

Amendment put and a division taken 2.
with the following result:—

Ayes—22

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Court	Mr. Reid
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Ridge
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Stephens
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Thompson
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. Williams
Mr. McPharlin	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. Mensaros	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. O'Connor	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Noes—22

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Hartrey
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brady	Mr. Jones
Mr. Brown	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Burke	Mr. May
Mr. Cook	Mr. McIver
Mr. Davies	Mr. Moller
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Graham	Mr. Harman

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. A. R. Tonkin
Sir David Brand	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Nalder	Mr. Bickerton

The SPEAKER (Mr. Toms): The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Harman.

House adjourned at 10.19 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 28th July, 1971

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

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

1. RIDING SCHOOLS

Control

The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) What controls, if any, are horse riding schools subjected to in this State?
- (2) Is he aware that the R.S.P.C.A. would like to see tighter control over riding schools in Western Australia?
- (3) Is it the intention of the Government to consider legislation relating to horse riding schools?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Regular visits are made by Police Officers, who ensure that there is no ill-treatment of animals.
- (2) No—no approaches have been made.
- (3) Not at present.

TRAFFIC

Control in Country Areas

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Minister for Police:

In view of the statement reported to have been made by him in *The West Australian* dated the 24th July, 1971, concerning the proposed takeover by the Police of the control of traffic in which he said "We are not going to make money out of this—it's going to be an expensive proposition"—

- (1) What does the Minister consider the additional annual cost to the State will be?
- (2) Could he enlarge generally on the statement "it's going to be an expensive proposition"?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

As the Hon. Mr. Griffith is well aware, the passage which he quoted was part of a statement which I made, criticising completely irresponsible allegations by the President of the Wickiepin Shire as to the Government's motives in seeking to take over the control of traffic in country areas.

I strongly reject any thought or inference that costs should be of prime consideration when lives are to be saved on the roads.

The answers to the questions are—

Estimated additional costs of traffic control on a State-wide basis:—

- (1) Establishment costs (exclusive of housing)—\$591,990.
Annual running costs—\$689,500.
- (2) Costs include staff, buildings, motor vehicles, radio and traffic control equipment, but do not include the cost of providing additional housing which cannot be estimated at this stage.

3. RURAL INDEBTEDNESS

Action by Government

The Hon. N. McNETT, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) What is the estimated total debt commitment of the farming industries in Western Australia?
- (2) Is it considered that the rural indebtedness is beyond the capacity of the industry to service under present and foreseeable circumstances?

- (3) Does the Government believe that a major effort in debt consolidation is a necessary step in improving the economic position of farmers—particularly in the grain and wool growing industries?
- (4) As the Government has expressed intentions of resolving problems occasioned by heavy debt commitment, what action, other than that provided under the Commonwealth-State Reconstruction proposals, is being contemplated?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Approximately \$300 million to \$330 million, in January 1971 being the most recent statistics available.
- (2) Investigations lead to the conclusion that approximately one third of Western Australian farmers are viable in present economic circumstances, one third can possibly be made so with the help of the Reconstruction Authority and the remainder have little or no prospect of servicing their debts.
- (3) No. Debt consolidation is only one aspect of Reconstruction and will be helpful to only a small proportion of farmers.
- (4) The sum of money required to rehabilitate agriculture is so large that it must necessarily be a Commonwealth matter.
- The State has committed \$565,000 by way of Emergency Carry-On this year and a Rural Re-Training Advisory Committee has been set up.
- This committee has already established a course for the training of farmers or persons associated with agriculture as meat inspectors. Forty people have qualified to date and presently applications are being called for another school of 30.

4.

POLICE

Vagrancy Charges

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Minister for Police:

For each of the five years ended the 30th June, 1971; and also, if such information is available, for the five years ended the 30th June, 1966, how many persons have been charged in the Police Courts with having no visible means of support?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

The information is not available, as separate records of these charges are not kept.

5.

HEALTH

Incidence of Venereal Disease

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) How many cases of venereal disease were notified to the Public Health Department during 1970?
- (2) How many cases of venereal disease were notified for the first half year of 1971?
- (3) With due regard to population increase, was this an increase or decrease on the 1969 figures?
- (4) What was such increase or decrease expressed as a percentage?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) 1,328 (1970).
- (2) 777 (1st January 1971 to 30th June, 1971).
- (3) and (4) The 1969 total was 1,028. The percentage increase in 1970 (1,328) was therefore 29.1; the expected increase according to population growth would have been 24.8 per cent.

6.

ELECTORAL

Redistribution of Boundaries

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Leader of the House:

Referring to my question of the 20th July, 1971, and the Minister's reply thereto regarding Section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act—

- (1) What is the date of the Chief Electoral Officer's report?
- (2) On what date did the Attorney-General receive the report?
- (3) Has the report been considered by the Government?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) The 17th March, 1971.
- (2) The 18th March, 1971.
- (3) Yes.

7.

POLICE

Destruction of Films

The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is it usual for the public to be informed through the Press that some films taken by the Police Department in the course of duty have been destroyed?
- (2) If this is not the usual practice, what prompted him to advise the public in this way that a film taken by the Police Department of a Moratorium March led by the Premier through the streets of Perth on 30th June last had been destroyed?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) No. This is the first instance that films of this nature have been taken.
- (2) The Press approached me for a statement, after receiving a query from a member of the public.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Taxes

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Minister for Local Government:

The issue of *The West Australian* dated the 20th July, 1971, contained a report of a speech made by him to a meeting of 200 delegates who were attending the opening of Local Government week—

- (1) Was the Minister correctly reported?
- (2) Could he enlarge on the statement attributed to him in which he is reported to have said "Everyone should contribute to Local Authority. I hope I can do something about it in the near future."?
- (3) What description of new taxes does he have in mind?
- (4) Has he put forward any recommendations to the Government on the matter?
- (5) Has the Government considered the matter, and if so, with what determination?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS replied:

- (1) to (3) The comments made are self explanatory. He has always gone to great trouble when speaking on this subject to explain his research and thoughts on this matter are his own and not those of the Government.
- (4) No.
- (5) No.

FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT

Disallowance of Regulations 6 to 9: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 27th July, on the following motion by The Hon. G. W. Berry:—

That regulations 6, 7, 8 and 9 made pursuant to the Fauna Conservation Act, 1950-1969, as published in the *Government Gazette* on Wednesday, the 18th November, 1970, and laid upon the Table of the House on Thursday, the 19th November, 1970, be, and are hereby, disallowed.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West) [4.44 p.m.]: May I firstly welcome Mr. Ron Thompson back to the House and wish him a speedy recovery to complete good health.

I must apologise for the confusion last night when I adjourned this motion, but I had expected Mr. Dellar to rise and speak to this matter. I know from my own experience that this is a question which gravely concerns the electorate which Mr. Dellar represents—as we were informed by his colleague, Mr. Berry.

I was a little slow in getting to my feet when the motion was called last night because I expected Mr. Dellar would be anxious to speak on this subject which, I know, is causing some concern in the pastoral areas in respect of which he has been successful in an election. However, he probably was not ready to express his thoughts last night so I managed to get in before the question was actually put and I adjourned the debate. I look forward to hearing Mr. Dellar's views subsequently. I am quite sure he heard many comments about this subject when he was electioneering.

I find myself in a somewhat unusual situation because I have every intention of opposing the motion put forward by my very good friend, The Hon. George Berry, a member for whom I have a tremendous admiration. I have been to his electorate and I have been entertained by him, and I am not happy about having to oppose his motion. However, on this occasion I will be supporting Mr. Willesee in his remarks, and opposing Mr. Berry.

I suppose most members appreciate that the concept of the protection of kangaroos in this State was inaugurated during my term as Minister for Fisheries and Fauna. I still believe it to be the best system developed in Australia, and I still believe it to be the most flexible system available; and I still believe it to be essential, not only for the welfare of the kangaroos, but also for the welfare of the pastoralists.

One of the major problems in this exercise was the fact that this matter reached a climax at the same time that the pastoralists were facing a two-pronged difficulty. They had not only the very severe recession in wool prices with which to contend, but in many parts of the State they also had to contend with adverse climatic conditions. Many parts of the State had not received sufficient rain, and, in combination with the low wool prices, tremendous hardships have been brought about. Indeed, I believe that these particular primary producers are the worst hit of any in Western Australia. This certainly would apply, without question, to the pastoral industry in the Laverton and Leonora area where the worst effects of the drought have been felt.

There was some difficulty in regard to those people being able to talk to the Government. There were people in some isolated situations who had difficulty coming down to discuss their problems. During the time that the proposals were in train, a number of deputations—I think it was three—called upon me and the different matters were discussed with them. Those deputations left my office expressing their gratitude for the meeting, and their satisfaction that the proposal had the sort of flexibility which was necessary.

It was necessary under those circumstances for the department and myself, as Minister at the time, to deal with the most representative body of the graziers. This, of course, was the executive of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. Mr. Willesee has already said that this co-operation extended even to the point where the name of every shooter was submitted to the executive of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. Those whom they would not accept, were not granted licenses.

It is necessary for me to recount a little of the history leading up to the bringing in of this requirement, but before I do so I think I should make it clear that in Mr. Berry's motion we are dealing with the red kangaroo and its predominant habitat, which is the pastoral areas. I do not think Mr. Berry would disagree with that claim. He has just indicated, by nodding his head, that he agrees with me on this. We are not discussing the grey kangaroo, which is to be found in the southern and more heavily forested areas. We are dealing with the red kangaroo and with the non-agricultural production areas; that is, the pastoral zone.

What happened last year was that there suddenly came about a tremendous interest in the preservation of the kangaroo. Much of this has been explained to the House previously but because there are several new members I will take the liberty of going over it briefly.

The interest came about because of a drought in the Eastern States. The kangaroos over there are red, but a slightly different red from those here. There are also some grey kangaroos in the Eastern States, but they are a slightly different grey, and they are quite numerous over there. The kangaroos in some areas of the Eastern States left their normal range and concentrated on the residual pastures that were available. Those pastures were all that were left for the ordinary stock—the sheep and cattle, and the like—and tremendous pressure was therefore placed upon the residual grazing areas.

This situation, of course, alarmed agriculturalists, pastoralists, and graziers in the Eastern States, and created a bonanza for the shooters and those engaged in the

marketing of kangaroos. There was a considerable amount of slaughtering, which was concentrated in those areas where water and some degree of feed were available. Such was the extent of the slaughtering that very alarming forecasts were made by scientists and conservationists throughout the Eastern States. This, in turn, raised quite a furore. All sorts of prognostications were made that the kangaroo was doomed to extinction and so on.

I have said before in this House that I find such prognostications extremely difficult to believe. It is rare for any species to be destroyed by hunting alone. They are generally destroyed or lost through a change in habitat. However this situation created a great deal of concern in the Eastern States, and the concern extending to Western Australia and to other parts of Australia.

The matter came to our attention at a stage when the shooting of kangaroos had reached such proportions in the East that the take of kangaroos had very sharply diminished. We received advice that something in excess of 20 shooting outfits were preparing to move from the Eastern States into Western Australia. When I speak about shooting outfits in this context, I mean a chiller, a group of vehicles, and a group of shooters.

At that time the kangaroo industry looked like being dominated by one particular Queensland group, and if we had had this influx into Western Australia the effect on our kangaroo population would have been disastrous. The effect on the pastoralists would have been little better because these shooters would have been roaming over their properties and the pastoralists would have had trouble not only with the mining companies but also with the shooters.

Steps were taken to stop this influx, and it was stopped. We have Mr. Shugg to thank for that. The move was heralded as being something of a revolutionary step, and it excited great commendation in Eastern States papers. I must admit it did not get a paragraph here, but it got front page treatment in the major paper in Brisbane, and, at the height of this argument with regard to kangaroos, it was given good treatment in a paper in New South Wales.

We were not quite so fortunate in being able immediately to stop the incursions of a shooting group from South Australia. However, a couple of telephone calls, a few promises about what might happen, and a little assistance from the South Australian Government were successful in preventing the group from taking kangaroos. If there was anything to be made out of kangaroos, we wanted it to be kept here. There has always been money to be made out of kangaroos.

That is the background to the establishment of one or two conservation groups. One group in particular is led by a man named Queripel, in South Australia, whose publications are probably the most lurid. He makes claims which, to my mind, are quite ludicrous. His statements about the cold-blooded and heartless slaughter of kangaroos and the cruel methods by which they are killed certainly cannot be substantiated. A little later, perhaps, I will explain to the House how I know that. However, this man started a campaign and printed a broadsheet, which was sent out far and wide throughout Australia.

This led to a period when petitions relating to kangaroos were being placed on the Table of the House in Canberra at the rate of something like three a day. A strong move was afoot completely to ban the slaughter of kangaroos anywhere in Australia, to prohibit the marketing of any kangaroo products in Australia, and to ban the export of kangaroo skins and other kangaroo products from Australia.

If this move had succeeded, it would have spelt disaster for the pastoral industry because the only thing that could then have been done would have been to declare kangaroos a pest and to handle them as such, which means shooting to destruction. It would have meant the issuing of destruction licenses, in which case the kangaroos would have been shot or poisoned. This is an expensive process, and no-one could appreciate that more than you, Mr. President, with your background in agriculture.

How much better it was to devise a programme to which kangaroos could be treated as a resource, marketed, and turned into an economic benefit. Therefore, the principles which had proved eminently successful in the conservation and control of crayfish and prawns were applied by very skilful officers to kangaroos. We even had pet food manufacturers in the Eastern States going on air and advertising that their products contained no kangaroo meat at all and quoting this as a great benefit.

What a tragedy it would have been if all these kangaroos had been destroyed by shooting and left to rot! I was able to point out to the pastoralists—and these figures can be verified at the department—that at one station a kangaroo shooter made \$12,400 in a year. I do not know what was the financial position of the station owner at the time, except that he was making a loss, as was every other sheep station owner. That will give an indication of the money that was to be made out of kangaroos; and, because of the loose arrangement of the market, that shooter was probably not getting the best possible price.

So it was decided to set up a method of controlling all kangaroos; and not merely to regard them as pests to be poisoned,

but as a resource to be handled and marketed. All the constituents were already to hand. We had a team of professional shooters, skilled in their job; a team of people who could gather the carcasses; and a team of people who could process the carcasses and handle the product. The basis of the industry was well worked out.

The shooter uses a four-wheel drive vehicle equipped with a spotlight and with rails along the side. He arms himself with a .222 rifle—a special rifle made in South Australia—or a .243 rifle, of which a variety can be purchased. The rifle is equipped with a telescopic sight. Many shooters charge their own ammunition using a set grain weight to provide a fairly flat, hard-hitting trajectory, so that the bullet will not travel far beyond the distance over which they can reasonably be expected to shoot.

The shooter makes arrangements with the station owner and he traverses a circuit through the property. He soon learns where the kangaroos might be expected to gather. In the main, the market is supplied with reds, and with some greys; but never in the history of the statistics available has an appreciable number of greys been taken in this State. The shooter travels along until he finds kangaroos which he picks up by spotlight. Incidentally, I would mention that there is no sport associated with it, and the shooting kangaroos by night has never appealed to me as a sport because when the spotlight is on them they prop and stand still.

If the shooter sees a kangaroo of a size considered reasonable he shoots it generally in the upper fore part of the body or in the head. In either case, death is mostly instantaneous. He might shoot two or three, or only one. However, whatever number he takes, the kangaroos are decapitated and the forelegs and hindlegs are docked. If the tails are big enough he also docks them because that skin is used for wallets and I think he receives 10c or 20c for a tail skin.

The kangaroos are then placed on hooks and hung on the side rail of the vehicle so that they can drain. When the rails are filled the shooter takes the carcasses off and loads them into the back of the vehicle. If the weather is too cold and the kangaroos are hiding under cover from the cold easterly wind which often prevails, the shooter might stop for a bowl of soup from his thermos flask and perhaps sleep for several hours. When he thinks the kangaroos will be moving again he travels looking for them.

When the shooter has sufficient kangaroos he returns to his chiller, which is usually a closed truck body—just a box—with a diesel engine and a refrigeration unit at the front. He then fills out certain forms for the Department of Fisheries and Fauna, giving details of the age, sex, size,

and weight of the carcasses which are then hung in the fridge. If the fridge is getting full those carcasses which are already frozen are stacked in the front.

I am able to recount this because I went out twice with shooters in the Murchison area and saw the process in order that I would know something about it. To my mind the operation is as humane as any slaughtering operation. From what I have seen of slaughtering operations, I think perhaps if more people watched them probably there would be many more vegetarians. However, be that as it may, this method is as humane as a normal slaughtering operation can be. That is my belief and I have seen all sorts of slaughtering operations.

The carcasses are then collected. The fellow collecting them might travel a circuit in which he might have two or three freezer units. The carcasses are taken to Perth where they are flayed and the skins either sent overseas or handled locally, and the meat is processed into pet packs or exported. In due course the skins are tanned and are used for a variety of purposes about which we all know. The industry brings in a reasonable amount of money to Western Australia and it is one worth looking after.

So, with all that set-up already in existence, it was decided that the best method of keeping kangaroos below pest levels was to devise a proper, rational system of cropping the stock and supplying a market. This House agreed to that proposition, in general, without a dissentient vote some three years ago. An amendment to the Fauna Conservation Act empowering all this to be done was passed. I am proud to say that I handled that Bill in this Chamber and that it went through without any trouble whatsoever.

We then proceeded to devise regulations. The problem was: who should become the key? As I have already recounted to the House, we had the shooters, the station or property owners, the handlers or the fellows who supplied the freezers, and the processors. There was some overlapping because some shooters had their own freezer units, and other shooters were actually the owners or lessees of stations—I will refer to them as owners because it is easier.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You also had the kangaroos.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes. So we had all those different groups and the problem was: to whom should we give the predominant situation? It was decided to handle the situation with the use of tags, as members who have been here some time will remember. The regulations contain a picture of the tag, which is a small plastic article. A sample was tabled in the

House when the matter was debated. It is a remarkable, self-locking invention which made the whole thing possible.

The problem was, to whom should the tags be given? If they were given to the processors, then the shooters were likely to be squeezed. If they were given to the station owner he would have little time to organise the rest of the business because he was running a station. This was a question about which there could be argument *ad infinitum*. However, in the event it was decided that the tags would be issued to the shooters because after most serious consideration it was decided that if we wanted to control kangaroos we had to have a body of professional shooters who would in fact be sufficiently mobile to handle the situation.

I have already recounted to the House how the situation at Laverton and Leonora was indeed grim. In that area, as a result of the drought, shooters were finding it difficult to get kangaroos of any size.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Both of those places received over an inch of rain during the weekend.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, I was delighted to hear that, because it will do a tremendous amount of good. The kangaroos are not silly; they will not stay around and die if there is no food or water. If they are strong enough they will move to where they can find those things.

So it was decided to issue the tags, in the main, to the shooters. It is unlikely that shooters could set up processing plants, because those plants were not issued with tags. Some 80,000 tags were reserved for issue to pastoralists. That is the way the situation was handled, and it was handled under the regulations.

The relevant licensing regulations are contained in part 2. Regulation 4 deals with the taking of dangerous fauna and states that there is a special license, with which we need not bother ourselves for the purpose of this debate. Regulation 5 deals with a license to take protected fauna causing damage to property. Regulation 6 concerns a license to take kangaroos for sale, and this is the first of the regulations which Mr. Berry desires to have wiped out. Regulations 7, 8, and 9 deal with licenses to process, licenses to deal in kangaroo carcasses, and licenses to transport kangaroo carcasses and skins in that order, and Mr. Berry desires that those regulations should be disallowed. So we are left with regulation 5, which states—

- (1) For the purposes of section 15 of the Act, the Minister may issue licenses, to be known as damage licenses, to take fauna causing damage to property.

(2) Any damage license expires on the date shown thereon, and there may be specified in the license—

- (a) the number and species of fauna which may be taken;
- (b) the area or place where the fauna may be taken;
- (c) the person or persons who may take the fauna;
- (d) the manner in which, and the time of day when the fauna may be taken;
- (e) the manner in which the skins and carcasses, either separately or together, shall be disposed of or the person or persons to whom the skins or carcasses shall be taken for disposal; and
- (f) the returns which the license holder shall submit and the time within which the returns shall be submitted,

and, without limiting the operation of any condition endorsed on the license pursuant to subsection (5) of section 15 of the Act, the damage license authorises the holder to take and deal with fauna only in accordance with the requirements specified in the license pursuant to this subregulation.

- (3) The holder of a damage license shall carry the license on or about his person whenever he is taking or about to take the fauna to which it relates.
- (4) The holder of a damage license shall, before disposing of, selling or transporting or consigning any fauna, or part thereof, taken under the authority of the license, duly affix a tag to each specimen of fauna or part thereof.

It is my belief that the system could, with great difficulty, work under that regulation. There would not be a controlled body of shooters, because shooters would not be licensed. A station owner would have to prove to departmental officers that he had too many kangaroos on his property before he could be issued with a given number of tags. He would then have to obtain shooters from somewhere or other to do the shooting, and he would have to arrange to have the carcasses taken away. He would also have to advise the department of each step he took along the way.

I think that would be an infinitely more cumbersome scheme than the one worked out under regulation 6, which licenses shooters to take kangaroos. Under regulation 7 the processors are licensed so that their establishments can be inspected to ensure they are properly looked after. The dealers in kangaroo carcasses are also licensed at present, so they come under

inspection and control. Those who transport carcasses and skins are also licensed for the same purpose. Therefore, I believe that regulation 5, standing on its own, would not serve the purpose.

I can well understand Mr. Berry's agitation. I know it will be argued by some that the number of tags issued is too small, and those people might well be right. But it has been said repeatedly that all one has to do to issue more tags is to phone the manufacturer. As soon as more tags are manufactured, they may be issued. There is nothing in the regulations to say that the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna cannot obtain more tags. He is quite at liberty to disregard the professional advice of his department and to issue a further 100,000 tags. Mind you, Mr. President, he could also do the reverse because there is nothing in the regulations set out one way or the other. So the matter of whether or not enough tags have been issued simply does not enter into the argument. It is a matter of drawing a red herring across the trail.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Can we get away from the word "issue" and use the word "sold"?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: All right. I understand the tags are sold for 10c and I do not think there would be any change in the price.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I thought they were 20c.

The Hon. G. W. Berry: They cost 20c for greys.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, I understand the position to be that the tags cost 20c for greys and 10c for reds. The tags may be purchased at any time.

If the honourable member wants to use the word "purchase" instead of the word "issue," I am quite happy about it.

One other aspect I wish to mention is the opinion of a Federal parliamentary inquiry committee which went round the entire State taking evidence on the control of kangaroos. In *The Sunday Australian* of the 11th July, 1971, there is an article headed, "W.A. leaps ahead in 'roo control.'" The article reads—

Western Australia has been praised by a Federal Parliamentary inquiry committee for its control of Kangaroo shooting.

The House of Representatives select committee on wildlife conservation spent five days in the WA outback.

"We've seen more kangaroos in the past few days than anywhere else in Australia," the committee chairman, Mr. E. M. C. Fox (Lib, Vic), said in Perth last week.

"We expected to see more than we did in Southern Queensland. We saw plenty of carcasses and plenty at the

chillers. We were told we'd have seen more had we gone farther west—or come a week earlier."

Queensland is the only State without controlled shooting. Half of the two million kangaroos killed in Australia are shot in Queensland.

WA has 43 shooters licensed to kill 4000 kangaroos a year and another 22 to shoot fewer numbers for a total annual harvest of 200,000.

The committee has given priority to its terms of reference on kangaroos because of deep public concern. It will consider the effects of the meat and hide trade on kangaroo population.

It then goes on to say that the committee will go to South Australia, and so on.

The crux of this argument is virtually who has prior claim to the purchase of the tags. At the present moment it is the shooter, because he is the key component of the industry, and a difficult component to keep on a long-term basis. I understand that there is a reserve at the present moment of 80,000 kangaroos to the station owner, who can obtain them as he requires.

It might be argued that 4,000 kangaroos are not enough for one shooter. I am advised that the shooters have claimed they are not doing too badly. They are getting 4½ to 5½ per pound and generally they earn something like \$6,000. This can, of course, be altered. One only has to increase the number of tags if that is required.

It will be argued that the 200,000 decided on this year should be increased, but this is quite beside the point. The number can be increased tomorrow by Mr. Davies, if he thinks the kangaroos are there. It might also be argued that kangaroos can breed at some fantastic rate; but they cannot do so. It takes something like 273 days for a kangaroo doe to produce her young. I suppose it could be said that the privilege ought to be given to the processors, and this is quite a valid argument.

We can argue in this manner if we like, but the point is that in the long-term interests of the pastoral industry it is desirable that a proper control system should operate in Western Australia. I believe that the present one is the proper system and it should be allowed some time to operate. Despite my personal regard for Mr. Berry I feel that the system should be allowed time to operate.

There is only one other thing I believe should happen. I said this before I left the department; though I am not sure whether "left" is the correct word; perhaps I was deposed. However, I believe the department should make every

effort to confer with all the pastoralists and graziers, and not merely with the Pastoralists and Graziers Association executive. I feel every effort should be made to move out and talk to those who, because of financial hardship and remoteness, have difficulty in understanding the situation.

I do think that a person who understands the situation should be selected even if it is necessary to go to some expense to secure the services of such person. I feel the body in question should go out and sell its proposals, because they are good proposals. These negotiations should be continued and the body concerned should talk not only to the people engaged in the industry but to the executive of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association to ensure that, even if they do tend to over-kill, they should continue to do this because they have the necessary control at their command.

Initially it might be an advantage to increase the number of tags beyond the point advisable until the operations of their scheme are proved to be efficient and in the best interests of everybody concerned, and also with a view to the ultimate preservation of the kangaroo.

I again say that never at any time have I indicated that I thought the red kangaroo was in danger of extinction from shooting. I still do not believe it is in danger of extinction from shooting, but I do believe the scheme, as it is listed now, is the best one we can devise with our present knowledge.

THE HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [5.22 p.m.]: I rise to support this motion on the basis that the whole concept as to how to administer the regulations is quite unrealistic. It is only by the means provided in the motion that we can persuade the authorities to take a more realistic view of the situation.

A lot has been said—in fact part of it has just been said by Mr. MacKinnon—about the situation in other States. I am quite sure that most people, and certainly Mr. MacKinnon, will agree that the kangaroo has been far more extensively exploited commercially in New South Wales than it has ever been in this State.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: New South Wales and Queensland.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I referred to New South Wales, particularly, because I have here a copy of the report published in *The West Australian* of the 23rd June. It is a report of evidence given by certain eminent gentlemen to a Select Committee of the House of Representatives inquiring into wildlife conservation. I will not bore the House by quoting the entire article because I do not think it is relevant to the

ase, but I would like to quote part of the report. It is headed, "Extinction of Kangaroos Denied", and reads—

Two authorities on wildlife agreed today that neither the red nor grey kangaroo was in danger of extinction.

They differed on whether a Commonwealth wildlife conservation authority was needed.

The two submissions were given before the House of Representatives select committee on wildlife conservation.

The head of the biological sciences school at the Macquarie University, Professor G. B. Sharman, said that red and grey kangaroos—those most exploited for the meat and fur trades—were the most abundant of all kangaroos.

The director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of N.S.W., Dr. D. T. McMichael, agreed, saying that there was no evidence that either the red or the grey kangaroo was in danger of extinction in N.S.W.

Evidence showed that the species were generally increasing.

Professor Sharman said that the introduction of sheep and the conversion of the habitat into grazing land had benefited the bigger species of kangaroos.

That was the evidence submitted to the select Committee by the two men concerned who, I think speak with some authority; and they are from a State which as certainly exploited kangaroos from the commercial point of view far more than his State has ever attempted to do.

I would like now to quote some figures which have been supplied to me by a professional shooter operating in the Gascoyne-Murchison area. I will not mention my district nearer than that, nor do I intend to name the station on which the man concerned operates, or the name of the operator. I do know him, however, and think his figures are reasonably authentic. He does not want his name published because he feels he may suffer at the hands of the authority concerned for having supplied these figures to me. I do not now whether he would suffer or not but he asked me not to publish his name and do not intend to do so.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: He now has complete insurance, but his reason for wanting it is, I think, unfair.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I do not think the authorities would be that petty.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I did not say I agreed with his reason for not wanting his name published. I merely said he asked me not to make his name known and I do not propose to disclose it. It is his decision not mine. I do not think his

reason for wanting to keep his name quiet is altogether authentic, but that is beside the point.

I will not bore the House by quoting all the figures. They are very extensive and include the costs of his operations, and so on. I found the figures to be most enlightening.

It is generally claimed that these people make big money. They may handle large sums of money but their expenses are very heavy, as will be seen from the figures I quote. I would like to say that this whole operation was carried out on one station. It involves an operation of 15,400 kangaroos in one year. I would also like to make the point that to my personal knowledge, in the same area on this station, some very old friends of mine—two of whom have now passed on—operated for three years prior to 1920.

That is a long time ago, but similar operations have been going on from that time, and yet we find the man to whom I have referred can go out and take 15,400 kangaroos off the property on which he is operating.

This is why I feel the approach of the authorities is quite unrealistic as it refers to numbers. Furthermore, the proposal to allocate 4,000 to a shooter is quite uneconomical from the point of view of the shooter.

The first figure I will quote is in relation to an operation covering a period of 25 weeks, and the number of kangaroos shot for skins was 5,000.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: For skins only?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: Yes, for skins only, and for this lot the man in question received \$1.20 per skin, which constitutes an income of \$6,000. I will later detail some of his expenses so that members can appreciate this point. I would point out, however, that his expenses amounted to \$2,638, which left a sum of \$3,362. He then deducts 20c for the levy. I think he is wrong in this regard, because the figure should be 10c. He is working on a figure on which he has not operated yet, and has taken that figure because he thought the levy would be 20c, whereas it is only 10c. Therefore he has a figure of \$1,000, but the accurate figure would be \$500 and this would leave him \$2,862.

On the same station over the period of 12 months—because in some areas they shoot for skins, but when the animals are more accessible they shoot for carcases—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There are not many shooting for skins nowadays.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: There are plenty, and I will give the figures of this one shooter, if the honourable member wants them. Plenty are shooting for skins when the carcases are hard to get out.

From the 13th April, 1969, to the 13th April, 1970, on this station, the shooter for meat took 10,400 kangaroos with an average weight of 36 lb. which is fairly good. This gave him a poundage of 374,400 at 2½c which is \$9,360. His expenses on this occasion amounted to \$5,276 leaving \$4,084, and from that again he has deducted a sum of \$2,080 which is incorrect. It should be \$1,040 at 10c. This would leave him a balance of \$3,044. Now I point out that this is on an operation involving 10,400 kangaroos.

Let us do a similar exercise based on a take of 4,000 kangaroos. It is just not an economic proposition from the shooter's point of view, because in the case of skins we reduce the number of animals from 5,000 to 4,000, which would be the limit for the year for skins alone, and therefore we reduce his income by 20 per cent. thus giving him an income of \$4,800. We then reduce his expenses by the same 20 per cent. which makes it \$2,011 less the 10c which is \$400, and this gives him an income of \$2,289.

This shooter makes some points in regard to this matter. His estimated working hours on the previous figures I quoted were 60 a week. No provision was made for holidays, hospital benefits, dental expenses, private insurance, or anything of that nature, and he has not dealt with the capitalisation of plant, which he puts at \$3,000. On top of this he must pay his income tax.

I know that some members are aware of the conditions under which these fellows work. They are right away in the bush living in caravans. This particular fellow has a wife and children and he operates a truck. He must have a caravan and a Landrover.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: With regard to the 10,000-odd he shot for carcasses, did he not take the skins from those?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: The skins go with the carcasses when he sells them. When he shoots for skins he sells the skins, and when he shoots for carcasses he sells the carcasses with the skins.

I have just indicated the situation when a man is shooting for skins. I will not bore the House by going through the whole operation for carcasses, but if members do the same sort of exercise based on 4,000 kangaroos shot for meat, they will find that the shooter's income would be reduced by a lot more. Therefore, in those circumstances it is quite unrealistic to talk about operating on a basis of 4,000 kangaroos.

A lot has been said about the shooting of kangaroos and I certainly agree with the remark of Mr. MacKinnon that the shooter is the greatest conservationist we have. Many farmers in this Chamber who remember the period of great trouble with rabbits will also recall that the Agriculture Protection Board objected strongly to the commercial trapping of rabbits, and that

is the same objection which is used in connection with the commercial shooting of kangaroos. The reason is that when a commercial trapper operates he takes in the main only bucks and he certainly reduces the rabbit population to a degree.

However, when he cannot make a good go of it he moves out and this immediately has the effect of increasing the breeding capacity of the rabbits because the habitat is improved as a result of the lowering of the population. Nothing will stop a rabbit from breeding—and the same applies to the kangaroo—as much as over-population, because as soon as the rabbits begin to get short of food they adjust their breeding. A kangaroo is exactly the same as a rabbit in this regard. This was the reason why the Agriculture Protection Board absolutely frowned on commercial rabbit trapping; and the same thing applies to the kangaroo population. The reduction in the kangaroo population allows the animals to breed faster all the time.

The figures I have quoted involve one station alone which, to my knowledge, has been having the kangaroos shot since before 1920, and yet it is still possible to go to that station and shoot more kangaroos. This proves the point.

The Hon. J. Dolan: A trapper must surely catch some does, and because they would have broken legs they would be destroyed with a subsequent effect on breeding.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: They will trap some does, but in the main the commercial trapper is interested in the bucks. I do not know whether members know the habits of rabbits. The bucks will travel every evening when they leave their burrows to the squat and that is where the traps are set. Sometimes they will be set in furrows and the trapper will then take what he gets; that is, does or bucks. However, as soon as the trapper is trapping insufficient rabbits to make a good living out of the venture, he moves on. He has, though, thinned the rabbit population down to a degree, but this enables the rabbits to breed twice as fast as previously. The same principle applies to kangaroos.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The reason Mr. Willmott's argument is not apposite is that it is desirable that the rabbits be killed out, but it is not desirable with regard to kangaroos.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: The rabbits would not be killed out under this system.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I said it is desirable that the rabbits be wiped out, but not the kangaroos.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: But they would not be wiped out and that is why the board frowned upon commercial trapping of rabbits.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I agree with regard to rabbits.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: The method does not reduce the number of rabbits, but increases the number overall.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I agree it is desirable that the rabbits be killed right out.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: Well, do not make foolish observations.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was desirable with regard to rabbits, but it is not desirable in connection with the kangaroos.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: Quite a bit has been said about the attitude of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. I have here the submission made to the Select Committee on Wildlife Conservation appointed by the House of Representatives.

Paragraph (d) of the terms of reference deals with kangaroos and the portion I wish to quote concerns the submission made by the pastoralists association in this State to that Select Committee. Therefore we can ascertain exactly the official attitude of the pastoralists to this matter. I will not bore the House by quoting the whole submission, but would like to quote page 2 and part of page 3 because these pages give an indication of the true attitude of the association itself. It reads—

The pastoralist believes this estimate is too low.

The submission is here referring to the estimate of 4,000 animals per shooter and the overall estimate of some 200,000 kangaroos. To continue—

He feels the population could be up to double the official figures. And this being so, he is not at all convinced that the imposition of any limit on harvesting is necessary to prevent the kangaroo being wiped-out. You just cannot economically shoot that many kangaroos.

The pastoralist bases this assertion on several facts.

He points out that the red kangaroo, far from suffering from the arrival of the white man into his domain, has in fact benefitted greatly.

Before pastoral lands were opened up for grazing, the red kangaroo had to rely on natural waters. For these it had to compete with both the Aborigine and the dingo.

The pastoralist provided hundreds more watering points and lowered to almost non-existence, the predatory effect of both the Aborigine and the dingo. This has made it much easier for the red kangaroo to live and breed which in turn has made it much harder for the pastoralist.

Contrary to one point of view, tests have proved that the red kangaroo prefers the best pasture, the very pasture the pastoralist tries to build up and regenerate for his stock.

So it can be said that the red kangaroo, by and large, lives off the pastoralist.

As for the shooter, the pastoralist believes he would not be able to shoot the kangaroo out of existence if he was given unlimited tallies.

He points out one case where 25,000 kangaroos were shot on one lease in 12 months. Yet two years later the red kangaroo was back again in almost plague proportions.

This bears out the case I have just quoted and of which I have personal knowledge. To continue—

The shooter's technique is to stay in an area only until he has shot a reasonable daily tally of the most profitable red kangaroos—fully grown males. By doing this he is not curtailing to a disastrous extent the kangaroos breeding capabilities.

What is more, the shooter is highly mobile. He moves through a property rather than staying in one fixed place. And in doing so, he stays to a large extent on station roads. This gives him a shooting range only as far as his spotlight carries on each side of the road. Kangaroos away from the road are thus left undisturbed and this is why the pastoralist believes he himself should be licensed to shoot roos as well as the professional shooter.

The pastoralist also believes that the current regulations could have a harmful effect on the pet meat industry. He feels that many shooters who have invested heavily in freezers and other equipment could be put out of business if they did not get a license or were not able to operate, because of their allotted tally, at an economic level.

He also believes he has good grounds for fears that the regulations will have disastrous effects on his lease. Many pastoralists have exercised some form of control over the kangaroo by having shooters working the lease regularly. With the tally system there is no guarantee he will be able to have the same number of kangaroos shot on his lease each year. This could very easily lead to a massive kangaroo build-up.

The pastoralist believes he is better suited to assess the number of kangaroos on his lease and to organise their thinning out. He could either shoot the kangaroos himself or subcontract his agreed tally to the professionals who would shoot under his direction.

I will not bore the House by quoting any further.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Can you tell the House whether pastoralists and graziers actually want these regulations disallowed?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I have not rung them lately to find out.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I would strongly suggest you do so.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I suggest Mr. MacKinnon is not listening. He asks questions but never listens to the answer and that is why he never learns.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I suggest you ring and learn.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I suggest that Mr. MacKinnon should listen to what I am saying. I attended a meeting of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association a few weeks ago and it was then said that this is wanted. No-one has rung me since that time, although an undertaking to do this was given if there should be any change in attitude. As I say, no-one has rung me subsequently. I suggest that Mr. MacKinnon should ring.

Other members of Parliament were at the same meeting. Many people are putting words into the mouths of pastoralists, graziers, and other people with which those people simply do not agree. Perhaps pastoralists and graziers say one thing to me and something different to somebody else. I would not know. I am relating only what has been said to me and what has been put in an official submission.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think the honourable member should listen. I would have less chance of suffering bodily injury if he did.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Wear a safety helmet.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I do not think there is any real danger. I may be a little stirred up, but that is all.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is very disorderly to tap me on the head.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I thought the honourable member was getting hopping mad!

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I have tried to give members the grounds on which I base my objection to the regulations. I do not object so much to the regulations, as they exist, as to the fact—as I said at the start—that it is only by doing this that we will sheet home to the authorities how absurd their attitude is in regard to the operation of the regulations.

I shall carry my argument a little further. A shooter has supplied me with a detailed account of his operating costs. I will not bore the House by giving all the detail, but I would like to give members some idea of what his costs are. I have

listed some of his figures to save time. The operating costs are over a 27-week period.

I might say that this man keeps detailed books on every operation in which he is concerned; that is, every operation on every station. He knows exactly what he has taken and exactly what his costs are. I have no reason to disbelieve these figures, which were brought to me by a pastoralist who is well known to me and who is on one of the stations where this person operates. The pastoralist assured me that the man's figures would be correct. I shall go into detail later on, but at the moment I would like to give an example of his costs over a 27-week period, as follows:—

		\$
Allowance for rifles	....	30.00
Ammunition 1,000	.22	15.00
	6,000 .222 ..	255.00
Petrol	....	457.50
Oil and grease	....	30.00
Rail freight	....	130.30
Spencer & Attwood—Parts	....	141.72
Elders—Salt	....	88.99
W. & E. Bell	....	90.26
Tarpaulin	....	64.00
Cooking gas and parts	....	52.90
Bags	....	30.00
Truck, caravan, and Landrover		
registration	....	133.00
Kerosene	....	55.00

The total for the 27-week period was \$2,638.88. To that figure has to be added a 10c levy for every kangaroo shot. Members will see that it is an expensive operation for shooters. The good operators will not contemplate continuing if the limit is 4,000. It is absurd. The shooter will have this number in a matter of weeks. What will he do for the rest of the year?

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What is he doing for the rest of the year now?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: He is shooting all the time.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Did not the honourable member say that the figures are for a 25-week period?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: The figures are for a 27-week period. The meat operation I referred to earlier was over the whole year. However, this operator was not operating on meat over the whole year. That is what he took out during the 12-month period. As a result of keeping his books this way, the skin operation was only over a 27-week period. Do I make myself clear?

I could quote details of other operations, but I will not bore the House. It is only thrashing a dead horse to continue. The whole operation over 12 months would involve not 15,000 kangaroos, but at least double that number. That is why I say it is completely unrealistic to think that shooters will continue to operate if 4,000 kangaroos is the limit.

I have heard others, as well as Mr. MacKinnon, say that the kangaroo does not compete for food with domestic stock. This is absolute nonsense. Any farmer in this Chamber who has ever planted an oat crop knows how far kangaroos will come to get at the oats. Do domestic stock eat oats? Of course they do and they will come just as far to get into the crop. It is sheer nonsense to say that the kangaroo does not compete for food with domestic stock.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Is the statement made more in relation to pastoral areas than the grain growing areas?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: The same thing applies in pastoral areas. Once the pastoralist closes his paddocks, the grass grows, and provides better food. A pastoralist cannot fence the kangaroo out although the fences keep his own stock out. The kangaroo unquestionably competes for food.

I wish to quote one more operation which is for a different year. I happen to know the properties well and I know one property owner very well indeed. He assures me that the figures are quite correct. They relate to a 12-month period on two small stations which carry fewer than 18,000 sheep. I would like members to remember that. He was operating for skins only, because I assume the two stations were too far out to enable carcasses to be brought in. On the two small stations, which carry fewer than 18,000 sheep, 10,527 kangaroos were taken over a 12-month period.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: It is more profitable than sheep.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: That is the position in regard to kangaroos in these areas. It is ridiculous to think that taking 200,000 kangaroos will be sufficient. I am convinced it will not be. I have been a kangaroo shooter myself and I know something about it. I know some stations where kangaroo shooting has been continuous since 1920. Despite this it is possible to take 10,527 kangaroos on two small stations in one year.

I think perhaps I have taken up sufficient of the time of the House. I will leave the matter at what I have said. I ask members to support Mr. Berry in his motion so that we may bring home to the authorities concerned the seriousness of the position. I feel they should take much more notice of professional shooters. They are the people who control the industry and know where the kangaroos are. The process of waiting for a special permit to operate in one area or another is too slow for the professional shooter. He knows where kangaroos are much better than any departmental officer, because kangaroo shooting is his livelihood. I strongly support the motion moved by Mr. Berry.

THE HON. S. J. DELLAR (Lower North) [5.56 p.m.]: Earlier, Mr. MacKinnon said I would be interested in this subject. This is quite correct. It affects my province quite considerably. The honourable member gave members a comprehensive account of the history which preceded the institution of the regulations and the factors which caused them to be brought into force. Mr. Willmott has taken a different line on the kangaroo shooter and his problems. I am sure all members agree that pastoralists, shooters, and the authorities have many problems to cope with.

The motion moved by Mr. Berry seeks to disallow regulations 6, 7, 8, and 9 made pursuant to the Fauna Conservation Act, 1950-1969. Mr. Berry is possibly concerned with the preservation of the red kangaroo but feels that its further exploitation as a commercial commodity would not affect its preservation. Regulation 6 deals with licenses to take kangaroos for sale. Regulation 7 is concerned with licenses to process carcasses of kangaroos and other fauna. Regulation 8 is concerned with licenses to deal in kangaroo carcasses, and regulation 9 is concerned with licenses to transport kangaroo carcasses and skins.

Whilst I disagree with the motion moved, I feel that the question of conservation comes back to the question of the kangaroo population. I have lived in these areas for some time and I cannot see that kangaroos are in danger of complete extinction. However, some control must be placed on their exploitation. If an industry depends on the ability of the kangaroo population to survive, that industry must also be regulated in order that it may progress in an orderly manner.

The regulations make provision for a periodical review of the cropping programme, which can be followed through only if records are kept and details submitted to the various departments to allow them to gauge the number of kangaroos which are being taken. It is only in this way that the departments will know whether sufficient tags are being issued; whether, in fact, to reduce the numbers being taken or increase them still further.

We should bear in mind that the regulations were introduced only in November, 1970. Although they have been in operation for eight months, perhaps this period is not quite long enough for us to gauge the overall effect on the kangaroo industry. In saying this I am referring to people who shoot and process kangaroos. We should also consider that changes in seasonal conditions have an effect on the kangaroo population in various parts of the country. Kangaroos migrate quite rapidly from one area to another.

It has been said that the professional shooter knows his business, and I would be only too ready to agree with this, because he does know what he is doing. I will not labour that point any more. Mr.

Willmott has given a detailed outline of operations of shooters and how they go about their work. I would like to refer to what Mr. Berry had to say when he moved this motion. I refer to *Hansard* No. 2, of the 20th July at page 22. He said—

I find that the provisions of the Act, as laid down, are acceptable. What I find at fault is the implementation of the regulations which seek to provide for effective control of the administration of the Act and I think if such implementation is persisted with it will result in a complete breakdown of two of the objects of the Act; namely, the control of kangaroos below vermin level, and the retention of a viable kangaroo industry.

This is very good. Mr. Berry agrees that the Act is acceptable but he considers there is some doubt about the way the regulations are being implemented. He did say later on that there were various people involved in this: the pastoralists, the shooters, and the other people involved in the processing and sale of the kangaroos and the by-products that come from them. The honourable member said that the regulations are not of the standard necessary to achieve the proper operation of the Act, but he did not say where the fault lies. Who is at fault? Is it the shooters; the pastoralists, or the processors? This has not been pointed out to the House, and I do not have any knowledge of this matter which would convince me that one or all three of these are at fault.

There was an interesting submission made to the House of Representatives Select Committee on wildlife conservation. This submission was made by the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia in September of 1970. There are a few points I would like to read from this submission.

When the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia was formed in July, 1970, it had an initial membership of 60. Another 43 have since indicated that they will join the association, as also have about 200 associate members. Members are employed in the kangaroo industry of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia, so members can see that every State is represented in this association. The association is made up of people actively dealing with kangaroos.

There are various groups represented, the meat producers and shooters, meat wholesalers, retailers and canners, tanners and fur processors, skin merchants and exporters, and manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers of skin products. The association, therefore, represents the great majority of people engaged in the numerous branches of the kangaroo industry. The various groups have conflicting interests, but they have one common interest—the intelligent conservation of the kangaroo.

The reason why the association prepared this submission to the Select Committee was that it wished to make the views of its members known and to make recommendations to the Select Committee which it believed were in the best interests of conservation. These people are exporting the kangaroo as a business, but their main interest is to conserve the animal. Naturally they would want to conserve it so that their industry could carry on; but their main objective, I believe, is to have an economic business operation and at the same time conserve our native animal. The views expressed are based on many years' experience in all aspects of the kangaroo industry.

I would just like to read very briefly some of the points that are made in their submission. They will not take very long; I do not want to labour the point. The following is a summary of the points made in this paper:—

The first aim of the Kangaroo Industries Association of Australia, as set out in its constitution is "conservation of the kangaroo".

The Association agrees that State authorities have rightly imposed, or should impose controls on the killing of kangaroos, whether this killing is for commercial use of skins and meat or whether it is killing by graziers to protect property.

The Association does not believe that the present controls in some States are in the best interests of conservation. The reasons are set out in sections of this paper devoted to the individual States.

Present controls in many States permit the killing of small kangaroos.

While professional shooters receive their greatest income from large animals, graziers receive a licence to destroy a given number of kangaroos with no size restriction.

I do not know whether that applies in Western Australia. To continue—

The Association believes that all States should impose a minimum legal size for kangaroos which can be killed. This size should be determined in conjunction with State Fauna Authorities and C.S.I.R.O. scientists and may vary with the species of kangaroo and the area in which they exist. The Association believes a satisfactory minimum would be 25 lb. carcase weight.

Scientific opinion in the "Wildlife" Departments of all States, and in the C.S.I.R.O. Wildlife Department, Canberra, is that kangaroos are a natural resource which should be harvested.

Controlled killing of kangaroos is necessary for the conservation of the various species as well as for the continued production of sheep, cattle, crops, etc.

If, in the opinion of the scientists, a controlled number of kangaroos should be killed each year, the Association believes that the skins and meat from these animals should, wherever possible, be used in the national interest.

This is substantiating their claim that they do wish to conserve kangaroos; that it is no use just killing them off; if we are going to kill them off, we might as well get some benefit from them. Further points made are—

The system of licensing shooters and chiller operators makes policing of controls considerably easier. This system does not operate in all States.

I might add this recommendation was made before the regulations were brought into force in Western Australia. To continue—

The Australian Kangaroo Industries have a capital investment of not less than \$14 million.

The industry employs, directly, not fewer than 5,400 people.

The industry's annual wages bill is \$12.175 million.

These figures do not include payments to people indirectly employed as a result of the industry. Much of these payments (for petrol and diesel fuel, for ammunition, for food, and for repairs and maintenance of chiller boxes and refrigerated trucks, etc.) are paid to people in remote areas and country towns. The amount paid for ammunition in Queensland alone last year was more than \$50,000.

Export income for kangaroo skins in the year 1969-70 was \$1.56 million. Export income from kangaroo meat was \$362,000.

There is some belief that the number of kangaroos that can be shot is unlimited. I do not believe this. In fact there are possibilities, as has happened in other States, of their being in danger of being eliminated but generally they do have the ability to reproduce.

Sitting suspended from 6.08 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I would like to continue to quote some further comments made by the Kangaroo Industries Association of Australia. These comments are as follows:—

THE KANGAROO INDUSTRY AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S ECONOMY

Figures compiled at meetings in Perth with members of the Kangaroo Industries Association of Australia,

show that more than 450 people are directly employed in the industry in that State. This figure does not include shooters.

The annual gross wages bill for the industry is not less than \$1,600,000 per annum for people employed directly.

This does not include money paid by members of the industry in many parts of the State for petrol and diesel fuel, firearms and ammunition, repairs for refrigerated trucks and chiller boxes, etc.

The capital investment (plant and equipment only) of meat producers, tanners and furriers, skin merchants and manufacturers is more than \$1,350,000.

Annual sales of skins, including skins exported and sold to other States, last year was about \$720,000. This figure is for the raw skins and does not allow for value added by preserving and tanning (about \$72,000 last year) or by manufacture in Western Australia. The value of this manufacture is difficult to estimate because of reluctance of individual manufacturers to reveal their turnover, but it is known that sales tax on kangaroos products (ranging from 2½ per cent to 25 per cent) was in excess of \$28,000 last year.

The retail value of kangaroo meat produced last year was in excess of \$1,400,000.

The recommendations made by the association to the Select Committee are—

That the Select Committee should urge the Commonwealth and State Parliaments to accept the kangaroo industries and their Association as organisations which are capable of playing a major role in conservation and management of wildlife.

That there should be close co-operation between the Fauna authorities and the Association and because of its members' many years of experience, the Association should be represented at Fauna Conferences, planning kangaroo conservation control and management.

That the Select Committee should recommend to the Victorian Parliament that legislation be introduced in that State to ensure that kangaroos killed in that State are fully used, thereby preventing wastage of a natural resource.

That the Select Committee recommend to the South Australian Parliament that it recognise the kangaroo

industry as a practical and valuable method of controlling the kangaroo population in that State.

That the Select Committee recognise that Fauna authorities agree that some control of kangaroo populations is necessary and recommend harvesting as the means by which the kangaroo populations are controlled, because harvesting enables the kangaroos to be fully utilised, avoiding waste.

That the Committee should recognise that the kangaroo industries must plan ahead to maintain employment and economic stability and that, in view of this, Fauna authorities should give ample notice of any possible changes in policies.

That the Select Committee should recommend that a minimum legal size be fixed for all kangaroos killed, whether by commercial shooters or by graziers and/or their employees. The Association recommends a minimum legal size of 25 lbs. carcase weight. (Carcase weight in the industry means a carcase which has been gutted and the head, legs and tail removed but with the skin still on).

That the Select Committee should recommend the establishment of more National Parks, preferably fenced, where kangaroos and other wildlife will be fully protected.

That, in States where a permit system operates, graziers should not be allowed to kill and waste kangaroos without commercial shooters first being given the opportunity to harvest the kangaroos to make full use of the meat as well as the skins.

That the Select Committee should recognise that kangaroo meat is rich in protein and could with proper Department of Primary Industries inspection, become a valuable export commodity as game meat for human consumption. The Association would appreciate the opportunity of consultation with the Department of Primary Industries with a view to up-grading the industry, making kangaroo meat a more valuable commodity and thus assisting the industry, the graziers and the national economy through greatly increased export income.

That, because State Fauna organisations have the authority and local knowledge to control kangaroo conservation in their own States, the Select Committee should recommend to the Commonwealth Parliament that it should give all possible assistance

to the States to continue or to implement a scientific conservation policy based on intelligent harvesting.

In my opinion, the motion to disallow these regulations conflicts with the Act. Under the Act itself one is required to have a license to do certain things in relation to the harvesting of kangaroos. If these regulations are disallowed it will mean that the professional shooter will probably die out or the opportunities to control the growth of the kangaroo population and to assist the pastoralists in their efforts to control the kangaroos will be considerably reduced. This responsibility will be thrown back onto the land owner.

From the submissions made by the association, it supports the regulation that provides for the restriction of the number of kangaroos harvested. We know that in the past indiscriminate shooting of kangaroos was done by part-time shooters, and it has to be kept in mind that these shooters did not have the overhead expenses or skill of the professional shooter. This, of course, resulted in the overshooting of kangaroos in some areas of the State.

Mr. Willmott has quoted figures showing how difficult it is to operate on the restricted number of kangaroos a shooter is permitted to harvest. That is fair enough and may be so. I have a deep concern for the shooters who are operating in the industry, but the regulations can be amended, as has been said tonight, to increase or decrease the number of kangaroos that may be shot. If kangaroo shooters feel that they are not being permitted to harvest a sufficient number of kangaroos and can prove their case that an increase in the number of kangaroos they are permitted to shoot will not affect the kangaroo population, they may be given permission to shoot a greater number, and the situation could be reviewed later.

As matters stand at present I cannot support the motion. Even any proposed amendment to the regulations which seeks to alter the present set-up will have to be examined very closely to ensure that the kangaroo population is conserved to a reasonable figure. I think Mr. Berry was within his rights in bringing this matter before the House to enable discussion on it to take place.

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [7.38 p.m.]: I congratulate Mr. MacKinnon on the way he explained how the Act should work and how elastic it can be if properly administered. Last year, when the Bill was passed, we all agreed with its provisions. We thought we had made them elastic enough to cover all contingencies. The fact is, however, that wherever one travels throughout the State it is found

that the take has been cut by half and this makes it fairly awkward for anyone in the kangaroo business to earn a reasonable living or to keep the crop down to the point where kangaroos do not become vermin.

Recently I made a trip to the Murchison and although I did not raise the subject of kangaroos at any time, on two or three occasions the matter was brought to my notice. On one station I visited, the kangaroo take prior to the introduction of the Act was about 9,000 kangaroos a year and yet there seemed to be as many kangaroos left on the property as there had been in any other year. However, now that the take has been halved, over the past few months a tremendous increase in the kangaroo population has been noticeable.

I have received a letter from the people in the Plantagenet area and I would like to read it to the House, because in that district they are concerned because the kangaroo take has been cut in half. This letter reads as follows:—

Shire of Plantagenet.

Kangaroos.

Concern has been expressed on a number of occasions at the build up of kangaroos and emus in the district and at their effect on the farming activities of the district.

Mr. N. Cooper, a farmer in the Eastern Area of the Shire stated, and was supported at the Annual Electors Meeting, that he had estimated after careful study that the Eastern Area of the Shire abutting onto the Stirling Range National Park would have a population of 12,500 kangaroos and 85,000 emus if the present rate of build up continued for the next 3 years.

Settlers in the Perillup area have expressed concern that numbers persist after an annual take of over 1,200 off 10 farms and are alarmed that the weekend shooter Frank Norton, who has operated for 9 years, is to have his license terminated in July. The Flora and Fauna Department stating that farmers will be expected to look after themselves.

Jim Waddell a metropolitan pet food company have employed 120 week end shooters in the past but are now to be restricted to 2 professional shooters with a weekly take of 50.

Figures below indicate that kangaroos are still plentiful in the area, 34 having been taken in one paddock on the night of 20th February. Settlers are of the opinion that there is no migratory movement and that breeding accounts for the local kangaroo population.

Plantagenet Shire—Perillup Area Kangaroos Shot

December, 1969	38
January, 1970	74
February, 1970	45
March, 1970	87
April, 1970	21
May, 1970	—
June, 1970	99
July, 1970	74
August, 1970	76
September, 1970	59
October, 1970	103
November, 1970	178
December, 1970	261

1,115

Plus:

January, 1971

102

1,217

So in a period of 14 months something like 1,217 kangaroos were taken, but now the two professional shooters are to have their take restricted to 50 a week. In the past the shooting was done only by weekend shooters who would go out to get pet food for the metropolitan pet food companies. They would pick the carcasses up on the Sunday night or the Monday morning. It was a fairly lucrative business for the shooters whom Mr Waddell employed to do the shooting for him over the week-end.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: These would be grey kangaroos.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: It does not matter what species of kangaroo it is; the kangaroos are still a nuisance when they come onto those farms that adjoin the reserves that have been mentioned. So the fact remains that although we thought the Act was elastic and could cater for such contingencies, this has not proved to be the case. I therefore support Mr. Berry in bringing this matter before the notice of Parliament in the way that he has, because I feel a tremendous number of pastoralists and farmers have been complaining about the halving of the kangaroo take during the last few months, and we consider that this is practically the only way we can bring to the notice of those concerned that a reduction of the take to 2,000 from the previous total of 4,000 should not have occurred.

I believe they should have considered the matter thoroughly and taken some notice of those who had performed the shooting and earned a living from it, and also taken notice of the pastoralists, instead of cutting the kangaroo take in half. As Mr. MacKinnon has said, the Act is elastic enough to rectify the situation by increasing or decreasing the numbers of kangaroos shot, but to date this has not been done.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [7.45 p.m.]: Generally I do not favour the disallowance of regulations, because a disallowance has a tendency to interfere with the operation of the law. However, for fear that these words might be quoted against me out of context on some other occasion, let me add that there are exceptions to this rule; but I repeat that generally speaking I do not favour the disallowance of regulations.

In this debate we have heard the case for the disallowance of the particular regulations, and also the reasons why they should not be disallowed. I do not know what the mood of the House is as a whole, because not all members have spoken on the motion.

One or two things are quite clear to me. The first is that when Mr. Berry moved the motion—as he had every right to—he concluded his remarks with these words—

I also request the department and the Minister to call a round-table conference of members representing all sections of the industry which are concerned with the implementation of the Act to see whether satisfactory regulations which are workable can be drawn up.

When the Minister addressed himself to the motion, naturally enough after he had been briefed by his colleague in another place, he made certain remarks; and I wish to offer two comments on his speech. The Minister said that between the landholders who wanted the numbers pruned down when kangaroos were over-abundant, and the ordinary citizen who liked to see kangaroos with reasonable frequency when travelling through the country, a practical compromise was possible. However, the Minister did not indicate to us what the practical compromise might be.

I also observe that in his contribution Mr. Willesee said—

Here I would mention that I availed myself of the opportunity during the adjournment of this debate to bring to the notice of the director of the department the views expressed by The Hon. Mr. Berry on behalf of the pastoralists and the industry generally.

Once again we are left in the dark as to what the director of the department thought of the words used by Mr. Berry when he moved the motion. To say the least, this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

It is quite obvious that if we disallow these regulations the Act will be in a mess, because these particular regulations give the Minister or the director the authority to do certain things; but the disallowance of the regulations will take that authority away from them, and the director, the Minister, and the Government will be left with

no authority. From everybody's point of view that would probably be an unsatisfactory situation.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The way the Act is worded, it might stop all shooting.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: After consultation with my colleague, Mr. MacKinnon, I gathered that the Government would have to use the damage clause in order that the kangaroos could continue to be shot.

I make this suggestion to the Leader of the House: I do not think it would be a satisfactory conclusion to have a vote on this motion because of the reasons I have just given. I do not think it would be satisfactory to cast a vote which would disagree with the motion and leave the regulations intact because the department would then be entitled to interpret the vote as being the majority voice of the members of the House, indicating that the regulations were perfectly all right.

From some of the speeches which have been made we are entitled to say that, at least, there are points of difference. In the Minister's own words, he suggests that between the differences of opinion which we have heard during the course of the debate some compromise must be arrived at. The suggestion I make is that an attempt be made to ascertain whether there is a satisfactory compromise. I know that you, Mr. President, do not like interjections, although we did hear some unruly ones a little while ago, but I invite Mr. Willesee—

The PRESIDENT: Some interjections are permissible.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse! I suggest the Minister should agree to the adjournment of the debate for a couple of weeks, so as to enable the parties concerned, including the members representing the district—and the views of the two members of the North Province are as wide apart as the poles although they represent the same people, the same industry, and those who are earning a living from the industry—to get together at a round-table conference, as has been suggested by Mr. Berry in his concluding remarks, to see whether or not a satisfactory solution in the form of a compromise can be arrived at.

If a satisfactory solution is arrived at, the Government can then introduce amended regulations and we will not have the situation which will prevail with the disallowance of the regulations. Such disallowance would cause a hiatus in the operation of the Act.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: How wide a conference do you suggest?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I leave that to the Minister concerned. Let him call together the members representing the district, the pastoralists, the graziers, and others to get their ideas. They have made certain suggestions. Obviously the regulations are not working to the satisfaction of everybody, otherwise we would not have the motion before us.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I can safely give you an assurance now that I accept your suggestion and will arrange a conference with the Minister concerned.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We would not lose anything by adopting that course. If the conference fails to achieve anything we can be told of the result. Mr. Berry has the right of reply to this debate.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: He will be at the conference.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Alternatively, the House will have to go on adjourning the motion. Other speakers to follow me might have other differences of opinion. Ultimately a vote would have to be taken, but a satisfactory conclusion might not be arrived at. Whatever we do we will please some people but displease others. I suggest that some member on the Minister's side of the House take the adjournment of the debate for a couple of weeks.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There should be an adjournment of a month, because some of these people are in the Murchison.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Just an ordinary adjournment, and we will do our best.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If that is done this motion will come up as the first item on tomorrow's notice paper, because motions to disallow regulations have preference.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I suggest an adjournment for three weeks.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I hope that when I sit down some member will move for an adjournment of the debate for three weeks. In the meantime an attempt to reach a compromise will be made.

Debate adjourned until Wednesday, the 25th August, on motion by the Hon. R. Thompson.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIFTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 22nd July on the following motion by The Hon. L. D. Elliott:—

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.

THE HON. R. T. LEESON (South-East) [7.55 p.m.]: Mr. President, it is indeed a privilege and a pleasure for me to be able to address the House, despite the fact that I am placed in a somewhat nervous situation. However, I think I can get over it.

Firstly, I would like to pay a tribute to the late Hon. J. J. Garrigan, whom I succeeded in this House. In the time that I have been associated with him—before, during, and after the last election—he gave me all the assistance that I required, and I do appreciate that very much. Jim Garrigan was very well liked in my area; he knew everybody; and he got on well with everybody. In due course I got to know many of his friends.

I would like at this stage to thank the electors of my province, and the people who worked so hard for me and did such a magnificent job, as a result of which I was, at the last election, elected as a member for the province.

The South-East Province comprises possibly a greater cross-section of the people than do most of the other provinces. The people of my province range from those engaged in the pastoral industry to those engaged in the mining industry and those engaged in the farming industry.

Prior to my election I made a tour of the farming districts, but at the time that part of my province was quite foreign to me. I journeyed down there and travelled south of Merredin. I got to know many farmers and became aware of their problems. I found it very interesting for the first time in getting to know something about them. After talking to many of the farmers I was quite astounded to discover the plight they were in. When they raised their problems they must have thought that members of Parliament were some sort of gods who were able to do something for them. I thought that over many years the solution laid in their own hands. At the moment the farmers are further behind the eight ball than they have ever been.

Since then I have made two other trips through the district, and in the near future I hope to make another. Whilst I was in that area, which is only 300 miles from Perth, I became aware of some of the problems that the people raised. For instance, we held a meeting at Holt Rock, at which a farmer showed me a telegram that he had just received, but which had been sent five days previously. This is a shocking state of affairs, especially as the district is only 300 miles from Perth. It should not take five days for a telegram to be delivered to the recipient.

Some problems relating to telephone communication are also being experienced. Some people there have to travel miles to find a telephone, and when they do find one they are fortunate if it works.

A lot has been said about the difficulties faced in the north of the State, but as I have said this sort of thing occurs only 300 miles from Perth.

I would like to revert to the goldfields and mention briefly the position of local government in the area at the moment. As is known, there has been quite a lot of controversy concerning local government administration over the last couple of years. Two bodies amalgamated and ballots were held, and upheld. At the moment two local governing bodies operate in the area but I do feel that as we progress there should be more amalgamation, possibly, in order to provide greater efficiency.

Quite a number of projects are in course at the moment, and local government is faced with terrific expenditure in trying to provide the necessary services. I am more concerned with the duplication of services which occurs in relation to the two local governing bodies I have referred to. One project under way at the moment is the extension of the sewerage scheme into the Boulder Shire Council area. The initial borrowing was \$200,000 and the project is expected to cost \$1,800,000 when it is completed.

The scheme is being put down to service the Boulder Shire Council area, and no consideration has been given to the Town of Kalgoorlie at all. Kalgoorlie has its own overtaxed sewerage treatment plant and I have wondered whether provision has been made, with the construction of the four-mile main, to eventually accommodate the requirements of the Town of Kalgoorlie without having to duplicate the main at great expense.

While discussing the goldfields district I suppose one should not miss the opportunity to mention a matter which has been discussed in both Houses of the Western Australian Parliament, and also quite considerably in the Federal Parliament. I am referring to the gold subsidy. I would first of all like to pay tribute to Mr. Fred Collard, M.H.R., the member for Kalgoorlie, for the magnificent job he has done over the years in an endeavour to get an increase in the gold subsidy for Kalgoorlie. Unfortunately, his pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

Of course, many people are opposed to subsidies. The people living on the goldfields, naturally enough, would be in a minority in this category. However, they do not ask for long-term assistance, but for short-term assistance. It has been claimed that now nickel has been discovered there are no problems. It is true

that we do have nickel, but at the moment 2,000 men are employed solely in goldmining in Kalgoorlie, Norseman, and Mt. Magnet. There are as many men employed in the goldmining industry as are employed in nickel mining.

A new nickel smelter is being constructed by the Western Mining Corporation, but it will employ only about 250 men. We do know that over a period of years those employed in goldmining will be absorbed into the nickel industry. However, they cannot be absorbed into that industry in a period of 18 months, and 18 months is the life of the goldmining industry under the present conditions.

While speaking on this subject, I would like to mention that part played by many people who are usually forgotten. Of course I refer to the workers in the goldmining industry. I have been very closely associated with these people over many years, and during the last 10 years these people have sacrificed wage increases to maintain the industry. Apart from machine miners, the other men employed on the mines would be on the lowest wage rates in Western Australia. A worker has no trouble in getting \$4 or \$5 a shift more while working in the nickel mine next door. However, the people who work in the goldmines are dedicated and they remain there to keep the mines operating. The mines have been there for 75 years and those people do not want to see them closed overnight.

I would like to mention a very important matter which is causing some concern on the goldfields at the moment. I refer to the 34 miles of black road between Kambalda and Boulder. As members will be aware, in a period of less than three years since this bitumen road was opened 22 deaths have occurred. Only as late as last Friday a 19-year-old apprentice fitter was killed. A week prior to that the 21st death occurred.

There has been considerable discussion on this matter in an attempt to find out why this particular road is so dangerous. I have spoken to many people about it but no-one seems to have an answer. I recently spoke to the Secretary-Manager of the Eastern Goldfields Regional Traffic Council, and I asked him if he knew what was wrong with the road. He answered to the effect that the road was too good. I do not know that a road can be too good.

A few years ago the edges of the road between Northam and Perth were painted white, and I understand that other roads in country areas very close to the metropolitan area have received the same treatment. I suggest that the painting of the edges of the road between Boulder and Kambalda, in the same way, could possibly alleviate the problem which exists at the moment. Certain sections of the

road tend to blend into the gravel edges, and on some sections of the road there is a considerable drop at the edge.

Cars do travel very fast over the road, there is no two ways about that. If they get too close to the edge of the road they invariably get out of control and they overturn. I suggest that the engineers from the Main Roads Department should examine the road mile by mile to see whether they can find a solution to the problem. The road is 34 miles long and there have been 22 deaths in less than three years. At that rate a death has occurred for every $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. I think that is a record for Western Australia, for Australia and possibly the world. I know that the road is the concern of everybody in the area. When I am asked to go to Kambalda I shudder because of what has happened previously.

I do not think anybody can claim that long-haired louts in fast motorcars cause the problem, because at the moment the General Manager of the Western Mining Corporation is in the Royal Perth Hospital as a result of a head-on collision which occurred a month ago. A man in the other car was killed on that occasion. The accidents involve a cross-section of the community and they cannot be pinpointed to any one particular section.

I appreciate the opportunity of being able to speak tonight, and I support the motion.

THE HON. C. R. ABBEY (West) [8.12 p.m.]: I rise to support the motion and in doing so I join with other members who have welcomed the new members to this House. Of course, I also add my congratulations to the members who were re-elected, and I offer my congratulations to Mr. Norm Baxter on his reappointment as Chairman of Committees.

Tonight I would like to touch on some matters affecting the recent cost of living increase wherein, in Western Australia, an increase of 1.4 per cent. in the June quarter was evident. That was a little better than the Australian average, but still quite high.

The most staggering fact in the cost of living index is that meat prices in W.A. increased in the June quarter by 0.4 per cent. The total increase was 1.4 per cent. It is also staggering to think that during the same period the price of stock, to the producer, was so low that it was absolutely uneconomical. We know that the dry season has had an effect, and we also know that there has been some over-supply.

During the quarter beef, pork, and bacon were above the previous quarter by a small margin. However, when we look at the mutton and lamb prices we find that they

are returning about half as much to the producer as they were returning in the same quarter of the previous year.

I refer to lamb which, during the quarter April to June, 1970, was bringing something like 22c a pound. That was quite an incentive to producers to hold their lambs until that period and then put them on the market. They were getting \$8 and \$10 for well finished lambs.

What do we find in 1971? In the same quarter an average of about 11c a pound is received by the producer, which means \$4 or \$5 a head. It probably also means that the lamb has cost the producer \$2 or \$3 to hold until that period, and that he has made a very severe loss. Yet we see in the cost of living index a rise of .4 per cent. in meat prices. I am sure no-one in this Chamber could find a real explanation for that.

I ask myself how these prices are arrived at. Who does the survey? What days do they choose to sample the prices of meat? I cannot believe that in the retail businesses in the city—where, no doubt, most of the sampling is done—costs would have been so high to the consumer during that period that they would affect the index by .4 per cent. It is a staggering situation.

In the case of mutton, during the June quarter of 1970 about 7c to 8c a pound was the average return to the producer, but in 1971 the average for that quarter was as low as about 4c a pound. How is that justified when lamb and mutton constitute a very large proportion of the meat used? I cannot, for the life of me, see how that result was achieved.

While I am on the subject of meat I would like to outline some of the factors affecting the industry, particularly as regards abattoirs. The position in Western Australia is absolutely chaotic. In the very dry periods, because of great increases in the production of sheep and lambs, the market has been over-supplied for many weeks of the year, when normally we would expect a lessening of this sort of pressure. It must be recognised that this is a situation that will be with us for ever and a day.

In future we must make provision to cope with the increase in the quantity of stock for most of the year. The additions to the Midland Junction and Robb Jetty abattoirs will, when they are available, no doubt go a long way towards coping with the situation, but I foresee that there will be many a slip between the cup and the lip because there will be difficulties when the new chains, freezing chambers, and so on, are brought into operation. There are always difficulties in getting new machinery to work properly. I am somewhat concerned to think that we will rapidly reach

a situation where those works will be unable to cope with the numbers of stock coming forward.

The Manager of the Midland Junction Abattoir recently made an announcement that he had the right under the Act to restrict the number of sheep and lambs, in particular, coming forward for sale at Midland. I think that action will have to be taken. It is absolutely stupid to bring forward stock that cannot be handled and which will be sold at give-away prices and put into the back paddock by the purchaser, who has done somebody a good turn in buying the stock because they would be quite unusable if they could not be put away and held. The wholesaler, in the main, pays a heavily discounted price for stock when this occurs.

For the present, at least, producers will have to accept the fact that they must restrict their forwardings each week. I hope the manager and the board of the Midland Junction Abattoir will have the courage to take that action. A bold approach is sadly needed in the handling of stock in this State.

I mentioned a while ago that the alterations and additions to the Midland Junction and Robb Jetty abattoirs would help the situation. The figure I have heard quoted—and I take it to be a correct one—is something like \$7,000,000 which is required to bring these two abattoirs up to a standard which is acceptable for the treatment of export meat, principally for the American market.

If that is so, I would point out that that sum of money would more than build a new works which would be of a much higher standard than the old improved works. One of the very important advantages of a new works, whether it be built by the State or by private enterprise with State backing, would be that, because of increased efficiency and the installation of all possible labour-saving devices, it would require something like half the labour force which at present operates the old works.

We all know of the very serious situation within the unions that operate at the present works. There are only a few stirrers in those unions but, particularly in the last three years, it seems that during the lamb-killing season the stirrers get busy and cause disruption. During the peak of the lamb-killing season last year, when the sucker lambs were at their best, the unions concerned were out on strike for six weeks. It meant that something like 250,000 lambs were not killed and exported, and the quantity of lamb involved had to be absorbed by the local market, which immediately depressed the return to the producer.

I recently heard a suggestion that because of the huge investment in the two State abattoirs the Government would not grant licenses to private enterprise to build

and operate a new works within the metropolitan area, or adjacent to it. Whether it is merely a guess or an informed guess, I am not aware, but that story is going around.

If that is the case, there is a very bleak future for meat handling in Western Australia because private enterprise and those in the industry have the knowledge which enables them to seek out the markets. We are informed that there are plenty of markets for processed mutton and beef, and that we only have to be able to supply it.

It will be recalled that because of insufficient abattoir space in recent months some orders for processed mutton had to be filled from the Eastern States. That is a dreadful situation when the stock is available here and cannot be killed and handled for export. I am not blaming the present Government for that; it inherited the situation.

During the last three years the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, the Farmers' Union, and the Liberal Party, with its interest in rural affairs, have had a very serious look at this matter and have come up with suggestions and plans which, in their opinion, would overcome the problem. In the main, they have recommended that a statutory authority be set up for the meat industry, principally, with wide powers and wide representation from both the producers and the handling industries.

If such a statutory meat authority were set up, it would need to be armed with the ability to advise the Government on future trends and the ability to plan for and cope with all situations. A body with expert knowledge would be better able to deal with the industry than the Department of Agriculture.

I do not want it to be thought that I am decrying the efforts of the Department of Agriculture. In its field it has made a very great contribution to agriculture in this State, and I take my hat off to it, but I do not believe that one officer in the Department of Agriculture can possess the composite knowledge that is required for the overseeing of State abattoirs and the licensing and general planning that go with it. So I repeat that all the recommendations made in recent years have a sound basis and should be considered seriously.

I again draw the attention of the House to the fact that within approximately only the last 18 months we received the report of an expert committee composed of Messrs. Towns and Austen—two gentlemen with considerable knowledge of the industry in the Eastern States. Amongst other things they strongly recommended that a meat marketing authority be set up in Western Australia very much along the lines I have indicated. They recommended that both the producers and the handling

organisations should be strongly represented on the proposed authority to plan and control the industry and to help it out of the terrible mess it is now in.

I think the previous Minister, Mr. Nalder, must bear a good deal of the blame in this regard. He ignored the advice given to him and was not prepared to take steps which, in my opinion, would have overcome the situation.

In recent months the Farmers' Union and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association proposed a lamb marketing plan which was accepted by the previous Government. I understand the present Government will legislate in this regard. I sincerely trust that the hopes of the industry will eventuate because I feel the plan will at least go some way towards overcoming the present problems of lamb producers. I realise much work will have to be done on the plan, and it will not have a rapid or marked result in the immediate future. However, it is an attempt to improve the situation.

We know also that the Farmers' Union and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association have put to the State Government a plan to improve the mutton industry and to set up a similar marketing body. Likewise we know—or some of us know—that the United Beef Breeders Association has a beef marketing plan under discussion. All this surely indicates the great concern within the farming community of this State at the present situation. It means that the farmers have no confidence in the present auction system and they can see no future for themselves unless marketing bodies are introduced. I fully agree with them. It is time we made changes to stabilise our country areas. Lord knows, the farmers are in enough trouble as it is.

At a recent sitting of the House I asked the following question of the Leader of the House:—

In view of the very large body of public opinion against the routing of high voltage power lines along the suggested Darling Range routes to supply electricity to points north of the City, and the objectionable proposal to reserve a site for a power house at Long Point, south of Rockingham, will the Government, as a matter of urgency, initiate a feasibility study into the possibility of commencing a new power station north of Perth as quickly as possible to provide electricity for the northwards expansion of the City and industries that may be established in the area?

The reply I received was a brush-off which, of course, I had expected. It is as follows:—

No. The establishment of a power station north of the City will not remove the need for the high voltage power lines referred to. The evaluation

of power station sites is a continuing function, and at the present time a northern site has no special attraction.

I think it is high time the planners of our instrumentalities took a long, hard look at their policies. Obviously in the near future we will be faced with the construction of a power line along the Darling Range, whether it be in front, or on top of the range. It is obvious that in the future there will be a need to construct a second line in the same vicinity, because the future power needs of the area north of Perth will be heavy and two lines will be needed.

I am certain that we do not have to construct all our new power stations to the south of the city in the vicinity of our industrial area. Surely it is better to spread the power stations over a wider area. I admit that at present very little industry exists north of Perth, but it is obvious that plans for the proposed alumina refinery in the Swan Valley will come to a satisfactory conclusion. A great many people will be needed to operate the refinery, and population will be attracted to the area. We know that the residential districts to the north of the city will increase considerably in the future and that their electricity needs will be heavy.

There is the added attraction that if a power station is situated north of Perth it will become part of the grid system. I admit that if we are to have a grid system we must have connecting power lines, but these could be provided by a route other than that along the Darling Range. The provision of power lines would not be quite so urgent, because a new power station would take some years to construct. I feel there are many attractive features about the siting of a power station north of Perth, despite the reply I received to the effect that there is no special attraction.

The many thousands of people in this State who are becoming more and more concerned about the despoiling of beauty spots must surely be taken into account. Their feelings are important, so I sincerely hope further consideration will be given to this matter. In fact, I request the Government to rethink the whole situation. For instance, if we have a power station established at Long Point—and the Premier has stated that a site at Long Point is to be reserved for a power station—then we are going to concentrate our industries in that area. I believe that is not good planning procedure.

In the future Long Point may become a most important part of the State's playgrounds, especially for the residents of the Rockingham-Kwinana area. Therefore, it should not be despoiled. Many areas are available to the north of Perth which could be developed with proper planning

and which would not interfere with the planning for the future requirements of the Western Australian coastal strip.

We have been told that the Labor Party slogan which some people believe won the election was, "Time for a change." I sincerely hope that this is the time for a change and that the problems I have mentioned will be given serious consideration. I think it is time for a change in departmental thinking, which has perhaps become a little too stereotyped. That is all I wish to contribute this evening, and I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. D. K. Dans.

House adjourned at 8.41 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 28th July, 1971

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

LIQUOR

Sale of Low Alcohol Beverages: Petition

MR. A. R. TONKIN (Mirrabooka) [4.32 p.m.]: I wish to present a petition from the West Australian Temperance Alliance, addressed as follows:—

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

We the undersigned residents in the State of Western Australia do herewith pray that Her Majesty's Government of Western Australia will reconsider its policy of allowing beverages with a known alcohol content of less than 2 per cent. being freely available in stores and milk bars with a view to restricting the sale of such beverages to licensed premises.

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

The petition has 2,002 signatures, and I have signed the petition to certify that it conforms to the rules of the House.

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

QUESTIONS (42): ON NOTICE

1. ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Replacement of Lost Revenue

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Premier:

Relating to the Government's published intentions of not taxing any particular group to replace

lost road maintenance tax revenue, does this mean the Government will—

- (a) use the same method as that to refund the receipts tax estimated to cost between five and six million dollars; or
- (b) revert to the deferred payments method as in the late 1950's?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (a) Possibly, but not necessarily.
- (b) See answer to (a).

2.

OLD COAST ROAD

Works Programme

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the programme of work now being undertaken on the Old Coast Road?
- (2) What is the cost of the work?
- (3) As traffic has been diverted to another road, could his Department give consideration to the erection of speed limit signs along this route?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Reconstruction and widening to 24 ft. over a distance of 14 miles.
- (2) \$160,000.
- (3) The Department will investigate the need for additional signs for this detour.

3.

ABATTOIRS

Midland Operational Loss, and New Major Abattoir

Mr. REID, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is to be the estimated loss of the Midland abattoirs ending the 30th June, 1972?
- (2) What will be the loss on—
 - (a) the mutton chain;
 - (b) the lamb chain;
 - (c) the beef chain?
- (3) What is the cost of servicing the loans currently held by the Midland Abattoir Board for the last financial year?
- (4) Has the Government made any decision regarding building a third major service abattoir?
- (5) If so, where will it be built?
- (6) If not, when will it make a decision?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) This information is not available. The Board is currently finalising its budget for 1971-72. The effects of increased capacity, and of the new boning, freezing