

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