out of Queensland again. This little insect did a wonderful job.

On one occasion I was travelling through Queensland and saw a hall which has been erected as a mark of respect to the insect, and it is probably the only hall of its type in the world. It is known as the cacto-blastis hall.

Another example of the way that pests can be controlled is in the use of myxomatosis to control the rabbit pest. However, Dr. Waterhouse complained there had been too many outright failures in this sphere.

The next speaker, also one who has world-wide recognition, was Dr. Stephen Boyden, a professorial fellow in social biology at the Australian National University. That is quite a new word, even in my vocabulary—social biology. He said that scientists today were abysmally ignorant of the effects a modern civilisation had on the minds and bodies of people and his comments amazed me, as I think they would surprise most members.

He said that added to the interplay of the new physical forces of civilisation and the ancient forces of nature on the body were the cultural forces. This control is also a new one. Cultural forces obliged individuals, whether they were in offices,

factories, or even in homes, and even if they were temporarily or permanently incompatible, to put up with each other's company wherever they were, whereas the natural thing would be to avoid one another.

He wanted to know how it was that these people could put up with each other hour after hour, day after day, and year after year, despite the fact that they had nothing whatever in common. He felt that most of us—and I do not suppose we can exclude members of Parliament because occasionally they might like an afternoon nap, and if they feel like one now I pardon them and forgive them—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Even while you are talking?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Yes. I would feel they would be doing the right thing. Under natural conditions we would do so if we felt like it; and I think in that respect some countries of the world, particularly the southern European countries, can teach us a lesson. They shut up shop at lunch-time for an hour or two, during the heat of the day when the climate is so enervating. However, cultural pressures have denied most of us that opportunity and we have to be in the privileged class before we can exercise it.

Let us take the case of children. Under natural conditions it is not possible to keep a child still for more than two or three minutes, but observe children who are not allowed to exercise their natural instincts. What does our society require them to do? They have to remain, sometimes almost motionless, sitting in uncomfortable positions, for hours every day at their school desks. The children may be learning respect for authority, and a little bit of discipline, and they may be preparing themselves for the many long hours they will spend at desks when they go to work. However, Professor Boyden poses the question: "What price do they pay to acquire those benefits?"

He said that a part of the cost, apart from heart disease, ulcers, and appendicitis, might be frequent headaches, mild depression, and aggressive behaviour at home when they are no longer inhibited. He also said there was a vast list of unanswered questions in this particular sphere, and one of the duties of the symposium would be, if possible, to find the answers.

The man who made the greatest contribution—and I would particularly refer his remarks to members of the farming section of our community, because he referred to them, and yet I think most of them would probably disagree with his remarks, but I would ask them at least to give his remarks some thought to see what truth they think is in them—was Dr. Costin, the assistant chief of the C.S.I.R.O. Division of Plant Industry. He pleaded: Save fauna and flora from the farmer.

He dramatically outlined the effects man has already made on Australia with his crop system and the use of chemicals, and he made this amazing statement: Even the Adelie penguin which never left Antarctica now laid eggs that have been found to contain D.D.T. That gives some idea of the widespread effect of the use of chemicals. He pleaded for fauna and flora to be saved from the farmer.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: What revenue would the farmer get from flora and fauna?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will tell the Minister later. This man said that the land use policy should integrate the natural flora and fauna with the semi-natural and intensively developed use of land. I used his words there because he could express what I wanted to say better than I could. In the long run he believed that the integration of the natural flora and fauna with the semi-natural and intensively developed use of land would be one of Australia's main contributions to the biological resources and the welfare of mankind.

Sitting suspended from 3.51 to 4.8 p.m.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would like to continue to refer to the remarks made by Dr. Costin when he was speaking about the effects of farming. I do not want to buy into an argument as to whether or not farming is necessary, because that would be childish; apart from which I do not wish to be diverted.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: We would not get very far without farming.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Dr. Costin had this to say—

In the past 100 years of wheat and pasture development in New South Wales and Victoria virtually all of the original 100 million acres of native forest (about half the area of central Europe) had been effectively destroyed, he said.

In Victoria, 12 species of plants were presumed extinct, another 36 had not been seen for many years, and another 201 species were restricted to individual specimens or a few colonies.

In N.S.W., of 52 species of marsupials on open grazing land 22 were either extinct—not recorded since 1910—or rare—not recorded since 1944.

In many places communities were disappearing in the face of land development before it was known what species were there.

The reduction in biological diversity had other effects. Most of Australia's agricultural crops were astonishingly simple systems and were wide open to invasion by all kinds of pests.

An increasing part of agricultural technology was concentrated on reducing these invasions, particularly with chemicals.

But chemicals had effects, through pollution of drainage water and trans-

mission, and through food chains well beyond the target area and species.

I wish now to refer to a matter that was raised by my leader when he asked a question at the commencement of the sitting today. He prefaced his question by referring to an accident that occurred at the corner of Roberts Street and Star Street, Carlisle. This area is in my territory. The accidents at this corner are very frequent, and yet the only traffic sign visible is one marked "Slow—15."

Only last week a bus containing slow-learning children tipped over at that corner and it was providential there were not a few lives lost. I hope notice will be taken of this matter now that details have appeared in the Press. Some action is very necessary.

During the last two sessions I have raised the question of the ill-effects of smoking and its relationship to lung cancer. I make mention of this fact again without in any way meaning to refer to any particular smoker; so far as I am concerned smokers can do as they please!

To make the point I have in mind I would like to quote the comments of Dr. Adams, a chest specialist at the Hollywood Repatriation General Hospital, who, at a medical symposium recently, said that 200 people of whom 16 were women died from lung cancer in 1965, and that in the same year 252 people were killed on the roads.

The doctor said that studies in Britain had shown that lung cancer could be expected to account for 40,000 deaths there in the early 1980s—about five times the present road death toll. These statistics are absolutely amazing. He said there was no question that the risk of lung cancer was much greater amongst smokers. It was 40 times greater amongst those who smoked 20 cigarettes a day over a period of 20 years. He also said that smoking was associated with bronchitis and emphysema. The smoke was an irritant which stimulated the flow of mucus. This could become stagnant and was a good medium for infection. He referred to people who discounted the effects of smoking by referring to some character whom they knew who smoked 2 oz. of dark Havelock tobacco a day and so on, and who lived till he was 90.

This reminds me of the story of a reporter who interviewed a man on his 90th birthday and asked him to what he attributed his great age. The reply given to the reporter was that he did not touch liquor, he did not smoke, or knock around with women. At that moment there was a commotion upstairs—things were being thrown around and knocked about—and the reporter asked what all the noise was about. He received the answer, "It's the old man coming home drunk again."

The point I am making is that one swallow does not make a summer, just as using one heavy smoker as an example,

while being the exception to the rule, would prove very little.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Emphysema may last for 10 years with coughing.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Well, I do not want to get it. Dr. Adams expressed the opinion that the medical profession must take a lead in campaigning against smoking.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Mr. Willmott says that too much talking brings on these conditions.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The doctor referred to the fact that although the incidence of lung cancer in Great Britain was increasing among the general population, it was decreasing among the doctors, and there was evidence that this was associated with a decline in their smoking habits.

I would like to take this opportunity to show what has been done by the Commonwealth Government in its effort to institute a code of advertising on television. Some nights I have watched a programme on television and in three hours have seen perhaps 20 to 30 different types of cigarettes being advertised.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: All made by the same firm.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will read the code that has been accepted; and members can check to see whether or not the television companies are abiding by it. It is as follows:—

1. Cigarette advertising must not be aimed at any non-smokers but must be intended to effect a change of brand amongst smokers.

2. Principal characters shown smoking cigarettes in any advertising should not be under 25 years of age.

3. No cigarette advertising may be placed on television in children's programmes or immediately before or after such programmes.

4. No family scenes of father and/or mother smoking in front of children may be shown.

5. No advertising for cigarettes may appear containing testimonials from persons who have special appeal to young children.

In that respect I think it is bad when one sees on television prominent sportsmen who are well known to kiddies being used in connection with cigarette advertising. Continuing—

6. No advertising may claim special health properties for, or reduction in, any ingredient from smoking of any cigarette unless backed by scientific authority.

7. Cigarette advertising may use attractive healthy looking models or illustrations or drawings of persons who appear to be attractive or healthy

provided that there is no suggestion that their attractive appearance or good health is due to cigarette smoking.

In other words, one would not have to smoke Capstan cigarettes in order to grow big and strong like the persons appearing in the advertisements. Continuing—

8. Advertisements shall not show well known past or present athletes or sportsmen smoking cigarettes, or anyone who has just participated in physical activity requiring stamina or athletic conditioning beyond that at normal recreation.

9. Cigarette advertising may not show or imply habitual or excessive smoking.

The doctor suggested, of course, that boys should be told of the effects of smoking on their sporting prowess, and girls of the effect it had on babies.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think the Russian idea was a good one; they highlighted its effect on virility.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That might worry those people who regard that as a pastime.

The next matter to which I would like to refer concerns a book on child behaviour; and I suggest to the Library Committee that a copy of this book be obtained and placed in the Parliamentary Library. The book has been written by a retired S.M., Mr. A. E. Debenham of Sydney, after dealing with child delinquents in the courts for a long period of time. Some of his comments are worth repeating for the benefit of all members. He places the blame for juvenile delinquency on lack of parental control, overcrowded classrooms, glorification of the criminal by films, comics, television, and newspapers, and a constant subjection of the adolescent to propaganda on sex. He urged open children's court hearings; the making of parents legally liable to pay damages and compensation for offences committed by children; and heavier penalties. He also felt—and I would remind members of the legislation which we have passed this session—that if parents knew that offending children would be dealt with in an open court they would, perhaps, make greater efforts in the upbringing and training of the children.

Mr. Debenham said that in his experience on the bench he never had a Jewish or a Chinese child before him as a delinquent because of the parental care and upbringing they receive. He said—

I understand that if a child of either of the faith and race named appeared in court for misbehaviour, the Jewish (or Chinese) community direct the child and parents carefully and are concerned that there should be no repetition of the offence.

From that I would pass quickly to a matter which I raised earlier in the session. I

am pleased to see the Minister concerned has just come into the Chamber.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I was on the phone getting an earbashing.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I must have sensed that the Minister was coming back. I refer to the provision of a cemetery site in the area between the Causeway and Armadale. I originally raised this matter at the request of funeral directors; but now a request has come from the people of the Armadale Shire and others on that side of the river. It has been pointed out that when the new cemetery at Pinnaroo is started anyone from the region of Armadale wishing to visit the cemetery will be faced with a 70-mile trip—35 miles each way.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They will not bury anyone living at Pinnaroo!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The matter of the increased distance was raised before because it brings about an increase in the charges that will have to be paid by people who can ill afford to pay them.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Have they any idea where the cemetery ought to go?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: As I said on a previous occasion, I wrote to the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority on the matter and was told it had reserved a site, but unfortunately the standard gauge railway and a controlled access road interfered and that in the overall planning the authority would take note of my request and would put a cemetery there in the future.

Earlier in the session I also referred to prawning and expressed the opinion that we had only just started to find prawning grounds. The owner-skipper of the 60-foot prawning trawler *Tiruna* was reported in this morning's paper as having returned to Fremantle after being away prawning for eight months; and he had had a catch of 205,000 lb.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He caught this weight over the period.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Yes, over the eight months.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He could not bring that many back.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: No; the boat came back. He expects to get \$75,000 for his catch. That is big money in anybody's language. However, I am more concerned about his comments, which were as follows:—

He said that prawning in W.A. was in its infancy and there were still vast areas of the coast which had not been tried. His catch had been taken in an area of about 150 square miles.

When I think of the enormous areas that are still waiting to be explored, and in which prawns will be found, I can see a great future for that industry.

I was also interested to read in this morning's paper that Dr. Roy Adam, senior lecturer in education at the Western Australian University, had returned from overseas, after a year's study leave in Britain, in particular, and this caused him to have certain reflections on the money which is often paid to educate people from the backward nations. I wish to refer to only one thing. He felt that much of the money spent in educating Indian students had resulted in a lot of unemployed white-collar workers. In other words, he suggested that we had to ensure the money we spend on these people is spent in a way that will educate them to be useful in their own country and of benefit to its economy. I would think this is a very wise observation on his part.

I seldom refer to education problems, and when I do so I do not intend to be critical; but I was interested in an article which referred to the teacher drain to Canada. We are concerned about this in Western Australia because of the number of teachers we are losing to Canadian schools. However, it is a bigger problem in the Eastern States; so much so that from Victoria a special officer is being sent overseas to find out the main reasons in order to see if something cannot be done about it.

The main reasons, according to the teachers who have gone to Canada, are that the salaries are higher, and the conditions are better. In their summing up, they also have regard for the high cost of living, but they still think they are better off.

The concluding item on which I wish to speak would be of interest to all of us; and shows that we have a terrible lot to learn. I have heard at times that universities produce some queer types. One university in the news recently received most unfavourable publicity. That was the Monash University in Victoria. It is named after one of our greatest Australians—Sir John Monash—who was not only a great soldier, but also was responsible for the great electricity scheme at Yallourn in Victoria.

Research at the Monash University has revealed the amazing capacity of desert mice to survive without water longer than camels. After close examination of these little hopping rodents—two adult species I think weigh an ounce, and they are found near Birdsville in Queensland—it has been found that they have the most amazing capacity for doing without water. Tests were carried out on the rodents by Dr. A. Lee, senior lecturer in zoology at Monash, and Dr. R. E. MacMillen, who has returned to Pomona College in California. This tiny rodent has the most fantastic kidney yet discovered in terms of its ability to concentrate water and regulate the amount of water lost in urine.

These mice were put on a special diet consisting of birdseed with a content of

10 per cent. salt, and they were given a salt water solution to drink. However, they put on weight and improved considerably. These mice are nocturnal, burrowing into the ground during daylight, which enables them to conserve water and energy. This was the purpose of the research. If this knowledge can be applied, those who carried out the experiments cannot see why the work might not be useful in regard to the breeding of stock in arid areas. If this is so, we can well imagine the benefits to be obtained.

I would conclude—as this is the last opportunity I will have this session to speak—by expressing my thanks to you, Mr. President, to members of the House, and to the officers for the courtesies shown to me and their willingness always to be helpful. Whenever I have wanted information, I have found everyone most co-operative; and I take this opportunity, at the end of the session, to express my sincere thanks to all.

THE HON. J. M. THOMSON (South) [4.30 p.m.]: The Bill which we are discussing, together with the Appropriation Bill—which we hope will come to this House in the near future—and the supply Bills will grant approval for the expenditure of a grant total amount of \$176,140,000. This will indeed represent a colossal amount. It is a far cry from the day when *The West Australian* published the headline news "Jack Scaddan has Gone a Million" on the occasion when he, as Treasurer of the State, delivered his Budget for the financial year 1912-1913. When we compare that figure with the present expenditure, we appreciate the fantastic progress and development which has taken place, and which continues to take place.

The loan programme, in the Estimates, clearly indicates the magnitude of the expense involved in controlling and managing a State such as ours. When looking at the first schedule, on page 3 of the Bill, I would have been far happier if item 11 had stated that work amounting to \$50,000 was to be done on the Albany Harbour in conjunction with work on the Bunbury Harbour and the Geraldton Harbour. However, I am aware that the amount shown in item 11 does include money which will provide facilities for the commencement of the work which will ultimately lead to the completion of the third berth at Albany by 1970. It is estimated that the berth will cost \$1,300,000, as was recently announced by the Minister for Works.

It is a matter of interest to note that over the last 16 years, according to statistics, the port trade at Albany has increased by nearly 800 per cent. In 1950-51, the figure was 76,417 tons. In 1966-67, it had increased to 592,962 tons. That, of course, fully justifies the action of the Government in proposing to spend the amount I referred to a few moments ago.

We, at Albany, look forward to the completion of the new berth by 1970. It will help to serve a tremendous area of the State which is producing wealth comparable with that being produced in the rest of the State—including the northern section.

Item 19 deals with the expenditure on police buildings throughout the State, and the amount is \$700,000. The only complaint I have refers to the site on which it is proposed to build the new police station and C.I.B. building at Albany. I am firmly of the opinion that the site at present occupied by the Albany Primary School would be far more suitable because of its central position in the town. The present site for the new police station is at the bottom of the town and is within a stone's throw of the high-water mark of the harbour. I think this matter of re-positioning should be looked at.

The Education Department selected a site for a new primary school six or seven years ago, at Yakamia. That site will adequately cater for the primary school population of Albany for many years. However, some people in responsible positions consider the time may be premature to consider moving the primary school. From the view of economics and practicality, I think a change of thinking in regard to both these matters—the police station and the primary school—would show forward thinking.

Item 18 indicates the amount of money which is allocated to the Native Welfare Department for new buildings, including furniture and equipment. It is interesting to see that the natives are gradually moving into a better type of home, as is provided for under item 18. The beneficial results emanating from the housing programme carried out by the Native Welfare Department are making themselves quite evident by the attitude of the adult native people. It is more particularly noticeable among the native children. These young people are, naturally, of importance and concern to us all. This interest and concern is quite openly displayed by many of the white people in the State—those who are interested in the wellbeing and welfare of the children. In many instances the coloured children are being taken into the family circle of the whites.

It is of paramount importance that this should be done, and it is being done quietly and effectively in many places. When the figure for 1967-68 is compared with the figure for 1964-65, it can be seen that there has been a continual and substantial increase in each successive year.

The total expenditure on education and buildings is of tremendous interest and concern to us all. In 1964-65, the increase amounted to \$4,500,000; in 1965-66 it amounted to \$3,500,000; and for the current financial year the total amount will be \$46,531,700. The increase for this year is a further \$3,000,000.

I am pleased to note that there is an upward trend in expenditure for agricultural education. Members will recall that I have asked questions relating to agricultural high schools. This field of education has proved of immense value to many students who pass through the agricultural schools situated at Narrogin, Cunderdin, Harvey, and Denmark.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Minister and those responsible officers for supplying me with the information contained in the answers to my questions. I was interested in the intake figures for the approaching school year; namely, 153 students. I was also interested to know that the number of applications received was 183, which means that 30 boys missed out. This would appear to be the pattern each year. There is always a surplus of lads who are not able to gain admittance to these agricultural schools, for various reasons as indicated in the answer to my question. The main reason is lack of accommodation. Some of the applicants were rejected as being unsuitable for training for agriculture.

Of course, we must leave such decisions with the board we have set up to deal with such matters. However, at the same time we should examine this matter regarding new buildings and accommodation. I was pleased to note what is being done to provide additional accommodation at the Narrogin Agricultural School and at Harvey. I also noticed it is contemplated that additional accommodation will be provided at Cunderdin. I look forward with confidence to seeing provision made for these buildings in next year's Estimates, and also for provision for additions to the agricultural high school at Denmark.

I would like to see accommodation provided at Denmark for another 30 boys. Bearing in mind the requests continually being made for agricultural high schools to be established in the country districts of the State, it is essential that we utilise, to the fullest extent, the facilities that the Government has provided to establish such schools.

Ere long it will be necessary to establish an agricultural school at Esperance. Great credit is due to the small but efficient committee at Esperance, which, through its foresight and vision, has partly developed an area of land on which eventually will be built the Esperance agricultural high school. Through the efforts of that committee, and its enthusiasm, and the co-operation of the Government departments concerned, a chain of events has been set in motion which will ultimately lead to the establishment of a farm school at Esperance.

At all times we attach importance to our agricultural expansion. That is right and I would go further and say it is essential that all Governments pay ever-increasing attention to this facet of our secondary education, and provide the facilities necessary.

Before concluding, I wish to comment on housing. In particular, I refer to farm housing and to the wives of the young men engaged in developing lately acquired farms. The evidence submitted to the Rural Reconstruction Commission, which is to be found in volumes 1 to 10 of the commission's reports, was taken under the chairmanship of The Hon. Frank Joseph Scott Wise. Mr. Wise was ably assisted by Mr. James Francis Murphy, Professor Samuel MacMahon Wadham, and Mr. Cecil Ralph Lambert. On looking at the evidence taken by the commission, it is interesting, encouraging, and enlightening to see the problems which confronted the members of that commission, when they took evidence in 1943.

Under the heading, "Standards of Housing on Farms," the following appears:—

A farm should be able to provide this level of conveniences in the course of a few years from its establishment. Yet evidence shows that there are many farms in Australia which do not reach that minimum standard.

Further down the page reference is made to the housewife and to the important role she plays in the success of any farming venture. The reference reads as follows:—

In many cases her life does not offer the opportunities for variety and entertainment which are available to her sisters in the city; yet, if she fails at her task or loses her mental perspective, the whole farming venture may fail with her. For this reason, if for no other, special consideration is necessary to make her work as pleasant and reasonable as possible.

In these modern times there are many firms manufacturing transportable homes which would be most suitable for erection on conditional purchase leases, and on other blocks. These homes can be carried to the site at a cost of approximately \$6,150. This is the price for a home comprising three bedrooms, a lounge room, kitchen, and complete laundry and toilet facilities.

To my mind these homes present the Government with a wonderful opportunity to provide adequate housing in farming areas at a reasonable price, especially when we keep in mind that in the past, for a house to be erected in the country, a team of men had to be transported to the site and the time taken to build it represented a major portion of the cost. If we continue to use these obsolete methods of building homes in the country the costs will continue to increase, but the provision of transportable homes provides a wonderful opportunity for homes to be erected in country districts very cheaply.

Among its recommendations, the Rural Reconstruction Commission had this to say—

State rural credit authorities should be asked to co-operate by adopting as principles of loan policy—

- (1) The maintenance of satisfactory standards of housing on properties on which loans are secured; and
- (2) where necessary, the extension of existing loans to enable existing houses to be replaced or improved to the requisite standard.

This is a requirement which I think was borne out by the evidence submitted to that commission in 1943. The information was presented together with other valuable items of information, and it is something to which the Government could give serious consideration with a view to making an endeavour to provide these amenities and all the modern facilities possible in farming areas without further delay.

As one of the members who will be facing an election next year, and as one who has enjoyed the privilege of being a member of this House, I wish to extend to you, Mr. President—as I may not be present in the Chamber after the tea suspension—and to all members a very happy Christmas, and a prosperous and happy new year. It has been a great pleasure and a privilege to me to be associated with all the members of this House. Despite the fact we have many disagreements over various matters from time to time, we have one thing in common; that is, we all strive to do our best to keep the State moving forward and to do all we can for the people we represent.

I am bold enough to say that I look forward to joining you, Mr. President, and other members when the House re-assembles next session. Once again I thank you, Mr. President, and other members for the courtesies and kindnesses that have been extended to me.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [4.50 p.m.]: Unlike Mr. Jack Thomson, who was fortunate enough to have a lot of money spent in his area under the provisions of this Bill, I wish to complain that not enough money is being spent in my province. Mr. Jack Thomson represents the southern tip of the State and I represent the northern tip. The people of the south are very fortunate in receiving such favourable consideration under the provisions of this measure.

This Bill, under which \$54,140,000 will be distributed, provides that 93.8 per cent. of that sum will be spent in the southern half of the State and only 6.2 per cent. in the northern half. Therefore, members can quite understand my criticism of the methods used to distribute all these millions of dollars. Whilst it has always been a constant complaint of mine, when debating loan and revenue Bills, that the distribution of the State's funds is extremely unequal, I now want to add a further complaint that the expenditure on the various items is far from sufficient to meet the demand.

The first schedule appears on page 3 of the Bill, and under the heading "North-West," item 29 makes provision for the expenditure of \$30,000 on "Native Welfare Buildings including furniture and equipment, new buildings." That amount will not provide a great deal. Whether the sum is to cover housing for natives or only administrative buildings, I do not know, but I should imagine it will be used to provide both. From my understanding of these matters the Native Welfare Department supplies the money and the State Housing Commission arranges for the construction of the houses and any other buildings. In my opinion there is a serious lack of what is known as transitional houses for natives in the north.

Of a State total of 22,000 natives, 9,000 live in the Kimberley, and therefore that sum of money is far from sufficient to meet their housing needs. In my opinion the natives in the north, together with those who reside in the goldfields areas, particularly around Kalgoorlie, are receiving a pretty raw deal.

In speaking for my province, I think that the native housing programme is completely inadequate, and now that the Commonwealth Government, as a result of the decision given by the people at the referendum, has recognised that natives are its responsibility, I wonder why it is taking so long to provide the State with sufficient money to get on with the job of housing natives. Months after the people of Australia overwhelmingly decided that natives were the responsibility of the Commonwealth, it is found that a committee has been appointed to make inquiries, and that is as far as it goes. The appointment of a committee of inquiry is not necessary. Each State has its own native welfare or aborigines department, and, in my opinion, all the Commonwealth need do is to make available sufficient money for the States to provide the necessary housing and other needs of the natives. By doing that it would save unnecessary expenditure on the appointment of committees.

The Commonwealth Government should not have in mind the building up of another organisation or department, but should make it possible for the State to start building houses for our natives so that native children, on leaving school, would have no need to sit around a heap of coals to get warm. At the moment the general trend is that when a child finishes his education he goes to live with his parents in a shanty in adverse circumstances. This should not happen. In the past it was appreciated that the State was not able to supply adequate housing for natives throughout the State, but now there is nothing to prevent the Commonwealth Government from providing sufficient funds to the State for this purpose.

I hope the Prime Minister, who himself has accepted the responsibility for natives, and who is giving this matter his own personal attention, will forget about building up another bureaucratic department and, instead, supply money to the State which knows how best the money can be spent for the welfare of natives.

I now want to speak on the provision of cheaper power in the north. I know I take every opportunity to speak on this matter, but after each approach taken by myself and my north-west colleagues we usually finish up in a deadend, without making any progress. The last official inquiry I made was by way of a question in this House last month, and the answer I received indicated that the State Electricity Commission is prepared to take over only one town in the north—that is, Port Hedland. I am pleased to learn that new ground has been broken by this step, but I had hoped the commission would take over all towns in the north.

A welcome piece of news in relation to cheap power in the north that has been made public is that a Mr. Eltham, about a month ago, discussed the possibility of nuclear power being used in this State. For many years there were, and still are, good prospects for an economic distribution of power from a nuclear source for the whole of the industrial complex which is beginning to take shape throughout the Pilbara and other districts in the north. When one finds that only one salesman is sent to this State to interest people in nuclear energy being used for the provision of power in Western Australia, one realises he has come along too late. He must realise there is not much chance of selling this type of power now, because all the big projects in the Pilbara district are installing their own tremendous power plants.

I was at Dampier only a few days ago where I saw an enormous powerhouse which has just been completed. When the pelletising plant comes into operation the power plant will be running at full capacity, but at present only one generator out of seven is operating. Nevertheless, the fumes or exhaust gases from that one generator are being used to operate a desalination plant, which means that Dampier is now being supplied with fresh water obtained from the sea. The water that comes from this plant is of excellent quality and it is supplied to the whole town. When I inquired about the cost of supplying fresh water by means of this desalination plant, those in charge could only estimate that the cost would be in the vicinity of 77c for 1,000 gallons. That is a very economical operating cost, but it must be borne in mind the company is using the exhaust gases from the power plant generators.

It is most unlikely, therefore, that at Dampier, at the Mt. Newman project—which has made arrangements for a power plant to be erected in Port Hedland—at the Mt. Tom Price, and the Mt. Goldsworthy projects, any interest would be shown in the provision of power from a nuclear source. It would be quite unrealistic now for anyone to make an attempt to induce those firms to install nuclear power plants for the provision of cheap electric power in their areas.

Nevertheless, I hope the Government will give further consideration to the people living in the smaller towns of the north. These people have to pay a very high price for power, for water, and for the other essentials just to be able to live comfortably. I support the Bill.

Sitting suspended from 5.1 to 7.30 p.m.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [7.30 p.m.]: As most members know, this morning we had a power failure and it was quite convenient to get a small Kleenheat gas stove to take the place of the electric stove which one usually uses in these days of modern facilities.

People in the metropolitan area, and in some country centres, are afforded the right and privilege to have connected to their homes either town gas supplies or Kleenheat gas, this being the major liquid gas in Western Australia. A person who lives within the metropolitan area and who does not have the town gas supply passing his property, but is desirous of having Kleenheat gas installed, attempted to purchase a Simpson L.P. gas stove. He ran into no end of difficulty because he found that Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty. Ltd. in Western Australia virtually has a monopoly, and he was not allowed to purchase the stove from a city store and have it connected to a Kleenheat gas container.

I have in my hand a copy of a letter written on the 7th September to the officer in charge of the Commissioner of Trade Practices, G.P.O. Box P1160, Perth. I believe the person who wrote the letter was under the impression that restrictive trade practices should not be carried on in Western Australia; but we members of this Chamber know that that Act was one of the first to be repealed when this Government took office. After listening to a reading of the pertinent paragraphs of the letter, the Government may not think it was wise to have repealed that Act. The letter reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,

It was with great interest that I read in a recent edition of the "West Australian" that legislation has been passed in Federal Parliament in respect to "restricted trade practices". I feel that the circumstances which affect me would come under the category of "restricted trade practice".

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Is this letter addressed to the trade people or is it from them?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is addressed to them. Continuing—

It is my prerogative as an individual to purchase a commodity of my liking, however, in this particular case I cannot because of some monopolistic attitude of Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty. Ltd.

It is my desire and intention to have installed an L.P. gas stove, of which the Simpson is my choice, firstly because I consider it equally efficient as any other L.P. gas stove and, most important of all, the financial side. The purchase of this particular make would mean the saving of the cost of at least 12 months' supply of gas, \$6.00 annual rental of cylinders and installation cost. However, I find that the purchase of this stove would mean that I cannot get a licensed installer to install the stove, because Wesfarmers will revoke his licence if he is found to be guilty of such a flouting of Wesfarmers' policy. Furthermore, I would not be able to procure the gas (perhaps I could if I did it with "cloak and dagger" tactics). Even if I managed to do the foregoing I cannot get service because an "unlicensed" person installed the stove.

He goes on to point out that any disagreement that may exist between the Simpson company and Wesfarmers should not be the concern of the individual who wants to buy a stove of his liking; and he says it is an infringement of individual human rights. Continuing—

To further complicate matters Commonwealth Industrial Gases sell the same gas under the trade name of "Handigas" but once again can only sell it for industrial use not domestic use, because of some agreement with Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty. Ltd. I can get "Handigas" per medium of an industrial establishment but why should I be forced to use "back door" methods. Once again the monopoly precludes me from using the gas of my choice—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Incidentally, do you know that Sunny West sells Kleenheat gas. I have bought it from them, so it is not a monopoly.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: What brand of gas?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Kleenheat. I used to buy it from Wesfarmers but now I buy it from Sunny West.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It can be bought from a BP garage; but if one wants to install a stove it has to be done by Wesfarmers. Continuing to quote—

Once again the monopoly precludes me from using the gas of my choice

and at least I think it is my "business" whether I use the gas for domestic purposes or otherwise.

He goes on to say that another company—Mobil Flame—has been carrying out installations in both Albany and Esperance. I checked this information and verified that Mobil Flame gas is being brought into Western Australia from that company's refinery in South Australia; and a good quantity of this gas is being shipped to the north-west because there is a disagreement between some people in the north-west and Wesfarmers as the people have been unable to obtain stoves, and they are dissatisfied with Kleenheat gas.

I was not prepared to accept this letter at its face value, so I rang Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty. Ltd., and asked to speak to the service manager, because I thought he was the appropriate company officer, particularly as the person who has complained said the service manager told him he could not get a license to install any stove other than one purchased from Wesfarmers. When I read out the pertinent paragraphs of the letter, which I have just quoted, the service manager told me he would not discuss the matter with me and I would have to speak to the sales manager.

Three hours later the sales manager phoned me at Parliament House and I discussed the matter with him. Again I read the pertinent paragraphs and he, too, refused to discuss the matter with me and said I would have to take it up with the manager. The manager rang my home on several occasions, once as late as 8 p.m. The next morning we made an appointment and I met him. I spent an hour with him, presented the letter to him, and asked if it were truthful. After an hour's discussion the only thing the manager could tell me was that it was a service, and he traversed Western Australia in order to tell me that this is a highly dangerous type of installation and must be carried out only by licensed and thoroughly trained people.

I then questioned him on the matter and asked what the position would be if someone on a remote station in the north-west, or in a small mining town, such as Cue, wanted to have Kleenheat gas installed. He said his company would get the local tradesman to do it. At no stage could the manager refute anything contained in this letter, other than say it was a matter of service.

I then rang the sales manager of Simpson in Western Australia and read out to him this person's complaint. He said that what was stated was true, and that unless one buys a stove from Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty. Ltd., and has it installed by Wesfarmers, one cannot obtain gas from that company. At that stage I asked him who were regarded as being

recognised installers and he told me they were plumbers or sheetmetal workers. They were his own words.

Therefore, if an installation was required for a remote country town, the company would have to send a licensed plumber to do the job. This would probably cost several hundred dollars in air fares in order to get the person there and back and pay for the time involved. The position would be just the same if a person travelled by road.

It boils down to this: There is no freedom of choice in regard to the purchase of a stove. Any person in Western Australia who wishes to install a stove using Kleenheat gas in his home, wherever it may be in the State, cannot go into a retail store in Perth and buy a stove of his choice and have it hooked up.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am sorry to say that you are wrong. In Bunbury, I can go to any one of three different places. I have used this gas for 10 years.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That may be so; but unless one buys one's stove at the dealer's price, it is not possible to have it installed by Wesfarmers.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That was the position 10 years ago, but it is not so today.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is the true position today. This letter was written on the 7th September, and I interviewed the person concerned on the morning of Melbourne Cup day.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: There is a pretty good reason for this.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: My colleague, Mr. Williams, had a stove installed by Sunny West within the last four months.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I bought a stove recently and had it hooked up.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Members seem to know more about the policy of the company than does the manager. I am telling the truth. What I am saying in this Chamber I am prepared to say outside. I had a discussion with the manager, and I enjoyed that discussion.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: I bet he told you the reason, too.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The reason is the installation and the service. Wesfarmers gives three months' service on every new stove which is bought. Simpson gives 12 months' service, but a licensed installer is not allowed to install a stove. If he does, his license will be revoked and he will not get another job, and Wesfarmers will not supply gas for the stove. That is the true position. This Government stresses free enterprise, and I have heard a Minister in this House praise the American way of life. He said it was the greatest free enterprise country in the

world, and we will be the next. I heard those remarks in 1959 or 1960; yet we find restrictive trade practices are operating right in the City of Perth, and a wholly-owned Western Australian company is involved. That was the first of the points I wished to raise.

Recently, from a professional man, I received a letter with which was enclosed a photostatic copy of a news sheet which is issued in Canberra. It is called *Inside Canberra*. It is the first time I have ever seen one of these news sheets. As I have said, it was a professional man who wrote to me and drew my attention to the contents of the sheet. He asked what I could do to make sure circumstances similar to those referred to in the sheet did not apply in Western Australia. Apparently these circumstances will prevail in Sydney when American servicemen visit Australia.

Possibly, if the American servicemen do visit the Eastern States what is pointed out in this news sheet could apply in Western Australia. With modern jets we are now only a few hours' travelling time from the other States.

As I said, this is the first time I have seen this news sheet and I do not know how reliable it is. It was posted to me for my inquiry, and I think this is the best place to conduct that inquiry. It reads as follows:—

Fears of Disease from Asia.

Sydney's two biggest hospitals for the reception and treatment of venereal disease have been instructed that no U.S. servicemen are to be treated.

A confidential circular with a restricted circulation among senior staff at Sydney Hospital and St. Vincents Hospital says that all U.S. servicemen found to be suffering from venereal disease are to be sent to U.S. headquarters for treatment. No details will be kept at the hospitals.

Official quarters believe this instruction will apply to all hospitals and that it is intended to conceal the extent to which visiting servicemen may be found to be suffering from venereal disease after arriving here. V.D. is a notifiable disease, but if patients are not treated at hospitals there will be no record of how many arrived in Australia after having been infected in Vietnam.

Some Tests Useless.

"Inside Canberra" reported (Vol. 20 No. 27) that Federal health authorities were concerned at the possibility of virulent strains of venereal disease entering Australia with servicemen on leave from Vietnam. It is admitted officially that pre-embarkation checks in Vietnam of troops going on leave are practically useless because of the long incubation period.

Medical authorities say that one of the risks is that troops previously infected in Vietnam might not have been properly cured, even though they appeared to have been. In such cases, a resistance would have been built up to either one of the principal treatments, penicillin or tetracycline, and anyone subsequently infected in Australia could receive the wrong treatment because of the absence of a full medical history.

My question is: Has the Minister or the Public Health Department any knowledge of this type of venereal disease? Has the Public Health Department taken any steps to find out how serious it is; if the disease is prevalent; and if American servicemen are likely to come to Western Australia?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It occurs to me that with a matter such as this it would be a good idea to have a chat with the Minister concerned.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Why?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Because you might get more satisfaction that way than by mentioning it in the House.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is the right place for me to raise the matter. I feel these questions should become public knowledge.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: By airing the matter in the House?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They should be made known to all members. We have professional men in the House who might know more than an unqualified Minister.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think the professional members would know a lot more about it than you or I.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I admit that I know nothing. If the Minister had listened when I started to speak I said I had received this letter from a professional man who asked me to make the matter public.

Another matter has been brought to my notice within the past few days. I have had a request from two ministers of religion regarding the Parole Board. Those two ministers inquired whether some latitude could be given to parole officers to recommend the release just prior to Christmas and Easter of prisoners who would normally be due for release several days after Christmas and Easter. Those ministers pointed out to me that last Easter several prisoners had to remain in prison over the Easter period, when they were due for release just after Easter. They said this had some reaction on the family, and particularly on the children.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The parole officers, who have had some experience in their job, know that there are provisions for the release of prisoners just prior to Christmas, if the term of imprisonment is nearly up. They know.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: As I said, two ministers of religion have brought this matter to my notice. Evidently what the Minister has stated has not been practised in the past. The ministers are in close contact with prisoners and I feel sure they would not be asking me to make this request if it was already the practice.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think it is at the discretion of the Comptroller-General of Prisons.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Those ministers think this delay has a serious reaction on home life when the father comes home a few days after Christmas and the children ask him why he was not home for Christmas. I think that argument is reasonable.

I will now mention one of my own experiences, and it concerns the Fremantle Traffic Office. As most members would know, until just recently our office was in the Trades Hall right next door to the traffic office. From time to time people whom we have got to know come to the Trades Hall to use our washroom facilities. We have hand basins and towels.

It is some 12 months since I was last at the back of the traffic office, but at that stage it did not have a hand basin and no towel was provided for the use of the patrolmen. A staff of about 20 is employed and the patrolmen go out on accident cases. I have seen them come back to the office with blood on their hands and on their uniforms. The only washing facility within the building itself was a sink where the cups and saucers were washed after morning and afternoon tea. The patrolmen had either to wash there or go out into the backyard, which is quite an open area, and use a tap in the yard. I have observed that practice personally over the years.

Also, a fortnight ago I went to the traffic office in Fremantle to renew my driver's license. I usually pay by cheque, but I had overlooked the matter on this occasion. It was about 2.15 p.m. and I stood in a queue for about 25 minutes waiting to renew my driver's license. After I had paid the fee I spoke to one of the constables and asked him how often this occurred. He replied that it occurred every day. I could not speak to the cashier because he was working absolutely flat out and it would have been impossible for him to work any harder.

The solution of that problem is the installation of another cash register. It is unfair to ask people—and most people are busy these days—to stand in a queue, even if it is only for 15 minutes, to comply with the law. So I would ask that this matter be investigated, particularly from the staff's point of view. Some of the people who go to the traffic office are not very polite, especially when they have to stand in a queue. I believe that from time to time the officers, who are doing their best, do not get very favourable treatment from the public; so I ask that some change be made at that office.

On the 27th September, an article appeared on page 2 of *The West Australian*. It was a feature article written by Cyril Ayris, and the heading was, "Drivers Say Ambulance Service Is Inadequate." The article states—

W.A.'s ambulance organisation is hopelessly inadequate, according to members of the Ambulance Service Union.

They say that Perth is one of the few capital cities in Australia in which a patient can die in an ambulance without receiving emergency treatment from a trained attendant.

Their allegations were strongly denied yesterday by the president of the St. John Ambulance Association, Mr. J. M. Lavan.

The drivers claim that the ambulance service relies too heavily on the use of volunteer drivers and the willingness of the public to help in emergencies.

Their union has made repeated requests to the St. John Ambulance Association to improve the service but members say that most of the requests have been ignored.

Weaknesses

They claim that there are four major weaknesses in the ambulance organisation:

The practice of sending ambulances out with only a driver instead of with a two-man crew.

The heavy reliance on volunteer drivers, many of whom have limited first-aid knowledge.

Inadequate ambulance cover for the metropolitan area during the night.

Inadequate training for ambulance officers.

The article goes on at length and there is a reference to a Dr. Gollidge, who supported the claim for a two-man crew.

Since that date there has been a Press statement to the effect that shortly some ambulances in the metropolitan area will be manned with two-man crews, and I hope this will be so with all ambulances. In the St. John Ambulance Association report for 1967, on page 7, under the heading "General" it states—

The ambition of the Association to encircle the greater metropolitan area with sub-centres equipped with ambulance vans and permanent staff has finally been realised and we now have ambulance transport manned 24 hours a day operating from the Association Headquarters, Midland Junction, Bassendean, Welshpool, South Perth, Fremantle and Claremont.

Of course, that is not true; because in Welshpool, South Perth, and Claremont

the ambulance driver is employed for 40 hours a week, and at other times the ambulances are manned by volunteers. The ambulances are not manned for 24 hours a day in the three places I have mentioned. The report goes on, on the next page, to say—

Financing the activities of the Association still continues to engage a great deal of detailed work and attention.

In spite of the fact that 82 out of the 94 sub-centres of the Association conduct their affairs on a voluntary basis, the overall cost of operations throughout the State during the year amounted to \$234,000.

It then goes on to state—

As a means of economising the operating costs of the organisation as a whole an investigation is being conducted with a view to co-ordinating and streamlining the work of both the Association and the Brigade.

Although the functions of both foundations are quite distinct it is felt that substantial economies can result from a revision of procedures and the reorganisation of staff.

According to my inquiries some ambulances are manned by volunteers who have no first-aid experience whatsoever; and in some cases even women, inexperienced in first-aid, have been driving ambulances and, at times, on their own.

I am most concerned also at something that is happening at the town of Medina. An ambulance was supplied for this town and for a time it was manned by volunteer drivers. However, it became difficult to get volunteer drivers and the ambulance, during the times the drivers were not available, could not be used. In view of the large number of accidents that have occurred in this area something should be done about the ambulance situation. Workers in the area went on strike recently because of the large number of accidents at one of the local projects, and on two occasions people have been killed because of explosions on barges working in the channel.

On the last occasion when a blasting accident occurred the Medina ambulance, manned by a volunteer driver, was called out to go to the scene. The driver was told to proceed to Cockburn Sound and he finished up miles away from the scene of the accident. The reason for this was one of the points I raised in the House two nights ago—there is no access to the waterfront except at given points. Another reason for the driver not being able to proceed to the exact location of the accident was that the ambulance is not equipped with a two-way radio. If the driver received insufficient instruction about where to go, and he wanted to get the correct address, he would have to phone base to find out.

The Chairman of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and subcentre in Kwinana, Mr. A. Lydon, has been pressing for some time for a complete subcentre in the town and for the ambulance to be fitted with a two-way radio. A statement appeared in the Press on the 14th November this year and I shall read a portion of the lengthy article—

"There was no chance of our driver getting re-routing instructions after he left the sub-centre," said Mr. Lydon. "He would have had to stop along the road or come back here and phone Perth headquarters for further details."

Medina's only ambulance staffed by a hard-core of volunteer drivers, is nearly eight years old and has no two-way radio communications fitted to it.

Why? "There's no possibility of planning for or getting any in the near future, unless we get a substantial donation," says chairman Lydon.

Public apathy is preventing this scheme from being developed and going ahead in the proper way.

And so the article goes on. Mr. Lydon said—

It boils down to the fact that a few people up here are keeping the flag flying.

Medina is a town which is progressing; there is extensive development in the vicinity and there are many young people living there. The town itself is bursting at the seams and there are insufficient houses to accommodate those who need them. Yet the town has not got a reliable ambulance service and it is 15 miles from Fremantle. That is not good enough. In my view the ambulance service in Western Australia should be an integral part of the public health system of Western Australia.

I knew very little about the ambulance service until recently, but I have delved deeply into it and I have read some of the reports that have been made on calls. I could quote many cases, giving the destination, the date, and the time of the call, but I shall merely refer to a few cases to illustrate my point regarding what some of the drivers are required to do. The notes on these cases read as follows:—

Van on duty at Caversham. Attended motor cycle smash where patient had received a fractured skull. Ambulance officer could find nobody to travel with patient to R.P.H.

Van proceeded to simulated air crash at Perth Airport. On arrival at scene of disaster ambulance officer had to ask three people before obtaining help to lift stretchers out of ambulance. Each person at the scene had their own job to do. The time delay was at least five minutes.

And then he had to get a policeman to help him. To continue—

Van called to Perth Airport to transport a seriously burnt baby to P.M.H. No assistant was available to travel with baby on journey to hospital.

Van called to Maniana Place where a patient was seriously ill with emphysema and on continuous oxygen. After obtaining assistance to load patient it was found that neither relative could travel with patient to hospital. The distance to hospital was 12 miles and the condition of the patient was such that the ambulance officer did not expect the patient to survive the journey.

Van given job to transport two old ladies from R.P.H. one to Brentwood Hospital North Perth and the other to Leighton Hospital Leederville. On arrival at Brentwood Hospital it was found that the patient for Leighton Hospital had vomited all over herself and blankets etc. Patient was too weak to help herself. After cleaning patient up continued journey to Leighton Hospital. On arrival it was found that patient had vomited once more and was again covered with vomit.

It was explained to me that had there been an attendant in the van there would not have been any mess in the ambulance. The patient could have been treated and provided with a bag, which the ambulances carry. I have a long list of reports but I think I should read this one—

Van called to street in Perth where baby was found to be in need of resuscitating. None of the people present were willing to accept the responsibility of working the resuscitator. Ambulance officer had to use a catheter instead. The baby was dead on arrival at hospital.

So I could go on for some time reading those reports.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think it would be fair to point out that your comments show a lack of appreciation on the part of the general public and do not reflect on that worthy organisation, the St. John Ambulance Association.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Let me make my own speech. I am not knocking the St. John Ambulance Association or the brigade. It was never my intention to do that, because I think the association and the brigade carry out a public duty at their own expense, and when I refer to "expense" I mean the time that is involved. A great deal of voluntary work is done, particularly by the instructors who go out of their way and spend hundreds of hours attending sporting fixtures and training nights. I see them regularly in one of the halls that I have occasion to visit.

It would be my last intention to say that these people have not tried, or that they have not done a wonderful job. I think they have been over-generous with their efforts in the past. But the time has arrived when we should give this matter a great deal more consideration, particularly in relation to our industrial workers in places like Medina and Welshpool—or wherever else they may be—where there is danger of accident, and where it has taken up to three-quarters of an hour for an ambulance to arrive at the scene of an accident. Because of this I think an ambulance should be permanently stationed in a particular vicinity, and the cost should be borne by the Public Health Department. After all, it is a matter of public health to ensure that a person lives rather than dies through neglect.

This matter has undergone a great deal of research in America, and there are innumerable points which I could raise from the booklets I have in my possession. I will, however, quote only those cases which I consider necessary. I have here a statement from Mr. A. Bell, one of the officers and directors of the Northern Californian Ambulance Association. He says, among other things—

Generally, however, a city will have a \$500,000 fire apparatus to protect property, and a \$3,000 station waggon to protect human life. Police and firemen should be freed from ambulance work to protect life and property—their real job.

Eisenhardt believes that the Syracuse plan will be followed by more and more cities as time goes on. It provides quality service with lower costs.

Mention is then made of funeral directors in America who also conduct ambulance services. In the case of Miami we have the following report:—

Randall-Eastern operates out of 13 locations in Miami, all controlled through a central communications center. This makes it possible to study response times by areas, forecast vehicle needs and redeploy vehicles.

We should not lag behind in this field. This is something which should be brought into operation in the metropolitan area, where all ambulance calls should go through one centre, and the nearest ambulance could be directed by radio communication to the scene of the accident. If we linger any longer we will find the job will become far too big, particularly in view of the way the metropolitan area is spreading. If a start is made now, the service will grow naturally as more ambulances are required, although they will still be controlled through one centre.

At weekends and at night there are two ambulances on duty in Perth. It is true that the operator can man an ambulance after a call is put through,

but recently there was a spate of accidents just outside Perth, for which the South Perth volunteer ambulance was called, as was one from Midland and two from Perth.

I am led to believe that at this stage there were eight calls waiting at the central ambulance depot in Perth. This meant that the emergency cases had to be treated first; that the ambulances had to proceed to the scene, of the accidents whilst the other eight cases had to wait until the emergency cases were cleared up.

We should follow the example of Miami where 13 centres are controlled from one unit. If we did follow this example there would be no delay. I have not the slightest doubt that this is a matter which requires immediate attention. One of the articles to which I wish to refer reads—

Recently, Lucile P. Leone, chief nursing officer of the U.S. Public Health Service said, "What takes place when a patient rides in an ambulance is part of his total health care."

Evidently the American authorities have the same trouble in their outlying areas as we have in our country areas. Again I do not wish to knock the people who render such a valuable service to the community, but I feel that on an area basis the shire council should employ a trained driver who could be called on in the case of an emergency. I understand that most country centres handle up to 30 ambulance cases a year, and that that is a fair average.

I feel that ambulances in the metropolitan area, apart from coming under one control, should be allocated on a *per capita* basis. In some of the American cities there is one ambulance for every 50,000 head of population; and if we did something along similar lines I am sure we would make some progress and contribute towards the future development of the city, the suburbs, and the State.

I also have copies of the training programmes for the major ambulance associations and centres in Australia which indicate what should be done and the facilities offered to the community by each of the associations. From my study of these documents I have come to the conclusion that a small town like Cairns offers the best ambulance service in Australia. I do admit that it receives a fairly large Government subsidy, as do all the medical services in Queensland; nevertheless a great deal of money is donated, because the people appreciate the service that is given. Rather than have our ambulance associations—particularly in the country centres—go cap-in-hand in an endeavour to raise funds, it would be far better if the State, or even the local authorities, took up the matter and by the provision of a fractional tax helped provide this most important service.

I have enough information on ambulances to talk for the next two or three hours, but I do not think members would be interested enough to listen any further on this point.

I now propose to refer to a criticism which has been levelled by tourists in Western Australia at the state of our caravan parks. One of the caravan parks that has come in for criticism is that situated at Coogee Beach. Here we find that the shire council went out of its way to develop an amenity for tourists. It must be borne in mind that everything provided there was paid for by the ratepayers who live in Cockburn. No Government subsidy, or tourist development subsidy has been received towards the provision of this caravan park. However, in order to bring it to the standard required by the Cockburn Shire Council, and that required by the people from other parts of the State, and the Eastern States, who use it from time to time, a request was made to the State Electricity Commission to have the area rewired.

This request was refused by the State Electricity Commission, and the matter received some publicity in the Press. It is possible that most members are aware of this. Mr. Jukes of the State Electricity Commission denied the claim of the shire council that it was the responsibility of the S.E.C. It was said that the old installation was put in to service Coogee Beach. It was installed by the old Fremantle tramways and electricity department. The State Electricity Commission now wants to charge the full amount for the extension of electricity into this area.

To my way of thinking it would be unreasonable to place this burden on the ratepayers in the area, whether it be Cockburn, South Perth, or anywhere else. As Minister for Tourists we find the Premier making very little money available for tourism in the metropolitan area. Rockingham has probably been favoured more than any other shire council I know of around the metropolitan area.

If tourists are to be attracted to Western Australia it should not be done at the expense of the ratepayers in a particular area, because it is also necessary to provide parks, gardens, lawns, changerooms, and swimming facilities.

When a request is made for an electricity service—particularly a small request like this—the Tourist Development Authority should come to the party and pay the costs.

The last matter on which I wish to speak—and it will probably be my last speech this session—is that of housing. Last evening we heard a member in this House make a most irrational speech on housing. He was obviously not prepared and did not know the facts.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: He knew the facts all right.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: He did not know the true facts of the housing position in Western Australia at the moment. I would hope that this member would take me out to his electorate, and I would publicly debate with him, in front of his own audience, the true position of housing in Western Australia at present.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: How many applications are there with the Housing Commission now?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will tell the honourable member exactly.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Don't tell him now; tell him in your own time.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: I would like to know how many you say there are now.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I can tell the honourable member because I can read. I read it in the report.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I have the report here.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The exact number of outstanding applications with the Housing Commission at the 30th June, was 5,750 for purchase homes and 7,505 for rental homes. Because some people apply for both rental and purchase homes at the same time, there is some duplication. The number duplicated is 1,777, leaving a total outstanding on the waiting list of 11,478.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: You are just 5,000 out because the Minister for Housing tonight told us that there were 6,000 genuine applications with the Housing Commission; so your figures are completely wrong.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is quite possible because this report is put out by the Minister!

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: You have not studied your figures.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This report was laid on the Table of the House.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Mr. Robinson suggested last night that I was a liar. Is he now suggesting that this honourable member is a liar?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Finish the story.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: All right. I will go right down the list.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Oh, don't read them all; we couldn't stand it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If I don't read them all the Minister will accuse me of leaving some out to suit myself.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Let us hear about the wastage. You led us to believe that 11,000 applications were outstanding. You know that the wastage figure is in that report, but you very conveniently did not read that out.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I read out the answer to the question I was asked, which was the outstanding number of applications. Is not that what I was asked?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Yes.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will read on. It then states "less estimated wastage of 40 per cent."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Yes!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Is that a realistic figure?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You are so anxious to quote from this reliable report.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am asking the Minister whether it is a realistic figure.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is the same figure that was used when I was Minister for Housing, and it is the same figure the Labor Government used. It gives a net figure.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I asked a question and the Minister said it is a realistic figure.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member please answer questions through the Chair?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, Mr. Deputy President. We are left with an estimated real need of 6,878.

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

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am very pleased the Minister made the interjection. Let us now look at the total number of houses built in the Perth division for the 12 months, 1966-67. The number was 924; so if we divide 924 into the 6,878, and if the present building rate continues, it means that every person who lodges an application has a seven-year waiting period.

The Minister can laugh, but I will go a bit further with him now. Applications lodged in May, 1965, for the Fremantle area, were processed and houses commenced to be allocated in November, 1965. There was not much of a backlog. That was two years ago, but the commission is still processing applications lodged in May, 1965. In some of the Perth areas applications lodged in August, 1964, are being processed. That is in the area Mr. Robinson represents.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: You tell us where they are processing for 1964. Where?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: For Perth.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: Where?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Mr. Robinson knows so little about housing that he asks a silly question like that.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: He should ask it through the Chair, too.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We listen to a lot of silly information, so we are quite in order.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When a person applies to the commission for a house, he applies for it in the Perth area, the Fremantle area, or the Kwinana area. Yet Mr. Robinson asks me, "Which area"? It does not matter which area; there is only one area of Perth and one area of Fre-

mantle, which extends from Canning Bridge to Coolbellup. I do not know the distance covered by the Perth area because I am not conversant with it. As I said before, applications lodged in 1964 for the Perth area are still being processed. Therefore, if we divide 924—the number of houses built in the Perth area last year—into the number outstanding, and go back to August, 1964, we would find that the people in the Perth area will have a longer waiting period than the waiting period I mentioned for the Fremantle area.

Through you, Mr. Deputy President, I would like Mr. Robinson to ask me questions because, as I said, last night he made a completely irrational speech, not knowing the subject. Possibly he could not even tell us the wages qualification necessary for either a rental or purchase home, or the amount of money a family man can have for each child.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Don't fire any more bullets at him now, because he is bound to reply to you on the Appropriation Bill.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I could come back. I could go for an hour over this.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You have been more than that now.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would like him to take me out to his area, to any hall he likes, and arrange a debate.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: You apparently did not like the speech I made last night defending what the Government had done. It upset you, didn't it?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am getting to the stage where I wish he would take you out there right now.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would be quite prepared to go out. The good job the Government has done! If the honourable member would go to the trouble of getting the official State Housing Commission report, and have a look at the graph that has been provided, he would find that it gives all the details. The top line represents the houses constructed by the Housing Commission.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I showed him that last night and he did not believe me!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: By way of interjection I said last night that in 1954-55, the Labor Government had constructed 4,000 houses. I was a bit out because the number is 4,202, if my memory serves me correctly. Here is the graph. Now we come to the figure for 1966-67 and we find that more than 1,000 houses fewer were constructed in a time of need and crisis, at a time when people are sleeping on beaches. If the honourable member does not believe me, he could go down to Coogee Beach—any member could—and he would find that there is one family with six children there at present. They have not even a tent, but are sleeping under a tarpaulin. Yet we hear this glib talk of

what a wonderful job the Government has done. I am sick of this backscratching by Government members. They are so imbued with what the Government has done that they are not facing reality. They are not aware of the human suffering for which the housing shortage is responsible.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: They do not care.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: We will face the electors with our record!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I sincerely hope the Government will have the courage to make housing one of its platforms.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You mean planks, I suppose?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Government will be shot to ribbons on this one. There is hardly a family in the metropolitan area—

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: That has not got a house.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —that has not some branch of the family with a housing need.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You know what? You have the same gleeful grin on your face that Mr. Wise says I have when I am introducing a taxing Bill.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You cannot see yourself when you are introducing a taxing Bill.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is good I can be so serious and so happy at the same time.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You are not happy about the housing situation, surely?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: East Melville is considered to be a blue-ribbon Liberal seat. For the first few years I represented my area, I received very few jobs from East Melville. Now I get many jobs from the area of East Melville, and they are all housing jobs.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: In an area represented by the Minister for Housing.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Exactly!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It shows you what a fair fellow he is; he does not favour his own electors.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Earlier this year I produced my file to indicate that I had dealt with some 250 housing jobs. I had the letters to prove this and I said at the time that any member could read them. They were not jobs which involved a washer on a tap or a chimney which required fixing. They were genuine housing problems in regard to which the people wanted emergent consideration in order to obtain a house. These jobs were investigated by the State Housing Commission and, of the 250 cases, the Housing Commission allotted houses to 14. Some of the members in this Chamber discussed the matter with me in private and said I was lucky to have that number allocated; they could not get as many.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If they discussed the matter with you in private why are you mentioning it? Was it corridor talk?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am not mentioning any names. That is the true position. Not even members on the Government side were having much success. Mr. Robinson said last night that 13 months is not long to wait for a house. He said this when Mr. Lavery read out a letter. If a person has not a house, a week is a long time!

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: A day is a long time!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: One night is a long time if it is raining and cold and the person concerned has children. Government members are so imbued with what happens in their own glossy little circle they cannot realise there is need in this community. This Government welcomes migrants at naturalisation ceremonies and other functions, but it is not supplying the housing needs of those migrants.

In and around the Fremantle area, up to four or five European families are living in the one house, because they are not in highly paid jobs. Some are in waterside jobs, others in road construction jobs, and the like. These people would be earning under the \$50 per week allowed by the State Housing Commission. Most of them have applied to the State Housing Commission, but they cannot get houses. At the present rate, they will wait at least six or seven years. This is a fact, because the house-building rate has not increased.

Mr. Robinson was president of the Perth Shire Council and probably he would know how many homes were constructed in the Perth Shire each year.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: I cannot keep pace with it, because it is growing so rapidly.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will tell the honourable member something he does not know.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: You chaps are living in the past, and if you fight an election on that basis you cannot win.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course we are living in the past, because the situation was better then than it is now. If the honourable member cares to insert an advertisement in the paper saying that a public meeting will be called to discuss housing, I would come to that meeting.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am sure you would be on the bandwagon.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would tell the truth, as I am now. Members of the Government like to indulge in back-slapping tactics. Mr. Robinson read out the total figures for home construction in Western Australia. Mr. Lavery, on this side of the House, gave the figures, too.

However, how many of these homes are available for rent to working families?

The only ones that are available for rent are the duplex type of dwellings; but at a rental of between \$22 to \$24 per week. If a man is bringing home \$38 per week, how can he pay \$22 per week for rent and still support a family? If anyone cares to refer to tomorrow's paper, he will see this is the truth. Other large buildings that are being constructed, such as blocks of flats, command per flat a rental of up to \$50 a week, or something like that.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: And one is not allowed to take children into them.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is so; the landlords will not have children. I would like to refer to the other factor which Mr. Lavery mentioned; that is, so many unnecessary difficulties are created. I will refer to lots 11 and 13 in Granpre Crescent, Hamilton Heights. If members know where the Phoenix Hotel is situated they will be able to visualise where these lots are located. One turns up Phoenix Road right at the corner where the hotel is situated. The lots are exactly six chains from a water main.

One home was finished six months ago. Up to date no water has been connected. Adjacent to it is a vacant block of land and, alongside that, another house that has been finished for the past three months, but no water has been connected to that, either.

The reason is that the Water Board says it is not an economic proposition to extend the main the six chains to the first house, past the vacant block, and take it to the boundary of the next house. Lot 11, the vacant block in the middle, has recently changed hands. Until the builder submits plans, signs a statutory declaration that he is going to construct a home, pays building fees to the council, and pays fees to the Metropolitan Water Board he will not be able to have any water supplied.

The first house, as I have said, is six chains from a water main. Under the normal extension service which has been in practice for years, the Water Board allows an extension of four chains to service one house. It allows a further three chains to service two houses. That means that if two houses are seven chains away, they are entitled to water service; but, in this case, there is no service. There will not be until three houses have been constructed. I have letters in my office which state this case if the Minister is interested to see them.

The names of the people concerned are Mirco and Silvestri, and the other person who has to submit plans is Letizia. The occupation of one house, which should have been lived in six months ago, is being held up by our glorious Government. This would have appeared in the statistics Mr. Robinson read out, but families cannot

live in some of the homes which are covered by those same statistics.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I do not think Mr. Robinson is a good spokesman for the Minister for Housing.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: He used to be a spokesman for the Minister for Local Government until he made too many mistakes. I could go on to the price of land which warrants a great deal of discussion, but I think members have been most patient. I am concerned; I think the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority is concerned; I know the Real Estate Institute is concerned; but the only person who does not really appear to be concerned is the Premier. Members need only recall what he said at the opening of the Real Estate Institute conference; he summed up the situation by asking its members for a solution. We have a pretty bad state of affairs when an elected Government publicly has to ask an outside body for a solution.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You get down pretty low with some of your assertions. You were not present and do not know what the Premier said. This certainly is pretty low.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Why was it not denied in the Press?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I will not bother to answer.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Letters have been flowing in to the editor, but the Premier has not denied it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I do not think you were at the gathering. You do not know in what concept it was said, but you assume the Premier asked publicly for an answer which he could not give himself.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This has been reported in Press statements.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I have listened to you for so long that I know the tactics you employ.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course, the truth hurts.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Nobody knows that better than you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I repeat that the truth hurts and I never attack anyone unfairly.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think that was pretty unfair.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If I have anything to say to anybody, I have enough courage to say it to his face. As a matter of fact, I do not like orators outside of the Chamber, but there seems to be plenty of oratory away from the precincts of this House about what should and should not be done. However, very little is said in Parliament about what should be done.

I now turn to the question of the price of land and wish to refer to the price paid for resumed land. The Government has a very good solution when it comes to the question of resuming land.

Then, it fixes a minimum valuation. However, if it has land to offer to the public it puts it up for auction and it is sold to the highest bidder, with the result that a colossal profit is made on that land. We all know that this happens.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Sold by the Housing Commission?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: When it is put up for auction.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I repeat: Was it sold by the Housing Commission? What do you think the Housing Commission would use the money for? You know it would use it to buy more land to build more houses for more people. These insinuations are ridiculous.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is quite true that the Housing Commission would do that, and I do not deny it. However, on top of that, last year it was necessary for the Government to put up the rents of most State Housing Commission homes; but in that year it made its highest profit ever. This was equal to 50 per cent. of the total profits which have been made in the history of the Housing Commission. Nevertheless, the people who are fortunate enough to have a State Housing Commission home had to pay increased rentals. The commission did not even ask whether they could afford to pay the increases. The rents were just put up; but, so that they would not be felt in one impact, the increases were made over a 12-monthly period.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Don't you think that is reasonable?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If I sign a contract to do a certain thing, and without reference to me that contract can be changed, then I would not consider that to be reasonable.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What contract?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: A contract of tenancy. An agreement is the same thing. What is the difference between an agreement and a contract?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you think one man should be able to occupy a brick house for, perhaps, 15 years and pay \$3.50 per week in rent while his neighbour pays three times that amount? Do you think that is fair? Is it not more reasonable to put up the rent of the person who is paying \$3.50 per week?

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Possibly some members were becoming a little tired of listening to me. As I said previously, I feel the Government has let down the work force that it has attracted to Western Australia. It has let it down inasmuch as migrants from England and Europe, and people from the Eastern

States, have come to Western Australia and have assisted in the State-on-the-move developments. They have lived in caravans, in tents, and in some cases under very shocking conditions, in the north-west. They have done a good job for Western Australia.

When those same people leave the north-west and come back to the metropolitan area, they cannot get a State Housing Commission home. It is "wait-turn," irrespective of whether or not they have worked in the north-west. Is this justice?

We can proudly point to our achievements in Western Australia. I acknowledge them, because I am part of them and, in addition, I am proud to be a part of them. However, I am not a part, and never will be a part, of this kind of thing. These people return to the metropolitan area after they have fulfilled their contract. They have done a wonderful job and, as I have said, lived in caravans, tents, and camps, and under terrible conditions. Then, when they wish to return to the city to enjoy some of the amenities offering in the metropolitan area they are refused a home by the State Housing Commission because they did not make an application before May, 1965.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [9 p.m.]: At this hour of the sitting I wish to make a few brief comments in support of the Bill and, in doing so, I am prompted to use the Latin saying of *cacoethes loquendi* which, translated, I understand means the itch for speaking. This seems to be a malady in this House which is somewhat infectious at this stage of the proceedings; and, while speaking in a lighthearted manner, I wish to thank the honourable member who was good enough to circulate among members the pamphlet listing Latin, French, and Italian words and phrases which are frequently used. I am sure that in the future members will use it to good effect.

During this debate we have heard certain statements made which, in the view of the speakers making them, cast a reflection on the record of the Government and its achievements. Of course, that is the prerogative of those members, but one does not have to agree with them, especially if one considers the statistics which are frequently quoted in this House. Very often it is found that the statistics which are quoted are used to colour the picture in the way the speaker desires it to be coloured.

I have in my hand the ninety-first Annual Report of the Office of Titles for the financial year from the 1st July, 1966, to the 30th June, 1967. This report gives me a clear picture, in a certain fashion, of the development of the State, and in

view of the comments that have been made in respect of the housing situation in Western Australia I think they could be followed up by quoting some statistics from this report; because, in my view, it could be used as a yardstick of the performance of the Government in the development of this State.

Among certain figures quoted, the report discloses statistics relating to the number of transfers that have been handled by the Titles Office during the 12 months under review. For the year ended the 30th June, 1966, 28,529 dealings were executed, and for the twelve months ended the 30th June, 1967, 35,170 dealings were executed; an increase of 6,911. That is a fantastic increase. It represents an increase of almost 25 per cent. within 12 months in applications for land transfers lodged at the Titles Office.

To keep my speech brief I will merely point out that the consideration for that increase of approximately 25 per cent. in land dealings totalled about \$70,000,000. This is a large sum of money and reflects the affluence of our society and the development that has been made over the whole of the State, because as you know, Mr. President, land dealings reflect the prosperity of any community.

Another yardstick of the prosperity of this State is the number of mortgages handled by the Titles Office. For the past 12 months the figure was 27,877, compared with 23,320 for the previous 12 months. Once again, this is an increase of 5,500, which represents a percentage increase of almost 25 per cent. on the previous year's performance. Surely this reflects the progress and the general development that has taken place over the whole of Western Australia.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: If things are so good, why is there need for so many mortgages?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I am glad of that interjection, because it gives me an opportunity to say—although I do not think it needs to be said for the enlightenment of those who are acquainted with the true position—that the need for mortgages and the need for finance to be readily available arises only in times when there is a stable economy and an affluent society. In more difficult times, as some members of this Chamber will no doubt recall with greater clarity than I can, it is most difficult to obtain money on mortgage or by other means used for raising finance.

From the tables which are set out in this report I am of the opinion that one can gain a true picture of the prosperity of the State, because when there is a large number of land dealings taking place it means that development follows in their wake, backed up by the private sector of the community. For example, more houses than ever before are being built in Western Aus-

tralia at the present time, apart from the normal land transactions associated with other types of property.

I can follow up that statement by quoting from the same report statistics relating to certificates of titles. From the 1st July, 1966, to the 30th June, 1967, 14,823 certificates of titles were registered compared with 12,554 registered in the previous 12 months, which represents an increase of 2,269, or an increase of approximately 18 per cent. That is another fantastic percentage increase. I have made brief reference to those figures because I think they are worth mentioning. As members of this Chamber, we are vitally concerned in the welfare of the State and we should be acquainted with these figures because, perhaps, they can be used as another yardstick of the prosperity and the development that is occurring in this State at the present time. I support the Bill.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [9.8 p.m.]: This has been an interesting debate. Many members have availed themselves of the opportunity to speak to the Loan Bill.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: The number of members who have spoken would constitute a record, would it not?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think it is a record, because I have just had an indication that the number of members who have spoken is 16. I admit I do not have much of an audience to hear the replies I might give to the points raised by the 16 members. I think it is a good idea that members should be encouraged to speak, but I cannot see the force of making speeches such as that made by Mr. Ron Thompson this evening who, time and again, went over ground he had previously covered in the manner which he adopts in trying to bolster up an argument. We had a full debate on this matter when Mr. Willesee moved a vote of no confidence in the Government earlier in the session. That was a full-scale debate, but even then some of the information that was given to members did not sink in.

The other evening Mrs. Hutchison told me that all the Government was actually allotting this year to alleviate the housing shortage was \$2,500,000. She said we would want double that amount. It is pitiful to think the honourable member could make such a mistake. The amount the Government will allot for housing this year will be nearly \$24,000,000.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I will believe it when I see it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course, the honourable member would not believe it when she did see it. The amount of \$2,500,000 referred to by the honourable member was a loan authorised to be raised under the State Housing Act. As you know, Mr. President, there is more than just one Act under which moneys can be raised for the provision of housing.

For example, there is the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Act; the Government Employees' Housing Act, and several others, as Mr. Ron Thompson knows only too well.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You told me a little while ago that I did not know what I was talking about.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Sometimes you know what you are talking about.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Most times!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think any speech that takes 1½ hours to deliver cannot be a good speech. I once heard it said that if one cannot say what one wants to say in half an hour it is not worth saying.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That is, on one subject.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, on one subject.

Point of Order

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: On a point of order, Mr. President, I ask for a withdrawal of that remark by the Minister. In regard to the speech that was made the Minister has cast a reflection on a member of this House who is also a member of the party to which I belong.

The PRESIDENT: What is the remark to which the honourable member takes exception?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The Minister said that any speech that takes 1½ hours to deliver could not be a very good speech.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member concerned has taken no exception to it, so I ask the Minister to continue.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The utterance that was made is not worth taking exception to, Mr. President.

Debate (On Motion) Resumed

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thank you for making the point, Mr. President. I was simply saying that the amount of money that will be made available for housing this year is approximately \$23,600,000 and it will be distributed in accordance with the provisions of the Acts I have mentioned. I think it is not a bad idea for members closely to study the situation before they make these accusing speeches in an effort to present—to whom, I do not know—a situation that is not accurate.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell me how it is inaccurate?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am talking of the statement made by the honourable member's colleague, Mrs. Hutchison, in regard to the amount of money the Government was making available for housing. She also said she was not sure whether it was for one year or three years.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What a fitting conclusion to a speech!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am simply repeating what Mrs. Hutchison said. I also repeat that earlier in the session we had a full-scale debate on the subject of housing. The discussion ranged through all the years the Labor Government was in office up to the time this Government took office, and we heard many figures quoted in regard to the money that had been spent and the number of houses that had been built by the previous Administration as compared with the present Administration.

I do not propose to be drawn into another debate on a matter which has already been extensively covered, nor do I intend to reply to all the questions that have been raised by the various members who have spoken, and for this I think I will be forgiven at this stage of the session. However, I can assure members that all the speeches that have been made will be closely studied and where answers can be given to the questions raised the honourable member concerned will be advised as the information becomes available.

Housing has become a moot subject this year, but as I said when the motion calling for a vote of no confidence in the Government was before the Chamber, this is the first year in nine that it has become a moot subject. Therefore, this great crisis must have arisen only in the last few months, because it did not happen last year, the year before, or in any year from 1959 onwards.

I will leave it at that and satisfy myself with the knowledge that the Government can do no more than face the electors next year on its record—which it is quite prepared to do—and let the electors decide what shall happen.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly: and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [9.19 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of this Bill is to appropriate the sums of money required for the services of the current financial year as detailed in the Estimates of expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and

the General Loan Fund. The Bill also makes provision for the grant of supply to complete requirements for the current financial year.

Supply is granted in total amounts from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan Fund and, in the Bill now under consideration, provision is made to appropriate these amounts under the respective heads of expenditure detailed in the Estimates. The amounts now authorised are additional to those made available by the two Supply Acts already passed in this current session.

As well as authorising the provision of funds for the current year, the Bill ratifies the amounts spent during 1966-67 in excess of the Estimates for that year. Details of these excesses are given in the relevant schedules to the Bill.

Under section 41 of the Forests Act, 1918-1964, it is necessary for a scheme of expenditure from the Forests Improvement and Reforestation Fund to be submitted annually for the approval of Parliament.

The Bill makes provision for the appropriation of moneys for the current financial year in accordance with the scheme of expenditure already laid on the Table of the House. I commend the Bill to members.

THE HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [9.21 p.m.]: This will be my last speech in the House, and being acutely conscious of my many faults and shortcomings I take no umbrage at the obvious sigh of relief which that announcement has brought forth from all quarters of the Chamber, including the *Hansard* reporter. I notice our very efficient clerks look more pleased than they have for quite a while; and that is because, with an eye to economy, they can see that in the future their paper requisitions will be halved as a result of the saving in not having Watson's notices of amendments cluttering up the notice paper.

I hasten to assure you, Sir, I will sternly resist the not unnatural urge on an occasion such as this to reminisce over the smiles and tears of bygone years, or upon the many and mighty changes and developments which have taken place nationally and internationally during one's life span. I will not dilate upon those things, nor upon the many personal friendships I have made in this House.

As I have said, I will not dilate upon those things, but I will certainly not forget them, because it has truly been said that memory tempers prosperity, mitigates adversity, encourages youth, and cheers and comforts those not so young. I am proud to have been a member of this House and to have had such a long association with the members who comprise the House.

I would like to convey to the electors of the Metropolitan Province my high appreciation of having had the honour and

privilege of representing them continuously in this House since 1948.

Perhaps I may be permitted to recall this fact: It was in 1914 at the age of 14 that I left school and commenced work in Perth at the princely remuneration of 75c per week, and ever since then I have been working hard and learning hard. Therefore I feel I have earned a rest, at any rate from parliamentary life and political affairs.

During my tenure of office in this House I have done my duty as I have seen it, but as to the measure of success attending my efforts there is doubtless room for a difference of opinion.

However, I feel we can be pretty unanimous on this point on which I bid everyone *adieu*: The past and present history of Western Australia is remarkable; the prospects for the future for Western Australia are tremendous; the spirit of Western Australia is eternal.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [9.26 p.m.]: It is not my intention to delay the House at this stage of the session, but I would like to take the opportunity which the debate on the Appropriation Bill affords us to make reference to two subjects, one in a brief manner, and the other taking only a few minutes more.

Following on what Mr. Wise had to say the other evening in regard to phosphatic rock, and the supply of sulphur for the manufacture of superphosphate, there is no guarantee that we will, over the years, be able to import the amount of sulphur that may be required to meet Australia's requirements. This brings me to the point where I wish to make reference to several articles that have appeared in *The Countryman* over the last few months in relation to the production of sulphur and sulphuric acid from gypsum. In this State we have huge quantities of gypsum, and the possibilities of the production of sulphur, not only for our own use, but also for export, look very promising. I bring up this matter so it can be referred to the Government, and particularly to the Minister for Industrial Development.

In *The Countryman* of the 2nd November this year there was an article in regard to a plan to form a company here, inspired by the findings of Dr. D. Coghill from South Africa. The proposal in the formation of this company is to produce sulphur from gypsum by a bacteriological process. From reading the article, this seems to be an involved and lengthy process and one cannot assess how long it would take before the first sulphur was produced. However, it is worth following up. If this doctor is successful in interesting people to form a company in this State, I think we could work in conjunction with it and treat certain of our sandy soils and sulphur-deficient soils with gypsum as a top dressing.

There is another article in *The Countryman* of the 12th October this year on

the value of gypsum for supplying sulphur to sulphur-deficient soils. Possibly a number of members in this Chamber have read both of these articles, so I do not intend to quote them or dwell on them at length. It appears from this article that if particles of gypsum are used as a top dressing, reasonable quantities of sulphur will be supplied to the soil and it will overcome this deficiency.

I believe there could be two separate sections of production worked by the one company, because gypsum could be supplied for immediate use until such time as the company could produce sulphur for the purpose of making sulphuric acid for superphosphate.

I would like to bring this to the notice of the House so that it will be brought to the notice of the Minister concerned. If a proposal comes forward for assistance, that assistance should be given. Not only will these supplies come from Western Australian sources, but also they will save a large sum of money which is usually paid for imported fertilisers.

I will now deal with a problem which I believe is of vital national importance. I have some material in my hand which is not cotton; it is wool. It is treated wool-scoured wool. I bring up the matter because of the situation of the wool market of Australia. This matter is not only very important to the State, and to the State Government, businessmen, and the people of the State generally, and last but not least the farmers and wool producers, but it is also of national importance.

It is of national importance because the drop in the value of wool over the past 12 months has been from 46c a pound to an estimated 39c a pound. The drop, of course, could be to an even lower level before the end of the wool-selling season. That is in the hands of the wool buyers and the wool speculators of the world. We have to see what this means to Australia as a whole. The estimated drop in the value of wool exports from Australia is in the vicinity of 27 per cent. With a total export value of some \$3,000,000,000, 27 per cent. is a colossal figure to be taken out of the Australian economy.

In 1966 the production in Western Australia, for export, was 202,196,000 lb. of wool, with a value of \$115,129,000, in round figures. This represents 36 per cent. of the total exports of Western Australia. The drop in the value of wool represents a 15 per cent. reduction in exports from this State. The loss to the Western Australian economy, and the spending power of the public, is in the vicinity of \$17,000,000. This will be reflected in costs generally, and costs have risen considerably. That amount of money will be taken out of the economy and it will mean increased costs to the producers in Western Australia because many farmers have had to borrow from the banks to carry on.

The loss to the farmer has been accentuated by the drop in prices for fat lambs. The farming community, and the farming members of this House, would know that the price of fat lambs has dropped considerably this year. Also, the price of sucker lambs has dropped. The prices are lower than they have been for some years. Those farmers who rely on fat lambs and wool are finding themselves in a pretty tight corner, and a large number of producers are concerned. They budget on an assessed price, but it has not come up to expectations this year.

Even the section of the farming community concerned with wheat production will feel the pinch. I sometimes wonder if this matter is taken seriously enough. We must look at the situation in regard to the marketing of wool throughout the world. The three major producers are South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. South Africa and New Zealand both have a wool reserve price scheme.

A short time ago the growers of Australia voted, by way of a referendum, against the reserve price scheme. Personally, I concur with the view of many farmers—and people who are not farmers—that the reserve price scheme was a scheme for the selling of wool and it was not the ultimate required. However, it was a step in the right direction. Once it was accepted a sound scheme could have been introduced gradually over the years.

I believe both the South African and New Zealand reserve price schemes were used by the speculators and wool buyers of the world to depress the price of wool on the auction market in Australia. We have seen reports of the stockpiling of wool, particularly during this year. A total of 3,000,000,000 lb. of wool is already held in store this year, whereas in past years the amount has been 1,000,000,000 lb.

One wonders why there has been this big increase. Are the textile industries of the world selling less textiles? Has the price of woollen goods or textiles been reduced in other countries of the world? I do not think so. I think the prices of textiles and manufactured goods have remained fairly static, but the price of wool has receded in many instances below the figure which was paid during the depression years.

That might sound a strong statement to make, but when one looks at some of the prices which are paid one must realise that they are lower than they were during the depression years. In today's Press, a report stated that the reserve price of wool in New Zealand is a minimum of 25c a pound. However, the floor selling price is 15½c. On today's monetary values, is not that well below the depression prices? If it is not, I do not know what I am talking about. One has only to use one's common sense to know it definitely is. Perhaps more drastic action than has been taken up to date needs to be taken now. In the

past, this matter has been left in the hands of the industrial organisations. They come to the party and say what they want.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: It has been left in the hands of the growers.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: In the hands of the growers through the industrial organisations. I think the honourable member knows what I meant. As a result, we have got nowhere with a marketing plan. Five years ago an organisation known as the Australian wool industry conference was set up. There was an article published on this matter on the 26th October, which states that this conference was wrongly held to be the solution of the problem.

What has the wool council actually done? It was set up to bring about a definite and orderly wool marketing scheme. The International Wool Secretariat has spent the huge sum of \$213,000 on wool promotion, and one wonders where this money went when one sees the price gradually declining. Recently, one of our members of Parliament went on an overseas tour. He looked from one place to the other for some sign of wool promotion in the countries he visited. He tells us he did not see one sign of wool promotion, so there is definitely something wrong. When an amount of money such as I have mentioned is spent there should be some sign of where it has been spent.

The price of wool is receding, so what is happening to the money? It is high time the Federal Government carried out a thorough check to see what is being spent by the wool secretariat and to see if the money is being spent wisely. We have all heard reports—I will admit not too many—of what is being done by the wool secretariat. I have heard that a building is being constructed in London for the headquarters of a wool secretariat. Even though that will be an international organisation, the building of a headquarters in London will not help the wool producers very much if the price of wool keeps on receding as it has been doing over the past few years.

The Prime Minister, the State Premiers and Treasurers, and the Ministers for Agriculture from every State should get together and study this problem. They should produce a scheme for the economic and orderly marketing of wool in Australia. I believe there is only one answer to this problem. I think we are in the hands of the wool buyers and speculators of the world, and we will continue to be in the same position.

The wool should be assessed by valuers and an organisation set up to keep in touch with the spinners in the various countries. That organisation would gather all the information in regard to the sale value of manufactured woollen goods, and the manufacture of woollen

goods combined with synthetics. It could also visit those engaged in the industry and, in consultation with the spinners, gain some impression of what is the real value of wool to the spinner. This would have to be done on a yearly basis, and there is no doubt it can be done. Once the figures have been co-ordinated in co-operation with the spinners, prices could be set for the various bulk class types of wool and samples sent to the spinners. The services of a middleman are not required in this industry and we do not need the assistance of any speculators. What we do need is an organisation that will handle our wool and ensure an economic return to the producer.

In turn, this would mean that the economy of the Commonwealth would be improved and stabilised to a greater extent than it is today. However, whilst we are in the hands of manipulators such a situation will never take place. I trust the Government of this State will take notice and will endeavour to make some move through the Commonwealth Government, with the backing of the Premiers of other State Governments, to see if something cannot be done to tackle the position. There is no doubt that it is time the Government of the various States of the Commonwealth came to the assistance of the producers. We have tried to effect these moves through the various organisations in the industry but members know how long it takes to organise them in an effort to have anything done. The present situation has been in existence for 50 years, and no practical steps have been taken to do anything about it.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You will have to wait till the gun goes off.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not think so; it is only a matter of summoning up enough courage to handle this matter properly in the interests of Australia. I support the Bill.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) [9.50 p.m.]: This evening I was returning from Applecross in my car and I was fortunate in hearing a radio broadcast in regard to the tragic situation which has been created in England by an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, to which subject Mr. Wise made reference earlier in the session. As no doubt many members would not have had the opportunity to hear this broadcast, I thought I would like to bring it to their attention and also to the attention of the Government.

Recently I heard a statement made by one of our Australian leaders as to the precautions that were being taken in Australia against what is occurring in England, because of the damage this disease could do to the economy of the Commonwealth in view of the fact that we produce a great deal of meat for consumption by people in other countries.

During the debate this evening I learnt that horses, cats, and dogs are immune from foot-and-mouth disease but all types of stock are subject to it. At the moment in England leading producers are having many head of prime stock slaughtered on account of the spread of this disease, and it has also meant the ruination of many small farmers in that country, despite the fact the British Government is doing everything it can to compensate them for their losses.

As members know, before any stock or beef is exported from this country it must be accompanied by a certificate stipulating that it is free from foot-and-mouth disease, and, as a result, we have built up an excellent trade overseas with our export meat production. However, there is no doubt that once a report is published that Australian beef herds have become affected with foot-and-mouth disease this export trade will greatly diminish. As an indication of the loss that Australia could suffer if this did occur, it has been estimated that the losses incurred by producers in Great Britain as a result of foot-and-mouth disease have been greater than the cost of conducting the last war. So I repeat that, as I heard this report over the radio this evening, I thought I would pass the information on to members so that they could watch out for any further reports that are made in the next few days. I considered it my duty to convey this information to the members of this House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

Complimentary Remarks

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [9.59 p.m.]: The passing through this House of the Appropriation Bill concludes the business of the House for this session of Parliament, and therefore, I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date to be fixed by the President.

The first session of the first Parliament since the inauguration of responsible Government in this State was commenced on the 30th December, 1890, and finished on the 26th February, 1891.

I made passing reference to the founding of the City of Perth and of the Legislative Council while speaking on the

Address-in-Reply. The present Ministry has been in office since the 2nd April, 1959—a period approaching nine years. It is the 23rd successive Ministry since responsible Government. The present Premier's name therefore becomes closely associated with outstanding leaders of other Ministries who maintained office over lengthy periods.

A reference to the *Parliamentary Handbook* gives the details of various Ministries, and makes very interesting reading. In the early days of our history Governments came and Governments went, and it was almost like heads falling into the holding pot beneath the axeman's blade. In latter years Ministries have maintained the confidence of the people and have continued in office for some time.

You, Mr. President, are the tenth President of the Legislative Council since responsible Government. Members of prominent families in Western Australia have held this very high parliamentary office from time to time, and a reference to the *Parliamentary Handbook* would indicate who some of these people were. Suffice it to say that I wish to thank you, Sir, for your impartial conduct of the House and for the manner in which you control us when, on occasion, we might get unruly.

It is traditional at this time to express my thanks to those people who have assisted me in the conduct of the business during this last session. I would first convey my grateful thanks to Mr. Logan and Mr. McKinnon for their help, and I would also thank the Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) and his deputies (The Hon. F. D. Willmott and the Hon. F. R. H. Lavery) for the good work they have done. I must also say how much I appreciate the understanding that the Leader of the Opposition (The Hon. W. F. Willesee) has shown, and I do want to thank him for this. There has certainly been a very good feeling between Mr. Willesee and the Ministers in this House. I also extend my thanks to the members of the Government parties, and to the Whips (The Hon. H. R. Robinson and The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs) for the part they have played in assisting me. I extend good wishes to all members of the House.

For the purpose of the record, I would like to say a few words in respect of Mr. Watson. It was with some regret that I listened to him make his final speech, which he delivered in his normal capable fashion. His term of office ends on the 22nd May, 1968, when he will have been 20 years in this House. He has had quite a career. He led a petition for secession for Western Australia, and he has always shown great interest and ability in matters financial and political. We have very much appreciated his learned dissertations.

He has not always seen eye to eye with the Government; nor has the Government always seen eye to eye with him, but he has had the courage of his convictions, which is a quality one must admire in debate. Mr. Watson's legislative ability has been appreciated by all of us. I trust he will be spared to enjoy a well-earned retirement and good health for many years to come. My best wishes also go to Mrs. Watson.

It would be improper if I did not extend my thanks to Mr. Roberts and his staff—Mr. Ashley, Mr. Hoft, Dave Carrick, Bill Joiner, Geoff Hoar, Bill Summers, and Wally Truscott—for the splendid help they have given us. Nothing has been too much trouble for Mr. Roberts and his staff. I also thank him for the little diary which we receive at the end of each session—no doubt to remind us to make an entry of the date of the next session!

Our sincere appreciation goes to *Hansard* and to the Controller for their efforts in reporting our activities and attending to our needs in the House. We also thank the parliamentary draftsman—who is always working under great strain; the Government Printer and his staff for printing our Bills, notice papers, and amendments which might come forward. At this stage I must express my personal thanks to my staff, Mr. Whitely and Miss Lawn, for the excellent work they do—nothing is too much trouble for them.

This session 80 Bills have been introduced in the Legislative Council, all of which have been passed. The window has not been opened on one occasion! Some of the Bills have been most important, and it is interesting to note that 30 of those Bills have emanated from this Chamber. Another point of interest is that the Government has been nine years in office during which time nearly 900 Bills have passed through both Houses of Parliament. So, as we close this session of Parliament it gives me some satisfaction to look back on the progress made.

Although we belong to different political parties we are essentially a people of individual personalities, and I am sure it is true to say that our collective objective is the continued welfare and progress of our State and people. The conclusion of the third session is always meaningful, and, as we conclude this third session of the 25th Parliament, I think we can say that our greatest development in Western Australia is the confidence we have in our future growth.

I would like to wish you, Sir, your family, members and their families, the members of the staff of the House and their families, a very happy Christmas and an extraordinarily prosperous 1968.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [10.10 p.m.]: Let me first thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over us this session. Like the Leader of the House, I feel we always need your advice and we appreciate very much your making yourself available in so many ways.

I offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues, Mr. Dolan and Mr. Ron Thompson for their untiring work, and for having taken a great deal of the work off my shoulders. I would also like to thank the old master opposite (The Hon. F. J. S. Wise) upon whom we call when we are in difficulty, and who, when he rises to his feet, never disappoints us, because we always expect from him a learned dissertation, not only because of his knowledge of legislation, but also because of his general knowledge of all matters on which he speaks.

The Minister said that 30 of the 80 Bills introduced emanated from this House, and that I think could have helped in making the session a little easier. It is of great assistance when we are given time to digest the contents of a Bill. Legislation from another place is, to a certain extent, buffered, but any legislation that is introduced in this Chamber is generally not subjected to a great deal of amendment in another place. Apart from that, when we know the purport of a Bill and are given time to debate it, we are able to apportion the work and do the legislation justice. This was borne out by the number of speeches made on the Loan Bill and on the fauna legislation. We had plenty of time to debate those measures, because they were not rushed through the Chamber.

I appreciate very much my association with the Ministers in this House. They certainly do a very good job of work. There are times, however, when I am not sure whether I should refer to them as the three wise men or as the three monkeys, who hear no evil, see no evil, and speak no evil, particularly when I endeavour to put forward a point of view which I feel will be helpful to the Government! Whatever their characteristics, however, I appreciate my association with them very much indeed; and the treatment meted out to them in their *sanctum sanctorum* is their own business.

I must place on record my appreciation of the work done by the two Whips (The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs and The Hon. H. R. Robinson). I do not think I have seen a Whip work quite as hard as does Mr. Robinson, and I have often thought of suggesting to the Minister that he be provided with a scooter to help him get around the Chamber.

To the Chairman of Committees and his associates I extend my thanks for a job of work well done. Whatever role

they have had to perform they have performed efficiently and well. I did think of referring to Mr. Roberts on the basis of saying that in his usual capacity he performs his duties with impeccable ability, but I know he also has an infinite poetic capacity which we all appreciate.

To Mr. Ashley and Mr. Hoft who are so cleverly being moulded into the style of Mr. Roberts I extend my thanks. It is very difficult to know when one of them is here and when one of them is not here, because they do their work so efficiently. I hope that in time they will pick up the poetic capacity of Mr. Roberts so that we will not be at a loss for entertainment in dull moments.

To Mr. Hoar, the Assistant Clerk of Records, I extend my personal appreciation, because at times I lean very heavily on him and he seems to have the infinite capacity to regard these leanings as all in a day's work. To the attendants of Parliament go our thanks. They have all done a good job, not so much for us as for the visitors who come to Parliament House. To them they have shown the most courteous attention, and they have treated visitors with the highest respect.

The *Hansard* staff is always present in the Chamber and is always helpful. I never cease to wonder at their efficiency. One feels quite proud of the speech one reads, especially if one remembers having stumbled for a word or having misused a word. It is strange that the word which one gropes for at times is the one which appears in *Hansard*. We do appreciate the issue of *Hansard* on Tuesdays; that has been of very great help to those of us who have to digest the debates and legislation in an endeavour to make some sensible approach when called upon by our Simon Legree.

We appreciate the service of the Press members very much. They have a difficult job to do. To report the debates is difficult in itself at times, but of course their reports have to be submitted to the people who have to make a decision as to what they think we have said, or whether the reports should be published. If at times we are a little disappointed that something we have said has not been printed, perhaps in the long run it is just as well. For the present let us say: All's well that ends well.

To Mr. Burton and his staff I extend my thanks for the things they do on the material side for members. Mr. Burton certainly does not make our speeches, but he does make a good job of the meals.

During the year we had a new parliamentary draftsman. We lost the services of Mr. Staples, who is a very capable officer, and in his place we have Mr. Morris. I wish him well in his appointment. He has been very helpful to us in the short time that he has been in the position.

Like the Leader of the House, I must take the opportunity on behalf of the Labor Party, with which I am associated, to place on record our sincere appreciation of the help and co-operation of The Hon. H. K. Watson, who has taken his seat in this Chamber today for the last time. His ability is undoubted, and tributes have been paid to him throughout the evening. His voluntary retirement from Parliament—and I sincerely echo the sentiments which you, Mr. President, expressed—is, I believe, all too soon. We could do with his brains for at least another six years. We wish him well in his retirement, and we look forward to seeing him here frequently. I offer him my personal appreciation. When he does return I will assist him rather than disagree with him. I feel that if we joined together we might beat the Government occasionally, even though he might not have the capacity to vote.

As we conclude this session of Parliament it is normal that we turn our thoughts to the festive season. So, Mr. President, to you and to your good wife may we offer our thoughts for a very happy Christmas and a very happy and healthy new year. We, on this side of the House, extend to all members similar thoughts; that is, happiness in the festive season, and good health in the coming year.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [10.21 p.m.]: In speaking as Chairman of Committees and for members of the Country Party I would first of all thank you, Mr. President, for your co-operation and assistance during the year. This has not been a very hard session, although at times it was a little tiring. As the Minister said, we dealt with 80 Bills, and not one was thrown out of the window. On the average that is roughly 20 Bills fewer than usual. There have not been many controversial measures, and although there has been some crossfiring in the House, we have seen more of that in past years.

To the Leader of the House I offer thanks on behalf of the Country Party and on my own behalf for his co-operation during the year, and for the manner in which he handled all matters put before him by members of my party. At times when I was occupying the Chair he has looked at me for a spark of inspiration. On one occasion when I looked to him for inspiration I received a smile and a comment, "Don't look at me for inspiration"; and I was not given any. However, he has always been very helpful.

To the other Ministers I express similar thoughts. They have also been very co-operative and helpful in every way. This also applies to the Leader of the Opposition, and to him I express my appreciation for his co-operation during the session.

To my deputies, Mr. Willmott and Mr. Lavery, I extend my sincere thanks for

their assistance during the year. It makes the task of the Chairman much easier to have two assistants who are always willing and co-operative.

To members in general I offer my thanks for the way they have helped me while I occupied the Chair, and for their full co-operation when amendments were dealt with. They have observed the decorum of the House at all times. This session the decorum and conduct of members has been better than in past years, and much better than that of other Parliaments, from what I have heard. Still, that has been the position for many years.

To Mr. Roberts, Mr. Ashley, Mr. Hoft, and the attendants I offer my thanks for the great assistance they have rendered not only to me but also to all other members of the Country Party. This applies also to all members of the staff. These officers have been exceptionally diligent and courteous in the way they have attended to matters and obtained information for us. That has made things easy for us in many respects.

To the *Hansard* staff I express the appreciation of the Country Party for reporting our sometimes difficult-to-report speeches, and for their co-operation in the checking of our proofs.

I would also like to express regret that Mr. Keith Watson has decided to retire from Parliament. In the first few years after I came into the House I was associated with Keith in some very sticky pieces of legislation. They included the rents and tenancies legislation, and the price control legislation. Many of the debates we had in this House were fiery, and many were the amendments which we moved. Keith and I often discussed these matters privately, to try to work out ways and means to put these pieces of legislation on a fair basis. Eventually the rents and tenancies legislation was put on a very fair footing, before it was eventually thrown out of the window. I shall not forget his co-operation.

I join with other members in expressing our appreciation to Mr. Keith Watson for his co-operation and for the sound speeches he so often made in the debates which, I am sure, have been of assistance not only to the Ministers but to all members, including those who were here in the earlier days and those who joined us in more recent times.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Mr. Burton and his staff, and I join with the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition in saying that they have done a wonderful job.

We extend to you, Mr. President, and your good lady, our best wishes for the coming festive season; and we similarly extend them to all members, officers, staff, and attendants.

THE PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) [10.28 p.m.]: Before I put the motion I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, and Mr. Baxter for the sentiments they have conveyed to me for my ruling of this Chamber. This is the eighth session in which I have been President, and it has been a wonderful experience, especially during this year. I desire to thank all members and all the staff for their loyal co-operation. In the eight years there has been only one occasion when it was necessary for me to exert the extreme powers which the President holds. I think that is a wonderful record, and it indicates the excellent manner in which members have conducted themselves.

As President it is not my intention to echo the great list of thanks and appreciation to the staff and officers. I feel it is my duty to set an example by simply saying I endorse in their entirety the remarks of the Leader of the House in expressing appreciation to members and staff, which remarks were so ably supported by the Leader of the Opposition and Mr. Baxter.

I thank you all very much indeed. I appreciate the sentiments expressed in regard to the festive season to me and my wife; and I, in turn, express a similar wish to all of you and your families. I hope you enjoy the best for the coming festive season.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Friday, the 24th November, 1967

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

Postponement

THE SPEAKER: With the permission of the House it is my intention to postpone questions until a later stage of the sitting—sometime after lunch.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1967-68

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 23rd November, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

Vote: Agriculture, \$3,798,700—

The **CHAIRMAN:** Progress was reported after the vote had been called.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [11.4 a.m.]: I would like to outline, as briefly as possible, the development in agriculture in Western Australia.

As members know, agriculture has made, and is continuing to make, a very valuable contribution to the profits and the development of the State. I am sure, however, that members will appreciate the fact that seasonal conditions have a very definite bearing on the agricultural production of the State. The conditions this year have been somewhat similar to those experienced previously.

When the season started, there were very good opening rains in the majority of the districts in the north. The agricultural area also had very good opening rains, and farmers seeded large acreages. These rains, however, did not continue into the latter part of the year and it appeared that a reduced quantity of grain would be produced.

But it is amazing how different varieties of wheat are able to stand up to the most difficult conditions, and from the reports that have come forward it would seem that we will now have at least an average production—if not an above-average production—in our cereal crop.

An additional 1,000,000 acres were cleared during 1966-67 making the total nearly 32,000,000 acres. Of these 32,000,000 acres over 13,000,000 acres were sown to pasture and 8,600,000 acres to cereal crops. The area sown to wheat again increased and stood at 6,300,000 acres which yielded over 103,000,000 bushels, a new record. The area sown to oats was 1,200,000 acres for a yield of 22,100,000 bushels, which was below the record yield of 23,200,000 bushels in 1965-66 and 22,600,000 bushels for 1958-59.

Barley production was 6,700,000 bushels from less than 400,000 acres. This is the fourth highest total yield recorded, but it is remarkable inasmuch as the average of 18 bushels to the acre is the highest production ever recorded in this State. Some of these results would be considerably less were it not for the work done on cereal breeding. There are high hopes that a new crossbred wheat will pass the critical, final test this year before being named and released. Should it fail in any respect it will join the many types that have been discarded.

I might mention that the work the cereal breeders are doing is appreciated by all concerned, not only in this State but in other States of the Commonwealth. There is a great deal of co-operation—Australia-wide—in this field, and every endeavour is made to increase the quality of the cereals and to improve their productive capacity.

Members who have had experience in farming will know the great strides that have taken place over the years—from as far back as 1920. At that time the variety called Yandilla King met the necessary requirements and made a very valuable contribution to the State's pro-