

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 29th October, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## BILLS (5): ASSENT

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Railways Discontinuance and Land Revestment Bill.
2. Marketing of Potatoes Act Amendment Bill.
3. Ministers of the Crown (Statutory Designations) and Acts Amendment Bill.
4. Main Roads Act Amendment Bill.
5. Library Board of Western Australia Act Amendment Bill.

## PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

### Tabling

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith): I wish to lay on the Table of the House the report of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations for the year ended the 30th June, 1974.

*The report was tabled (see paper No. 287).*

## QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

### EDUCATION

#### Remote Areas, and Handicapped Children: Assistance

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government introduced any form of assistance for the parents of children who, to further their education, have to board at schools which cater for special disabilities?
- (2) If not, will the Minister advise when such assistance, as suggested by him in July, will be introduced?
- (3) Will this assistance cater for the children attending such educational institutions as St. Joseph's Preventorium for asthmatic children at Kellerberrin, to which referrals are made by Princess Margaret Hospital and other agencies, and which is attended by many children from the metropolitan area as well as other country areas?

- (4) Will the Minister take steps to ensure that those not covered at present by the Australian Government's assistance to isolated children scheme are not precluded from attending schools most suited to their needs by their parents' financial problems?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) Assistance is provided by the Commonwealth Government for children who, through isolation or certain physical handicaps, are obliged to live away from home. The Commonwealth Government does not recognise the asthmatic condition as being in this category.
- (2) to (4) A decision as to whether the State Government should grant such special assistance has not been reached.

## SOIL CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Report

Report of Committee adopted.

## CITY OF PERTH ENDOWMENT LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [4.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Members are aware of the present public discussion on the proposal to have portion of the City of Perth endowment lands set aside as an "A"-class reserve in a manner similar to that applying to King's Park. Largely for financial reasons the Council of the City of Perth has not supported the proposition. However, it has indicated a willingness to discuss the matter with the Government.

While strongest support for the proposal has come from the City Beach Ratepayers Association, the size of the suggested reserve gives it an importance for the whole community and not for the local residents only. It is for this reason—that the proposed reserve will rank in importance with King's Park—that I have introduced this Bill to Parliament. It is only reasonable that all citizens through their representatives should be enabled to express their views on the matter.

The land, the subject of this Bill, includes portion of the area known as Bold Park but also includes a large area presently classified under the metropolitan region scheme as urban residential. The Bill defines an area bounded by portions of Oceanic Drive, Challenger Drive, West Coast Highway, Stephenson Avenue, Underwood Avenue, Brookdale Street, and Alderbury Street. It includes not only

Reabold Hill but also the Perry Lakes Stadium, and comprises roughly 1 000 acres.

The land is extensively used for both passive and active recreation by citizens from all parts of the metropolitan area, and Reabold Hill itself is a popular look-out point for visitors to the State, providing, as it does, extensive views in all directions.

The attitude of the Labor Party is that the area should be set aside in the same manner as King's Park, and this view has been expressed by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr J. T. Tonkin) in a motion presented to the Legislative Assembly.

The introduction of this Bill has several purposes. It allows members of this Chamber an opportunity to express their views on the future of the area but, more importantly, it will prevent, for the time being, any subdivision of the land. It also achieves this purpose without removing the land from the control of the City of Perth.

In brief, the passing of the Bill will impart to the area most of the characteristics of an "A"-class reserve, will preserve its present status in respect of the City of Perth, provide time in which to assess quietly the most appropriate future uses of the area, and reassure members of the public who are concerned that no ill-considered, hasty actions will occur.

The purposes of the Bill are achieved in three ways by amendment to the parent Act. Firstly, the Bill creates a new definition, namely "Reabold Hill", the boundaries of which have already been described; secondly, certain powers conferred on the City of Perth by the parent Act will be exercisable in respect of Reabold Hill only with the consent of the Governor; and, thirdly, the Council will be prevented from exercising its powers to classify and reclassify land in respect of the area to be known as "Reabold Hill".

In commending this Bill to members, I now draw their attention to some of the reported comments from members of the public and also to the report of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission in 1930, headed by Mr Harold Boas.

For the sake of accuracy, I have chosen to present a prepared speech so that there will be no misunderstanding about the essential purposes of the Bill.

I would like to refer members to various reports which have appeared in the Press over the last month which may improve their knowledge on the subject. The first of such reports appeared in *The West Australian* on the 23rd September under the heading, "Group: Keep it natural". The article refers to a group of City of Perth councillors who were working to keep the area in its natural state. If members study the zoning of this area under the Metropolitan Region

Scheme they will observe that roughly half the land is suggested for urban development under that scheme, although it has not as yet been set aside as such by the City of Perth. That article in the Press indicates the difference of opinion within the council, and illustrates that the intention of the councillors concerned was to include all the area I have described in my definition, although they did not envisage the inclusion of the Perry Lakes and stadium in the reserve.

Later, on the 12th October, an item headed, "Don't destroy bushland, say residents" appeared in *The West Australian*. The article appears under the name of John Arthur, and states in part—

Last month, 100 City Beach residents strongly supported proposals to retain the 490 acres as a park.

City Beach Ratepayers' Association president, Mr Danny Crewe, said "The way things are going the only heritage available to our children will be bricks and mortar."

"The most important point about this park proposal is that it is not just a facility for City Beach.

This indicates the proposal has general support in the area, and that the ratepayers' group does not view the park simply as a local facility. Certainly it is not used in that fashion at the moment.

On the 31st August, an item headed, "Bold Park 'has space enough'" appeared in the Press. It stated that the general purposes committee of the Perth City Council held the view that the existing open space in Bold Park was sufficient for the area. I do not intend to read out the article in full. However, it includes comments by Cr Julius Re, and indicates the intention at that time was to increase the area by 20 hectares—a decision which I think was adopted last Monday week.

On Monday, the 14th October, another item appeared in *The West Australian* under the heading, "Only third of park is bushland". The article was accompanied by a map which shows a regional road cutting across the area to link Underwood Avenue with West Coast Highway at a point to the north of the Wollaston Theological College, and skirting the existing pine plantation. The map also shows the area currently proposed for residential development. The article, which was written by Ted Joll, states in part—

Another matter relating to MRPA plans for the area is giving councillors food for thought. A westward extension of Underwood Avenue and a controlled access highway shown going north near Perry Drive threaten to carve up the charm of Bold Park and mingle exhaust fumes with its bushland scents.

I think that in itself is good reason for us to give further consideration to the future of this reserve.

It is my belief the westward extension of Underwood Avenue is not at all necessary, and the existing road link of Stephenson Avenue with West Coast Highway is quite adequate for the present traffic flow. However, the general problem of the proposed regional road through the reserve requires resolution. It would be perhaps unfortunate if the road were to be constructed. That article in the Press was quite a long one and it set out in some detail the current events regarding the controversy.

In *The West Australian* of the 17th October there appeared an article under the heading, "Division in PCC over park plan". This was also written by Ted Joll and was one of the first articles to appear in the Press which highlighted the difference of opinion within the Perth City Council in regard to this matter. I will quote parts of the article briefly as follows—

When the matter was last discussed by the finance committee, a majority supported the plan for a park. However, at this week's town planning committee debate there were clear indications that a majority favoured selling the land.

Further on we find the following—

The body responsible for the council's parks and recreation department, the general purposes committee, may have something to say on the issue tomorrow.

That indicates that three different committees of the council are involved. Further on the article states—

However, whatever money might be raised by land sales, it could not be used for the benefit of the city generally.

That refers to a discussion on whether the land should be sold. It has been suggested that some \$15 million to \$18 million may be raised by the sale of the land. However, under the endowment lands legislation that money may be used only within the endowment lands, and this is seen as a problem.

On the 3rd October a photograph accompanied by a small item appeared in *The West Australian*, indicating that students of the Claremont Teachers' College had started a survey of flora and fauna in Bold Park. The article stated that the survey had so far found 65 species of flora, 21 species of birds, and a tremendous number of insect varieties. Obviously the park is still rich in its indigenous flora and fauna.

In the *Daily News* of the 8th October we find the heading: "No' again to City Beach park plan". The article states—

Perth City Council's town planning committee has reaffirmed its stand against setting aside about 500 acres at City Beach for a natural park.

Finally, the *Daily News* of the 9th October carried a headline stating, "Council looks again at bush park plan". The article refers to the attitude of Mr Medcalf in regard to the area. I will not read it out, because he is quite able to express his views for himself. Several people in the district have also written letters to the Press urging the retention of this area for a park.

In December, 1930, the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission published a report. At that time the commission was chaired by Mr Harold Boas, a man who had a very high reputation in this State. I found this report extremely interesting overall, because the ideas set out in it have a modern ring to them. In the summary, on page 15 of the report, the following appears—

#### A Circle of Parks.

One of the most important recommendations in this chapter is for the creation of a park belt encircling the metropolitan area, linking up lakes, reserves, river valleys, and ocean. It has been assessed by the best English authorities that the unit of a complete community within a given area should not exceed 100,000 people and that such an area should be divided from any adjacent areas by a bar or ring of open country or a parkway system. These parkways are the lungs of the community and also provide recreational facilities . . .

A little further on is what I consider an extremely accurate forecast made in 1930, because it reads—

The Commission visualises within 50 years a large and thickly populated metropolitan area comprising within its 137 square miles 1,000,000 people.

By the time we reach 1980, which is not far away, that report will be almost spot-on. Therefore, as I say, it is an extremely accurate prediction for the future, and it was in this context that the commission was making its recommendations. Another chapter on "Open Spaces" appears on page 94 and it commences with a few quotations, which relate to what the members of the commission thought should be public open space for the general health and welfare of the people. The commission indicated the importance of open space not only for health alone, but to reduce the cost of conducting and maintaining hospitals and providing health care. By ensuring that we had a

better environment, we would reduce the incidence of various costs to the community.

That was a very far-sighted approach by members of the commission at that time and is in line with our modern way of thinking. In this chapter also the members of the commission enter into a little more detail on the question of a circle of parks. Therefore I would like to quote a little more from the report which is under the heading of "Park Belt" appearing on page 101. It reads—

#### PARK BELT.

It has been assessed by the best English authorities that the unit of community within a given area should not exceed 100,000 people, and that such an area should be divided from any adjacent areas which are a natural extension of the community by a bar or ring of open country or a parkway system. In many cases the natural features of the country in the form of river valleys have been used for the creation of these parkways, which act not only as the lungs of the community, but as great recreational features and add to the amenity of the district.

Further on, the following appears—

a belt of timbered country could be developed up the valleys of the Swan and Canning Rivers from Perth to their sources, and it might be possible to connect these with large belts of open country situated in a circumference around the metropolitan area and including the National Park at Swan View as one of the main features.

Another small section of the report reads—

There is within the metropolitan area a series of lakes and swamp lands eminently suitable for future beautification and planting and, if linked up by a series of parkways, they are so situated as to create a ring belt around the metropolitan area of the type being designed and carried out in other parts of the world and recommended by the Melbourne Metropolitan Town Planning Commission for the future development of Melbourne and its suburbs.

This belt would run from Monger's Lake through or around what was Herdsman Lake; thence north, absorbing the Karrinyup Swamps up to Lake Coolelal and thence to Lake Joondalup;

It then describes the further course it would take. On page 102, from which I have been quoting, there is a map of the area under discussion—the Reabold Hill area—which delineates the sort of scheme the commission was proposing. The caption under the map reads as follows—

City of Perth Endowment Lands, showing great value of large areas of

open space, with two townsites designed on modern town planning lines.

This map delineates—almost, but not quite—an area similar to that which I have outlined in my Bill.

I quoted that report particularly because it indicates not only the thinking of those people at the time, but the foresight shown by them, which has provided us with lands around the city which at present are readily available. On page 103, the report speaks of the pine plantations that were planted round about that period, which have proved to be of tremendous value to successive Governments of this State who have found many community uses for the land on which the pine forests were planted. One of those that is well known is the area which is now the site of the Western Australian Institute of Technology, and another is the site where the new Murdoch University is located.

Today we are enjoying the result of the foresight shown by the people who made these decisions well before our time. In 1930 they could foresee and appreciate the value of the earlier decision to preserve King's Park. If members support my Bill they will, I am sure, show the same foresight as shown by those who have gone before us and who, at the time in question, urged that the land I have been describing should be set aside in the same manner as King's Park was in earlier times.

The piece of land I have delineated—which includes Perry Lakes and the stadium—is already used by a large section of the people in the metropolitan area. I should think it would be used also by many of our country citizens. It is a reserve not just for the benefit and welfare of the citizens of Floreat Park, and it has the potential to serve even more people as the areas around it are developed.

I would remind members that the area I have delineated at Reabold Hill does not include all the endowment lands. There is an extensive section of 110 acres south of the Stephenson Avenue which would accommodate a large population. Other university endowment lands also lie to the south which would be capable of subdivision. So the size of the community in the area will grow, just as the size of the total population of the metropolitan area will increase.

Members may question my use of the term "Reabold Hill" instead of Bold Park, which is the more frequently used term. I point out that Bold Park embraces a larger section which extends northward of Oceanic Drive and includes what is now the Wembley Downs public golf course. So we have to find some other term that would be distinctive and readily recognised by a wider section of the community which would take in areas such as those on which Perry Lakes Stadium

is situated. Therefore I consider the term Reabold Hill would meet what this demands.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Before you sit down would you be good enough to inform us who was the real sponsor of the Bill?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Does it have to be anyone but me?

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It would be interesting to the members of the House to know.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is my proposal. I managed to convince my party it should support it, and so it comes to this Chamber. I do not see why it should be some other person who should sponsor the measure. If such were the case I would have no hesitation in saying so, but this is not the case. I believe this to be a matter of public interest and one upon which we, as members of Parliament, have a duty to express ourselves. I say that because I believe we are not looking at what would be purely a local resource, or one that would serve the local community; we are looking at something with the potential of King's Park. It will, of course, be quite different from King's Park, but it will have a resource value to the whole community.

As we all know, members of both Houses will be visiting the area on Thursday next when they will be able to go to the top of Reabold Hill. It is a place I like to visit when I have the time. At every opportunity I take visitors up there because of the tremendous view it offers not only in the daytime but also at night. There is a wonderful view of the city lights from the top of that hill.

The area has a variety of vegetation. There is rather low scrub on the front sand dune which takes the brunt of the weather, and beyond the first ridge there is a colony of banksias which merges into tuart and general low shrubs, as one travels up Reabold Hill. With those words I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice).

## ALUMINA REFINERY AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 22nd October.

**THE HON. R. T. LEESON** (South-East) [5.14 p.m.]: This Bill relates to the royalty paid by Alcoa to the State Government on the production of alumina. Its purpose is purely to alter the formula which prescribes the royalty that is paid.

Prior to May, 1972, the formula was based on the Canadian f.o.b. Toronto price of alumina that was published in the *London Metal Bulletin*. This was indicated by the Minister when making his second

reading speech. For some reason, however, this price has not been published, with the result that the officers of the Mines Department, the Department of Industrial Development and the representatives of Alcoa have had to get together to work out some alternative formula.

The formula that has been arrived at for long-term purposes—and this is considered for a period of 10 years—contains almost the same amount as that in the previous formula. Consequently there will not be a great deal of alteration in the amount of the royalty paid.

I can see nothing at all wrong with the Bill. We all appreciate that the State is beginning to depend more and more on royalties in Western Australia; and as a State which is now geared to mining it is hoped that we continue at an increased rate to derive royalties from the mining industry.

With those few remarks I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee, etc.*

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

## RURAL AREAS

### *Attitude of Federal Government: Motion*

Debate resumed from the 24th October, on the following motion by the Hon. A. A. Lewis—

That this House deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas and in particular its obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia.

**THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON** (North Metropolitan) [5.19 p.m.]: This motion moved by a member of the Government parties has been laboured with great difficulty both by the mover of the motion and his colleagues. The members concerned have been able to bring very little forward to support their statements, nor have they been able to give any reason for their view, as expressed in the motion, "That this House deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas and in particular its obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia".

The Government members who have spoken to the debate on the motion have certainly not been able to show that the last part of the motion is true. It would appear that the attitude of members of the Government parties is that farmers should be the only recipients of welfare treatment; that they can survive only with a great accumulation of hand-outs and

subsidies, and that sort of thing; and that they do not have the ability to stand on their own feet. This is a very sad reflection on the farmers by the members of the Liberal and Country Parties.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is not what I said.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is a sad reflection by people who claim to understand and sympathise with the problems of the people in rural areas.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is the sort of picture that you and the Prime Minister are trying to create now.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The sort of picture that Mr McNeill would like to have built up would contain an atmosphere of hate existing between the country and the city people. In my electorate I have yet to find that this attitude exists. The only place in which I have heard such an attitude expressed is in this House, or outside of it, by members of the Liberal and Country Parties. This is from where the whole thing first sprang; from their own electoral needs rather than from something which actually existed.

If we consider the Liberal Party's policies in order to get an appreciation of how it felt things should be done in rural areas, we will find very little at all to guide us. Mr McNeill claimed that the Labor Party had no policy. This is far from the truth. He should have certainly taken a closer look at what is contained in his own party's platform.

I would point out that a booklet produced by the Labor Party for the May, 1974, election set out the party's rural policy. This booklet is readily available and had Mr McNeill made the necessary inquiries he would have been able to obtain a copy to see exactly what the policy of the Labor Party is in this connection. The booklet in question is not a small one; it consists of 30 closely printed pages and it certainly does a great deal more to show what the policy of our party is than anything which the Liberal Party has produced to indicate what its policy might be in this regard.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Is the Federal Government following it?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is in fact making a general approach to the rural areas in much the same manner as we are approaching the problems of the people in those areas. We want these people to be able to exist independently on their own means without being given hand-outs or charity, or anything of that nature.

One of the first statements made in this booklet which is entitled, *This Land—Labor's Rural Programme*, is that—

One-in-four families in country towns live in poverty or near-poverty conditions.

This does not refer to the farmers but to the people who live in those country towns.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Government members forget about that.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Yes. It would be a most unjust accusation to level at my party to say it has no regard for the country people.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: You are quite specific this does not include farmers?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The report refers to the people in country towns.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You know this definitely?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I can only believe the notes that are contained in this authoritative source. We then turn to a booklet put out by the present Government of Western Australia, *The Western Australian Economy, 1973-74*, in which we find the following—

New records were achieved in the primary sector with the net value of rural production amounting to almost double the record result of the previous year.

From that one would assume that rural production showed an increased net value of almost double that of the previous year.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: How much is the net value?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The net value referred to was double that of the previous year.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What does it say about the farmers?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We did not make the statement.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: We are sorry Mr Cloughton made the statement; we only want clarification which he cannot give us.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The first statement I have read out says that one in four families in country towns live in poverty or near-poverty conditions; and the second statement, which is contained in the booklet put out by the present Government, states that the net value of rural production is double that of the previous year. This is a generalised statement and it could well be that some of the one in four referred to could be farmers.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Thank you, that is all I want to know.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: However, when we see that rural production has doubled in the last few months we must accept that in general terms it is not the farmers who comprise the one in four who are living in poverty conditions.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Why don't you visit the agricultural areas and see for yourself? If you did you would know a bit more.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: If the honourable member did perhaps he might learn a bit more.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: I certainly do visit these areas and I invite you to come out with me. It might teach you something.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I do not need an invitation from Mr Masters to visit these areas, because I will be making a trip through the rural areas in a few weeks' time.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Do not forget to stop.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As it happens, I made a very extensive tour of the pastoral areas and this took over a week. In the past I have visited rural areas and I have enjoyed very much my years of rural living.

I think Mr Cooley might have read a statement which was made by a person living in the rural areas to the effect that if things were 10 times worse than they are in those areas he would still prefer to live in the country rather than in the city.

Generally speaking, we can say that on the figures that have been produced farmers, in this State at least, are doing extremely well. If there has been a change it has been fairly sudden, possibly since the present State Government has taken office.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Since the Labor Government got in in Canberra.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Did you say "if there has been a change"? Don't you know?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The rural production has doubled in its net value in the last few months during which the present Government has been in office. This must have taken place previously, so if things are bad for the rural areas at the moment one can lay the blame at the door only of the present State Government—nobody else would be to blame.

It was not uncommon during the regime of the Tonkin Government to hear the comment that the Minister for Agriculture in that Government (Mr H. D. Evans) was the best Minister for Agriculture the State had known for years.

To return to the rural policy of the Australian Government which members of the State Government parties in this House appear to deplore: what it really means is that the policy of the Australian Government is that it does not want to force country people into the big cities; nor does it wish to see their children forced into the big cities. The Australian Government does not want these people to be the subject of handouts; it wants them to be strong and self-reliant which

is a very different view from that which has been expressed by the members of the Liberal and Country Parties.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is exactly what I said.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Australian Government is now steering a new course, and I would refer briefly to some of the things this involves, and some of the features the Australian Government has introduced. I do not intend to say that everything the Australian Government has done has been good; that would be foolish. However, most things it has done have been sensible and have been based on the accumulation of sound information.

In its first Budget the Australian Government allocated \$36 million to growth centres. That amount was provided for decentralisation, to avoid perpetuating the continual trend of people moving to the cities. Centres have been created away from the major cities so that facilities are located in rural areas where people can enjoy them instead of their having to travel to the cities.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: All in the south-eastern part of the country!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Government does not pretend to be a wizard or a magician; it cannot do at once all it would like to do. A start has to be made and it is a naive objection to say that the start should not be where the most people are situated. All that members opposite have been able to offer to the people of this State, apparently, is a change of Government which is supposed to be sympathetic towards people who live in rural areas.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: Does the honourable member not think those people believe that?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Members opposite have done nothing more, and if something more has been done they have not been able to tell us what it is. The programmes to assist education and pensioners, as mentioned by Mr Thompson, are of benefit to the citizens of this country, not in the cities alone but in the country areas also. The decentralisation policy will mean that many facilities, such as hospitals, will be located closer to where the people live.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: Does the honourable member support the centralisation policy of the Federal Government?

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He said, "decentralisation".

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I referred to decentralisation, such as the location of hospitals in country areas.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Do you mean to say that country areas do not have any hospitals at present?

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: In what areas has the Commonwealth Government assisted?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Pratt will have an opportunity to make a speech.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: I am asking the honourable member to clarify his statement.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The Australian Government was praised for cutting tariffs.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The McEwen policy.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: In May, of this year, it was estimated that tariff cuts would provide to the farmers benefits amounting to \$100 million. The booklet from which I am quoting mentions AIDC support for farmer co-operatives. This is something to which I thought the Country Party would be drawing attention: the co-operative movement, to ensure that farmers are not subject to control by middlemen, and to ensure they receive a price for their products which covers the cost of production, and provides an incentive for the farmers to continue producing.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Can the honourable member tell me exactly what help the AIDC, or anybody else, is providing for the co-operatives? I am very interested in what the honourable member is saying, and I would like him to give me some examples of where the support has gone.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is a reasonable question. I am quoting from the booklet, *This Land—Labor's Rural Programme*. I do not profess to be an expert on rural problems. The Opposition parties have rejected legislation to extend the role of the Australian Industries Development Corporation into the area of farmer co-operatives. That is a quite incredible situation. An organisation is available which can provide funds and assistance to co-operatives yet the Opposition parties—which pretend to sympathise with the farmers, and support them—have rejected the extended role of the AIDC.

The statement on AIDC support for farmer co-operatives continues—

The Labor Government and the co-operative movement wanted the AIDC to financially support co-operatives to ensure that farmers had an increasing stake in the processing and marketing of farm produce.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Go on.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Read us some more.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: There is an instance where members opposite are working against the interests of the farmers. It is certainly not the Australian Labor Government which, in this case, was

promoting a policy to assist farmers' co-operatives; the proposal was defeated by the Liberal and Country Party Opposition in the Federal Government.

I have no doubt that Mr Lewis is anxious for me to sit down because he does not want to hear about what is taking place. One of the major aims of the AIDC was to seek out new markets. For a farm to be viable, and for the farmer to get value for his produce, the logical thing is to seek markets rather than prop up the farmers with subsidies and welfare hand-outs. Increased markets will give the farmers an opportunity to be independent and self reliant.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What is the honourable member's definition of viability, on a broad scale?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Gayfer is thinking of a farm as a business, and like any other business it has to make a profit and support, reasonably comfortably, the people who depend upon it.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What about the price for wheat? Does the honourable member think we should receive the same price as that paid overseas, or give a hand-out to the consumers in Australia?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There has been plenty of time since the change of Government.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The member opposite raises a reasonable proposition and I imagine that in time the Australian Labor Government will tackle the matter. Again this cannot happen overnight.

A report on wheat marketing, which appeared in *The Australian* of last Saturday was extremely glowing and optimistic with regard to prices which the farmers will obtain for their wheat crops this year. When we listen to some members speak in this Chamber we are led to believe that the farmers are having an extremely poor season; that they will not do very well at all. That could be because we have a Liberal-Country Party Government in this State. In the rest of Australia, however, the farmers will have bumper crops and do extremely well! The farmers in this State are unfortunate in that they picked the wrong party at the last election.

The Hon. G. E. Masters: They will do it again.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The last annual report of the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia comments on the rural sector as follows—

The buoyant conditions being experienced in agricultural areas are reflected in the figures for loans outstanding. With the exception of Farm Water Supply and seasonal assistance (No. 4) loans which are confined to farmers with specific difficulties in limited areas and continued lending



under the Marginal Dairy Farm Reconstruction Scheme, loans outstanding have reduced substantially.

I repeat: loans outstanding have reduced substantially. That can occur only under good conditions in rural areas. The report which I have just quoted, of course, covers the period of the Tonkin Government in this State.

The Hon. I. G. Pratt: Is the honourable member saying that debts have been reduced?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The farmers did a whole lot better under the previous Labor Government than they are now doing.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The comment was from a real left wing bank!

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: As Mr Thompson said last week, when speaking to this motion, the Australian Labor Government has already created a fund to fight animal diseases, and has agreed to construct a laboratory to cost \$56 million. This is the type of positive measure taken by the Labor Government to protect a valuable primary industry.

As a further step to improve communications between farmers and the Government a national rural advisory council will be established to advise the Government on problems and policies. One could go on quoting from the booklet, to which I have already referred, to indicate what the Government is doing?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What about the selling of wool overseas?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: It is not necessary for me to deal with that problem.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Wheat has now been sold to Russia.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: All right; what about these things?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr Gayfer would like me to conclude.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: I listened to the honourable member for three hours the other night.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I commend the booklet, from which I have been quoting, to Mr Gayfer and perhaps when he is next on his feet he may say something in approval of what the Australian Government is doing for rural areas. Obviously, it has a very comprehensive policy. The Country-Liberal Party Government has never really had a policy.

Instead of deploring the attitude of the Federal Government, we should commend it because of the breadth of its policies in the rural field. The Australian Government most definitely has a very obvious appreciation of the problems confronting primary producers, not only in Western Australia, but throughout the whole of the country.

I must strongly oppose the motion. It is most ill conceived and it is a pity that the member who introduced it into this House produced so very little to support it.

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

*House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 29th October, 1974

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

### PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

#### *Tabling*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Hutchinson): I have for tabling the report of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations for the year ended the 30th June, 1974.

*The report was tabled (see paper No. 321).*

### QUESTIONS (18): ON NOTICE

1.

#### POLICE

##### *Assaults and Bashings*

Mr SIBSON, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Could he please indicate the number of unprovoked assaults and bashings reported to the police during the last six months—
  - (a) in the metropolitan area;
  - (b) in the country areas?
- (2) Of the cases reported, how many charges were laid—
  - (a) in the metropolitan area;
  - (b) in the country areas?
- (3) What was the total number of convictions and of those how many were—
  - (a) fined;
  - (b) gaoled?
- (4) Of the total charged, how many were first offenders?

Mr Grayden (for Mr O'CONNOR) replied:

- (1) (a) 216  
(b) 68
- (2) (a) 63  
(b) 36
- (3) (a) 58  
(b) 9

The balance of 32 were dealt with either by being committed to the Department for Community Welfare, placed on good behaviour bond, or dismissed.

- (4) 19.