

Mr. Graham: Most definitely we did not. We have protested about it from the commencement, and we still do. We do not think much of it or of the people who barrack for them.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: None of us condoned it or liked it.

Mr. Graham: You should have stood up with us to be counted, instead of which you tried to win elections from us.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Graham: You were 100 per cent. behind it. Now you are feeling sorry for yourselves.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Rushton: What about the millions who are locked up in Russia?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Moller.

House adjourned at 9.59 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 3rd April, 1973

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

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. TRAFFIC

Fatal Accidents

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN, to the Leader of the House:

I refer to my question 20 on the 22nd March, to which the Leader of the House replied on that date—

"The answer requires considerable research and will be supplied to the Hon. Member when available." Is the information now available?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

I thank the honourable member for drawing my attention to this matter. The answer is now available and it reads—

I am now in receipt of a report from the Commissioner of Police who advises as follows—

Information of this nature is recorded in the Department under the Police District which in many cases does not correspond with the boundaries of

local authorities. Figures have been reassembled according to local authority area and while there may be some minor errors in dissection, it is believed the totals are correct.

Shire	Date of Handover (Equivalent Periods) Prior	Fatal Accidents Subsequent
Broome	1/1/1969	8
Busselton	1/4/1971	3
Esperance	1/10/1970	7
Lake Grace	1/7/1971	1
Manjimup	1/10/1970	12
Marble Bar	1/7/1972	NH
Merredin	1/4/1971	7
Murray	1/7/1971	NH
Northam	1/7/1972	2
Nullagine	1/7/1972	3
Onslow	1/7/1971	NH
Port Hedland	1/10/1972	NH
Ravensthorpe	1/10/1970	4
Roebourne	1/7/1972	6
Tableland	1/7/1972	NH
West Kimberley	1/1/1969	27
Wyndham-East Kimberley	1/4/1971	1
		79
		64

It will be appreciated the difficulties experienced in collating this information and any inconvenience caused by this delay is regretted.

2. ROAD TRANSPORT

North-West: Permits

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Would the Minister indicate how he was able to provide the answer to my question of Wednesday, the 28th March, 1973, by giving the answers in tons, when he says that it is not possible to give the answers in the number of permits issued as requested by me?
- (2) Is it not a fact that in order to calculate the number of tons carted the permit application forms would have to be examined?
- (3) If the answer to (2) is "No", how is it possible to calculate the tonnage without checking the permits issued?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) to (3) For statistical purposes it is continuing practice to tally the tonnages of goods authorised for transport to the different north-west centres.

As an individual permit could represent anything from a few tons to 40 or 50 tons and the goods included in each permit may be for several different destinations, the number of permits is not significant.

For this reason, statistical records of permits issued are not kept.

QUESTIONS (4): ON NOTICE

POLICE

Stolen Vehicles

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Do country shires send to the Government Statistician—
 - (a) a weekly report of the new vehicle registrations; and
 - (b) a monthly report of all renewals made in their shires?
- (2) If so, has Superintendent Monck a viable argument that police cannot get information on country registrations?
- (3) As the Chief of the C.I.B. has denied the statement made by the Chief of the Traffic Branch that there was evidence of a car stealing racket in Western Australia due to dual traffic control, is it not becoming apparent to the general public that such a statement was made only to influence legislation to come before this House?
- (4) Does not the Minister consider he does the members of the Police Force an injustice asking them to take sides in party politics?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) No; country Shires send to the Government Statistician copies of individual registration documents which are collated for statistical purposes. Details of individual vehicles or owners are not available.
- (2) Information is available and is obtained from country Shire Councils, when requested.
- (3) The spontaneous statement made by Superintendent Monck regarding evidence of a car stealing racket was of his own volition. Earlier Criminal Investigation Branch investigations, initiated as a result of information supplied by the Superintendent, did not produce any supporting evidence. The statement has no connection with Government policy and I do not believe it will influence the general public or members of this House.
- (4) I strongly reject the insinuation that I, or any Minister of the Crown, would ask the Commissioner of Police or his Officers to take sides in party politics. The question is highly insulting and unworthy of a member of this House.

As Minister for Police in this Government, I am fully aware of the obligations of the Commissioner of

Police to enforce the law without political interference, and I have respected this duty and obligation. In fairness, I must say I believe the Minister for Police in the previous Government also upheld these principles of law enforcement.

Lord Denning handed down a judgment on this matter in 1968 and the Hon. Member would be well advised to study this judgment, a copy of which I seek leave to table.

The judgment was Tabled (see Paper No. 91).

2.

FISHERIES

Abalone

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) What was the quantity of abalone caught in pounds weight and value in dollars in Western Australian waters during the following years—
 - (a) 1968-69;
 - (b) 1969-70;
 - (c) 1970-71;
 - (d) 1971-72?
- (2) Have records been kept detailing the catch in pounds weight and dollar value in the Areas No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 for each of the years stated in question (1)?
- (3) If so, what are the figures disclosed?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) (a) Live weight 60,000 lb. (Estimate) \$6,000 (Estimate).
- (b) Live weight 65,000 lb. Value \$7,000.
- (c) Live weight 390,000 lb. Value \$104,000.
- (d) Live weight 774,000 lb. Value \$272,000.
- (2) Yes for Areas 1 and 2 combined and for Area 3, except for 1968-69.
- (3) 1968-69 Breakdown by area not available.

1969-70:

	lb.	\$
Areas 1 and 2	34,000	4,000
Area 3	31,000	3,000

1970-71:

Areas 1 and 2	260,000	78,000
Area 3	130,000	26,000

1971-72:

Areas 1 and 2	400,000	160,000
Area 3	374,000	112,000

The above data is taken from research records. The totals given above are greater than those derived from fishermen's monthly

returns because (a) some fishermen provide shucked-weight figures instead of whole weight and (b) because there has been some illegal abalone fishing by other than abalone concession holders.

3. MINILYA-EXMOUTH ROAD

Maintenance

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Leader of the House:

What is the policy of the Main Roads Department regarding maintenance of the gravel section of the Minilya-Exmouth Road whilst construction work is being carried out on the new alignment of this road?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

The Minilya-Exmouth Road is not a main road, and therefore responsibility for its upkeep and maintenance rests with the local authority. However, during construction work on the new alignment the Main Roads Department is maintaining the old road.

4. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Charges: Concessions to Pensioners

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Has this Government given consideration to introducing any concessions to charges for gas or electricity supplied to pensioners?
- (2) If so, what are the concessions?
- (3) If not, would the Government give consideration to this matter?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) to (3) In terms of existing policy, the interests of the electricity consumers, under all categories, are best served by the use of simple standard tariffs requiring the minimum of administration. To select one type of consumer would require an increase in tariff for other consumers to cover the cost of the concession plus the cost of extra administration.

SEWERAGE

Commonwealth Funds: Ministerial Statement

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.52 p.m.]: Mr. President, I seek permission to make a ministerial statement in relation to a question asked on the 28th March.

The PRESIDENT: Leave granted.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Thank you, Mr. President. In reply to question 2 on the notice paper for Wednesday, the 28th

March, 1973, asked by The Hon. Clive Griffiths, the *Minutes of the Proceedings* of the Legislative Council record in answer to subquestion (2) (a) (i) that the amount of money provided for sewerage works in the metropolitan area was \$3,500. The answer actually given was \$3,500,00.

The printed figure of \$3,500, when compared with the figure given for country areas of \$175,000 in reply to subquestion (2) (a) (ii) is a very obvious understatement of Commonwealth funds made available to relieve unemployment in the metropolitan area. The simple explanation is that a nought was dropped from the answer that was given. The figure should read \$3,500,000. I would advise the House that the correct figure is, of course, given in *Hansard*.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: EIGHTH DAY

Motion, as Amended

Debate resumed, from the 29th March, on the following motion by The Hon. R. F. Cloughton, as amended—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency—

May it please Your Excellency—We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

However, this House is of the opinion that the best interests of the State and the people would be better served if the Government were to concentrate on improving its administration of the affairs of the State, instead of endeavouring to denigrate the Legislative Council (an integral part of the bicameral system of Government in this State) in an effort to cover up its own shortcomings.

THE HON. J. M. THOMSON (South) [4.53 p.m.]: Like previous speakers I wish to express my regret that Mr. Willesee is not sitting in the seat which he occupied in the two sessions prior to the present session of Parliament. I sincerely hope his health will continue to improve and that he will enjoy the remaining period of this Parliament; I hope also that he will enjoy his retirement in the best of health. I tender my congratulations to Mr. Dolan, Mr. Ron Thompson, and Mr. Dans upon their appointment to the positions they now hold.

In company with hundreds of adults I attended the Perry Lakes stadium to witness the running of the Little Athletics Association events over the last weekend. It was indeed a most successful function;

to describe it any other way would be quite incorrect and a gross understatement. All those who assisted in the organisation of the events prior to and on the day, and all those who assisted in the controlling of the events fully deserve the highest commendation for their sterling efforts on behalf of the youth of the State.

It was most gratifying to see the flower of our youth participating with the zeal they demonstrated in all the events throughout the weekend. I would be remiss if I did not mention the men and women in country towns who devote their time to encouraging the participation of young people in athletic clubs in those towns. These men and women are indeed deserving of high praise for their unstinted efforts on behalf of the young people in their towns.

As I watched the events last weekend the benefit of professional coaching was clearly demonstrated to me. With the question of professional coaching, of course, goes the matter of inducing young people to continue to train. Whilst one or two country centres may be fortunate to have folk qualified to provide a high standard of coaching, many other centres are not so fortunate. I gave notice of a question this afternoon regarding this matter because it became obvious to me that where professional coaching is available the young people make full use of it and certainly excel themselves when compared with those children who are not so fortunate. I await the reply of the Leader of the House to my question in due course.

I noticed with some interest the statement that appeared in *The West Australian* of Monday, the 26th March, 1973 under the heading of, "Scheme to help rural builders". The statement was made by the Minister for Development and Decentralisation (Mr. Graham) and it certainly attracted my attention and aroused my interest. I think this is an opportune occasion to read to the House the statement of the Minister. The article states—

Building contractors in rural centres would be given a 5 per cent advantage in tenders for some Government works, the W.A. Minister for Development and Decentralisation, Mr. Graham, said in the weekend.

The scheme would apply to contracts let by the State Government for public buildings worth up to \$20,000.

It would apply to regions defined for the 10 per cent preference scheme to country manufacturers on Government purchase.

It would also apply beyond those boundaries if the contract was within a 50-mile radius of the builder's premises.

Mr. Graham said: "Normal tender principles will still operate, but if a metropolitan building tender is the

lowest and a regional company is within 5 per cent of the lowest tender price, the contract will be let to the regional company.

"The measure is an extra incentive to decentralise industry. It aims to strengthen existing regional industries, improve prospects for the establishment of new industry and foster permanent employment in regional centres."

He said that the State Housing Commission could not take part in the scheme because fixed rents would not enable it to recover the higher costs. Alternative financing methods were impractical.

The 5 per cent allowance would apply to new works and renovations and would be reviewed in a year.

I applaud the motive behind this move, and I am sure many country builders do likewise.

However, in my opinion the Minister could have extended the scheme and made it far more embracing, because on present-day costs of building the 5 per cent preference would be applicable only to repairs and renovations to some of the larger Government buildings in country centres. This would cover the external work to such buildings. I refer to structures such as regional hospitals, regional correction centres, senior high schools, and also a number of the larger primary schools, as well as buildings of the Crown Law Department which comprise a courthouse, clerk of court's office, a magistrate's suite, and police station with all its requirements. The amount of \$20,000 which I have mentioned will be sufficient to cover only the work I have just detailed.

If we consider what \$20,000 will provide in the way of housing on today's costs, it will be noted that this amount will cover the cost of a house of 12 to 13 squares. A brick house comprising three bedrooms, a lounge, a kitchen, a bathroom, a laundry, a toilet, and some verandah space at the back and front would cost in the vicinity of \$1,500 per square. This is the cost for a modest type of house. The type of house which the Public Works Department has built on occasions in some country areas to accommodate senior Government officers costs far in excess of the \$20,000 required for a house of 12 to 13 squares.

I understand that the cost per square of a house larger than 13 squares is in the vicinity of \$2,000. For the reasons I have enumerated I do not consider the \$20,000 which has been mentioned is sufficient to induce metropolitan builders to compete for contracts in the country. Therefore the move announced by the Minister would be of no benefit to country builders.

For that reason I say that a contract would need to be one in excess of \$50,000 to attract tenders from metropolitan builders; and such a contract would relate to a

larger type of structure than a house of 12 or 13 squares. No doubt, from time to time members have seen notices of the Public Works Department calling for tenders for various works to be carried out in the country on a contract basis. We have seen this being done in respect of contracts of \$100,000, \$250,000, and \$350,000; and on rare occasions in excess of \$750,000. If the Government is really anxious to see that the local country building contractor, with his team of tradesmen, necessary plant and equipment is to receive some preference for Government contracts within the stipulated radius of this establishment, I would suggest an allowance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. up to \$50,000, with a progressive reduction in the percentage of preference as the value of the contract rises. This would be a practical approach to assist country builders.

It is not uncommon to find builders from the metropolitan area submitting tenders, and sometimes quoting prices below those submitted by builders in country areas. Very often when a metropolitan builder has done this he has to resort to poaching the work force of the country builders, and by so doing he depletes the number of tradesmen and building workers available to the country building contractors.

I would not like members to think that I am advocating that metropolitan builders should be debarred from tendering and undertaking contract work in country areas. It would be a foolish and a most unfair suggestion to make, and this is the last thing I would advocate. It was a serious oversight, and a matter of regret, that the Government has not seen fit to tell the building contractors and their associations that the Government desires to give preference to local or country building contractors before it made the Press statement it did. Had the Government said, "Let us get together and discuss the matter with the representatives of the country builders, the metropolitan builders, and the Public Works Department" some of the anxiety would be allayed. As it is the policy of the Government to decentralise industry, it should consider the holding of such a conference. I am sure that if such a conference were held a sound and a practical approach would emerge on the question of preference to local building contractors with the aim of encouraging decentralisation—a policy to which we all subscribe.

Another matter to which I wish to refer relates to the present and the future policy in regard to the catching of the edible shellfish known as abalone. Members will no doubt be aware that I placed a question on today's notice paper seeking some information on this matter, and the Minister kindly furnished an answer this afternoon. My question, in part, referred to the quantity of abalone taken in the years 1968 to 1972, and the value of the catch in Western Australian waters.

Let me refer first of all to the catch of abalone in 1971-72. The figures indicate that abalone is a good dollar earner to the State, but that is not the important point I wish to make. The total catch in Western Australia for the year 1971-72 was 535,000 lb., and of that quantity 391,409 lb. was exported, netting a financial return to this State of \$331,897. The balance of 143,591 lb. sold within the State netted a return of \$39,500. The total value to the State of the 1971-72 catch of abalone was \$371,397.

This financial return is of significance, because it appears that the public is not very well aware of the value of this industry. Let me now refer to the total catch of abalone in Australia for 1971-72. It is interesting to note the value in dollars which the exports of abalone earned for Australia. In this period the total take in Australia, mainly from New South Wales and Victoria, and to a lesser extent from Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia, was 17,541,000 lb. Of that quantity 2,381,000 lb. was exported, and this earned \$2,539,000 for the Commonwealth. The balance of 15,160,000 lb. was consumed within Australia, and this netted a return of \$3,900,000, making a total of \$6,439,000 which represents the value of the catch of abalone for 1971-72.

It is interesting to note the figures which were supplied by the Leader of the House in his answer to my question this afternoon. These figures show a breakdown of the three areas in which the shellfish was taken. Area No. 1 extends from Eucla, Lawler, to Fanny Cove, west of Esperance; area No. 2 extends from Fanny Cove, west of Esperance, to Busselton; and area No. 3 extends from the Leeuwin.

Instead of referring to the live weight I will now refer to areas 1, 2 and 3 and the return received in those areas in pounds weight and their worth in dollars. In 1969-1970, some 34,000 lb. at a value of \$4,000 was taken from the area Eucla to Fanny Cove. Those figures were for areas 1 and 2. For the same period area 3 produced 31,000 lb. for a value of \$3,000. In 1970-71 areas 1 and 2 produced 260,000 lb. for a value of \$78,000, while in that period area 3 produced 130,000 lb. to a value of \$26,000. In 1971-72 an amount of 400,000 lb. to a value of \$160,000 was taken from areas 1 and 2, and from area 3 the take was 374,000 lb. for a value of \$112,000.

Though the position in the State scene may appear to be small when compared with the overall picture I wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that we have now in existence within our coastal waters the nucleus of a very profitable industry the protection of which is surely a matter of urgency. According to the opinions expressed by competent judges it will not be too soon if we act now to preserve the future of this species.

I noted with interest a question asked by Mr. Claughton last November in regard to abalone fishing. Mr. Claughton asked the Minister the following question—

Will the Government give consideration to the proposal to exclude the taking of abalone by professional fishermen along metropolitan beaches within an area extending a quarter mile off-shore.

The Minister replied—

The Government is considering a proposal in relation to the protection of some beaches against the taking of Abalone by Professional Fishermen.

At the present time there are no areas closed to the taking of Abalone with the exception of two research areas. A copy of the Direction to Licensing officers issued in relation to establishment of the Abalone fishery as a concession fishery is Tabled. (See Paper No. 383.)

I would now like to quote from the contents of the paper referred to in the Minister's answer. I have already defined the areas in which the species are available but the paper also gives the list of licenses held by both amateur and professional fishermen, and says—

3.2 Anyone who assists an authorized abalone diver to catch abalone or other fish must be licensed as a professional fisherman. This means that if an abalone concession holder has a buddy diver for safety purposes—and he can't have more than one—he must ensure that his buddy is licensed as a professional fisherman.

It goes on to say—

5.1 It has been suggested to the Department that the fee for a license to which an abalone concession is attached should be increased from \$4 to \$100 or even \$200. High fees like these are applied in South Australia and Victoria. Their suggestion is being considered and the opinions of other abalone concession holders would be welcomed by the Department.

The paper continues—

5.3 The additional revenue received from concession holders would warrant the allocation of more enforcement oversight to the fishery to try to keep it on a sound basis. If the high fees referred to in 5.1 are adopted, a special Inspector could be appointed.

Further the paper states—

It has been agreed in principle to recommend the introduction of a regulation to restrict amateurs to catching not more than 50 abalone in any one day.

The size and weight are then referred to and the paper states—

It has been agreed that no size or weight limit should be imposed, because of marketing difficulties, but processors will be encouraged to assist in conservation as the market allows. What the processors will buy the concession holders may sell.

I understand there has recently been some restrictions placed on catches between Triggs Island and Burns Beach in regard to concession holders. I also note from a memorandum that it was decided in 1971 that an area from Point Peron to Little Island near Sorrento be closed for the taking of abalone for sale. This area will be kept for the taking of abalone for other than sale purposes.

Like Mr. Claughton I too have been concerned with the reports that have been presented by people both to Mr. Claughton and myself; people who are interested in this particular sporting activity and line of business.

One of the people who had occasion to have a discussion with me concerning the state of the particular feeding grounds for abalone was no less a person than one who had been engaged as a licensed professional abalone diver. The man concerned says it would appear that there is approximately 12 months of profitable abalone fishing left along our coastline in areas 1 and 2 and possibly a further period in area 3—that is so far as it is commercially profitable to the industry.

I would point out that area 1 extends from the South Australian border to Fanny Cove just west of Esperance. Area 2 extends from Fanny Cove to Busselton, and area 3 extends from Cape Leeuwin to Wyndham. From the observations that have been made it would appear that licensees have been operating on the coastline and they are taking large and small abalone from the breeding grounds, thus leaving nothing to maintain or perpetuate an industry which, as I have said, is most profitable.

These statements can be confirmed by the past president of Country Under Water Activities who is now president of the council in Western Australia. The comments of these people from their own observations during the summer vacation period have confirmed the rapid decrease of abalone in their breeding grounds. If we are not careful we will experience the same difficulty that was experienced by Tasmania and New Zealand whose grounds have been sadly depleted, and in some cases they are now nonexistent and of little value to the industry. I admit the lure of the dollar is something we cannot disregard, but I think we are apt to consider the commercial aspect and its interests to the detriment of the industry together with its potential and future. We are apparently finding it difficult to police the

regulations laid down but nevertheless I think attention must be drawn to this fact and that is exactly what I am doing now.

A comparison of our Fisheries Act with that of Victoria and New South Wales is really quite interesting. In our Act I found no mention made of abalone, though in fairness to the Department of Fisheries and Fauna I would say that the regulations brought down as late as 1971-72 are intended to suffice as they apply to that period.

On considering the protection afforded by Victoria to the abalone industry I find quite apart from it being most interesting it is something of which we can take cognisance. The Act states—

The licence fee is \$200.

The holder of an abalone licence shall—

- (a) whilst using a registered fishing boat in connexion with the taking of abalone, not permit that boat to be used by any person other than the holder of an abalone licence as a base for underwater diving operations.

It then states that the holder of such a licence shall—

- (d) whilst engaged in the taking of abalone carry with him an instrument or rule to facilitate the accurate measurement of any abalone taken by him;

The Victorian Act stipulates the size and indicates that the minimum size that can be removed from the waters of that State ranges from 4½ in. to 4 in.

The Act further states—

- (3) The holder of an abalone licence who takes or has in his possession or control any undersize abalone shall be guilty of an offence against this Act and liable to a penalty of not more than \$500 for a first offence and to a penalty of not more than \$1,000 for a second or subsequent offence and in every such case to an additional penalty of not more than \$2 for each abalone in respect of which the offence is committed.

The Act goes on to prohibit a person having in his possession abalone within half a mile of any waters stated in the regulation.

Under the regulations, the amateur in Victoria is not permitted to take more than 10 abalone from any waters on any one day. Prior to coming into the House I received a telephone message to the effect that Victoria has now imposed restrictions on the taking of abalone from the continental shelf. It was said that this has been done to protect the industry further. I have not yet been able to verify

this statement nor the position which obtains in New South Wales where abalone fishing is a profitable industry. However, I have been given to understand that a concession licence holder is not permitted to take abalone from a depth of less than 60 feet. New South Wales has recently stipulated the sizes to be taken. The abalone must be able to pass through a fixed metal ring with a diameter of four inches. The amateur in New South Wales is permitted to take only 25 abalone per day.

It is quite obvious that the States to which I have referred have felt concern about the future welfare of the industry and have taken stringent steps to see that it will not be exploited.

I have pointed out the significance of the abalone industry and I advocate its continuance because it is a dollar earner. Nonetheless, we should not forsake the amateur; we should afford him the opportunity, as of right, to catch and enjoy this edible fish to a reasonable degree.

From observations made and evidence given by reliable and competent people it would seem some licensed professional concession holders have exploited the shallow waters to the utmost. Once upon a time the amateur was able to obtain the permissible catch in those waters and still leave some to be taken and enjoyed by his fellow amateurs.

This is not the position today because of greed and the total contempt of the good graces of unselfishness which once propelled men. The lure of the dollar is something which some people cannot resist. The amateur is left lamenting as far as Western Australian waters are concerned. I say this on the basis of the information given me by people competent to observe this exploitation.

We should be concerned about the present and future production of the shellfish, abalone. A limited number of people within our society enjoy catching abalone in their recreation time. I have already referred to the fact that abalone fishing has the potential of being a profitable industry. Bearing all these points in mind I suggest that the Government should give serious consideration to amending the provisions of the Act and regulations. One possible way is to restrict severely the number of divers selling their catch through one licence. This would need rigid policing which is not an easy matter, but it can be done. Another way would be to license the professional or concession holders to operate in a depth of not less than 60 feet. I think the Government should also stipulate the size which can be taken from any waters. The regulations which apply in other States could well be a guide in this regard. I further suggest that the onshore waters be available to amateurs and not to the concession holders. In this way the amateurs could take

their permissible bag limit from waters close to the shore. I would support any other provisions which are deemed desirable in the interests of safeguarding the industry.

There are further comments I could make on many other matters. However, as other members will be speaking to the motion this evening I will content myself with my comments on abalone fishing. On another occasion I shall refer to water in the drier areas on the south coast and also to the pre school education report which has been submitted to us. I shall conclude my remarks now with the comment that I support the motion, as amended.

THE HON. CLIVE GRIFFITHS (South-East Metropolitan) [5.35 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion moved by Mr. Cloughton at the opening of Parliament. I feel he made a provocative speech at that time and left himself wide open to many criticisms. Time has passed and it is not my intention to go into the numerous statements which left the way open for me to criticise him, but I must mention one. He said that the State had experienced difficult times since the Labor Government took office and it had gone through a downturn in employment. He said the State had faced difficult financial problems. In his opinion no person in the Parliament would have had the qualities or qualifications to steer the State through this period other than the present Premier, Mr. John Tonkin.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Hear, hear!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I disagree with this statement completely. Instead of, "steer the State through", the better term would have been "steer the State into". Without fear of successful contradiction I say that a great deal of the mess which the State has experienced over the last couple of years was certainly caused through the actions of the present Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What mess have we been in?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not know how Mr. Ron Thompson can imply that the State has not been in a mess. Unemployment, for example, has been at its highest level for very many years and is now running at a higher level than anywhere else in Australia.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Why was that?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: It was because of the lack of action on the part of the present Government—

The Hon. L. D. Elliott: The Federal Government of the day.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: —to meet the need.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I am asking because I want to reply to your comments.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister should bear in mind that I, personally, have many criticisms to make. In some instances people in my electorate have been affected or they have spoken to me about their problems. I cannot imagine Mr. Ron Thompson has not got the message in the two years the Labor Government has been in power in Western Australia. The message has been given to him consistently throughout this period by the Opposition.

The Hon. R. Thompson: We do not take notice of the Opposition but of the people.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Members of the Opposition have been voicing the opinions of the people.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You have made a statement which you cannot back up.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I now come to the next item on my list which, ironically, is to congratulate Mr. Ron Thompson on being promoted to ministerial rank.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Flattery will get you nowhere.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Mr. Ron Thompson's interjections have prevented my doing this. Seriously, I take the opportunity to offer him my congratulations.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Minister is taking notice now.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The promotion was warranted and I am sure Mr. Ron Thompson will carry out his ministerial duties in the same way as he has carried out his duties in representing members of his electorate. During the time I have been a member in this Chamber I have noticed that he has carried out his task with great sincerity and energy. I am sure he will project those two qualities into his new role as he carries out the responsibilities of a Minister.

Similarly, I wish to congratulate Mr. Dolar who has been elevated to the position of Leader of the House. This came about through the unfortunate resignation of Mr. Bill Willesee.

I have mentioned Mr. Willesee and perhaps now is the opportune time to say that I was deeply distressed to hear of the circumstances which made it necessary for him to resign from the Cabinet and as Leader of the House.

Many nice things happen to members of Parliament. Each and every one of us will store away and keep in his memory many happenings which he cherishes. One of the nicest things which has happened to me since my election to Parliament—and certainly it is one of those which will remain in my memory—is knowing Bill Willesee. He is a fine gentleman and has great qualities. Our political philosophies

are violently opposed but, nonetheless, I have great respect for him as a man. I am proud indeed that I have had the opportunity to become acquainted with him.

Few people, apart from the members who have worked with him in this House, appreciate the work that he has done or the load that he has carried. These comments apply both to the time when he was Leader of the Opposition and sat where Mr. Arthur Griffith now sits and when he became Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council after the last election. Few people, apart from us, realise the extent of the load he carried. It would do many people the world of good to make it their business to study some of the work which he undertook and the load which he carried in this House. I refer particularly to some of his colleagues in another place and to some at Trades Hall. He shouldered the burden under trying conditions, because other political parties in the Legislative Council outnumbered the Labor Party by two to one. He carried his load skilfully, diplomatically, and successfully. The members of his party owe him a great debt of gratitude for the work he has done in this House on their behalf.

I would like to be associated with the comments expressed by other members in regard to the departure of the Governor and his wife from Western Australia. Sir Douglas Kendrew's term as Governor is fast drawing to an end. Like other members, I express sorrow that he is leaving and gratitude for the good work which he has done during his term as Governor in Western Australia.

I now come to more parochial matters which affect my electorate. The first item I wish to mention this evening is the Cannington High School.

Over the period I have been a member of this House, one of the problems I have constantly drawn to the attention of the Government of the day is the partly completed hall-gymnasium at the Cannington High School. When the high school was built, about 1964 or 1965, the hall-gymnasium was only partially completed. Some walls were erected, the floors were put in, and some of the doorways and doors were made. However, the roof was not put on and some other structural work was not completed.

During the lifetime of the previous Government, I made representations to the Minister for Education and to the Education Department on behalf of the parents of the children who attend that school. I asked questions and talked about it here in an effort to have the job completed, bearing in mind, of course, that the completed part of the structure was deteriorating and that the money already

expended on the hall-gymnasium to that stage looked like being completely and utterly wasted.

Joining me on some occasions in this effort to have the hall-gymnasium completed was one of the members of the then Opposition, the present Leader of the House in this Chamber.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I was doing it before you ever came here.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is an interesting statement because if the Leader of the House had listened to my remarks he would have heard me say that the high school was completed in 1964 or 1965. If he was making representations before I came here, they must have been very hasty representations between the time the school was completed and the day I was sworn in.

The Hon. J. Dolan: When were you sworn in?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I was sworn in in 1965 and the school was completed in that year. The Leader of the House is suggesting that his representations were of more value than my representations.

The Hon. J. Dolan: No, I am not saying that. I said I made representations; they were not listened to.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Leader of the House interrupted me. I was paying him a compliment and saying that he had played a part in the representations made to the previous Government. He then made an interjection and the tone of his voice implied that I should not have said that, and also that his representations were of more value than those made by other members.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I am pleased when the Government does anything for any school.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is right; I did not understand the tone of the interjection. The Leader of the House has added emphasis to my comments: representation after representation has been made to the Government. I made representations to the Government in the firm belief that my efforts were warranted and that the school and the parents and citizens' association were justified in their belief that the Government ought to take some steps to ensure special consideration because of the circumstances; namely, that the building was partly completed.

The scene has now changed; the Leader of the House is no longer a member of the Opposition wishing to criticise the Government. He is now a member of the Government and in the unique position of having a say as to where State money should be directed. He has a decided advantage over an ordinary back-bencher

like myself, because I do not have any say at the moment and I had no say when we were the Government. I could only appeal to the Minister and the department and express the point of view of the people whom I represent. The Leader of the House did the same thing whilst his party was in Opposition, but his voice is no longer heard on behalf of these people.

The Hon. J. Dolan: How do you know? How would you know whether I did or did not make representations?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: There is certainly no evidence of it.

The Hon. J. Dolan: We do not advertise what we do in Cabinet. You know that; you are not that dumb!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, how dumb am I? I am trying to say that if the approaches were genuine when the Leader of the House was a member of the Opposition and he believed that the cause was just then, how is it the cause is not as just now?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Of course it is just.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: If that is so, why does he not do something about it?

The Hon. J. Dolan: What can I do about it? I have just attempted to explain to you that I am just one voice.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The present Cabinet consists of the Leader of the House—and he represents the area—

The Hon. J. Dolan: I am one of 12.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I was coming to that.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You do not have to tell me, I know.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Some members of the House would like to know this. Also in the Cabinet are the Minister for Works and the Minister for Mines, both of whom represent some of the parents of children attending the school under the present electorate boundaries. Now that is one-quarter of the Cabinet.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What about the Minister for Health?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: His electorate borders on this area. The member for Canning in another place represents some of the people of the area. I also represent the people of this area, but I am the only one who has consistently spoken out on behalf of them, irrespective of the party in power. I would have thought that every Tuesday one-quarter of the Cabinet would be asking the Premier to provide funds for this purpose.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You are a bit biased, aren't you?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not biased at all. When the Leader of the House was a member of the Opposition he

brought this issue up because he felt the cause warranted consideration by the Brand Government. He ought to be equally strenuously fighting for the cause now. However, nothing has happened.

I asked a question in this House on Wednesday, the 21st March, 1973. Part (1) reads as follows—

Is it the Government's intention to have the construction of the gymnasium hall at the Cannington Senior high school completed during the 1973-74 financial year?

The Leader of the House replied, "No". It is as simple as that; the Government has no intention of doing anything.

Just a short time ago the school was led to believe that it was second or third on a list of priorities somewhere. Now the list has disappeared because the Leader of the House goes on to reply as follows—

At the present time, halls/gymnasias are required in 28 High Schools. In the cases of most High Schools, equally strong representations as those from Cannington have been made on the grounds of urgency. It is thus necessary to consider this problem as an overall Departmental need based on all schools.

In part (5) of the question I asked—

What criteria are used in deciding a school's priority for the provision of a gymnasium hall?

To which the Leader of the House replied—

In general terms, on length of time the school has been in operation without a hall/gymnasium of any type, size of enrolment and general accommodation needs.

If we reflect upon these answers and the interjection made by the Leader of the House when I first mentioned this subject—and members will recall he emphasised the intensity and length of his approaches on behalf of the school—it seems strange that he has forgotten the arguments put forward in favour of the completion of this hall a few years ago. I would like to stress these facts again: The hall is partly built and because of the very high water table in the area the students are prevented from carrying out activities in the school grounds. These facts are no longer taken into account. The criteria now are the length of time the school has been established, the enrolment figures, and another qualification which had not been voiced earlier. I am amazed that someone's enthusiasm for a cause wanes when he moves to the other side of the House—when he is in a position to do something about it.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That answer was provided by the Minister for Education. I was only the agent in this place. They are not my views.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I asked a question of the Leader of the House.

The Hon. J. Dolan: But you know very well the question goes to the Minister for Education and he provides a reply.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not know where the question goes, but I must say I am amazed at some of the answers we receive in this place. I asked the Leader of the House for an answer, and I felt he should have ensured that the answer was correct. It is obvious that the hall-gymnasium will not be finished in the 1973-74 financial year, and that the Education Department does not know when the building will be completed.

Whilst on the subject, I would like to say I am staggered at the proposed cost of the building, although I could not say that it could be completed at a lesser cost. However bearing in mind the recent statements made by the Leader of the House in regard to answers which were not correct—and I instance last week when an answer referred to tons instead of permits—perhaps I should investigate whether or not the figure given is correct. I do not intend to do this—

The Hon. J. Dolan: If you ask me to, I will approach the department and say that you do not believe the answer is correct.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not saying that. I would like to draw attention to a question I asked in the House last year. I asked the Minister for Railways the following question, on Thursday, the 7th September, 1972—

- (1) Does the Minister consider that a railway station is warranted at the Cannington Senior High School for the benefit of students attending this school?
- (2) If so, what action is he taking to ensure its provision?
- (3) What is the current estimate of the cost of providing such a station?

The Hon. J. Dolan replied—

- (1) An additional stopping place for use by students attending Cannington Senior High School may be desirable, but bearing in mind the expenditure involved; the fact that the walking distance to be saved would be approximately thirty chains only; and the programme of other priority works; there is not, at least at the present time, sufficient justification for provision of this facility.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) A current estimate is not available but will be taken out and the information conveyed to the Hon. Member as soon as possible.

I ask members to take particular note of the opening words in the answer to this question—"An additional stopping place for use by students attending Cannington Senior High School."

I also draw the attention of members to an extract taken from a *Hansard* report of the 9th August, 1967, as follows—

The next subject I wish to touch on concerns the representations I made a long while ago, on the establishment of a railway stopping place for the children who attend the Cannington High School. The school is built alongside the railway line, but the children are faced with a mile walk in either direction to get to the nearest station. Many of these children ride bicycles to the stations to catch trains for school, but when they alight they face a walk of a mile and this is most uncomfortable during rainy weather and in the hot summer. They have to trudge along with a bag full of books, which I am sure none of us would like to do. I made representations to the Minister to establish a stopping place near the school. I realise he has other commitments but the reply he gave me was quite satisfactory. The cost of establishing the stopping place was said to be \$6,000. We now talk in terms of millions, and \$6,000 represents only chicken feed. The expenditure of this sum would enable many hundreds of school children to get to school comfortably.

The proposed stopping place would have to cater for only one train in the morning and one in the afternoon, each way. This is a privilege enjoyed by the children further along on the line who attend Armadale High School. A railway siding was built, and the train continues from Armadale station to the high school and drops the children there. In the afternoons the train picks them up again. If it is good enough to install a stopping place for one school it should be good enough to install a similar one for another. I shall continue to remind the Minister from time to time about the need for one near the Cannington High School, and I hope that eventually one will be established.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It was good representation, was it not?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Continuing—

Such a stopping place will be a boon to the children. Its establishment will be a sign of development. This high school is in a district where the population is increasing and where building activities will continue to grow.

Members may wonder who would make a speech such as that.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You would not have read it unless you thought it was good.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I have been absent from the Chamber for a few moments. Who said that?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That speech was made by The Hon. J. Dolan.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It was an excellent one, too.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I made several representations on behalf of this school and, in fact, I had the Minister visit the school to investigate the situation. I was responsible, too, for having officers from the Railways Department visit the school and they took all the necessary measurements to carry out this work. It was as a result of their efforts that an estimate of \$6,000 was made.

In answer to my questions the Minister has told me that the work will cost money, but no money is available. He also stated that the walking distance is only 30 chains.

Sitting suspended from 6.05 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Prior to the tea suspension I was making the point that in an answer to a question I asked concerning a stopping-off place outside Cannington High School the Minister indicated that as the distance was only approximately 30 chains it was not important that a stopping place be provided. When he originally spoke in the House on the subject the Minister indicated that the distance was one mile. Obviously on that occasion he was exaggerating because it is certainly not a mile. However, I would argue the point with him about the estimate of 30 chains because I consider it is about half a mile.

For all the reasons he gave in his speech in 1967 I consider a stopping-off place is necessary and I certainly agree with his belief at that time that the cost of providing this particular stopping-off place is chicken feed in the general run of the Government's finances. Now suddenly because the Minister is part of the Government which must provide the finance, the \$6,000 is no longer chicken feed but a major project which cannot be financed by the Government, notwithstanding the fact that all the reasons he gave in the speech I read to the House apply equally today; indeed they apply to a greater degree today because the school is now a senior high school and as fifth-year students now attend, the total number at the school is higher than it was in 1967.

I am pointing out that the Minister's attitude has changed dramatically from the days when he was on the Opposition side and able to criticise the Government. It is different these days when he is in a position in Cabinet to influence the Government's thinking and ensure that the

facilities are provided. These people at Cannington could be forgiven for wondering what sort of individual Mr. Dolan is.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They don't. They know.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am saying they could be forgiven if they had a doubt. On the one hand he was fighting for the facility they wanted. He was representing their case, and I take nothing away from him for this; but on the other hand, when he is in a position in a Government where he can actually do something about the matter, he loses interest completely.

I wonder how genuine some of these representations are when year after year the Government of the day was criticised for not doing certain things and yet when the Government changes and the very people who made the criticisms are in a position to do something about the matters they do not lift a finger to help.

I want to emphasise that I still believe the stopping place should be provided. I do not go along with the excuse that the \$6,000 which would be required should be a consideration. If the Minister's representations were genuine in 1967, I appeal to him to continue those representations in Cabinet and to prevail upon his colleague in whichever department is involved to provide the money. Now I come to think of it his own department is responsible; that is, the Railways Department. Surely the Minister has some say in the allocation of money to enable the \$6,000 to be provided for a project he believed was so vital in 1967. With regard to the hall-gymnasium, the Minister said he had fought for the provision of this amenity, but no longer has any vocal interest in it because he could not influence the other members of Cabinet to provide the funds. He cannot use the same excuse in this instance because the department involved is under his jurisdiction.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I cannot allocate the money the department has to spend. You do not seem to know anything about how the Government works.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I certainly do not know anything about how the Minister's Government works.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Nor any other Government.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I think this Government acts rather strangely.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think the previous one did that for 12 years.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The honourable member mentioned that from time to time. I am saying now that the Minister is in charge of the department which should provide the stopping-off place and it is within his power to suggest that the money be spent on this project

which he believed was so vital in 1967, but which he considers is not vital any more and about which he is consequently not doing anything.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think that in all probability it will take another term in office for us to clean up the mistakes of the previous Government.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is the Minister's view. Unfortunately for the Minister, it would appear from the attitude of the general public that his Government will not get that opportunity. Fortunately for the State, it appears the Liberal-Country Party coalition will be returned after the next election. Whether or not it is, I say that as far as I am concerned the stopping-off place was required when the Liberal-Country Party Government was in office and its provision is of no less importance now the Labor Party Government is in power. I made representations to the previous Government and I am making representations now, but to no avail. Therefore it seems that it does not matter which Government is in office, the stopping-off place will not be provided. The Minister is trying to tell me that he has no say in running the Railways Department.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I did not say that. I run the Railways Department.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: One would not think so.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You would not because you have no sense.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is a matter of opinion. Fortunately the Minister's opinion as to whether or not I have any sense is not valued very highly by me. I am saying that if the Minister has some authority over the department he ought to do something about this matter. I have drawn the attention of the House to the peculiar situation regarding Mr. Dolan's attitude to the position at the Cannington High School.

I want to make passing reference to the Canning Vale land which has been rezoned as industrial land. As there are other speakers and I have another couple of fairly important issues with which I wish to deal, I will not go into this subject in detail because time is getting away from me, but I am concerned about the land being rezoned for industrial purposes. I am not concerned that the land has been rezoned because good arguments have been submitted as to why this is desirable. It is geographically well located and I have no argument on that score. The whole of the particular area is in the province I represent and some of my constituents are very worried because the value of their land has been established for them without their ever having had an opportunity to voice an opinion.

The Government department concerned ascertained the names of those who wished to sell their land, but it did not inform them of the purpose for which the land was being purchased. The department has been able to obtain several lots in that area.

The Hon. R. Thompson: How much an acre are they paying? Have you any idea?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Something like \$2,000 an acre.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Different from the \$580 which was paid at Kwinana isn't it?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In what year?

The Hon. R. Thompson: Some of it is not paid for yet.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You are the Government now. You will be able to fix it up overnight.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I will not enter into an argument with Mr. Ron Thompson because, were I to move a motion on the subject, he would be my first supporter and he would be by my side when the bells were rung for a division. However, I will not move a motion and therefore I will not put Mr. Ron Thompson to the test.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He would be beside you trying to pull you over to the other side.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I take strong exception to the value of land being based on the sale price of a block nearby which the owner desired to sell. I cannot go along with the theory that because one individual sold his land for, say, \$2,000 an acre, it necessarily follows that the fellow who lives on the next block ought to accept that price for his land. He may not want to sell his land; to him it could be worth anything.

A person might not want to sell his land at all, either at \$2 an acre or at \$2,000 an acre. We realise, of course, that some land has to be resumed, but I do not go along with the theory that land is to be valued at the same value at which somebody else happened to be prepared to sell. One has to bear in mind that those who have sold their land were not informed of the name of the purchaser. I just cannot go along with that method of valuing land.

Some people have dedicated their lives to working properties in the area to which I have referred. They have applied their whole life's dream to the development of their block of land. The land in question is priceless as far as they are concerned. The efforts put into the development of those blocks of land are irrecoverable. People who have spent a lifetime working on their land and building it up do not want to go out and start again somewhere else. In many cases they are too old to start again.

It is not good enough to say that people can be relocated on similar ground in another area for \$2,000 an acre. Surely we should not let a situation such as this develop. However, it is taking place and it has taken place previously. I violently disagree with the system adopted, and I oppose it.

I believe people should be permitted to place a value on their properties based on what they have put into them, and based on their own estimation. I think it is a very sad state of affairs that this sort of tactic is used to entice people to sell their land in order to establish a value at which other land will be resumed. The system is fundamentally and basically wrong and I take strong exception to it.

Many people, of course, will be quite happy to accept the price offered and I am not in disagreement with that procedure if the people are happy. That is their prerogative. However, if somebody is not happy and he is convinced in his own mind that his asset is worth more than the value placed on it he should be able to place his own value on the land. I mention this matter in passing on behalf of the people who live in the area to which I have referred because I agree with their views.

A couple of other matters are disturbing me. The first concerns a question which I asked of the Minister on the 20th March, 1973. My question concerned the number of applicants which the State Housing Commission had on its waiting lists for rental and purchase homes. I asked the Minister to give me some comparisons of the number of applicants at various dates in the period from 1968 to 1973.

Those members who have been in this House since approximately that time will recall that the number of applicants for housing was very high indeed. A great number of people came to members of Parliament seeking representation to the Housing Commission so that they may obtain houses. I am sure that most members received numerous calls every day.

The number of calls which I, personally, now receive for housing assistance is nowhere near the same as those I received previously. In fact, the calls have tapered off and it is now unusual to receive a call from a person seeking housing assistance, although I do still receive such calls. I asked the question to verify, in my own mind, that the number of people on the waiting list at the State Housing Commission was obviously less than it was previously. That turned out to be the situation.

Back in 1968 and 1969, when pressure for housing assistance was heavy, members of Parliament could contact the

State Housing Commission—when representing a particular individual—and receive a reply from the Housing Commission within a week at the outside. Members would receive an indication that the person's case was being looked at on an emergent basis, or to the effect that the case did not warrant emergent consideration. Other replies would state that the person seeking assistance was eligible, or was not eligible, and members were able to convey that information to their constituents within a very short space of time. Indeed, a fortnight would have been a long wait. For that reason I find it very difficult to understand why different circumstances should prevail now. The demand from the populace is less intense and it is obvious that a lesser number of people are on the waiting list. That was evidenced in the answer supplied to my question. When I approach the State Housing Commission now, it seems to take months to receive an answer. I wonder what is wrong.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Have you been down to the building in Plain Street recently?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I would not have the slightest idea what that interjection has to do with the question I am asking. However, if it makes Mr. Cloughton any happier, I went past there a few days ago.

The Hon. R. F. Cloughton: Did you find the State Housing Commission?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I suppose the next thing will be Mr. Cloughton trying to tell me that the State Housing Commission has shifted. I am familiar with the situation with regard to the State Housing Commission.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think he might ask what day in the week it is.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am trying to point out that over the last year or two the ability to get quick replies from the State Housing Commission seems to have disappeared. I do not know whether I am the only one who has this trouble. As everybody knows, I have been critical—justifiably, I believe—of the State Housing Commission. I am wondering whether my attitude has had anything to do with my representations not receiving the same prompt attention which they used to receive. Notwithstanding the multitudes of people applying for assistance we usually received a reply within a week or fortnight at the absolute outside. As far as I am concerned that situation does not prevail today and I am at a loss to know the reason why.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I can agree with some of the things the honourable member has said, but I think the delay is mainly

due to the reorganisation in Shell House. Everything is not at the fingertips of the staff as it used to be.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: They have not been there very long?

The Hon. R. Thompson: For a period of six months.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: This has been going on for the last couple of years.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It has not happened to me.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I simply raise that point. It is a matter which concerns me as the representative of 70,000 people in that I cannot receive any sort of action under a period of two months. I wonder whether the breakdown is because of my criticism of the State Housing Commission over the years or whether it is just a lackadaisical approach by this Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The same officers are still doing the work.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I realise that, and I am not blaming the officers. I think the breakdown might be that the Government does not intend to worry about Clive Griffiths or the Liberal Party.

The Hon. R. Thompson: No, that would not be so.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am asking the reason for the delays because they are certainly occurring. If the same delay is not being experienced by other members then I want to know the reason for its being experienced by me.

I am also concerned that when I write to Ministers and departments and ask for information on behalf of constituents—who are concerned about one thing or another—the replies to my queries take such a long time to arrive. I am wondering whether such action does not emanate from the top—from the Minister, who does after all represent the Government.

To give some idea of what I am talking about, and for the benefit of those members who so rudely interjected a minute or so ago and who implied that what I said was not correct, I will give one or two brief instances of what I am speaking about. On the 22nd August, 1972, I received a letter from one of the parents and citizens' associations in my electorate. The letter was dated the 22nd August, and two days later—on the 24th August—I wrote to the Minister for Education concerning the particular problem.

After several months—and several more letters—on the 27th March, 1973, I received a reply from the Minister as follows—

Dear Mr. Griffiths,

I refer again to your letter of the 8th of March concerning the Maddington Primary School.

Arrangements have been made for sand from the Kardinya High School works to be used as filling for the Maddington Primary School grounds and this work is proceeding. I regret that advice to you to this effect was not forwarded when the decision was made and I can only ask you to accept my apologies for this oversight.

The work had been carried out and completed months beforehand. Notwithstanding that, the Minister wrote to me and said that as soon as the report came to hand he would advise me of what action may be taken.

After I had seen that the work was completed, I wrote to the Minister on the 8th March and asked him if he would give me some idea of the action to be taken in regard to this matter. He wrote to me on the 27th March and said that he regretted the delay in the advice, and any inconvenience it may have caused.

That was from the Minister for Education. To go a little further, I wrote to the same Minister on another occasion—the 7th February. It did not take quite so long to receive a reply on that occasion. On the 9th February the Minister wrote to me and acknowledged receipt of my letter. He said the matter was receiving consideration and that I would be further advised as soon as possible.

Incidentally, I was seeking information regarding a promise which the Minister made when publicly opening a school on the 8th December last year. The multitude of people who were there to witness the opening were given an undertaking that the Government would carry out certain works for them. The Minister received great applause and everybody thought that the work would be put into effect and that it would be completed by the beginning of the school year. However, to their dismay, when school opened the situation was the same as it had been on the 8th December. So I wrote to him and asked him what he was doing about it. He said he would have a look into it and advise me as soon as possible.

On the 19th February the Minister wrote to me as follows—

I refer to your letter of 7th February . . . I wish to advise that the contract documents are currently being prepared and it is hoped to put the work out to tender on Saturday, 24th February.

It was interesting to read in the newspaper on the 17th February an advertisement calling for tenders for this work and stating that plans and specifications could be picked up at the Public Works Department. The Minister wrote to me on the 19th

February and said plans and specifications were being prepared and it was hoped to put the work out to tender on the 24th February. The work had already been advertised in the paper. I thought this was a strange state of affairs.

I notified the school people of the position and, to my horror, I discovered that at a P. & C. meeting the night before the Legislative Assembly member for the area had produced a copy of a letter written to the Education Department by the Public Works Department indicating a state of affairs completely different from that conveyed to me by the Minister in his letter. I take strong exception to this. Some members interjected and suggested I was unreasonable in suggesting I was being treated differently from other people. I think I am perfectly justified in thinking the treatment that is being meted out to me leaves something to be desired, and I want to know the reason for it.

I make it perfectly clear that the letter produced by the Legislative Assembly member was not given to him by the Minister for Education. It was given to him by the Public Works Department. The letter informed the Education Department of a certain set of circumstances. Nevertheless, two days after the advertisement appeared in the paper the Minister wrote to me telling me the department was getting around to preparing the plans and specifications and hoped to send the job out to tender on the 24th February. I have here a copy of the newspaper advertisement. I therefore think I am justified in asking the Government whether this treatment is meted out to every member of Parliament or whether it is meted out only to Opposition members of Parliament.

Still on the subject of getting nothing done, and coming back to what I said about the State Housing Commission and having to wait two months or thereabouts before receiving a reply to representations, I wrote to the Minister for Housing on the 7th September, 1972, pointing out to him a state of affairs which existed in the house of one of my constituents at Bentley. I pointed out that I thought this particular constituent was justified in asking for certain renovations to be carried out because of the age and condition of the house.

I was pleased to receive quickly from the Minister a letter dated the 8th September—the next day—acknowledging my letter and indicating that he would have the matter examined and advise me further. On the 14th September—I was amazed at the speed with which I was being looked after, having received two letters within the space of a week—the Minister wrote pointing out the further action he had taken to ensure that this particular person's problem would be taken care of. On

the 17th October, 1972, I received another letter from the Minister in which he stated—

Further to my letter dated 14th September, 1972, the question... has been examined and put in hand.

I am informed that the following work has been ordered...

Items 1 to 6 are listed. I will not read them out because they do not enter into the argument. They merely indicate the extent of the work to be done, which was all the work the individual wanted done and all the work I had requested be done. The final paragraph of that letter reads—

You can be assured that the foregoing repairs will be completed by the Commission Contractor without any undue delay.

I was as happy as Larry. I wrote to the constituent telling him what had happened. He rang me up and thanked me profusely, and he has been ringing me up ever since.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: To keep on thanking you?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: No. He has been ringing me up to ask when he can expect the work to be done. I have been ringing the Housing Commission and getting nowhere in regard to my request for information about this job.

It is now the 3rd April, 1973. The Minister said on the 17th October, 1972, that the work would be put in hand without any undue delay. As a result of questions I have asked, it has already been established that there is nowhere near the crisis in housing that existed back in the days when we used to get action in a fortnight, and there is nowhere near the number of applicants for rental and purchase homes on the commission's books. So what the devil is going on? Does the commission make these promises in the hope that people will forget about them and go on thinking what a lovely Government they have? Does the Government think this man will forget his house has never been fixed and that he will be content for the rest of his life? At least the Minister thought the work should be done.

I want to know the reason for all these delays. What is the reason for my being given incorrect information? What is the reason for my letters not being answered at all?

I wrote to the Minister for Police on the 20th June, 1972. This will be interesting.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is not so long ago.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is incorrect. I wrote to the Minister before that. He wrote to me on the 20th June, 1972.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He is not too sure of himself.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am very sure of myself and I want the Minister to be sure of himself. I wrote to the Minister on the 16th June and he replied to me on the 20th June saying he was in receipt of the letter, the position was already under review, and I would be further advised in due course. That is the last I ever heard of the matter.

The Hon. J. Dolan: What was the subject?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: "Stop" signs in Oats Street, Carlisle. If the Minister had said, "The position is already under review and I do not consider it is any business of yours", or, "I do not intend to contact you ever again", I would not have expected an answer; but he said, "You will be further advised in due course." I took that to mean he would keep me informed of the situation. But not on your life! That is the last I ever heard of it.

I therefore think I am quite justified in believing that somewhere along the line the Government is lax in its approach to its responsibilities to members of Parliament. I believe the members of the Government should take a good, long look at themselves to see whether or not something can be done to enable members of Parliament to represent their constituents as they should.

Finally, I want to deal with a subject which began quite simply. It was certainly never intended to go as far as it has gone. It was certainly never intended to develop into the number of questions I have had to ask in order to obtain the information I wanted. I refer to the permits that are issued by the Transport Commission to people who cart general freight to the north-west of Western Australia. I did not intend that this matter should become a marathon. I did not intend to ask questions that were not easily answerable. I was certainly not trying to find out any secret information the Transport Commission might have in regard to this matter. That never occurred to me.

I started asking questions about this matter because I was approached by some operators who had recently renegotiated certain contracts for carting goods to the north-west of Western Australia based on the known facts, one of which was that the permit fees were so much a ton for goods carted to the various centres. The contracts were renegotiated in January of this year for a further 12 months. These people had been carting goods to those north-west towns for a long time—they were not people who had never carted material before—so they knew what the position was.

To their horror, on the 12th February, with no warning whatsoever, they discovered the permit fees had been increased by 60c a ton in some instances and 80c a ton in other instances—just out of the blue.

It must be borne in mind that these people cart hundreds of tons of goods to the north in the course of a year. If those hundreds or thousands of tons are multiplied by 60c or 80c, it would amount to not an insignificant sum of money, which the people concerned have no opportunity to recoup.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The amount of freight is decreasing because of the extra charges made by the Government. The people in the north are no longer dealing with the south of the State in some cases.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I did not want to become involved in this matter at all. I simply wanted to know—and I asked the Minister questions along these lines—when it was first decided that there should be a review of the fees. The Minister said, "It has been going on for months", or words to that effect. I asked when it was discovered that the fees would go up and the Minister said, "This was done early in February." He then told me the fees were increased on the 12th February. I asked the Minister what he had done in regard to notifying people about it, and he said the only action the Government had taken was to notify the Road Transport Association of Western Australia.

Of course, then I had to make inquiries, and I found that very few people belong to the Road Transport Association. Indeed, the majority of those who cart goods to the north-west do not belong to it. So it seems to me that it was unreasonable to expect the people concerned to be able to find out that the fees were to be increased, simply because an organisation to which it was not compulsory to belong was notified. Perhaps it would have been better had the Government notified the Transport Workers' Union, because that union is trying to get everybody to join it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: With success.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I will say it is successful! It is intimidating people and standing over them. However, I will not go into that matter.

The Minister chose to notify, of all people, the organisation I have mentioned. I think that would be fair enough if all the operators belonged to it; but that is not the situation. So the operators had no warning whatsoever of the rise of 60c.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No public notification at all?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: No, nothing appeared in the Press. Normally if the S.E.C. proposes to increase the price of electricity a notification appears in the Press warning the public some time in advance. If the Minister for Housing proposes to increase his rents we always see some prior notification of it. If the Post Office proposes to increase the price of postage stamps, we are usually notified in advance. But under no circumstances does

the Minister for Transport intend to let anybody know that there is a ruthless increase in the price of permit fees.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You pick some amazing adjectives.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister will not even admit that there was an increase; that is another fact that amazes me. He simply will not concede that the permit fee was increased.

I asked the Minister the following question—

- (1) Has the permit fee for carting general freight by road from Perth to the North West of this State recently been increased?

One would expect the Minister simply to answer "Yes" or "No". That question contains no complications or hidden meanings. But what did the Minister reply? He said—

- (1) The reduction in fees introduced on 1st January, 1972, was withdrawn on 12th February, 1973, and fees reverted to the previous level.

So instead of saying "Yes, we have increased the fees" he tried to gloss over the situation.

The Hon. J. Dolan: No, he did not.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, what did the Minister do?

The Hon. J. Dolan: We reduced the fees and then restored them again.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Why?

The Hon. J. Dolan: I explained why.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I did not want to know that.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It is about time you were factual and told the truth.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: There is no need for the Minister to get upset; I am not saying he did not tell the truth; I am saying that I asked a simple question, "Did the permit fees increase?"

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Of course they increased, but he would not say so.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: However, instead of saying "Yes" the Minister said the reduction which had been introduced over 12 months previously had been withdrawn. If that is not a Dutchman's way of answering a question, I do not know what is. Right from the time I asked the first question on this subject there has been a peculiar atmosphere that I just cannot understand. I was asking questions to try to ascertain what justification the Minister had to increase the fees.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I told you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Because the Minister said that he had not advised anybody apart from the Road Transport Association of the increased fees, I then attempted to find out something about the matter. I asked the Minister whether it was

compulsory for all transport operators to be members of the Road Transport Association. The Minister answered that question with a simple "No." He did not give a long, drawn-out story; he merely gave the answer I required. In reply to another question the Minister said it is understood that some operators are not members of the association.

I asked the Minister a question to this effect: "If all operators carting goods to the north-west were not members of the association, by what means were they expected to be aware of the increased fees?" I simply wanted to know how the Minister thought the operators would be aware of the increase because nothing appeared in the Press about it; they had no notification of any description.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: One would think there would have been a ministerial statement about it.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Yes, but we heard not a word. In reply to that question the Minister said—

Under the Transport Commission Act, the Commissioner is required to determine the fee for each individual license or permit and the applicant is then advised of the amount so determined.

In practice, a scale of fees is set out as a guide to ensure uniformity of treatment but is subject to variations if warranted by circumstances of any particular case.

A copy of the scale is supplied to the Road Transport Association but it is not practicable to circularise all individual operators in anticipation that they may become future applicants for permits.

I am not interested in all that. I maintain that I am interested in the people who have always been carting goods, and not people who are not carting goods. The Minister could have overcome the need to notify each operator by issuing a statement in the Press, as all other departments do when fees are increased.

I still could not understand the attitude of the Minister, so I pursued the subject further in order to establish in the mind of the Minister that relatively few people would be involved as far as the places to which I was referring are concerned. I asked him how many permits were issued to cart goods to those particular places. I can assure members that I was taken aback when the Minister replied to my question and indicated that in the case of Port Hedland 1,429 permits were issued in November, 1972; 1,580 were issued in December, and in January and February, 1973, 1,284 and 1,731 permits respectively were issued.

I immediately experienced a sinking feeling in my stomach and thought, "If those are the numbers of permits issued to cart goods to Port Hedland in those months, then I certainly cannot support my argument that the Minister should notify each operator." It seemed to me that in Western Australia we have more transport operators than any other kind of operators. I did not know we had so many; I thought road maintenance tax had sent most of them broke, because that is what the Government has told us.

I pursued the question and asked the Minister for the names of the people to whom the permits were issued. Naturally, the Minister said it was too big a job because of the number involved, and I agreed with him. So I asked a supplementary question as follows—

Further to the reply to my question on the 28th March, 1973, and in view of the statement that considerable research would be involved in extracting all the necessary information, would the Minister please provide the required figures for the month of February, 1973?

We all know the Minister then apologised to me in the House and said that the huge figures he gave in his answer did not refer to the number of permits that had been issued, but the number of tons of goods that were carted. Of course, that threw me back to where I started. So today I asked a question without notice. I asked the Minister how he was able to provide the tonnage of goods carted to the north, and yet it was too much trouble to ascertain the number of permits issued.

I assumed that when an operator makes application for a permit he must fill out a permit application form, and that form would contain details of the operator, his truck, and a description of the goods and their weight. It seemed to me that if the Minister could extract the total number of tons from all that information, he could also ascertain the number of permits issued. We must bear in mind the only place all that information is located is on the application form; if it is contained anywhere else then the department records it. As the operators complete the application forms from which the tonnages were extracted in reply to my question, surely the application forms are available. A form might be for 40 tons, as the Minister said today. So 40 tons could equal one application and one permit. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that if 1,400 tons of goods were carted to Port Hedland in a particular month somewhere around 60 permits were issued. Those 60 permits could have been taken out by four or five operators. Therefore, we get down to the number of people—which I was trying to establish in the first place, and which caused so much trouble. However,

I still have not got the answer because the Minister says it is too much trouble. I just cannot understand the Minister's answer to the question without notice I asked today.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The department gave it to me and I understood it, but you do not seem to realise that the department must check back through every permit issued to find out the information you seek. I have tried to tell you that, but you are deliberately twisting things to suit your own silly argument.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: To find out the number of tons carted to a particular town, the department would have to go to the permit application forms.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They extract that information when the permit is granted. I have told you they do not keep all statistics about the permits. You do not seem to understand that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I maintain that if information is available to enable the Minister to give me an answer of 1,731 tons—not 1,700 or 1,750 tons approximately, but an exact amount—then someone has gone through the permit application forms pretty accurately.

The Hon. J. Dolan: No. They take out that information every time a permit is applied for, but they do not take out the other information. I have told you they would have to go back through all the forms to get that.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Ask the Minister whether the permits are duplicated.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Obviously they are duplicated. Knowing Government departments I think probably they would be quadruplicated. I was simply trying to ascertain, considering the magnitude of the increase in the fee, whether it would be possible to notify the people who cart the goods to the north, so they would not be placed in the position of having to renegotiate contracts and, in some instances, to commit themselves for 12 months to a price at which they would lose 60c a ton.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you think a permit is issued before a journey is commenced?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Not always.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Not always, but I have made a few inquiries and I will have a lot more to say about this. I have not yet scratched the surface of this matter.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You will keep on misrepresenting the matter.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not misrepresenting anything. I take strong exception to the Minister misrepresenting what I am saying.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You have done that so far.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: In what way have I been misleading?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Your question about the fee, for a start. You did not tell the full story.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I read out the question. Certainly I am not misrepresenting anything. I believe there is room for an inquiry into permit fees and permits which have been issued. From the figures of the tonnages carted to the various places, it appears that not every road operator is taking out permits.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They have been dodging it for years, and still are.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is interesting.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That was why they were prosecuted and your Government gaoled them.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Don't get onto that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I take this opportunity to ask the Minister, when he replies to the debate, to inform us of the number of transport operators who were gaoled during the period of office of the previous Government for nonpayment of permit fees. I will ask the Minister this now so that he will clearly understand the question. Whether he will give me the information or not—

The Hon. J. Dolan: If the information is procurable I will give it to the honourable member.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Even the most simple of persons will know the answer to that!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I would like the Minister to give me the number of people who were gaoled by the previous Government for nonpayment of permit fees.

The Hon. J. Dolan: And road maintenance tax?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not talking about road maintenance tax, but only about permit fees.

The Hon. J. Dolan: What does a person get a permit for? It is for the purpose of carting goods, and on those goods he has to pay road maintenance tax. They are all associated.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I will have something to say shortly about road maintenance tax. The Minister has already indicated he is well aware of the fact that many people in Western Australia are not taking out permits to cart goods. I suggest this is very prevalent indeed in respect of operators who are carting goods to the north. I will give one or two reasons why they fail to take out permits.

It will be recalled that this Government made a statement that nobody would be forced to pay road maintenance tax, and that those who had failed to pay would be absolved. The Government made the statement that nobody would be imprisoned for failure to pay, and anyone who was imprisoned for nonpayment would be released. Notwithstanding that, recently one person was imprisoned, but this matter was rectified as a result of representations by the Liberal member for the area.

The Hon. J. Dolan: What a fool he made of himself!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not know about that. The person concerned has been released from gaol and it was as a result of an undertaking given by this Government. It was not an undertaking with which everybody agreed; however, it was an undertaking given by this Government that nobody would be gaoled for nonpayment of road maintenance tax.

The situation is that any person who has not paid his arrears of road maintenance tax, or any person who owes the Transport Commission any money at all, is not permitted to take out a permit for the cartage of goods anywhere in the State. So we find this situation arising: transport operators who owe the Transport Commission road maintenance tax—whether it be \$10 or \$100—are refused permits for the cartage of goods to the north-west. Such permits are refused until such time as the road operators have paid the arrears of road maintenance tax.

Let us see what the road operators are doing, and what the companies which engage subcontract drivers and owner-drivers to cart goods to the north-west and other centres of the State are doing. The main contractor engages a subcontractor who has not paid his arrears of road maintenance tax, and for that reason cannot obtain a permit. So the main contractor says to the subcontractor, "Here is a certain number of dollars per ton for carting the goods; and here is \$4.60 per ton for the permit fee. You cart the goods to the north in your own name. You know you cannot get a permit, but I have fulfilled my responsibility by giving you the money for the permit fee. You will have to take your chance as to whether or not you are caught."

Naturally these people cannot obtain permits. They receive the money and they cart the goods. I know of one individual who has been carting goods to the north for 18 months, and during all that time has not taken out a permit. I know of another individual who was carting goods to the north for 15 months, but who was caught on two occasions. On the first occasion he was cautioned, and on the second occasion I think he was fined \$20. By carting two loads per week and receiving over \$4 per ton for the permit fee, such a person

is very much in front. How stupid is it therefore for people to take out permits and pay the fee?

The Hon. J. Dolan: You are not advising people to break the law?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not, but I will tell the Minister what I am advising. I will advise the Minister what I believe he ought to do. Here we find a situation which has arisen as a result of the Government's action of not enforcing the payment of road maintenance tax; but the Government has introduced a rule which prevents people who owe money to the Transport Commission from working in the transport industry.

All these people must have some form of employment, and many of them have no other way of earning a living than to drive a truck and cart goods. Now the only way they can do that work is to do it illegally, and so they break the law.

If the Transport Commission were alert to the situation it would cause the trucks to be stopped and the drivers apprehended. I have already mentioned the cases of the person who has been carting goods to the north for 18 months and has not taken out a permit, and another who has been carting goods to the north for 15 months and who on the only two occasions he was stopped was apprehended. All this is brought about by the attitude of the Government in displaying leniency in respect of the nonpayment of road maintenance tax.

I supported the Government's Bill to abolish the road maintenance tax. I did not support it because I believed this was an innocuous tax. Indeed, I believe it to be a justifiable tax. I think it is important to have some form of road maintenance tax, whether it be a permit fee, a maintenance tax, or something else. I supported the Government, because I believe the Labor Party went to the people in 1971 with the categorical statement that should the party be elected to office one move it would make was the abolition of the road maintenance tax, and this tax would not be replaced by something else. For that reason I believed the Government was justified in introducing the Bill.

In a House of Review where I am not commanded by anybody to do anything, I voted according to my conscience on that occasion as I do on other occasions. However, I cannot agree with the action of the Government in scrubbing the debts that are owed by these people, but at the same time preventing them from taking out permits. As a consequence these people are not paying the permit fees. Even if they wanted to repent and to pay their arrears of road maintenance tax, they are not granted permits to enable them to do so.

I am a little concerned with the state of affairs which the Government has permitted to arise. I am concerned that people basically honest have become dishonest in

order to earn a living. I am concerned that the Transport Commission does not seem to be taking any action to stop these people from doing what they are doing. No doubt the Minister will tell us about the number of people who were imprisoned by the previous Government for nonpayment.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Why do you anticipate what I will say?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Minister said he would do that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am also interested in the number of people who have been prosecuted by either this or the previous Government. I think it will be found that the number is very small.

There is one other aspect of transport about which I am very concerned: that is, the licensing system for the cartage of frozen goods to the north of the State. This system was introduced in an attempt to bring about some sort of competition, and to give the people of the north a choice in the cartage of frozen goods. Because of the high cost of setting up the freezer trucks the licenses were restricted to two operators, one operating in fair competition with the other, so that if one did not get a job the other would. I presume this was intended to keep the prices at a reasonable level.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Who were these two operators?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I think one was Bell Bros. and the other Gascoyne Traders, but I am not sure.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: If you are not sure, how do you know there are only two?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister told us, so it must be true.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That information must be reliable.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It is reliable. It is absolutely true.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why then did Mr. Dellar doubt it?

The Hon. J. Dolan: You are talking about the two main operators between Carnarvon and Perth.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: No, the operators from Perth to the north. I am talking about the two parties who have been granted permits to cart frozen goods to the north.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That is not so. You are talking about the two operators between Perth and Carnarvon.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am not. The Minister might believe that, but I am not referring to that aspect.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I will tell you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not want to mislead the Minister. I am not being facetious or anything else; all I am

saying is that these are the only parties which are permitted to cart frozen goods to Port Hedland.

The Hon. J. Dolan: That is right. They have been given a franchise to do that.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: That is correct. Why then is the Minister talking about Carnarvon? I am referring to frozen goods. Only two parties are licensed to carry frozen goods to the northern towns mentioned by me in my question — Dampier, Port Hedland, Goldsworthy, Shay Gap, Broome, Derby, and Wyndham. Only two operators are allowed to cart frozen goods to those places. Nobody else. As I mentioned earlier the original purpose for this was to provide some competition within the industry itself to ensure there would be a stability of price.

I was not among the decision-making group that decided this issue, but this was the logical reason for their having made this decision, apart from a desire to ensure the maintenance of this facility of carting to the north the perishable goods in question. What has happened?

Anybody who obtains a permit from the Transport Commission is able to cart general freight and many operators do just this; but only two operators are permitted to cart perishable goods in freezer trucks. There are, of course, many people who perhaps would want a change made in those who cart the goods.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I agree with you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am sure many people would like a change but it is not possible for this to be done. In practice many of these towns are visited by only one of these operators; but the customer cannot get anybody else to cart his freezer goods because he is not permitted to do so.

I cannot say whether or not the practice to which I have just referred is carried out by a mutual arrangement between the two organisations concerned, but it seems mighty strange to me that one goes to one town while the other goes to the other town. They do not both go to each town as, I assume, was the original intention.

Let us have a little think as to what further situation could present itself, and may well present itself in a situation where only one of the carters carts to a particular town while somebody else who is complying with the law and who has obtained a permit to cart ordinary general freight is also carting to the same town; he carts ordinary general freight for anybody in the town who may also want freezer goods.

I believe the situation could present itself where the owner of the freezer license—the only one in the town—could say to the customer, "Unless you let us cart your general freight also we will not cart your freezer goods"; or, "If we cart your freezer goods the cost per ton to cart them would be the standard price plus 10 per cent. or

20 per cent." The present system permits such a situation to occur. I am not suggesting it does occur but it leaves the situation open to the possibility of its occurring.

In these circumstances I think it is time we had a look at the two-license system which operates where only one carter visits many of the towns which means, of course, there is no competition; where carters of general freight would cart freezer goods, but are not allowed to do so and are accordingly put at a great disadvantage, because of the lever that the holder of the freezer license has over his clients. He is the only one permitted to cart freezer goods and it is he who sets the price.

In the situation concerning road maintenance tax about which I spoke, there are people who are going bankrupt every day; there are dozens who are still trying to earn a living illegally, because they cannot obtain a permit from the Transport Commission; there are dozens who because of the action of the Transport Commission are not able to operate; apart from which the Transport Commission itself does not know how many permits are being issued. The fact is that these freezer licenses are working against the best interests of the north instead of in the best interests of that area.

I believe the people of Western Australia are entitled to a complete investigation into the entire workings of the whole of the transport system in Western Australia. We should demand nothing short of a Royal Commission into the entire road transport system of Western Australia.

THE HON. T. O. PERRY (Lower Central) (8.50 p.m.): I rise to support the motion moved by Mr. Cloughton, and I would also like to add my congratulations to Mr. Dolan on his appointment as Leader of the Government in this House. It is probably not altogether an advantage to be a leader of a party that is outnumbered two to one, but I suppose in his younger days Mr. Dolan has found himself outnumbered two to one on the football ground and I am sure he acquitted himself with a great deal of merit on such an occasion. I have no doubt, therefore, that he will be capable of handling the situation in which he finds himself at the moment.

It is also a matter of great regret that Mr. Willesee has not been able to continue as a Minister of the present Government. When I was elected to this House, Mr. Willesee was Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He later became Leader of the Opposition and then Leader of the Government. During that time he has commanded the respect of every member of this Chamber, regardless of his political affiliations.

I would also like to add my congratulations to those of other members on the appointment of Mr. Thompson to the Ministry. I think he has one of the most difficult portfolios to administer, particularly as part of his portfolio concerns the Aboriginal population. We are spending millions of dollars on Aborigines but I do not think we are making much progress in this matter.

As members know we do not have a grievance session in this House as is the case in another place and, accordingly, I would like to take this opportunity to raise one of two matters that concern me.

One such matter is the administration of the Lands Department in relation to town land in some of our country areas. Some four years ago I expressed my concern at the way in which the Lands Department was administering the distribution and sale of land in the townsite of Darkan.

After waiting some 12 months, and after making a speech in this House eventually a block was made available for purchase. I purchased the block and built a house on it.

Under section 41A of the Land Act, after land is put up for auction at an auction sale held by the Lands Department and it is not sold at the auction sale, it is made available to the applicants for 12 months at the upset price.

After the expiry of 12 months the land is recalled and revalued and usually it is not put up for sale again until there are sufficient applicants for the blocks to warrant an auction being held.

This means that in some country areas, and particularly in Darkan, a long time elapses when no blocks are available at all. If a farmer or a businessman has had his business on the market for some time and suddenly finds he has sold his farm or house and wishes to purchase another block and build a residence on it, there are times when he must wait six to eight months before he finds a block available for the purpose.

In this day and age I do not think we should allow such a situation to continue. I would like to refer to a situation that occurred in Darkan in December, 1972. Twelve months had elapsed since the last auction sale was held and a builder in Darkan made a verbal application for a block. He was told that no blocks were available.

He was, however, advised to make a written application for a block, which he did. I have a copy of his written application here. On the 24th October, 1972, he made application for Town Lot 263 in Darkan.

Nothing was done about holding an auction in Darkan so the person concerned approached me and asked if I would take the matter up with the Lands Department.

I was advised by an officer of the Lands Department that if an application were made for this block there would be a chance of its being made available quicker than if the applicant waited for an auction to be held. He accordingly made his application.

Applications closed on the 14th March, 1973, and up till 10.00 p.m. last night the person in question had not been advised whether or not his application had been successful. I rang the Lands Department last week and was advised that Mr. Peter Blake was the only applicant for this particular block of land.

That was on the 14th March. Nearly three weeks have elapsed since then and the man concerned has not been advised as to whether or not his application has been successful. I shudder to think what would have happened had there been more than one application for the block of land in question.

In the meantime the Lands Department decided to hold an auction in Darkan; according to the *Collie Mail* it was advertised to be held on the 30th March.

The people who purchased the land on the 30th March know that they own certain blocks of land in Darkan, but the man who last October was advised to make an application for a block and not wait for the auction sale to be held was not advised of the position; at least not up until 10.00 p.m. last night.

When he made one application to the department to see whether or not he was successful in obtaining a block he was told that owing to the departmental mail it was not possible to advise him whether or not his application had been successful.

When we have all these sections of a department housed in one area surely it is possible for the department to make a decision as to whether or not a man will be allocated a block of land! Such land should be made available through the shire at an upset price and from time to time the Lands Department should revalue the land. It should do away with the auction system and make the land available on application, because in this day and age when we are served by computers, adding machines, and heaven knows what else, we should not have to wait for six months for a decision to be made on a particular block of land miles away in a town like Darkan. We are not talking of land in St. George's Terrace where I can understand it might take a while to make a decision.

Another matter to which I wish to object is the objection the Health Department has to camping outside registered camping areas. If there is one thing I have enjoyed all my life it is camping in the country, and any time you wish to enjoy a good meal, Mr. Deputy President, I would be glad if you would come camping with me.

In an old camp oven I have cooked a few very tasty meals of fish, ducks—and I was about to say wild turkey; but this of course is outside the law and I shall not mention the matter.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: So far as health goes what do you do with the end product?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I will not answer that. Camping is part of the training of many of our youth organisations; it helps get youngsters off the streets and goes a long way towards making them good citizens. We should encourage teaching these youngsters how to camp. Our scout masters and other youth organisers teach the young people how to erect tents, light fires and cook meals. The Girl Guides Association does very much the same thing.

It is pointless to teach people how to camp in the bush and observe certain hygiene laws if camping in the bush is to be forbidden. Personally I am not keen on camping in our registered caravan parks. Sometimes the crowded parks attract the flies and the hygiene is not always the best. If an epidemic of flu or measles breaks out, in all probability the individual or his family will end up with the germ.

We have wide open spaces in Western Australia and camping is something which should be encouraged, not discouraged. I must voice my disapproval of the ban on camping within a 15-mile radius of an existing registered camping area. With those few remarks I support the motion, as amended.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan) [9.02 p.m.]: I join with previous speakers in offering my condolences to the next-of-kin of the two members who passed away during the period between the present and past session of Parliament. I never had the opportunity to meet the late Sir Keith Watson but I am fully informed of the high esteem in which he was held by all sections of the community. I did, however, have the opportunity to meet the late Dr. Gordon Hislop and, from what I knew of him, he was a man of character who supported his party very well.

I congratulate Mr. Jerry Dolan on assuming the responsibility of leadership in this House. Having been associated with Jerry over a number of years, I know he will discharge his duties to the best of his abilities. I also congratulate Mr. Ron Thompson on his elevation to the ministry. Similarly, I have had a long association with Ron and I have no doubts that he will be a competent and hard working Minister.

Last but not least, I pay a tribute to Mr. Bill Willesee, who is not in the House tonight. In my short association with him he has taught me a great deal. It was with some regret that I saw him step down.

Mr. Willesee is not, to all intents and purposes, a vigorous person but he is a sincere and helpful person. Also, he is able to pass on a great deal of his experience to others and he does this in a manner which, at no time, suggests that he is really trying to tell one something or to stand over one. In other words, he has a unique ability—what might be termed “a quiet kind of leadership”. I hope he will continue in good health until the end of this Parliament and that he will enjoy a long and fruitful retirement. I say those words most sincerely, because Mr. Willesee was able to suppress me on a number of occasions when perhaps I would have been carried away and done something foolish.

I have the highest regard for Bill and my only regret is that he is not in the House this evening.

Many matters have been mentioned by members who have spoken to the Address-in-Reply debate. As usual, members are availing themselves of the debate to bring to the notice of the House any matters which cause them worry. I have been worried over many matters, the main one being the number of unsubstantiated statements which are made from time to time, particularly by the Opposition. The only authenticity for the statements is the fact that members of the Opposition have made them. I refer particularly to some of the happenings in the industrial field.

I have no axe to grind with the Press, but the Press has jumped onto the bandwagon in using extreme language which only serves to stir up divisions within our society. I think I have mentioned previously that one of the saddening features of public debate is that, from time to time, we read about the mysterious people “we” and the equally mysterious people called “they”. It is high time both the Government and the Opposition put their best foot forward and strove for national unity.

Let me deal first of all with some sections of the trade union movement. Let no-one be under the illusion that trade unions, workers' organisations, or professional organisations will fade away overnight. They simply will not.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Who said they would?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: They are part of the Australian community. They have been around for a long time and they will be around for a long time to come.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Who said anything to the contrary?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Let me assure members in this Chamber and the public at large that the vast majority of people in trade union organisations in Australia are good, honest Australian citizens. It grieves me to pick up the paper and read

the words "blackmail; intimidation" and all else that has been generated in respect of the 'Transport Workers' Union.

It amazes me that the situation was allowed to continue for some 10 or 12 days during which time accusations were being thrown backwards and forwards, leader articles appeared in the newspapers, and all kinds of debate took place in this House and in another place. During this period no firm action was taken to adjust the situation.

I am not speaking about the rights or wrongs of what happened. It is incumbent upon all people, particularly those in public life, to make themselves aware of all the facts of a case. As far as I can see, the Transport Workers' Union was fighting for a principle—a principle of protection for its members. Surely this is a very worthwhile principle.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Was the union correct in what it did?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It was a very worth-while principle.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Did the union care when someone came down for fuel?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Let us look at the facts. Had there been intimidation or blackmail there was recourse to a Police Court on the part of the oil companies which, after all, appeared to be the ones most concerned. The oil companies are respondents to the Federal award but at no stage did they endeavour to take the action which is open to them at all times and which is still open to them; namely, to seek an order under section 28 of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Even at this time such action has not been taken. Section 28 sets out quite clearly what can happen.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Has there been any legal action in the last 48 hours?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It sets out, as I said, what can happen. With the indulgence of the House I would like to refer to section 28 because I want to develop this theme in order to enlighten Mr. Heitman—I do not say this in any offensive way—as to how Federal awards operate. It is not a question of fellows coming from the east. Section 28 states—

Subject to this Act, if it appears to a Commissioner that an industrial dispute has occurred or is likely to occur—

In other words, it does not have to occur. To continue—

—he shall, whether he has been notified under this section or not, immediately ascertain the parties to the industrial dispute and the matters which form the subject of that dispute and shall take such steps as he thinks

fit for the prompt prevention or settlement of that dispute by conciliation or, if in his opinion conciliation is unlikely to succeed or has failed, by arbitration.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Is that the State Act?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Leader of the Opposition knows that this is a Commonwealth Act and is the only Act which could have been used in an arbitral sphere in this particular dispute.

The Hon. J. Heitman: What would have happened to the oil companies if they had taken out this injunction? Wouldn't there have been a wholesale strike?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It is patently obvious that people do not listen to what other people say. I did not speak about an injunction but about a simple notification to the Commonwealth Arbitration Commissioner stating that there was a dispute or that there was likely to be a dispute. Action could have been taken to settle the dispute by conciliation or even by arbitration if in the opinion of the commissioner or his deputy conciliation would not work. None of this was done.

Some days ago a writ was issued in the Supreme Court of Western Australia to restrain the Transport Workers' Union from carrying out the actions in which it was engaged. The kernel of the matter is that this took place some 10 or 12 days after the dispute occurred. This could have been done on the first day or even before the first day. It could have been done by an application by any one of the respondents in accordance with section 28 of the Act.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: They were as scared as hell.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It could have been done simply by lodging a complaint in the local Police Court or by an application to the Supreme Court. An application was finally made to the Supreme Court and a decision was reached today.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What was the result?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The decision is quite unique. The matter has been adjourned *sine die* on the application of the union which has assured the court, presided over by Mr. Justice Burt, that it will not interfere with the free flow of petrol products to and from a depot.

The Hon. J. Heitman: The union must have been doing it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If the honourable member had listened to me he would have heard me say that I am not entering into the rights or wrongs of the dispute. I am speaking about the machinery which exists to prevent such a dispute from reaching the limits it did.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Because of intimidation, possibly.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Normally I have a fairly high regard for Mr. Withers but I think his interjection is stupid. I have already said that the decision was somewhat unique. In the court today it was agreed that private contractors could carry oil or petroleum backwards and forwards providing the trucks are loaded by a union member. This has been accepted.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Do you believe this will happen?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The court today, in its wisdom, accepted something which Mr. Withers now says will not happen. This is the whole problem. There are people in the community who are not at all interested in solving or settling disputes but in creating them. In making such a statement Mr. Withers seeks to create further industrial disputes which will benefit no-one. My answer to Mr. Withers is, "Wait and see."

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Wait and see what? More intimidation?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: This is the kind of remark which people start circulating, but they do not know what they are talking about. Mr. Heitman raised in the House the question of people coming from the Eastern States. He said that these problems did not exist when the workers were under a local award.

Together with a number of other industrial observers in this country, I have believed for a number of years that there should be one industrial law in Australia—one and one only. The Commonwealth has industrial power in the same way as it has a number of other powers. I will not read from the Australian Constitution but will refer to a well-read book entitled *Australian Federal Government* by The Hon. Percy Joske, who is a judge of the Commonwealth Industrial Court and a Judge of the Supreme Courts of the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory of Australia, and of Norfolk Island. He is fairly conversant with the subject and says—

The industrial field is divided between the Commonwealth and the States. The Commonwealth powers in respect of industrial relations are specifically set out in the constitution, while the States get their authority from the residuary powers left to them under the constitution.

In other words what is left over. To continue—

The Commonwealth powers are not exclusive, but where there is any inconsistency between Commonwealth and State laws, the Commonwealth laws are paramount.

That is what happened here. Because the oil companies operate interstate, any dispute affecting them can become an interstate matter and therefore a Common-

wealth matter. Only one award can apply and that is a Federal award. There were people in this State who knew that at all times. I may say I am surprised that the oil companies did not endeavour to bring this dispute before a conciliator or an arbitrator. There is no mileage in industrial disputes for any section of the community, although disputes occur from time to time, not only in this country but also throughout the world.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: They are occurring here very frequently in recent times.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If one wishes to go through statistics—and these become very cold with the passage of years—one will probably find less industrial disputes in the last few years than for many years preceding this. I am aware that if we go way back into the past there were many more, but I was comparing the present with the recent past.

Whilst we malign our arbitration system from time to time, we must admit that it has some good features. A former Prime Minister of our country lost not only the election but also his seat because he advocated the throwing out of the Commonwealth's arbitration powers.

I am referring to these matters because I believe they are serious. We do not fully understand what gives rise to disputations. I agree that sometimes the reasons behind a dispute seem to be—to use a colloquialism—very screwy. Sometimes disputes occur because people do not want to take the action which is available to them. I have had some experience in this field and I found that the shipowners were never very slow in seeking to use section 28 against one. For that matter, I think the unions have used section 28 on a number of occasions.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Possibly shipowners are not as scared as owner-drivers.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The Opposition has the reputation of not understanding these matters. The respondents to the agreements were the oil companies—not the owner-drivers. The oil companies had the wherewithal in their hands all the time.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Why is it that Robert Cowles is reported as saying that standover tactics were being used?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am not concerned about Mr. Cowles' remarks. I am concerned about what could have happened and what did happen.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You are saying that if somebody had taken the writ out on the first day instead of the tenth the argument would have been settled very quickly.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: On this occasion I must agree with the Leader of the Opposition. The oil company had three alternative courses of action available, and not one of them was used. The only action taken was in Busselton where a firm issued a writ at civil law. This is a long-standing problem; it appears today that people have a vested interest in causing strife in this country.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Robert Cowles says there is no other way. This is in *The West Australian*.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I will refer to some articles in the Press in a minute, and the honourable member will not believe them. We must remember that working journalists must have copy with which to write stories.

The Hon. J. Heitman: What about doing the same with the lift strike?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am dealing with the dispute which gave rise to all the brickbats last week. In the final analysis the attacks on the Government do not do any good to "we" or "they", the two imaginary groups of people. We are all part of the Australian community.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Strikes do not do any good to the fellow who is prevented from earning his living.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is very true, and I have just said this in much broader terms. The point which is overlooked is that a vested interest must be keeping the disputes going. All the machinery is there to settle disputes. There are two approaches open through civil law and one through arbitration authorities. It was not until the last dying days that any action was taken. The company accepted the one condition put forward; that the truck must be loaded by a union member. The matter is now adjourned *sine die*.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Please explain why unions—

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am making this speech, and I do not intend to explain anything to the honourable member, because he would find it very hard to follow the explanation.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is being a bit rude.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You have not got an answer.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He asked for that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Perhaps you could look at it in this light: We regard you as an authority on unionism and maybe the questioner was seeking your views.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not think there is any authority on industrial matters. However, I am glad the Leader of the Opposition interjected because we lag far behind the rest of the world in

industrial relations. We do not even know how they work. As an example, I would like to instance the recent strike in the north—no bombs were involved there—in an effort to ensure that proper medical facilities were available. Surely people can come along and say, "We want an ambulance and a first aid man. Let us have these facilities." These men had to go out on strike over this matter.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is only one of the strikes.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: A heave-ho and back we go, and what could have been accomplished by talking is only accomplished after action. The stock-in-trade of the unenlightened industrial officer is procrastination. He says, "We will look at it and may do something tomorrow or the day after."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What is the stock-in-trade of the striker?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The striker is frustrated by inaction. This has been pointed out time after time. I can honestly and truthfully say that indecision in industrial matters causes more disputes than decisions.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You referred to Paraburdoo but I notice you stayed away from the Mt. Newman strike.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He did not mention Paraburdoo; he said "in the north".

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I said, "somewhere in the north." The honourable member may make a speech about Mt. Newman later—I do not mind. I am sure the men at Mt. Newman and Paraburdoo would be very pleased to hear Mr. Withers debating the issues.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I am very pleased to see that the men at Paraburdoo got what they were after. You did not mention Mt. Newman.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: May I say this? I was talking about an incident concerning an ambulance. If it is the wish of the House, I could speak about disputes that have occurred over the past 20 years.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is true—there are enough of them.

The Hon. J. Heitman: There is no dearth of material.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is true, and we have not done a great deal to solve the problem.

I would like to return to my theme and discuss industrial relations. I was very interested to read about some of the things happening overseas in relation to disputes. I am reasonably friendly with the American labour attaché who provides me—along with the rest of his propaganda—with certain pamphlets such as the *Labour News* from the United States. I do not

point to the United States as the alpha and omega of all industrial matters, but at least the American Department of Labour and others do endeavour to give a lead as to what should happen.

There is some sort of feeling that everything in the United States goes very smoothly in the industrial field. The idea is that a contract is made, the parties abide by it, everything is laid out, and it all runs smoothly. This is not true. There is more contract rejection than there has ever been and it is causing problems.

The companies in America are now having surveys made. Very recently a survey was conducted by the University of Michigan. The survey set out to discover what makes workers happy, or the human side of enterprise. It may be very strange to Mr. Withers that workers in plants are human beings.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is very smart!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Maybe Mr. Withers will speak of the human side when he tells us about the Mt. Newman strike.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He is probably just as human as you are.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I will agree with that, too. Without going right through the survey, which would be very wearying, I would say that the conclusion reached by the team in America is the same as that reached by people in Australia who have looked at the problem from a completely unbiased point of view.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is a good joke.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Where do you get someone like that?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: One can see how difficult it is to orient the Opposition to the fact that people working in industry and commerce are human beings.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: How did you draw that inference?

The Hon. J. Heitman: I know more about them than you do.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They do not want to listen.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It is very difficult. Opposition members have an inbuilt hatred of the trade union movement.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You do not often talk nonsense, but that is tripe.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If I could complete what I was saying, Opposition members are biased.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Your statement in regard to our attitude to trade unions is absolute nonsense.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is the point of view of the Leader of the Opposition. I hope he sticks to it, I would welcome

an opportunity to tell the House this unbiased finding from the University of Michigan, although according to Mr. Heitman nobody can be unbiased. The priorities given by workers on the job are quite different from what many people would imagine. This is not strange to people who have had dealings in the field of human relations. Many people think that all a worker worries about is his money, but that is just not so.

The Hon. J. Heitman: No, it is the trouble rouser who causes them to think that way. It is not the average worker at all; he is a good bloke. The chap who stirs them up is the trouble-maker.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Members will see what I mean; it is very difficult to talk to the Opposition. Where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They will never be wise.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The first priority given by the workers is that the job should be interesting. The second priority is that there should be enough help and equipment to get the job done. I will return to these points in a moment. The report continues—

- (3) There should be sufficient information to get the job done.
- (4) The worker should have sufficient authority to fulfill the task required of him.
- (5) Good pay.

This is priority No. 5—certainly not priority No. 1. It continues—

- (6) An opportunity to develop special abilities.

This is certainly very important. To continue—

- (7) Job security.
- (8) Seeing the finished product—the result of one's work.

Members may look at this book later. I will ask the labour attache to find out whether the University of Michigan is biased or not.

The results of this survey are nothing new. This has been known to people in Australia for a number of years. The proof of the pudding is in the eating—if we look at workers in small plants and businesses with a real human relationship and provide an opportunity for the workers to take pride in their work and see the finished product, we will see that this is so. Often the business with only a few men on the pay roll does not give over-award payments. However, there is job satisfaction and only very little industrial disputation although the workers are union members.

We should be attempting to solve the problem along these lines. Despite all the interjections and caustic comments—and I apologise for some of my remarks—I am

sure members will agree that we should be striving for national unity. If one section of this country falls, we all fall. We all stand up or we all fall down. There is a great need to understand the problems of industry—the problems of people on the job. All sections of the community—and this includes the workers at Paraburdoo, Mt. Newman, and Kwinana—want to know what is in the job for them and where we are going, instead of this constant harping on “we” and “they”, and trying to make political capital out of every little tin-pot dispute which occurs.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Who are the “we” and the “they”?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not know; perhaps the honourable member would know. I think we change sides from week to week. We may be “we” this week and “they” next week; I do not know. However, I make this plea: Let us all bear in mind that the trade unions are sacred in their own right and whether there be in office a Labor Government or a Liberal-Country Party Government they will be the masters of their own destiny, and it is only with the utmost and proper co-operation of all sections of the community that we will be able to do the kind of things of which I have spoken; that is, to keep down to the “nitty gritty” of finding out the basic reasons why people behave in a particular manner in such situations and what forces them to act in the way they do.

I often think that although we spend hours debating the question of education, at the same time we never debate the question of housing. How would any member of this House care to be a teacher who is trying to teach children in those conditions and in that kind of environment where they go home to a flat to carry out their studies? In my view we are just wasting our time talking about problems of education in such circumstances. It is so easy to quote the native children in the north-west who, after they leave school, return to their mia-mias and similar conditions. Not far from where I am standing now there is a headmaster of a large school who will not set any homework for the children, because he knows that they have to return home to tenement buildings and to flats and that it is not possible for a child to study in those circumstances.

I am merely trying to illustrate that it is useless to discuss one question in isolation. There are always two sides to every story; in fact, sometimes there are more than two. Therefore I urge all members of this House, regardless of the party to which they belong, to try to understand the problem as it affects all concerned. I try to understand the problems that are faced by farmers, but they baffle me.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You do not try hard enough.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: For years and years people have been trying extremely hard—including the farmers themselves—to solve these problems, but to my way of thinking they have not got very far.

I move on to another complex subject that has been raised here; namely, how much money we lost when we revalued and did not devalue the Australian dollar to the same level as the American dollar. When Mr. Withers was speaking I said by way of interjection, “We will in Western Australia”. Of course, before I continue on this subject, it could be said by some people that Western Australia may have special problems.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: There is no “may” about it; it has.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Yes, it has special problems, and I have no doubt they will be resolved in due course; but surely no-one here would suggest that a national Government, charged with the responsibility of looking after the finances of the whole of the country, would simply devalue to meet the needs of one particular State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Could I remind you of something? The Premier of Western Australia (The Hon. J. T. Tonkin, M.L.A.) said that ought to be done.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I knew the Leader of the Opposition would mention that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Then why say that no-one here would suggest it, when your leader has already suggested it?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I know he has suggested it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: And he has pleaded with the Prime Minister to devalue.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The facts are that I disagree with him.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You should get some copy out of that.

The Hon. J. Dolan: If it were Bob Menzies you would get the axe.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am a little more fortunate; I may get a blunt sword. The facts are that no responsible economist in Australia has had the temerity to say that the decision made by the Commonwealth Government was wrong. His name escapes me for the moment, but the Nobel Prize winner in the field of economics visited Western Australia only last week and lauded the Government for the action it has taken.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: That was Professor Samuelson.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: A laughing Mr. Snedden is depicted alongside him on the front page of that newspaper and he did not have any argument with Professor Samuelson.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Why do you call him the “laughing Mr. Snedden”?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Well, he did not look miserable; he was laughing. All I am saying is that he was not offside with Professor Samuelson. He could have been snarling, but he was not.

The position is fairly simple. A Liberal-Country Party Government would have done exactly the same as a Labor Party Government eventually did. But, of course, the Liberal Party had a monkey on its back; the Country Party. I am not denying the ability of the Country Party, because for three days the members of that party telegraphed news to all parts of the world as to what would happen to Australia's currency. We all know there was a great flood of currency into the country. It is called "hot" money. It has created all manner of surplus office buildings in Sydney and Melbourne. The financial newspapers are full of articles containing such information. It has been stated that there is \$33,000,000 worth of excess money in Melbourne. I do not think it is a sound practice to quote lengthy articles from newspapers. On occasions I have done it in this House as have other members. Perhaps it can be said that this is one method of how to succeed without really trying.

Tonight, however, I intend to quote to the House a complete article from *The Australian Financial Review* of the 23rd February, 1973. Throughout Australia this newspaper is generally accepted as being an authentic financial journal, and it expresses in far better terms than I could what this matter is all about. In fact, the newspaper describes the position in sweeping, flowing statements. The article reads as follows—

Keeping the dollar initiative

The pressure for devaluation of the Australian dollar, sparked by selfish vested interests and fuelled by multinational companies, realistic speculation and fast-buck operators, is perhaps the inevitable result of Australia's emergence as a moderately independent, moderately important, virtually unknown quantity in world economic affairs.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The key words there are "virtually unknown quantity".

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Yes; I would hope that the honourable member could get a job on this newspaper. Continuing—

It is only the second time that the valuation officially placed on the Australian dollar has been open to a significant force of doubt and criticism.

The first time, of course, was after the Liberal-Country Party Government upvalued the dollar by a step so modest that every money-conscious investor around the world felt it was almost certainly undervalued.

The result was a great tidal wave of capital inflow, unprecedented in Australian history and predicated upon an absolute certainty of no downside risk.

The complaints on this occasion came mainly from those who were worried about the future rather than the present.

The immediate practical effects of such an undervaluation were shown in a surge of liquidity, the boom in property and office building, the flood of overseas takeovers for Australian companies and the relative ease with which export orders could be landed without rigorous market cultivation or sustained hard-selling abroad.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: What year did they do that?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Continuing—

Australia's overseas reserves soared to unprecedented levels—a perverse indicator of the wasted effort that was going into putting the results of Australian sweat and labour on to overseas markets at unrealistic prices.

Such a situation, let us be frank, encouraged sloppiness in business planning, sloppiness in assessing industrial prospects and sloppiness in planning national economic growth.

It was a comfortable sloppiness and it is hardly surprising that those who were becoming accustomed to it should have screamed with outraged pain when their operating guidelines were abruptly tightened up by the upward revaluation of the Australian dollar in December, 1972.

Nor is it surprising that, in a society where business permissiveness has become deeply ingrained, many of those who were adversely affected should have begun working for a reversal of the situation.

The further readjustment of currency parities which occurred when the US dollar was devalued by 10 per cent. in terms of gold simply strengthened the attitudes of those who much preferred an undervalued currency to one which, at most, might have been slightly overvalued.

But one point which should be stressed in all this is that, for perhaps the first time in living memory, Australia's monetary authorities had taken the initiative and had aggressively used it to create a situation which they believed was realistically in the national interest.

The implications of this were well set out in a "New York Times" analysis published in "The Australian Financial Review" last Tuesday.

Dealing with a US Tariff Commission report on the implications of multinational firms for world trade and investment, the report emphasised the disparity of power between the multinational corporations and governments.

This part is important, and I draw the attention of members to it—

The corporations dispose of liquid assets amounting to some \$US268,000 million while the official currency reserves of industrial nations amount to some \$88,500 million.

"These are the reserves with which central banks fight to defend their exchange rates. The resources of the private sector outclass them," the study says.

In other words it simply means that multinational corporations are able to seize the monetary values all around the country, because Governments of the world are powerless against them. In other words, these corporations have more money than the Governments of Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and other nations put together.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: According to you Mr. J. T. Tonkin has been riding a bum steer.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: And Sir Charles. Continuing—

The study points out that multinational corporations are simply better geared for "independent action rather than reaction."

"Contrast these systems with those of governments. It is unsettling in the extreme to see much of a country's knowledge about what has happened in an international monetary crisis listed under 'errors and omissions' in the balance of payments.

"One has to presume that a handful of central bankers in the world possess some better knowledge about the details—but this 'better knowledge' cannot be very well organised because the best that central banks can muster for the struggle is a reactive delayed defence rather than an offence, and they often lose."

It can be argued now that Australia's authorities, in a rare moment, seized the offensive last December and still have it in their hands.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That must be written with bias, because earlier I asked you a question as to what was the date of that article.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Continuing to quote—

What is now happening to the Australian dollar is the reactive offensive of the multinational corporations and

speculators. It is hardly in the national interest that they should succeed.

Without trying to study all the fine print, I have been looking at the financial results of Hamersley Holdings and it would appear that that company is likely to emerge from the fluctuations of the Australian dollar \$22,800,000 better off. Also, one of the parent companies—Conzinc Riotinto—has an amount of something like \$47,000,000 currency reserve because of the dollar fluctuations.

Therefore the companies of Riotinto and Hamersley Holdings, as a result of the amounts that have to be rebated, are now in front by some \$67,000,000.

In *The Sunday Times* of the 18th March, 1973 a similar comparison is made and the following is the contents of an article published by that newspaper on that date—

A \$94 million coup

Companies in Australia made a \$94 million coup on their overseas borrowings at the end of last year because of exchange rate variations during the December quarter.

Their savings caused borrowings outstanding at the end of a quarter to fall for the first time.

Figures on the overseas borrowings by companies in Australia were released by the Commonwealth Statistics Bureau.

The December revaluation of the Australian dollar and the falling value of the US dollar caused 25 companies to repay \$70 million which was not contractually due for repayment until later periods.

I think that the iron ore companies realise they are part of Australia and I think they will measure up to their responsibilities. It always amazes me why they ever wrote their contracts in American dollars. There may be good reason for their having done so, but those who studied international money markets in the days of the regime of General De Gaulle, and who wanted gold, realised that something screwy was happening to the international money market over the years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Of course, hindsight is always the best teacher.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The iron ore companies may have some good reasons for not writing their contracts in Australian dollars; I do not know. The problem still remains, but they can overcome this by increased production and renegotiation.

I certainly do not know what the situation will be—and neither does anyone else in this country—if the United States dollar is further weakened.

The Government has a responsibility to the whole of the nation. The manufacturing industries of Australia will have been

seriously disadvantaged and they employ the bulk of the Australian work force. I was thinking about this the other day and decided to try to find out just how much overseas companies have invested in Australian industry. The only book that I could obtain was a *Directory of Overseas Investment in Australian Manufacturing Industries* for 1971. It does not cover all the manufacturing industries in Australia, but it does reveal a remarkable situation. On page after page we find that about 90 per cent. of our food industries are in the hands of overseas companies. So, those people who talk about certain countries fighting us are wrong. Those countries would not have to fight us. They would simply chop off our food supply and we would all starve to death.

I produce that book merely as an illustration of the amount of money which is invested by overseas corporations in manufacturing industries here. I am not decrying that investment, but I am using it to illustrate the size of the work force in those industries—and they are certainly not doing any yelling—and the Australian-owned manufacturing industries.

I hope that members both here and in another place will look at this situation before they start talking. It was commendable from a State point of view that the Premier made a plea to the Prime Minister, and he was backed up by Sir Charles Court.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Now you are squaring off.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: No, not exactly. I have not finished. It is high time we realised we became a nation way back in—I forget the year.

The Hon. J. Dolan: In 1901.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I thank Mr. Dolan. Federation was achieved in 1901 and it is about time we realised that we will progress only as an Australian nation and not as a number of separate States preaching State rightism. With that approach we will just not attain the national unity about which I was speaking earlier.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You sound like a true centralist to me.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Is that some kind of religion? I have not heard of it. I am not a particular God believer so I do not know much about modern religion.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: He sounds like a true Australian to me.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It was the hope of our forefathers that we should become a united nation. If that is centralism, I support it. I believe that some of the rural industries have been disadvantaged to some extent. They have been catered for particularly in the wheat industry with certain bonus payments which are still to

be worked out. Whether or not they succeed remains to be seen. I hope very much that in the final analysis no-one will be disadvantaged.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I hope that the cotton growers in Kununurra will not be disadvantaged.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: This is another fault of our economics. We spend millions to provide a dam so farmers can grow cotton they cannot sell. We chop trees out from our hardwood forests to plant fruit trees the fruit from which cannot be sold. We have no economic planning.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The article you quoted from *The Australian Financial Review* is not correct. I hope—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If Mr. Withers believes the quote was wrong, I suggest he write to the paper which will take him up on the point and will no doubt print his letter. I certainly do not intend to debate the matter.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Perhaps you could read the article again.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I have no intention of reading the article again, but I have it here if anyone cares to read it for himself. If members read it they will, no doubt, being the wise people they are, come to the same conclusions I reached; namely, that we cannot as a State consider anything in this country, whether it be industrial disputation or monetary situations including devaluation and revaluation, in isolation. These are Australian problems and the sooner we start to think like Australians and take up our forefathers' cry of "federation", the better this country will be.

Dedate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. L. D. Elliott.

FIREARMS BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [9.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Following various representations by sporting bodies to the Commissioner of Police for some easing of restrictions in the use of firearms and the obvious need for the Act to be updated, it is deemed desirable to repeal the Firearms and Guns Act, 1931-1971 and introduce more up-to-date legislation that will meet present-day trends.

Basically, the new Act, which will be known as the Firearms Act 1973, proposes to include the following provisions—

- (1) Every person who handles a firearm to be subject to some form of licensing.

- (2) Every firearm in Western Australia to be subject to licensing, registration and identification and linked with an individual owner. This excludes affiliated members of the W.A. Rifle Association and the Small Bore Rifle Association, who possess a rifle for range shooting and are subject to Commonwealth Defence Act regulations appertaining to rifle clubs.
- (3) The prohibition of certain types of firearms considered undesirable.
- (4) More stringent control on types of weapons, not generally acquired by the public but by sporting persons.
- (5) For certain types of firearms in common use for destruction of vermin by farmers and sporting purposes no changes are intended.

In order to direct the attention of members to particular changes to the Act, I am referring to the Bill in clause form. This should assist members during the Committee stage of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 are self explanatory and need no comment.

Clause 5 provides that the Minister for Police be responsible for the administration of the Act, having regard to the recommendations of the Commissioner of Police but not being bound to give effect to any such recommendations. At the moment, the Commissioner of Police has the full responsibility of making decisions under the Act.

Clause 6 provides for the making of regulations to complement the Act.

Clause 7 was provided for under section 14 of the existing Act and no changes have been made, other than increasing the monetary penalty for a summary conviction and dispensing with the monetary penalty for a misdemeanour.

Clause 8 deals with exemptions found under section 9 of the existing Act. The proposed exemptions have a much wider coverage than catered for under the existing Act. Additional exemptions are contained in paragraphs (a), (e), (f), (h), (j), and (k) of the Bill, while paragraphs (i) and (fa) of the existing Act are replaced by paragraphs (m) and (n), these paragraphs being worded to meet present-day requirements.

Clause 9 is identical with section 7 of the existing Act; however, the wording has been improved.

Clause 10: Except for the age being amended to conform with the recognised age of majority—18 years—this clause is identical with section 8 of the existing Act.

Clause 11 is similar to section 10 of the existing Act. However, the right of appeal has been transferred to a more appropriate place in this Bill; namely, clause 22.

Clause 12 is contained in subsection (2) of section 10 of the existing Act, but has been given a wider scope, inasmuch as provision is made for curio firearms referred to in clause 15 of this Bill.

Clause 13: This matter has not previously been catered for and therefore is an entirely new clause providing for the Commissioner of Police to grant police officers permission to issue licenses for certain types of firearms which will be prescribed in the regulations. It will limit the issuing of licenses of other high-powered and concealable weapons to the Commissioner of Police and a delegated officer specifically nominated by notice in the *Government Gazette*, which is described by clause 14.

Clause 15 is an entirely new clause which will widen the scope for curios and antique firearms to be possessed by persons interested in this type of firearm. It is identical with current Victorian legislation and brings uniformity with Victorian control thus enabling this type of firearm to be transferred automatically from Victoria to this State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What about the other States? You have reciprocity with Victoria. What about the other States?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: There has been a Federal move to ascertain whether uniformity can be attained throughout the entire Commonwealth.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That move was made years ago.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The Commonwealth is moving again in this matter. I read in the latest copy of the *Federal Hansard* that the Minister in charge has given an undertaking that he will make a move in this direction as soon as possible.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It seems strange that we can get reciprocity only with Victoria and not with the other States, doesn't it?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The other States envy us our firearms legislation. On several occasions I have spoken to the Commissioners of Police from the other States and they have said they only wished they had an Act like ours under which to exercise the type of control they feel is necessary in this day and age. I hope their wish is fulfilled, although it probably will not be during my term of office. I wish whoever is responsible at the time, the best of luck.

With regard to clause 16—

- (a) No alteration to existing Act.
- (b) This is an entirely new provision for the licensing of curio licenses as provided for under clause 15.
- (c) Provides for the issue of a corporate license to banks and other various organisations, approved by the Commissioner of Police.

- (d) No alteration to existing Act.
- (e) A repairer's license and
- (f) a manufacturer's license are provided for in the existing Act as one license. This Bill enables a separate license for a repairer and another for a manufacturer.
- (g) No alteration to the current Act.

Clause 17 is an entirely new provision and the issue of temporary licenses under this section covers various needs which include licenses for guided hunting tours, a tourist attraction now becoming popular in the north of this State.

Clause 18 covers licensing procedures.

Clause 19: The licensing offences are under section 12 of the existing Act but this proposed section more clearly defines the penalties.

Clause 20: Revocations are more clearly defined in this Bill.

Clause 21, dealing with restrictions, limitations, and conditions, is new and is not contained in the current Act. Restrictions, limitations, and conditions are considered essential in present-day control of firearms and the penalties for breaching this type of license are considered realistic.

Clause 22: Appeals are contained in subsection (3) of section 10 of the current Act and in regulation 34. No major alterations have been made, but this Bill limits time for an appeal and specifies that the decision of the magistrate is final and not subject to a further appeal and shall be given effect to according to its tenor.

Clause 23: This proposed clause, dealing with offences, is currently provided for under section 12 of the existing Act. However, it is more clearly defined in this clause, with additional information. Drugs are not included in the existing Act, and a new addition in this Bill is the provision for a penalty against a person permitting another person who is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs to have possession of a firearm. Also, penalties have been increased in some instances and are more realistic for present-day conditions.

Clause 24: This clause is contained in section 11 of the existing Act. However, powers of police are more lenient in this Bill, particularly with regard to a member of the force, without a warrant, seizing a firearm from a person, if in his opinion that person, at the time, is not a fit and proper person to be in possession of it, notwithstanding that the firearm is licensed and the person possesses a license. This covers those instances where police are called to domestic disturbances and the person is intoxicated or in a temporary fit of temper, bordering on insanity, and is in possession of a firearm and likely to cause injury at the time.

Clause 25: This clause is contained in section 12A of the existing Act and there are no major changes. However, the provisions are more clearly defined in the Bill.

Clause 26: This clause is identical with section 13 of the existing Act.

Clause 27: This clause is identical with section 17 of the existing Act.

Clause 28: This clause is similar to section 16 of the existing Act except for minor adjustment in the wording. However, the intent is the same.

Clause 29: This clause is similar to section 15 of the existing Act but is more clearly defined.

Clause 30: This clause regulates sales of ammunition.

Clause 31: This clause regulates the keeping of records.

Clause 32: This clause provides for the safe-keeping of firearms and ammunition by traders.

Clause 33: This clause is identical with section 11A of the present Act.

Clause 34: This clause is similar to section 18 of the existing Act but with wider coverage.

An overhaul of the present Act was needed and it is expected that this Bill will fulfil that need.

The Opposition has asked whether this Bill could be postponed for some days to enable members to have a close look at it, in view of the fact that it will almost amount to a new Act. I am agreeable to that course of action being taken. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned until Tuesday, the 10th April, on motion by The Hon. F. D. Willmott.

House adjourned at 10.02 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 3rd April, 1973

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

QUESTIONS (19): ON NOTICE

1. MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

Overseas and Interstate Visits

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

Will he advise the number of times his ministers have been—

(a) overseas;

(b) interstate,

since his Government took office, and the number of days each has spent both overseas and interstate?