

Today when one reads the daily paper one will see that another section of the community employed by the Government will throw a further impost on the State's resources in respect of finances. Consequently, if the Government has to spend in one direction to provide the very necessary facilities that the State needs, one cannot expect to have the money to spend in another direction where one might hope that it will be spent.

As a Government, we are criticised, or castigated—whichever word one likes—for not putting sufficient money into housing, and for not providing sufficient roofs over the heads of our people. Yet, when the Government makes an effort and spends \$4,500,000 or \$5,000,000 on one project, one member says that this is all wrong, because he does not believe in that type of living. I am not terribly convinced of the merits of an argument of this nature. It is a Government's responsibility to do whatever it can and energetically to pursue the various projects under its control to enable it to do all the things that are required to be done. Two departments which consume a tremendous amount of money are the Education Department and the department controlled by my colleague, the Minister for Health. A terrific amount of money goes into each of these departments and a great deal of it is not recoverable. However, I am the first to admit that they are two of the most necessary departments that we can possibly have.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They pay the greatest dividends, too.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Education pays one of the greatest dividends the State could possibly get. Of course, if there is a maximum of good health in the community at the same time, the benefit is reflected throughout industry, commerce, and every form of enterprise.

I make these few remarks to indicate that no Government can do everything. I would like to assure Mr. Claughton that the Government does not do everything with an election gimmick in mind, as he seemed to indicate in his criticism.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would it not be fair to Mr. Claughton to say that he was asking you, as Minister for Mines, to ensure that the mining companies assist in conservation?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They take a very responsible attitude.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think that would be fair. As I have explained many times in this Chamber, the industrial agreements which are brought to Parliament for ratification contain clauses concerned with the rejuvenation of the land. In connection with ordinary mining on mineral claims I impose as many conditions as I can to ensure that, whilst we get some benefit through the wealth gained by extracting the minerals from the land, the land is not permanently despoiled.

One must realise, as I am sure all members do, that if there is a mining operation there must be some movement of the earth. Of course, since time immemorial man has been digging in the earth for minerals in one form or another. I am certain that the mining industry of this State is of very great benefit to us at the present time.

Mr. Claughton mentioned other matters such as mining on native reserves and that sort of thing. Some of those matters are *sub judice* at the moment, because they are still to be decided in the warden's court.

I leave the matter on that note and thank members for their contributions to the debate. I commend the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

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

House adjourned at 9.16 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 12th August, 1969

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

QUESTIONS (31): ON NOTICE

1. LAND

Flora and Fauna Reserves

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What is the total acreage of land in the State set apart for the preservation of flora and fauna, including State forests, national parks, etc?
- (2) Would he give an approximation of the acreage of such areas within 100 miles of Perth?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) 13,663,360 acres.
- (2) 1,964,660 acres.

Western Australia's total reserves, including about 39,000,000 acres for natives, are approximately

80,000,000 acres. I would like to add that the area of Victoria is, I think, 57,000,000 acres.

2. TOWN PLANNING

Ocean Frontage

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Within the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority area how many miles are there of ocean water front?
- (2) Of these miles, how many are unavailable to the public?
- (3) For what purpose is the restricted ocean frontage held or used?
- (4) What authorities are responsible for the control of the ocean frontage in the authority's area?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) 95 miles, including Garden Island.
- (2) 7.4 miles.
- (3) There is a variety of purposes including heavy industry activities such as the provision of jetties and wharves, safety and public health purposes connected with regulations controlling the use of explosives and quarantine, and power station requirements.
- (4) The Commonwealth Government, the State Government, Fremantle Port Authority, State Electricity Commission, and the following local authorities: cities of Perth, Fremantle, Cottesloe, Nedlands, Town of Mosman Park, and shires of Wanneroo, Perth, Cockburn, Kwinana and Rockingham.

3. RAILWAYS

Financial Operations

Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What were the Railway Department figures for the year ended the 30th June, 1969 compared with that of the previous ten years in relation to—
 - (a) revenue;
 - (b) costs;
 - (c) loss?
- (2) What amount was provided for interest and sinking fund in the same years?
- (3) What figures can be produced to show the reason for the reputed increased loss for 1968-69 and in what services the losses occurred?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

(1)	(a) Revenue \$	(b) Costs \$	(c) Loss \$
1958-59	27,399,606	37,493,750	10,094,144
1959-60	30,076,528	38,869,910	8,793,382
1960-61	33,075,696	39,573,624	6,497,928
1961-62	35,607,618	40,426,372	4,818,754
1962-63	33,429,028	40,297,384	6,868,356
1963-64	35,189,660	41,877,012	6,687,352
1964-65	36,686,332	43,506,380	6,820,048
1965-66	43,688,937	47,659,990	3,991,053
1966-67	49,119,886	53,578,797	4,458,911
1967-68	52,772,880	57,572,903	4,800,023
1968-69	50,558,113	60,609,910	10,051,797

- (2) (a) Interest charges included in the above costs were:—

	\$
1958-59	4,517,328
1959-60	4,679,578
1960-61	4,841,996
1961-62	5,081,870
1962-63	5,225,892
1963-64	5,577,070
1964-65	6,231,836
1965-66	7,006,097
1966-67	8,068,504
1967-68	8,809,562
1968-69	9,532,959

- (b) Sinking fund is not debited to railway accounts.
- (3) (a) The principal causes of the increased loss were reduced earnings from wheat \$4,443,000, award variations \$1,311,000, depreciation \$434,000 and interest \$723,000.
- (b) The allocation of earnings and expenditure over the various services is not commenced until the overall financial results for the year are completed and accordingly are not expected to be available for a few months yet.

4.

ROADS

Coolgardie-Kalgoorlie

Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Are plans in hand for diverting the entrance to Kalgoorlie from Coolgardie from Hannan Street?
- (2) If "Yes," where will the new entrance road cross the Kalgoorlie townsite boundary?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The Main Roads Department has no plans for deviating the Coolgardie-Kalgoorlie Road in the near vicinity of Kalgoorlie.
- (2) Answered by (1).

5. **TRAFFIC***Drivers' Licences*

Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) How many persons are at present incurring a suspension of a motor driver's license as distinct from those who before the offence giving rise to the conviction did not hold a motor driver's license and hence are now disqualified from holding such a license?
- (2) How many of the suspensions referred to relate to offences—
 - (a) under section 32;
 - (b) under section 32AA;
 - (c) for failure to take a breathalyser or blood test;
 - (d) for breach of the give-way-to-the-right rule;
 - (e) under section 31;
 - (f) under section 31A;
 - (g) under section 31B;
 of the Traffic Act?
- (3) Has consideration been given to amending those sections of the Traffic Act under which a suspension of a motor driver's license is mandatory upon conviction to enable justices to exercise discretion having regard to all relevant circumstances—whether or not to impose a suspension for example under United Kingdom legislation, in some instances, it is provided that magistrates shall suspend a licence unless "special circumstances" are shown to exist?
- (4) If (3) is "No", will he have the suggestion considered?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) A record of suspensions is not maintained on a daily basis. Suspensions and disqualifications incurred from the 1st July, 1968 to the 8th August, 1969, were—

suspensions and cancellations—11,980;
disqualifications—531.
- (2) Suspensions and cancellations from the 1st July, 1968 to the 8th August, 1969, were—
 - (a)—1,842.
 - (b)—460.
 - (c)—81.
 - (d)—661.
 - (e)—226.
 - (f)—755.
 - (g)—1,359.
- (3) Yes. The second schedule of the Motor Drivers' License Regulations was recently amended to reduce the number of offences which required the mandatory cancellation of drivers' licences.

Mandatory suspensions and cancellations are imposed for only the most serious offences or for accumulated points and it is not proposed to extend to these offences the discretion which may be extended for less serious offences.

- (4) Answered by (3).

6.

LAND*Reserve 24049*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Forests:

Will he lay on the Table of the House a copy of any survey or report made in relation to the protection of native flora on reserve 24049?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

Yes—copy of report dated the 6th March, 1969, by Senior Forester Donovan is submitted for tabling.

The report was tabled.

7.

TRAFFIC*"Stop" Signs*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) How many "Stop" signs have been erected in the metropolitan area since August 1968?
- (2) What is the present total of such signs?
- (3) What is the present total of "Give Way" signs in the same area?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) 156.
- (2) 1,509.
- (3) 183.

8.

HOUSING*Bentley Project*

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Housing:

In connection with the State Housing Commission Bentley high density project, will he advise—

- (a) the number and designation of permanent personnel to be employed by the State Housing Commission with regard to supervision and servicing of the accommodation;
- (b) the number and types of commercial businesses to be allocated to serve the tenants;
- (c) the basis of allocation of the business houses?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (a) One resident manager.
One clerk-assistant (non-resident).

Two caretaker-cleaners (one married couple)—resident.

One general hand-cleaner (non-resident).

*Two general hand-gardeners (non-resident).

*The mowing of grassed areas will be arranged on a contract basis, or by commission's gardening staff.

Maintenance of buildings will be arranged through the commission's maintenance organisation in the usual manner.

- (b) Four lock-up shops will be provided to accommodate the day-to-day needs of site residents; the essential needs being:—butcher, delicatessen, general grocer and greengrocer. The fourth shop will be provided for an optional purpose such as ladies and/or gentlemen's hairdressing.

A State Housing Commission Office will also be located in the project.

- (c) It is intended to invite public tenders for the lease of the four shops on a rental basis.

9.

HOUSING

East Manning

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has a firm plan been finalised for the development of State Housing Commission land at East Manning?
- (2) When is it anticipated that the construction of housing commission accommodation will commence?
- (3) Will the Bentley high density scheme sewerage extensions eventually serve the East Manning area?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) No. However, the information now available to the commission regarding the location of the main sewer to serve the East Manning land will enable the commission to proceed with the preparation of subdivisional plans and further discussions with the local authority regarding development.
- (2) 1970-71.
- (3) No.

10.

MEAT

Mutton and Lamb Prices

Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has any action been taken following the inquiry into the Mutton

and Lamb Industry to ensure that better prices are received by the producers for all types of mutton and lamb?

- (2) Has any action been taken to ensure that prices of mutton and lamb to the consumer are reduced?
- (3) Does he consider that the prices paid by exporters for various grades of mutton and lamb are fair and reasonable?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes. Meetings have been conducted with agents, farmers' representatives and abattoir authorities in an effort to rationalise deliveries with the object of having them spread more evenly over the year.

During the autumn months, mutton and lamb were in short supply resulting in improved prices to the producer.

- (2) Earlier in the year lower prices advantaged the consumer. However, as prices to producers have increased so the consumer has paid accordingly.
- (3) The entry of new exporters into the trade in this State has assisted in generating greater competition for types of meat required for export purposes.

11.

COAL

National Coal Research Advisory Committee

Mr. JONES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is Western Australia still represented on the National Coal Research Advisory Committee?
- (2) If "No", when did Western Australia withdraw?
- (3) For what reasons did Western Australia withdraw from this organisation?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The 1st July, 1969.
- (3) The Commonwealth Government modified the scheme of assistance to coal research as from the beginning of the financial year, 1969-70, and the State Governments and industry groups no longer contribute to a joint pool of funds for this research. As a result, the Commonwealth reconstituted the National Coal Research Advisory Committee and the State Government is no longer represented on it.

12. COAL

Research Finance

Mr. JONES, asked the Acting Premier:

- (1) What level of finance has been received from the Commonwealth for research into the utilisation of Collie coal since 1960?
- (2) How is the Commonwealth committed in this respect in the future?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) \$30,000.
- (2) Not at all.

13. EDUCATION

Enrolments and Teaching Staff

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the respective number of enrolments at each of the metropolitan high schools?
- (2) What is the respective number of teaching staff at each of the metropolitan high schools?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Metropolitan Senior High Schools	Enrolment at February, 1969	Teaching Staff at February, 1969	
		Full-time	Part-time
Applecross	1,471	75	2
Armada	1,283	69	...
Belmont	1,356	68	3
Bentley	1,465	79	...
Churchlands	1,363	70	...
City Beach	652	33	1
Cyril Jackson	1,013	52	2
Governor Stirling	1,453	80	2
Hamilton	987	50	1
Hampton	1,036	50	1
Hollywood	896	51	2
John Curtin	1,520	82	4
John Forrest	1,436	75	...
Kent Street	1,389	79	...
Melville	1,259	63	2
Mirrabooka	1,114	61	...
Mount Lawley	1,549	77	...
Perth Modern	1,324	73	3
Scarborough	1,416	72	3
Swanbourne	919	55	1
Tuart Hill	1,302	67	1

Metropolitan High Schools			
Balcatta	904	40	1
Cannington	1,213	55	1
Como	250	14	...
Eastern Hills	403	23	1
Kalamunda	604	27	4
Kewdale	1,017	53	...
Kwinana	875	43	...
Rossnoyne	480	24	4
South Fremantle	949	46	...

14. RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK

Alarms

Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) For the protection of the Rural & Industries Bank staff and property against possible armed "hold up", and as an example to similar private institutions, will he have easily reached foot-operated alarms installed beneath teller counters and office desks and tables?

- (2) If so, will provision also be made to have such an alarm ring inside and outside bank premises?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2). This type of alarm is not necessarily the best in all circumstances.

Alarms of various types have been installed in some branches and the Commissioners are presently involved in an enquiry which will result in the installation of such systems as best suit the circumstances of individual branches.

I do not think it would be appropriate to disclose the methods of alarms that are used within the branches, because it would be putting any prospective bank robber in possession of information he should not have.

Mr. Graham: Spoken like a statesman!

15. LAND

Cannington Primary School Site

Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

Will he advise when tenders will be called for the development of the land on which the Cannington primary school now stands?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Any agreement which may be entered into in regard to the existing Cannington Primary School site will allow the developer to schedule his own timetable for the development of the land.

16. COURTHOUSES

Kalgoorlie

Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) When is it expected that renovations and alterations to the Kalgoorlie court building will commence?

- (2) How long should this work take to complete?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Feasibility studies of the buildings are in course of finalisation. The commencement date is dependent on acceptance of the final proposals.

- (2) It is not practicable to estimate the time involved until final plans are prepared.

17. UNCLAIMED GOODS

Legislation

Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is it intended to introduce legislation to amend the Common Law relating to the bailment of chattels in circumstances where a

bailee without reward is left with unclaimed goods for an inordinate time?

(2) If so, when?

(3) If not, will early consideration be given this suggestion?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) This matter has been referred to the Law Reform Committee, whose report and recommendations for amendments to the law are expected to be received shortly.

(2) and (3). Legislation will be considered after the report has been studied.

18. DECENTRALISATION

New South Wales Comparison

Mr. WILLIAMS asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has he received a copy of the Development Corporation of New South Wales report on selective decentralisation?

(2) If so, in view of some stated comparisons made between this State's efforts in this field of development and that of New South Wales Department of Decentralisation, would he care to comment upon the effectiveness of the New South Wales department over the years as may be portrayed in the above-mentioned report?

(3) Would he have tabled a copy of the report on selective decentralisation?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) I do not think it appropriate to comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of the New South Wales decentralisation efforts in comparison with our own. Suffice to say in recent years we have achieved the greatest degree of decentralised growth in the State's history.

I think the salient features of the New South Wales report substantially confirm our own views expressed over the last two years, namely, that effective decentralisation can only be achieved by a regional approach to any developmental programme.

Expressed another way, the report appears to come to the conclusion that the amount of money spread over non-metropolitan areas to encourage decentralisation in the older type of approach does not achieve any clearly identifiable result. The modern decentralisation effort has to be concentrated more on regional centres or growth points.

(3) Yes. I am endeavouring to obtain some additional copies from New South Wales so that at least two copies can be tabled within the next few days.

The report was tabled.

19.

TRAFFIC

Accidents

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Police:

(1) With respect to that section of Rockingham Road between Hope Valley Road and the Medina turnoff, how many vehicle accidents have been reported in this section since the 1st January, 1969?

(2) How many vehicles were involved?

(3) How many people required medical attention?

(4) Would he consider reducing the present 50 m.p.h. limit on this section, at least, until all road construction in the area is completed?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1)

	Injury Acci- dents	Major Acci- dents	Minor Acci- dents	Total
Rockingham Road between Hope Valley Road and Medina Turn-off	8	23	10	41
Junction Rockingham Road and Thomas Road	1	6	Nil	7
Junction Rockingham Road and Hope Valley Road	Nil	3	1	4
	9	32	11	52

(2) 107 vehicles were involved in all the above accidents.

(3) Records of persons requiring medical attention are not available.

(4) Yes, but construction work between Hope Valley Road and Thomas Road junctions is expected to be completed within eight weeks.

20.

SHOPPING CENTRE

Calista

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) With regard to the recent acceptance of a tender for the construction of the new Calista shopping centre, will he table a copy of the conditions of tender?

(2) After the acceptance of the successful tender was the tenderer subsequently permitted to change the terms of the tender in respect of a number of shops to be constructed?

(3) Did the successful tenderer submit with his tender details of proposed shop rents to be charged?

- (4) Was any reference made in tender conditions or tender submissions that "ingoing" or "key money" may or may not, would or would not be asked of shop tenants?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. Subject to local authority approval, tenderer was permitted to provide two small extra shops, one for dry cleaner and bank agency, and one for a men's hair-dresser.
- (3) Yes. Estimated rentals were submitted by the successful tenderer in accordance with the requirements of the tender.
- (4) No.

The tender was tabled.

21. DRAINAGE

Peel Main Drain

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

Has his department yet determined the new course of the present Peel main drain when the Mandogalup Spectacle Swamp area becomes an area for alumina refinery effluent waste deposits?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

No. Alternatives are presently being investigated.

22. LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Address Requirements

Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is he aware that some legal documents lodged with the Supreme Court require an address "within one mile" of the court for the serving of notices?
- (2) If so, is not this requirement somewhat redundant now and could it not be eliminated?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A revision of the Supreme Court rules is to be undertaken and this matter will receive consideration at the same time.

23. MEAT

Mutton and Lamb Prices

Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Have the "further studies" which he stated in reply to a question on the 15th April been undertaken as a result of the Mutton and Lamb Industry Report submitted on the 11th March, 1969,

revealed any avenues of reduction in the price of lamb and mutton to the consumer?

- (2) If so, what are they?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) and (2). Earlier in the year lower prices did obtain but, as usual, during the autumn and winter months when prime mutton and lamb are in short supply prices do rise. However, mutton prices are now showing an easing tendency. With the flush lamb season it is also expected there will be lower lamb prices but this, of course, will depend on seasonal conditions.

24. CHILD WELFARE

Unmarried Mothers

Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:

Will he give the number of unmarried mothers in 1968 in this State?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

It is not possible to give the number of unmarried mothers in 1968 in this State. However, in the year 1968, there were 2,013 ex-nuptial births. Although most of these would be births of children born to unmarried mothers, some would be of married mothers but where the birth is regarded as ex-nuptial for other reasons. (This figure was provided by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and includes births of full blood aborigines.)

During the same year (1968), 189 unmarried mothers received financial assistance from the Child Welfare Department. It needs to be pointed out that not all unmarried mothers seek financial assistance and also that the figure could include unmarried mothers whose children were born in preceding years or who were born in another State and who subsequently came to this State where they applied for assistance.

25. WATER SUPPLIES

Shortage: Eastern Goldfields

Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he yet received a departmental report concerning water shortage in the pastoral areas of the eastern goldfields?
- (2) To what extent can the railways department facilities be utilised for transport of water for use on pastoral properties in the eastern goldfields?

- (3) Is he now able to advise when a decision will be made as to what the Government is prepared to do to alleviate serious water shortage where it now occurs throughout the State?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No, but my officers have reported below average rains in the eastern and north-eastern goldfields this year.
- (2) The water tank capacity of the Railways Department is likely to be fully committed for its own internal requirements.
- (3) The Government is actively engaged in assessing the extent of water shortages where they now occur and considering what action can be taken to alleviate the position.

26. WATER SUPPLIES

Plastic Pipes

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What companies have met the conditions laid down and been registered as approved manufacturers of plastic water pipes as outlined by him in February last year?
- (2) What action has been taken or will be taken to ensure that only pipe made by these manufacturers is used on connections to public water supplies?
- (3) In view of the need to ensure that purchases by all Government departments meet the conditions of the Australian Standards Association, have any general instructions been issued to departments that all plastic pipe purchases must be from an approved manufacturer?
- (4) What are the results and conclusions arising from tests which have been undertaken?
- (5) What are the points in doubt that require tests and experimentation?
- (6) For how long have tests been undertaken?
- (7) What is the estimated saving per house by using plastic piping and fittings for an average dwelling, as against the use of copper piping and fittings?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Gaydor Plastics and Vinidex are fully approved local manufacturers.
- Laminex Industries and Nylex Industries are conditionally approved local manufacturers.

Humes is a conditionally approved importer.

- (2) and (3). To date approval has only been given for the use of plastic piping on farming services. All consumers desirous of using plastic piping must obtain the prior approval of the departmental district engineer who determines the class of piping which can be used and informs the consumer of the approved manufacturer's brands permitted for use.
- (4) Plastic piping has been tested under operational conditions in country areas for a number of years, together with testing of selected samples at Northam water supply depot prior to the approval given early in 1968 for its use in farming services. Approved manufacturers must also have complete facilities for testing pipes to Australian standards, and regular factory inspections are out to ensure compliance.
- (4) Within the metropolitan water area, plastics are also under test. In some instances modifications have been made to field practice. Some failures have been experienced but not to the extent that plastic piping cannot be granted approval under specified conditions.
- (5) The durability of the materials in the pipes and joints under varying conditions of operation.
- (6) Testing of plastic piping has been carried out over a number of years. The most recent set of tests have been under observation for over twelve months.
- (7) Plastic piping will not be approved for all the water plumbing in an average dwelling. Metallic piping and fittings will be required for hot water services, piping in concealed places and possibly where exposed to sunlight or physical damage. The difference in cost would depend on the gauge of copper used and this is currently the subject of a submission from the copper pipe suppliers. From the meter to the rear of the average dwelling the difference in cost could vary from \$10 to \$35 less for plastic depending on the materials being considered.
- In conclusion, a Press notice of further approvals for extension of use of plastic piping will be released very shortly.

27. MEAT

Mutton and Lamb Prices

Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he read the report on the Mutton and Lamb Industry submitted to him on the 11th March, 1969?
- (2) If "Yes", does he consider it to be a satisfactory result to an inquiry into the reasons for the difference in prices ruling to the farmer and paid by the consumer?
- (3) Has he taken any action to give effect to the recommendations and, if so, what action has been taken?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The report indicated clearly the reasons for the difference in prices realised by the producer and paid by the consumer and this situation exists in every other form of primary production.

As an indication of the much better prices producers are currently receiving for lamb, I am aware that lamb is being imported to Western Australia from the Eastern States because of the higher prices to producers prevailing here.

It is known that lamb prices earlier in the season were favourable to the consumer.

- (3) Yes. Meetings have been conducted with agents, farmers' representatives, and abattoir authorities in an effort to rationalise deliveries with the object of having them spread more evenly over the year.

Increased killing space is now available and it is anticipated larger kills of sheep and lambs can be handled by Government abattoirs. It is understood private abattoirs will continue to take an increased percentage of the market.

As I replied in April of this year to a similar question, Government encouragement to the development of fresh overseas markets is continuing to be successful.

28. RAILWAYS

Coal Freight

Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Railways:

What did the railways receive in coal freights for the years 1960 to 1968 inclusive from—

- (a) Collie to Bunbury section;
- (b) Collie to East Perth section;
- (c) Collie to Fremantle section?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

	(a) Collie to Bunbury Section	(b) Collie to East Perth Section	(c) Collie to Fremantle Section
	\$	\$	\$
1959-60	688,296	417,815	524,361
1960-61	775,556	334,824	208,230
1961-62	1,054,230	335,213	269,839
1962-63	1,041,710	375,722	480,755
1963-64	1,210,284	334,727	371,574
1964-65	1,230,582	352,058	649,429
1965-66	1,232,009	343,301	541,653
1966-67	1,182,391	243,335	414,065
1967-68	751,227	189,769	191,167

29. CATTLE

Artificial Breeding Scheme

Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it a fact that there is a decline in the number of dairy farmers making use of the artificial breeding service?
- (2) Is he aware that the artificial breeding charges in Western Australia are the highest in Australia?
- (3) Do Governments in other States subsidise or vote any contribution towards containing artificial breeding charges?
- (4) What consideration is being given towards subsidising the artificial breeding service in Western Australia?
- (5) When can a decision be expected to a report from dairy farmers that the Government should subsidise artificial breeding?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Comparison of period the 1st January to the 25th July, 1969, with similar period last year indicates a decline of 814 in total numbers of cows inseminated. Declines at some centres were offset by slight increases at others.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) In the latest figures available, Tasmania and New South Wales have had operating losses recouped from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The Victorian service, which operates on a system of co-operatives, receives no direct Government subsidy.

South Australia has shown an operating loss in 1967-68 but it is not known whether a subsidy has been made.

- (4) A sum of \$50,000 was provided to the board towards establishment costs and towards costs of forward buying of semen. It was anticipated that further subsidy would not be necessary.
- (5) A decision should be available shortly.

30. RESEARCH STATION

Mt. Barker

Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What is the nature of cattle research being carried out at the Mt. Barker Research Station?
- (2) Is not this station primarily a sheep research station?
- (3) Has the Government any plans to develop a beef cattle research station in the south-west?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The Mt. Barker Research Station is being developed to include beef cattle research. Proposals for grazing trials for steer beef production have been submitted and approved.
- (2) No. The station will be utilised for general agricultural investigations, including cattle, sheep, cropping, pastures and soils.
- (3) Work has been progressing on beef research in the south-west at Bramley, Wokalup and Denmark, and will be continued.

31. RAILWAYS

Stock Races

Mr. McIVER asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What was the total cost of constructing the stock races on the standard gauge route at Grass Valley, Meckering and Cunderdin?
- (2) When will these stock races become operative?
- (3) Is he aware that these facilities are most unsatisfactory for the purpose for which they were constructed?
- (4) Will he give an assurance that the alterations to the stock races are made to the specifications requested by Wesfarmers and the Meckering branch of the Farmers' Union and submitted to the Railways Department?
- (5) Is a feasibility survey now being made to check whether these stock races are to be used; if so, when will a decision be made?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) It is assumed that the honourable member is referring to stock yard facilities generally at these localities. The total cost of the installations was \$36,250.
- (2) It is intended that the facilities will be used when general movement of freight traffic on standard gauge commences.
- (3) No.

- (4) Certain alterations to the facilities provided at Meckering have been suggested by the local representatives of Wesfarmers Ltd., following a joint inspection of the Meckering yards with departmental officers on the 8th July.

These are being examined and where there is justification, action will be taken by the department.

- (5) Answered by (2).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FOURTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 7th August, on the following motion by Mr. McPharlin:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

May it please Your Excellency: We the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [4.55 p.m.]: The Address-in-Reply debate affords members a great deal of scope to touch on subjects appertaining to their electorates or which are of consequence to the State. There is quite a number of matters which concern me—and no doubt other members as well. These are housing, native welfare, and similar matters. However, I want, in particular, to touch on one subject which has constantly caused me considerable concern and that is the diminishing role of the small businessman and the small primary producer in our economy at the present time.

I am concerned not only with this trend, but with the fact that Governments and other authorities apparently refuse to recognise that it is a trend, and if they do recognise it they refuse to admit it is an undesirable trend. This, of course, leads to the position where Governments and other authorities are doing very little to produce a climate which will enable the small businessmen or small primary producers, firstly, to survive and to maintain their position and, secondly, to work themselves into a position where they can compete successfully with the big combines and corporations which we now find virtually on every side.

I know there is a school of thought which feels there is nothing wrong with big business. I agree with this, and big business has its place in our society; but this does not necessarily mean that everything should fall under the dominance of big business. Some people think that this is a desirable state of affairs, but I certainly am not amongst that particular group.

As far as I am concerned I believe in free enterprise, because I think that when a person is employed in conducting his own business, to a large extent he is the master of his destiny. I can see no difference between a person working for a large corporation or for the Government. As a matter of fact, I would prefer to see a person in those circumstances working for the Government rather than for a big corporation or combine, particularly if the corporation or combine is owned or controlled by overseas interests.

The control or ownership of industries in Western Australia by overseas interests is extremely widespread. We have only to look around the metropolitan area to see what has taken place in respect of land. The blocks are priced so high that very few young people can even begin to contemplate buying them. This is caused largely by the big speculators and developers moving into this field.

In the past it was possible for the small landowners—people owning an area of 10, 50, or up to 100 acres zoned outside a residential area or the urban area—to put up a proposition to the town planning authority, and, if the circumstances justified the case, subdivision would be approved.

It would seem that the only people who can obtain subdivisions of land at the present time are the large corporations and combines. They can obtain approval for this reason: they can acquire a huge area of land, and they have the means to provide sewerage and other facilities. On that basis they may be granted approval to subdivide. However, there are many small landholders in the metropolitan area, owning tracts of land up to 100 acres, who are also prepared to provide the necessary services, with the exception of sewerage, as a condition of subdivision.

Generally these small holdings are in areas which are comparatively well drained so that sewerage is not necessary, because the land is suitable for the installation of septic tanks. These people are prepared to supply the services as a condition of subdivision, and to sell the blocks at a fraction of the price that is being asked at the present time.

In this respect I have in mind several areas located in the foothills, above Maida Vale, which are up to 100 acres in extent. The owners are prepared to install the necessary services—such as electricity, water, and bitumen roads—as a condition of subdivision, and will be happy to sell the blocks for \$1,700 each. It should be borne in mind that \$1,000 of this amount is for the provision of services. Some of the areas in the foothills which I have in mind have panoramic views of the ocean. They are identical with blocks further along the escarpment at Lesmurdie, which are selling at \$10,000.

I repeat that if the small man was permitted to subdivide to the extent he could in the past, then I am quite sure no land problem would exist in the metropolitan area. The prices would come down drastically. This is only one aspect of the emphasis being placed on the big corporation.

There are many other manifestations of it and one is to be seen at the Ord River. Recently an announcement was made to the effect that a consortium comprising L. J. Hooker Ltd., Mitsui of Japan, and Hawaiian Agronomics will be given, in return for certain research of the Ord, the right to 30,000 acres of irrigable land in the Ord scheme.

Members will know, of course, that the Australian taxpayers have spent, are spending, and will in the future spend, a very large amount of money on the Ord. I think the original diversion dam cost in the vicinity of \$17,000,000. I might be out there, but it does not matter very much. It was certainly a very large sum. The main dam and irrigation works will cost in the vicinity of \$47,000,000. I might be out again, but as far as I can ascertain this is approximately the figure. All this money is being spent to irrigate 178,000 acres of land, but here we are to give away 30,000 acres to this consortium.

Mr. Gayfer: We gave Northern Developments Corporation 2,500 acres several years ago.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Yes, in 1960. The point is that this is the basis on which the consortium will be granted the land. Firstly, may I say that the original idea of the Ord, as far as I am aware, was to establish an irrigation area in the north, and as such the people throughout Western Australia and Australia accepted it. They realised it was not going to be a bonanza and that all sorts of problems were in the way. Many of the experts said that the scheme could not work under any circumstances and would be a liability to the State.

However the people accepted the project on the basis that if largesse was to be distributed it would go to the small men. When the original farms were established I think they were in the vicinity of 640 or 650 acres. Therefore we can realise that if 178,000 acres of irrigable land is to be provided, and 30,000 acres of this is to go to the consortium there will be only 148,000 acres left. The consortium's acreage is the equivalent of 50 farms. We are to give 50 farms to this particular consortium; and for what? The consortium will spend about \$317,000 this year on research. I think it will spend a certain amount the following year also, but as yet I have no idea what the amount will be. At the end of the two-year period as far as I can ascertain from the newspaper, the consortium will get the 30,000 acres.

Whether this land will be a grant or whether the consortium will pay for it, I do not know. The original farmers paid \$1 or \$2 an acre and then they had to pay the cost of clearing and levelling the land. If the Hooker consortium is to gain this land it will obtain approximately \$6,000,000 worth of land for the expenditure of a relatively small amount. At \$200 an acre, the 30,000 acres is worth approximately \$6,000,000, and this is the value of the land which this consortium is to get. I have quoted \$200 an acre because in *The West Australian* last Saturday there appeared an advertisement for three cotton farms. The advertisement reads—

Kununurra cotton farm 3 lots adjoining each 650 acs. \$200 per acre, also suitable cattle, all under irrigation.

So the cotton farmers are selling out now at \$200 an acre because this is the value of the land after it has been developed, and we are suggesting handing over 50 farms to this consortium. I mention this because again it is a manifestation of the assistance which is being given to the big man at the expense of the small man.

Mr. Court: These people have to undertake very heavy developmental commitments which the small men have not had to undertake.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I appreciate that and I give the Minister a tremendous amount of credit for his part in the Ord project. I believe that the establishment of the scheme at the present time is due largely to the fact that he has pushed it to the extent he has. However, that does not mean that everything being done there is necessarily right.

The Minister has said that this consortium will engage in a huge research programme. I have already intimated that it will spend \$317,000 this year. The amount to be spent next year has not been announced, but I presume it will be a similarly large amount. However, I am pointing out that in two years' time the consortium, having spent this money, will be given land which, at today's price, is valued at \$6,000,000.

Mr. Court: You missed my point. The consortium must undertake developmental work at a very large cost, which the small developers have not had to undertake.

Mr. GRAYDEN: In what way?

Mr. Court: For channels and other things which the other people have not had to do, and this will save the Government the cost of this work.

Mr. GRAYDEN: There is another aspect which comes into this. Since 1945, the Kimberley Research Station, run by the C.S.I.R.O. and the Department of Agriculture, has been in existence. I think it commenced cropping in 1948, so for over

20 years the taxpayers have been subsidising research on the Ord. In addition we have other irrigation projects in the north. The recent one at Dunham River is an example, and there is one at Camballin. Much research has already been done. In Queensland, research has been undertaken in all sorts of projects, and it would seem to me that at this particular stage, with the Ord being under way, there is nothing the consortium could do whether it had the Hawaiian company in it or not. There is nothing it could do that the existing small farmers could not do; and this is the point I really want to stress.

We must realise that any consortium will make use of the C.S.I.R.O. and the Department of Agriculture because it will obviously have the benefit of the research undertaken by the Kimberley Research Station. In fact the consortium has already made it quite clear that it will do this. The significant point is that every crop which can be grown on the Ord, whether it be safflower, peanuts, sugar cane, or anything else, is already being grown in Queensland, and extensive research has been undertaken on it. Many of the crops are also being grown in the Northern Territory.

Therefore I cannot accept that a consortium of this kind will make any contribution at all to the Ord. However, let us leave that particular point. As I have already said I take a dim view of this proposal because I think it is another illustration of the diminishing role of the small businessman or primary producer in our economy.

I am perturbed about many other aspects of the Ord apart from this one. I am perturbed about the way the big pastoral companies, some of which are overseas-owned, are moving in and purchasing farms around the Ord. Quite a lot has been published on this subject and I would like to quote very briefly from the following article which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 23rd June:—

Nalder: Law puts limit on North land deals.

Acting Premier Nalder said yesterday that negotiations for the purchase of cattle stations in the North would have to comply with the W.A. Land Act, which limited holdings to a maximum of 1 million acres.

There was no suggestion that this provision would be waived.

He was commenting on reports of negotiations by Texas oil millionaire Nelson Bunker Hunt with Australian interests to buy four cattle stations in the Kununurra district totalling nearly 4 million acres.

Further down it reads—

Mr. Weston Cox, the Australian manager for Mr. Hunt, said in Darwin yesterday that he could not name the stations.

"We are negotiating on a number of properties," he said. "Some of these negotiations get rather ticklish."

He understood that different companies could hold properties.

Asked whether separate companies would operate the properties, he said: "That would be the way it would sound."

Here is a Texas oil millionaire openly saying that he will come into Western Australia and buy pastoral property totalling nearly 4,000,000 acres in the vicinity of the Ord project. The Minister has quite rightly pointed out that this is against the law, but we all know there are numbers of ways of getting around the provisions of the law.

This is only one illustration. I understand that Hookers has bought about three stations relatively recently; and so the trend goes on. The concentration is around the Ord. It means ultimately of course that if the worst fears are realised and no viable agriculture as far as cash crops are concerned can be established on the Ord, the surrounding pastoralists will be in a position to economically strangle all the small farmers on the Ord. There can be absolutely no question about this. We can go through the various crops and analyse them one by one. When we prove that none will be viable we get back to cattle and the necessity for the integration of the cattle industry with the project. When we do this we realise how the Ord farmers will be completely dependent on the surrounding stations for their stores.

We know that at the moment one or two of the pastoralists do sell stores, but very shortly they will refuse supplies and the Ord farms will be up for sale. It is obvious that those who will buy them will be the pastoralists surrounding the Ord, and then we will have the situation where half a dozen companies or consortiums will control the whole area which will have been financed, to the extent of countless millions, by the Australian taxpayers.

Let us consider briefly some of the cash crops which we might grow on the Ord. In the past there has been talk of growing wheat despite the fact that every financial institution in Australia has been warning of the impending world oversupply of the product. As I say, despite this warning, we were merrily encouraging farmers to plant wheat on the Ord, when it was very well known that wheat could be planted in many other areas which did not require irrigation. At the same time we were inducing the research station to carry out research into the growing of wheat on the Ord. I can recall that in the last four

years the Bank of New South Wales has stressed the impending oversupply of wheat. That is one product.

Another is sugar cane. We are all aware that the Queensland farms can supply the overseas quota, and also the quantity required for the Australian market. Also the Queensland farms could greatly expand their production without erecting a single additional sugar mill, which is an extremely costly project. In those circumstances we have to reject sugar cane.

Now let us talk in terms of sorghum. There are huge areas in Western Australia, and in the other States of Australia, where sorghum can be grown without irrigation. In the Kimberleys the growing season is relatively short—five months. In the Northern Territory, where there is a much longer growing season, and where there are huge areas of land eminently suitable for dry farming, it is a different situation altogether.

The growing of sorghum has not been a practical proposition in the past, notwithstanding that huge crops are grown on the dry land in the Northern Territory and shipped to the Eastern States. As I have said, it has not been a paying proposition. However, here we are thinking in terms of, or placing emphasis on, the growing of sorghum under irrigation.

That is only another crop. We have already had the experience of cotton growers going out of production. So we get back to the question that ultimately, and in all probability, the Ord farmers will have to depend on the fattening of cattle. However, those farmers must purchase their stores from the surrounding stations; they cannot produce the store cattle on their own properties.

The pastoralists in the Northern Territory normally sell their bullocks when they are five years old or six years old, when they are at their maximum weight. At this age the pastoralists get a certain price per pound. Will the pastoralists sell the beasts at two and a half years, which is the age at which they approach the maximum weight gain on the native pastures? What will induce the pastoralist to sell when the beasts are two and a half years old. The irrigation farmer will buy the cattle at a certain price per pound, say 6s. or so per pound, and will sell them at 6s. or so per pound—exactly what he paid. He will make his money on the weight gained, and that is all. The irrigation farmer will not buy his cattle cheaply and sell them at a higher price per pound, and have the weight gain thrown in.

If the fertility of the cows is high enough and they produce a sufficient number of calves, the pastoralists will naturally sell the calves to the irrigation farmers. However, apparently this is not the picture in the Kimberley, and it is not the picture in the Northern Territory. This is evidenced

by the fact that very few cows are sold. If there are reasonable seasons the pastoralist will have all the feed in the world and, in those circumstances, he will not sell his beasts when they are two and a half years old but will keep them for another two and a half years and sell them when they are twice the weight. It does not make sense.

Even though the pastoralists are supplying the cattle now, they will soon realise that they have the Ord farmers at their mercy. As I have said, the Ord farmers will be induced to sell out. I have already quoted the advertisement which appeared in last Saturday's *The West Australian* and which illustrates that three farms are for sale. It will be deplorable, as far as Western Australia is concerned, if the Ord farmers are induced to sell simply and solely because of the stranglehold which the pastoralists must have over them.

In those circumstances the Government should move into the situation instead of, say, the Texas oil millionaire who is talking about buying several properties. Let the Government, for instance, buy 6,000,000 acres. The land could be split up into 20,000-acre lots and granted to 300 farmers. They would need 20,000 acres each in order to produce store cattle and subsequently fatten them. It might well be that 20,000 acres is not sufficient and that, perhaps, 50,000 acres is required by each farmer. In those circumstances the Government would have to buy 12,000,000 acres, or more, of the surrounding cattle properties.

If we realise that ultimately we will fall back on the fattening of cattle in the Ord area, then what I have suggested will have to be the situation. We will have to ensure that the small farmers will have access to store cattle, and to ensure this it will be necessary for the Government to buy the surrounding station land and split the land up as I have mentioned into economically priced units which can be sold to the Ord farmers so that they might produce their own cattle.

The only alternative to this, of course, is for the Government to enter into some sort of negotiation, or understanding, with the pastoralists in the Kimberley to ensure the ultimate integration of the beef industry and the irrigation project. As far as I am concerned there is no alternative. It is imperative that the Government should act now either to reach that understanding with the pastoralists in the Kimberley or, alternatively, to purchase sufficient station property so that the land can be subdivided and sold to the Ord irrigation farmers. So much for that particular point.

I now want to get onto another subject which, again, deals with the diminishing role of the little man—the little business man and the little primary producer in

Western Australia. I have been talking about the Ord and the activities of the big pastoralists who are purchasing millions of acres of land.

I happen to have some friends in the north and one of them is a man called Jack Knox who is in business in Broome. He served as a sergeant for the duration of the war in the same unit as I did, and he had an outstanding record. Prior to joining the Army he was head stockman at Victoria River Downs Station. Obviously, he knows something about cattle. I understand he was subsequently at Moola Bulla Station. He is a man who has an intimate knowledge of the cattle industry in the north, and of the north generally.

Here is a man who lives in the north-west, and a man who has served Australia well. He now has a butcher shop in Broome. For years he has been attempting to get a 500-acre holding paddock on one of the surrounding stations. All he wants is 500 acres! He has not been able to get it, but we see big consortiums coming into the country and purchasing millions of acres of land in Western Australia. However, we see instances of men who have served Australia in time of war struggling, in time of peace, to get 500 acres of land and not being able to get it.

The annoying aspect of this, as far as I am concerned, is that there is provision in the Land Act on our Statute book for individuals in Western Australia to claim homestead leases. We also have the Mining Act in Western Australia—the member for Boulder-Dundas will be conversant with this provision because he was a former Minister for Mines—which makes provision for miners to claim a miner's homestead lease. An individual can peg out 500 acres and make an application to the warden's court, and invariably it is recommended. Subsequently, it has to be approved by the Minister, and the individual gets his lease. Mining homestead blocks are rife, and there are myriads of them throughout Western Australia.

I looked up a map of the area of Ravenshorpe, and every block in one area was a miner's homestead block, or a homestead lease under the Land Act. Strangely enough, every block covered an area of 500 acres. This is an incredible situation. In the north-west, where we are attempting to build up a population, the local butcher cannot get 500 acres in that vast expanse of country for a holding paddock. How silly is this situation; where do the small men stand in this sort of set-up? This is the point I want to make.

We can go further and see that the State Government has spent a lot of money subsidising air freight on perishables to the north-west. I think the Government pays about 6s a pound towards the freight on perishables sent to Carnarvon. The air freight on perishables

to Kununurra is subsidised for eight months of the year to the extent of 18c per pound.

Every pound of perishable goods which goes to the north by air for eight months of the year is subsidised from 6c to 18c. The Federal Government is going out of its way, and has been doing so for the last couple of years, to provide money so that natives can go into their own businesses and become dingo trappers, fencers, haulage contractors, and so on. That is one direction in which the taxpayer's money has been well spent.

However, what are we doing at the same time? We are preventing natives from growing vegetables in the north, and this is an absolutely incredible situation. There is talk about what we are doing for natives. I am not blaming the State Minister for Native Welfare, because I have the greatest regard for his attitude towards the natives. However, it seems to me to be an incredible situation when we have natives in the north who are anxious to grow vegetables to supply the mining towns and those natives are not permitted to grow the vegetables because of our policy in respect of pastoral properties.

Some natives out from Port Hedland applied for 500 acres as a mining home-stand block, which they are entitled to do under the Mining Act. The application was considered by the mining warden, who did not agree to the suggested 500 acres, but recommended that the natives get 50 acres on which they could grow vegetables to supply Port Hedland. However, the application failed to obtain the approval of the Minister.

Subsequently, the same organised group of natives wanted to obtain a few four-acre blocks on which to grow vegetables some miles from Port Hedland. Not far from the area of land they wanted was a hot rod track and, incidentally, a stock route. Pig pens, and such things, had been erected by the station owner. The natives wanted a few four-acre blocks in order that they could grow vegetables to supply Port Hedland. However, they were refused their application.

I mention this to illustrate how far we are prepared to help the little man in the north-west. Even though the application came from an organised group of natives attempting to do something for themselves, and even though the Government is prepared to make money available to subsidise air freight up to 18c a pound, we have stopped a group of natives from obtaining a few acres of land on a pastoral property on which to grow vegetables.

Mr. Davies: What was the reason?

Mr. GRAYDEN: What reason could there be? There could be no reason for a butcher in Broome not to be able to claim 500 acres for a holding paddock.

This man is providing a service in the area. If the people there were all vegetarians, it would not matter.

Mr. Graham: He does not pay as much to party funds as the graziers do.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I think a move should be made—

Mr. Graham: Why does not the Minister make a move? He looks after important people.

Mr. Court: Do you know which group was trying to grow vegetables?

Mr. GRAYDEN: It was the McLeod group.

Mr. Court: That probably answers the question.

Mr. GRAYDEN: After an experience I once had with the McLeod group, I have no time for it. We were mining tin and tantalite at the Turner River. We had a huge plant which cost about £60,000—which was quite expensive in those days. We found we were able to refine the material only up to a certain point, and beyond that we could not go. However, the natives with their panning dishes could separate the material better than we could, and we had occasion to get about 12 natives to help us. Those natives slept in a tent, they were fed—probably their first good food in years—and they were paid high wages. However, McLeod came along and moved them all out; so I have no sympathy at all for him.

That was a long time ago, and McLeod has been in the north ever since. He is endeavouring in his own way—even though I do not agree with the manner in which he is doing it—to do the right thing by the natives, and he has not been getting much support. I do not care whether a person is an Afghan, or whether he is Mao Tse-Tung, if he goes to the north-west and wants to grow vegetables there, I believe he should be permitted to do so.

Mr. Graham: But apparently not McLeod.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Even if the prisoners in the gaol wish to grow vegetables, I believe they should be allowed to.

Mr. Graham: What is your prejudice against McLeod, as compared with Mao Tse-Tung?

Mr. GRAYDEN: One is a well-known Communist, and the other is not quite so well known as such.

Mr. Graham: And what is Mao Tse-Tung's politics?

Mr. GRAYDEN: We are not prepared to let McLeod do anything in the north-west because of his politics. I think during the war he called all servicemen "five-bob-a-day murderers." In fact, someone once threw him off the Port Hedland jetty and he had to be extricated with a boat

hook. Of course, he is an acknowledged Communist; he has his beliefs, and I believe he is genuine, so I do not criticise him. He went on to the stations and took the natives off, which he was perfectly entitled to do.

Mr. Graham: The Minister obviously has something against him.

Mr. Court: Your Government had something against him.

Mr. GRAYDEN: These are only a couple of isolated incidents. How many more individuals in the north-west, and how many more law-abiding natives, have applied for homestead blocks and been refused? There must be countless numbers of them. I believe that the Government should sit down and rethink its policy in respect of the north-west and realise that we are going to have more population in that part of the State and that obviously something must be done about providing land under the circumstances.

Most members have probably recently received a document from the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of W.A. When the pastoral lease system was introduced into this State many years ago, it was on the basis that the land was of no use for anything but pastoral purposes. The people who put this system on the Statute Book of Western Australia realised that ultimately, with scientific advancement, much of the land concerned would be suitable for closer settlement. That is why the land was made available on a leasehold basis and subject to resumption by the Crown. The compensation payable in the case of resumption is in respect of improvements only. I do not necessarily agree with this; I think in this day and age if we are going to resume property from pastoralists, then we should pay compensation other than merely for improvements. I firmly believe this.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has four more minutes.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I am sorry to hear that because there are many things I want to say. We have now been presented with some demands by the pastoralists and graziers of Western Australia. Those people want the rights to the soil. They are not satisfied with the recent 50-year extension of their leases. They now want full rights to the soil with all its ramifications. I wish to quote an article which appeared in *The Northern Times* in respect of pastoralists. The article is headed, "Trespassing on pastoral leases" and is as follows:—

At the last meeting of the Port Hedland Shire Council the clerk said he discussed the problem of trespassing on pastoral leases with the Under Secretary for Lands.

He stated that lessees of pastoral leases had the right and the power to prevent trespassing on their leases and

this included persons using or attempting to use mill runs and station roads as an access to fishing spots.

The pastoralist also had the right to grant permission if he so desired and it was found that this use of his discretionary power was the major cause of the problem which existed.

Persons in possession of Miner's Rights who used this licence as an excuse for gaining access to fishing spots were acting outside the provisions of the mining act and could have the licence revoked.

So we have, say, the Minister for Industrial Development fostering development in the north-west and encouraging individuals to go to a town like Port Hedland. However, if any of the residents of that town—there might be 12,000 of them—stray onto the pastoral properties which surround the town in order to go fishing, they are liable for trespass. What sort of sordid situation is this in Western Australia? Again, I get back to the theme that we should put up a notice north of Geraldton which says, "Only big men permitted."

I realise the Government has done a tremendous amount in many fields, and I congratulate it on its achievements; but I believe that as far as the little man is concerned the Government should rethink its policies and do much more to assist him.

MR. JONES (Collie) [5.38 p.m.]: I would like to take the opportunity, in the limited time available to me, to bring to the notice of the Government several matters associated with my electorate. In my maiden speech I referred to the plight of widows, deserted wives, and others in Collie, and the need for the Government to do something about the matter. Whilst the Government has now appointed a welfare officer to look after those unfortunate people, I do consider that more assistance is needed for the 60 people in this category in the town of Collie. I realise, of course, it is all very well to fill up the State Housing Commission homes which may be empty in the town, but at the same time it would be true to say that Collie is bearing the brunt for Western Australia in this respect, and so should be compensated accordingly.

I would now like to refer to coal tenders. The current tenders will expire later this year, and I sincerely trust there will be no alterations to the existing ratios of open-cut and deep-mine coal. I think the history of Collie is well known to all members in this House. After the big disturbance in 1961 the industry has now settled down, and I would not like to see any alterations made to the existing ratios of coal. This would upset the employment level and the economics of Collie generally.

As members know, there are trade missions in Japan at the moment and we are hopeful that with another trade mission leaving for that country early next month, we will be successful in obtaining overseas orders, as has been mentioned in the report submitted by the Eastern States mining experts. So I hope the Government will allow the coalmining industry time to consider and plan for this overseas export trade, and that it will not upset the existing ratios of employment—particularly in the deep mines of the coalfields, because it is necessary for young men to be brought into the industry. The average age of the workers in the deep mines is 45, and it is considered that young men should be attracted to the industry and trained for the all-important job of mining coal for different uses within the State and, we hope, shortly for export.

The report mentioned that changes in the coalmining industry should be considered. I say that the industry generally is well aware of this position. There is a need to increase productivity, but members will realise that the level of orders available to the companies and the question of capital investment are matters which concern us all. Whilst the companies operating today see the need to increase productivity, the question of capital investment must also be considered. I hope the Government will realise this fact and give close attention to the matters to which I have referred when the tenders are under consideration. I believe the tenders are being considered now.

Last year we had an unfortunate incident in Collie in which a father and son became involved with the Police Department. I refer to the Marley case. On the 11th October, 1968, a forestry truck became bogged in the Shotts area some miles to the east of Collie. The forestry workers were in need of assistance and went to Marley, who was a farm worker, to ask him to tow their truck out. He was busy at the time and asked his son to jump on the tractor and drive down the road to assist the workers.

Unfortunately, Marley junior was under suspension at the time and was not permitted to drive any vehicle. Marley senior directed him to help the forestry workers, but he did not consider the implications which might flow from his action. When Marley junior was on his way back to the farm after assisting the forestry workers, he was stopped by heavy haulage officials of the Police Department, who asked him to produce his driver's license. He could not do so, of course, and so the officers accompanied him back to the farmhouse. He was subsequently fined in the Collie Police Court for driving without a license and whilst under suspension. All Marley junior was doing was assisting a Government department.

Finally, when the father and son appeared before the court, Michael Marley was fined \$100 and had his driver's license suspended for six months, and his father, Harold Marley was fined \$40—all for assisting a Government department. I feel this was a bad set of circumstances in which the police officers did not use correct judgment.

Appeals were made to the Minister for Justice, and they resulted in the fines being withheld; but the convictions still stand, and that is why I am raising this issue in the House today. I ask members what the position would be if a like situation arose tomorrow and a man was pinned under a Government truck. Would it be right for a man under suspension to say to the person concerned that he could not pull the truck out and so could not help a man whose life was in jeopardy?

These two men have convictions recorded against them for actions they took to assist a Government department. I think it is a shocking state of affairs, to say the least, and I call on the Government to take immediate action to have the convictions quashed.

Some of the actions of these government officials leave a lot to be desired. I would like to refer to another incident which took place in Busselton and which affected four members of the community there. Certain people were fishing in the Busselton area without the necessary safety apparatus. An official from the Harbour and Light Department warned them and took their names. After having done so he was about to take his boat and trailer out of the water and got bogged down. The four lads from Collie helped this man out of his plight and it took them three and a half hours to do so. They even went to the extent of going to Busselton to obtain a truck to tow the trailer out of the bog.

The official in question said that he appreciated their having worked on a Sunday to get him out of his difficulty and added that he would forget about any fine that might be involved as a result of their having inadequate safety apparatus in their boat. Some weeks later, however, a summons was issued from the Busselton court. It was fortunate that the Minister for Works was apprised of the situation and, seeing the injustice of the charge, he finally had it withdrawn.

If it was good enough to withdraw a charge in the above case, then it is surely good enough to withdraw a charge in the Marley case, and I ask the Government to reconsider its attitude and have the convictions against these people withdrawn. On these occasions the two Marleys have helped forestry workers who were in difficulty and they should not be charged for having done so.

I would now like to refer to the State Electricity Commission and its policy in connection with electric power in Western Australia. It is quite clear to me and to others on the managerial side associated with the coalmining industry, that the Government and the commission are changing their policies to meet any situation which suits their purpose. Although there has been a denial that the policy has been changed, as the new generating stations come onto load the old stations are being phased out.

The load that was being carried by the Collie power station was taken over by the East Perth power station while the load carried by the East Perth power station was, in turn, taken over by the South Fremantle power station. The power station at Bunbury then became the base load station, and when Muja came into full load that station eventually became the base load station.

We have, on numerous occasions, seen changes made in the policy mentioned by the Minister for Electricity and by the Premier. We saw a change when East Perth and South Fremantle were changed over to oil-burning stations. The figures clearly indicate that in 1968, when the Bunbury power station was burning coal, the average power produced was 30 per cent. of the requirements of the State, while that of South Fremantle was between 9 and 10 per cent. of the requirements of the State, and that of East Perth between 2 and 3 per cent.

A little later in the year, after the South Fremantle and the East Perth power stations were converted to oil-burning stations, the output of the Bunbury power station was immediately reduced; it went down, on an average, to 14 per cent. for the rest of the year. On the other hand the output of the South Fremantle power station built up to 18 per cent.

While this was going on there was a reduction in the output of the Bunbury coal-burning station and an increase in the oil-burning stations of East Perth and South Fremantle. At the time we saw what amounted to a record purchase of power from the Kwinana area. What is puzzling me and other people associated with the coalmining industry—and as I pointed out here, even Mr. Jukes at a recent conference could not indicate why the policy was introduced—is that since the East Perth and South Fremantle power stations have gone on to oil burning their production costs have increased. The figures supplied in this Parliament show that to be a fact.

If members will look at *Hansard* for the 31st July, 1968, they will see that prior to the East Perth and South Fremantle power stations going over to oil burning certain production costs were given by the Minister for Electricity. These show that the cost per unit at

South Fremantle for coal and oil was 1.06c; at East Perth it was 2.96c per unit, at Bunbury it was .65c per unit, and at Muja it was .33c per unit.

Following further questions that were asked we find that on the 18th June, 1969, the average price for East Perth had increased to 3.82c per unit, while the price per unit for South Fremantle had risen to 1.48c and the price per unit for Bunbury and Muja had gone to .98c and .54c respectively.

What I would like to know is why the output from South Fremantle has been increased even though there has been an increase in the cost of production since its changeover to oil burning. The people associated with the coalmining industry wonder just what is going on and they would like to know the deal that exists between the Government and the BP refinery. We are given one set of answers to one problem, but the Government changes its position to suit the occasion.

I asked the Minister for Electricity whether it was the policy of the State Electricity Commission to keep the East Perth and South Fremantle oil-burning stations at peak load, and the Minister replied, "East Perth will be used principally at times of peak load. South Fremantle will be used a little more than this."

The figures clearly indicate that since the change has taken place most of the stations have been upgraded in load to the detriment of Bunbury, which is a coal-burning station. The figures quoted in the unbound volume of *Hansard* No. 2 show clearly that the alteration started in the summer months of last year. For the sake of the record I will indicate that for the week ended the 19th October, the South Fremantle power station supplied 17.31 per cent. of the total power produced, while that produced by Bunbury for the two weeks ended the 16th November was down to 5 per cent.

Although the Minister said that the South Fremantle power station would only be used at times of peak load, here was a clear indication that this was not the case; that it was supplying more power into the grid system than was the Bunbury power station.

The matter was not left there, because on Tuesday the 15th October, 1968, the Minister was asked, "Is coal being stockpiled at Bunbury?" The Minister replied, "Yes, for use during the miners' Christmas holidays."

We did not expect this explanation because the miners' holiday period was two months away, and as Bunbury was only using 4,000 tons of coal a week we wondered why it was necessary to start stockpiling.

Some people might have believed what the Minister told us, but not those who knew the true position, especially as it related to Collie. We are not at all happy with the situation. Once again old father oil shows his head. So could we blame anyone in my position, or those associated with the coalmining industry for being suspicious of the Government's motives and of its tie-up with the oil combines of Western Australia?

While I was happy with the Government's announcement that it had appointed a subcommittee to meet the power needs of Western Australia, and even though three Ministers were appointed to the subcommittee together with a number of technical men from the department, I was rather surprised that no-one with experience of coal was included in the personnel of the subcommittee. I should have thought that we would have appointed somebody of the calibre of Mr. Paul Donnelly, who has been applauded by no less an organisation than the C.S.I.R.O. for his research into the utilisation of Collie coal.

While the appointment of the subcommittee is a move in the right direction and while it follows the pattern being adopted in America, I do feel that since coal is to play a part at a national level we should have included, on the subcommittee, a man like Mr. Paul Donnelly.

I would now like to refer to the inquiry made into the mutton and lamb industry. As members know, this caused a great deal of concern and, as we are all aware, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn raised the question in the House. There was an angry reaction to the report throughout the farmer movement in Western Australia. If members will refer to *Hansard* No. 11 of the unbound volumes they will see that on the 9th October, 1968, before indicating who had been appointed to make the inquiry, and before referring to the terms of reference, the Minister for Agriculture said—

So the situation, as I hoped it would, is improving and greater confidence is being felt by the farming community. The banks and the financial institutions generally indicate that the situation has improved and will continue to improve. However, in order to satisfy those who wish to have information made available to them, the Government is prepared to set up a committee which will commence operating immediately.

The impression I gained from that was that the Government felt that some people wanted an inquiry and accordingly it would set up a piecemeal arrangement to have a look at the situation as it concerned the mutton and lamb industry in this State.

Time will not permit me to go into all the references I wish to make in connection with the report. I would like to make it clear, however, that any comment I might put forward is not intended to cast a reflection on the members appointed to examine the mutton and lamb industry itself.

It is my view the Minister did not go far enough in the terms of reference. Though there was a certain amount of room to move around, the recommendations in the report show that while the members would have liked to be given certain information and to have had access to certain documents this was not made available to them because of the terms of reference. I would like to quote the following passage from page one of the report—

Because of these complexities in the meat industry, it was recognised that the Committee was likely to experience difficulty in obtaining reliable figures and it was suggested that it be given specific powers of investigation. However, it was considered that no special powers should be conferred upon it.

That was the introduction. If we go through the report we will find that the committee traversed the entire situation as far as it could and considered the problems which led to the inquiry. It then came to a number of conclusions and made certain recommendations. I would like to indicate some of the problems the committee experienced while making its investigations and, in doing so, I would like to quote from page 30 of the report as follows:—

4. Wholesalers' and retailers' margins.

As very few businesses operate alike in the meat industry and there are numerous variations in operation, manufacturing, treatment processes, marketing and distribution, the Committee experienced difficulty in ascertaining the profit margins obtained by wholesalers and retailers separately.

This was one of the prime directives which formed part of the investigation that the committee was to make. I will now quote the conclusions reached by the committee on page 33 which read—

(2) Not all of the lower prices paid to farmers has been passed on to consumers, but increased costs of treatment, marketing and distribution account for some of the difference. Competition should ensure that meat prices to the consumer are realistic at any point of time and is his main safeguard.

While considering these factors together with the price differential the recommendations made by the committee were scant indeed.

It is the opinion of various farmer groups that this is the situation. For the sake of the record, I think I should indicate I attended meetings of the Farmers' Union which were held at Arthur River, Darkan, and Duranillan, and all of these branches condemned the report as being quite meaningless to the industry. I have received correspondence from the Mayanup branch of the Farmers' Union condemning the report; and I have had discussions with the executive of the Collie branch and its views were similar to those expressed by the branch meetings to which I have referred.

At the Duranillan meeting, some 40 farmers were present and they ventilated their views on the mutton and lamb inquiry in very strong terms. I think they were really dissatisfied because the Government did not do anything in regard to growers' costs and also because the views of the various branches of the Farmers' Union were not ascertained.

A strong letter under the heading "Report on Meat Prices a 'Farce'" was written to *The West Australian* by Mr. R. L. Down, of Doubleview, and published on the 2nd July, 1969. His views were also shared by most who attended the Liberal Party Conference, a report of which was published in *The West Australian* on Tuesday the 8th July. Similar views were expressed, because there appears the heading, "W.A. Farmers 'Frightened'." The position is rather different from that indicated by the member for Mt. Marshall when he moved for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. I disagree completely with the views he expressed in this House, and I quote as follows:—

The small or low income farmers are facing very difficult times, but many of these people, because of their intense love of the land, and because farming is a way of life they cherish, are quite prepared to accept a relatively low monetary reward for their labour—but a reward which at least provides their families with a standard of living comparable with the rest.

I suggest the honourable member should have gone around to some of the branches of the Farmers' Union, particularly down my way and in the area of Upper Blackwood. The members of those branches are not at all happy with the position as it applies to small farmers. Production costs are increasing and returns are becoming smaller and smaller. In my view the position is totally different from that expressed by the honourable member. The view expressed by the member for Mt. Marshall is not shared by the farmers, generally, in the south-west of the State.

I suggest there is urgent need for the Government to have another look at the problem. I think those members who have studied the mutton and lamb report—as

I have done—will arrive at the conclusion that the terms of reference were not broad enough. The committee was not given sufficient authority to make an investigation in order to really grapple with the problem. Of the recommendations that have been made, three will not bring any relief to this part of our primary industry. Therefore, I hope the matter will be taken somewhat further.

In the time available to me I now intend to deal with the recent report on the Collie coalfield which was brought down by Mr. R. Menzies, Deputy Chief Inspector of Coalmines of New South Wales, and Mr. D. T. Hanrahan, Superintendent of the New South Wales Mines Control Authority. Whilst this report does make certain recommendations, there are many passages in it with which I strongly disagree. Because of this, it is my intention to make some comments in an endeavour to protect the industry.

I consider that some of the references made in this report are completely unjust. We must ask ourselves the question, "Why was the inquiry into the Collie coalfield instituted?" It is clear to those who follow the Press that an application was made to the Government to allow Messrs. Hancock & Wright to have the exclusive right to carry out boring on the coalfield; and the Government decided that it must assess the situation to see what reserves were available on the coalfield in order that supplies for the State would be ample, and to ensure that if the export of coal did take place it would not be to the detriment of the State.

The question I pose, as do many men who are engaged in the coalmining industry at the present time, and also men who have left the industry, is, "What does this report reveal that was not known previously?" That is the main question that men associated with the industry are asking, and during the time that is available to me I shall state how we see the report and what I feel it will bring to the industry in the way of relief. I would point out, firstly, that most of the matters contained in the report have been raised in this House by me; and, in the time at my disposal, I will indicate what the findings of the report will mean to the Collie coalfield.

The report, on page two, states that some scout drilling is desirable to establish whether large seam dislocations occur in the nominated areas. According to the report, this would cost in the order of \$22,000 to \$30,000 depending on the results of the initial bores.

I challenge anybody to say, without a proper grid boring programme or a proper drilling programme, how it can be known what reserves there are in the coalfields. I would like to know how members of the committee arrived at the \$22,000 or \$30,000 expenditure involved.

Going to page 3 of the report the members criticise the O.M.S. productivity level in the deep mines. Whilst criticism may be levelled, the report goes on at great length to recommend that the industry should be highly mechanised. The report says that about five tons per man shift are being produced from the deep mines, but that this should be lifted. I agree with this proposition, but it must be envisaged that if mechanisation is to be brought to Collie, it will need to be more successful than it was earlier. People associated with the industry know—the Minister for Industrial Development would also know—that when Amalgamated Collieries undertook a programme of mechanisation the object of the company was not achieved, because it brought equipment to the coalfields and tried to make conditions suit that equipment. That is where the whole thing fell down. This can be supported by productivity figures.

The productivity level, when Collie was one of the most highly mechanised fields in Australia, was just over two tons per man and it never reached four tons. Whilst five tons per man is now being produced, under mechanisation the figure was lower than this. Mechanisation is being gradually introduced to the Collie coalfield and the miners and the companies are doing all they can to increase productivity. Diesel end loaders have been introduced and with these units productivity averages 15 to 19 tons at the coal face and five tons for each worker at each colliery is being produced. The machines at present in use are producing from 15 to 19 tons, so it will be seen that the question of mechanisation is in the minds of the companies and the men.

The report deals quite a lot with the Collie Miners' Union and page four states "from a long standing custom built up by the Collie Miners' Union over many years." At this point the report is dealing with timber. I think the remarks are unfair. Anyone familiar with the mining industry would know that all types of timbering methods have been used at Collie. Iron bars, roof bolts, round timber, timber slabs, and long bars have been used; and at the moment an attempt is being made to introduce a new method of timbering. I think it is a complete injustice to state in the report that the Collie Miners' Union has fixed ideas in relation to timbering methods.

The report goes on to mention the various areas where it is considered mines could be opened up with certain outputs. It mentions the question of bore holes and the Ewington area as suitable for deep mining. The report approves that bore holes be provided in this area. When the Stockton mine closed in approximately 1960, five bore holes were drilled ahead and grid boring will have to be introduced to get a link-up with Stockton and Ewing-

ton. Whilst it recommends that drilling should take place, the report does not go far enough in that respect.

On page 10 the report compares O.M.S. productivity with New South Wales and the need to increase production at the Collie mines. I mentioned earlier that I agree with this. However, we have two different situations. Anyone associated with the coalmining industry would know that in the Eastern States they work on a retreat system of mining, which has advantages, but it cannot be introduced at Collie. This has been tried at the Neath mine at Collie but there was a terrific inflow of slurry.

The report does not mention that in the Eastern States 20 per cent. or one-fifth of production is waste material. There is no mention of this factor in the report. One of the weaknesses of this report is that there was no discussion with the Miners' Union. Industrial relations on the coalfield since 1960 have never been better. As a matter of fact, at a recent seminar in Melbourne it was indicated that good relations had been established between manager and worker. So why was not the Miners' Union approached for its opinion, particularly when it was good enough to obtain the advice of geologists and men associated with the industry? No harm would have been done in ascertaining the attitude of the union. Had this been done it would have been found that the views of the union were completely different from those expressed in this report.

The report states that the miners will have to change their ideas on a fixed darg. I think the companies would support me when I say that they have the ability now at the open cut with existing machinery to win more coal; and the same situation applies in regard to the deep mines.

I think the question in relation to borings is something about which there should have been consultation with the union, and the matter would have been cleaned up in the interests of the industry generally. At one stage there was a system of production in use at the Collie coalfield and the men produced 21,000 tons in excess of requirements. However, what is the good of producing coal if there is no sale for it?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. JONES: Just before the tea suspension, I was referring to the report on the Collie coalfield and in the little time available to me I would like to finish with the report.

I now refer to the reference in the report to increased costs in Collie. On page 13 of the report it states—

Existing contracts between the State Electricity Commission, Western Collieries, and the Griffin Coal Company commenced in 1967 for a three-year

period. Since then several price increases have occurred. In the case of underground coal this increase has amounted to 10 per cent. and for opencut coal to about 6 per cent.

Some comment has been made about the cheapness of oil as compared with coal, but the Joint Coal Board, in its annual report for 1967-68, had this to say at page 72—

Pressure on coal consumers from the oil companies for conversion of plant to oil has ceased. Furnace oil prices have increased and some firms which had installed oil-fired boilers are finding them uneconomical at the new oil prices. An increase of 50 per cent. in oil prices has been noticed over the past three years.

So on the question of increased costs at Collie while, as I mentioned earlier, we know that productivity must be increased the prices for other forms of heating elements have also increased.

Those who compiled the report stated that in their opinion the cheapest source of energy was still coal, but there are some opinions contrary to this; and there are those in this House who also hold a contrary opinion. The authors of the report again mentioned increased costs in regard to the building of a coal-fired power house in comparison with an oil-fired one, but they forgot to mention the fringe benefits of coal production. For instance, there is the question of employment and the matter of freights—huge freights—which help the Government's finances. The production of coal would provide more employment and more freights for the Government railways than does the use of oil fuel. The question of water also comes into it, but I shall not mention that at this stage.

The report also deals with the probability of Japanese orders and that, too, is a good thing. It was good to see that the report went into the question of the carbon content of Collie coal and after an examination was made a comparison between Collie coal and Eastern States coal was made. This is one field where Collie coal holds out.

The report then goes on to mention the question of rail freights, and the authors of the report consider, as I do, and mining people generally, that rail freight from Collie to Bunbury of \$3 a ton is excessive, and unless something is done to lower the freight rate, or have the coal carted by road, coal will be priced out of the market.

What did the Government do about the report? The day after the report was delivered to the Government, the Minister said that coal freights could be reduced. So I hope that if we are successful in obtaining orders the same concessions that have been granted to other industries will be granted to the coalmining industry.

Now that the survey has been conducted and a report delivered to the Government, the big question to be asked is, "What is the Government going to do about the Collie coalfield?" In this regard we have to remember that on the 17th April the Premier, in answer to a question, said that the report was based mainly on the economics of the industry. I have already referred to the question of costs, which is dealt with in the report, but what improvements can be made if the recommendations are put into effect? All the report does is to confirm that different methods of extraction should be applied, and, also, that more boring is essential. However, who will do the boring? In view of the fact that this is an economic survey it will be rather interesting to see whether it is the private companies or the Government.

I venture to say that no private company will undertake boring unless the Government will assure it that if it finds large volumes of coal it will have an opportunity to gain a lease because of the large expenditure of capital involved in the boring. However, I question whether that will be done. In this regard I refer to a question asked by the then member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) on the 23rd September, 1965. At that time Mr. Hawke was Leader of the Opposition and in answer to the question the Premier said—

The reserves of both the open cut and deep coal are well known following geological and geophysical examination, drilling, and the mining operations conducted over the years.

I do not agree with that. The people in Collie and myself and, in fact, everyone associated with the industry, have been saying for years that more boring is necessary. In 1965 the Premier said that the reserves of both open cut and deep coal were well known. Yet according to the report which has just been made into the Collie field more boring is necessary, and I look forward with interest to see what the Government will do about it. I hope it will adopt a policy which will be of benefit to the coalmining industry.

I hope the report and the recommendations will receive early consideration; because knowing what is going on in regard to the obtaining of export orders I feel, contrary to some opinions held in this House, and in other parts of the State, that the Collie coalfield has a bright future. Knowing of the investigation that has taken place and the good results that have been obtained, and the tests that were applied to Collie coal, I think we can look forward to a bright future for the Collie field. We only hope that the Government, in its wisdom, will grant the coalmining industry the same concessions, particularly in relation to freight and road transport, as other industries are enjoying—industries such as the bauxite industry the iron ore industry, and others.

While I do not want it to be thought that I am picking the report to pieces, it does in fact confirm what has been said about the Collie field for some considerable time. Following the report it is evident that more boring is necessary to establish that the field has a greater potential, and now that the Government has the report, it should have a look at the question of freights generally. If the freight concession had been applied between Bunbury and Collie, the economics of the Bunbury power house would be much better than they are today and a higher output from the Bunbury power house would have resulted to the benefit of the coalmining industry generally as well as the towns of Collie and Bunbury.

Mr. COURT: Before you conclude your comments on coal, did I understand from what you said before tea that the unions would have no objection to an increase in productivity provided there was no reduction in employment?

Mr. JONES: The unions have not said that, but they know that productivity has to increase. I think the natural wastage will take care of the position and I hope, as the Minister hopes, that we will be looking for more men. All I say is that with the new diesel units that are operating, the productivity has been increased to 18 tons per man at the coal face, and it clearly shows the need for increased productivity if coal is to remain in the energy element field. This opinion has been held for some time but I was alarmed when I read in the report that the union was not concerned in respect of this matter. I think the Minister knows, as well as I know, how the union feels about it. I only hope that we will go forward and that there will be a new era for coal and for the town of Collie.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [7.38 p.m.]: Like other members, I take this opportunity to say a few words about my electorate. As most members know, *The West Australian* makes available to all political parties, every Thursday, a column which is headed, "Political Notes." Each week *The West Australian* provides space for political parties to explain their policies, and one very interesting article was published on the 10th April of this year. It was under the name of the Premier, and one part in which I was interested referred to the road maintenance tax. This is a tax which is hitting my electorate and other remote areas rather severely.

As I said, I was interested in the whole of the statement made by the Premier because it clearly shows that he has no intention of surrendering this tax. He said that if an alternative were suggested it would be investigated. His actual comments were—

With this in mind, the government has set up an interdepartmental com-

mittee to examine and to report on other proposals and ideas that have been put forward.

I would very much like to know the names of the members of this independent committee, how it is constituted, and what power it has to make recommendations. I say this because in my view this tax is a selective one. It is one that should be reviewed and applied equally wherever possible. Further down the Premier said—

And there can be no escaping the fact that it is the road user who must pay by one means or another.

That, I totally agree with. There is no doubt that the person who uses the road should pay for it; and I believe that the Western Australian road user is paying for our roads. Actually he is paying nearly the highest tax in Australia in this regard.

A little further down the Premier referred to the operators, as he had done previously, and he said—

The operators of these vehicles must expect to contribute in fair measure to the roads they use and to the higher standard of construction and maintenance necessary to their operation.

To a certain extent I agree with that; but I think we should have a look to see just what the road user is paying and how the road user in Western Australia compares with his counterpart in other parts of Australia.

To this end I would refer to an extract from the Australian Automobile Association newsletter, Vol. 20, Number 8. I am not sure of the date, but the newsletter is of fairly recent date and it quotes some statistics received from the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. These figures show the type of tax, the mean population, the number of vehicles registered, and so on. It is very interesting to note that the total net collections per head of the mean population in Western Australia is the second highest in Australia. The only other State where the figure is higher is Queensland.

South Australia has the lowest figure, that being \$14.4 per head of population. Tasmania, which has no road maintenance tax, has a figure of \$15.8 per head of population; New South Wales has a figure of \$15.9; Victoria \$18.1; Western Australia \$20.3; and Queensland, which has the highest figure, \$20.4 per head of the population. So members can see that Western Australia is not trailing the field in its taxation of the motoring public. We have the greatest mileages to travel of any State, I should think; yet we are taxed to the limit, probably because we cannot get away from having to use our roads as we do at present.

I would like to look at another schedule brought out by the same body, which I found very interesting. It deals with the

taxation incurred through ownership and operation of motor vehicles in all States. In fact, the schedule lists them State by State.

It is interesting to note that Western Australia pays more road maintenance tax than South Australia. This astounds me, because South Australia has heavy transport going interstate in both directions. In fact, quite extensive heavy transport goes in and out of South Australia. Therefore, one would think that interstate hauliers alone would help to swell the fund extensively.

I understand the road hauliers that have come from interstate to Western Australia contribute only 6.1 per cent. of the total revenue collected from road maintenance tax in this State. This is not very much. It means that practically 100 per cent. of the road maintenance tax which is paid in Western Australia comes from people who live within the State.

I should like to look at the amount of road maintenance tax paid by South Australia and compare that figure with the amount paid in Western Australia. In the year 1967-68 Western Australia paid \$549,000 more than South Australia. In actual figures, South Australia paid \$2,324,000 and Western Australia paid \$2,873,000. Again, Western Australia is taxing its road hauliers in excess of what the other States are taxing theirs.

Further on in his comments the Premier made a remark which I should like to quote. He said, "Country areas contribute 60 per cent. of the road maintenance charge." I will not quibble with that statement by any means. It could be an absolute fact, because quite a large proportion of the vehicles which pay road maintenance tax are registered in the country and, therefore, the returns would be shown as country returns. The other 40 per cent. is derived from vehicles which are registered within the metropolitan area. However, who really pays the tax? Is it the road haulier? I say that it is not the road haulier who pays the tax; it is the people who live in the remote areas of the State and earn their living in those parts.

I consider that this statement is proved by the action of the transport commission. As soon as the road maintenance tax was imposed, the commission authorised hauliers under contract to raise their charges from 15 to 20 per cent. I consider that this is a straight-out exception, as the hauliers do not actually pay the tax. It means that people who produce any commodity whatsoever in the country and have to use road transport—and it is used extensively in the outback—have to pay from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. more in their freight charges. If a person in the country wants any commodity which has to come by road, he has to pay a 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. increase in the freight. Consequently, the price of the commodity is increased. Every man, woman, and child in the country

areas is paying this road maintenance tax, not the hauliers. The hauliers are tax collectors on an honorary basis.

High freight charges, and so on, make living conditions very difficult. If we are to encourage people to go into the remote areas of the State, then consideration should be given to freights, etc.

Railway systems operate in the areas nearer to Perth, such as the great southern, the south-west, and so on. In most years the railways carry a deficit which has to be met by taxpayers all over the State. However, taxpayers all over the State do not help to pay the road maintenance tax which is charged to the people in the remote areas. I think consideration should be given to amending the law so that taxation falls equally on all persons. I consider this action should be taken if the money has to be raised by this means.

I was also interested in an item which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 23rd July. The heading was, "Shires will see Brand on Roads." This article interested me, especially in the light of the statement made by the Minister at the beginning of the session. The Minister for Works, early in the session, said he would permit some of the road grants to be used for the servicing of loans. This would count towards matching moneys, as allowed for in the Act. The article says in part—

The association will complain about the section of the act which prevents shires from spending money from licence fees on loan commitments already in existence.

Taking away the license fees from some of the shires is definitely causing them distress and is reducing their income from that source. In this regard I have gone to some trouble to take out figures. The figures I have worked out are definitely conservative and are certainly not by any means in excess of the actual figures involved. For my calculations I have used the figures of motor vehicle registrations in Carnarvon on the 31st December, 1967. There were 997 cars and station sedans on the register at that time. In addition, there were 734 utilities and trucks. A large number of the trucks are heavy haulage vehicles. In other words, they are articulated vehicles which come under the road maintenance tax regulation.

I took the total of the vehicles at 1,764 and, so that I would not be overquoting or exaggerating in any way, I assessed the license fee at \$25 each, which is slightly less than the registration fee of a Holden car. I credited to the shire the \$4 per registration for the first 1,000 vehicles and the \$3 for each vehicle over the first 1,000. This gives the shire a return from the Government of \$6,292. I then added the 2 per cent. escalation on the base grant to the shire which is provided for in the

Act. In the case of Carnarvon, it is \$99,000. I took the figure at \$100,000 to make the calculations easier. The 2 per cent. escalation together with the rebate on the license fees came to \$8,292.

If the 1,764 vehicles had been licensed at \$25 each under the old system the return to the shire would have been \$44,100. On the basis of my calculations, which as I have said are very conservative and well below the actual figure, the loss to the shire would be \$35,808. That is no mean amount.

I was also interested in a comment which appeared further down in the article to which I have referred. It says—

Many of the shire representatives at yesterday's conference admitted that they could not understand the new road scheme.

I do not think the shires are the only ones that do not understand the scheme.

Several articles have appeared in *The West Australian* over the past few months in regard to dams in the north-west. I would like to refer to three of these articles, each one of which deals with the Pilbara area. The first article points out that there are plans for seven major dams in the area over a period of years. It is stated that no doubt the extra water will be very much needed for industrial purposes and that kind of thing. Certainly the provision of dams would help the development of industry, but it would not help those who are a little further south in the agricultural industry.

One of the articles is headed, "\$500m. Plan for Pilbara." From the article I understand that from \$400,000,000 to \$500,000,000 will be spent on damming water in that area over the next 15 years. I was pleased to see the next day that *The West Australian* contained a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition under the heading, "Tonkin says Priority is in Gascoyne." Certainly this latter article did not carry the bold headlines of the previous day, but I was very pleased to see it. I thoroughly agree with the Leader of the Opposition and later on I intend to show the reasons why he is right.

Of the three articles to which I am referring, two carried a map showing dam sites together with the underground water reserves. The seven dams were again shown in the article which appeared on the 15th May, together with quite a lengthy comment which was written by Mr. C. W. Quin. One statement puzzles me completely and that is in connection with the needs of water for the population.

It says, "Roughly the water needs of the population in such an area can be assessed by allowing 300 to 400 gallons a person a day, but industry is a much heavier user than the township." From 300 to 400 gallons a day for one person

seems to me a tremendous amount of water. If one were to work it out, it would mean that a single person would use from 109,000 to 146,000 gallons in a year. If he were to pay for that quantity of water at a country water supply rate he would be faced with a bill for \$35.80. If one extends that to a family of four one can just imagine the amount of water that would be consumed by that family. It is over 500,000 gallons of water per family per year. If members of this House had to pay for that amount of water they would be very cross.

The third article to which I shall refer is the one that interested me most. I would say that this probably gives the Government's exact feelings on the whole subject. The article I am referring to appeared in *The West Australian* on the 30th July, and, consequently, it is quite current. It is a report of an address dealing with the damming of rivers in the Pilbara. A senior engineer of the Public Works Department forecast that this would take place within the next 30 years.

The statements are attributed to Mr. D. B. Collett, of the planning, designing and investigation branch, and he was speaking to delegates to the Local Government Week last Friday. I would just mention here that Mr. Collett is an officer of the Public Works Department. Therefore, with his designation, one can realise that he is, or should be, well acquainted with the Government's plan and should know exactly what is going on, because he is the person, I take it, who has to do the planning, designing, and investigation. The article concludes—

Mr. Collett said that though damming of the Gascoyne River would allow bigger irrigation at Carnarvon it was not likely for a long time.

I think those articles which have been progressively published merely represent a softening-up process—as were the Premier's comments published in the political notes column on the road maintenance tax—of the people of Gascoyne, indicating that it is unlikely they will get a dam for some years.

Mr. COURT: Mr. Collett was giving a technical paper, and not expressing a matter of policy.

Mr. NORTON: I would say that Mr. Collett was making a statement based more or less on the instructions he has been given on what he has to do. That is he was merely telling the delegates what his duties will be. That is how I understand it.

Carnarvon is developing more and more every year as a vegetable growing community. Further, it will be called on more and more every year for the supply of out-of-season vegetables. As members know, Carnarvon is renowned for its beans which have been grown in that area for

many years and which have been exported to South Australia. Carnarvon is now developing the production of tomatoes with, of course, the production of capsicums, cucumbers, eggfruit, watermelons, and pumpkins. By the end of this year a large packing shed and a cool storage shed will be built at Carnarvon, which will serve as the distributing centre for the north-west and which will save people living north of Carnarvon a good deal in freight charges and road maintenance tax.

It is logical that Carnarvon should be the supply centre for all towns further north which require fresh vegetables. When one studies the estimates of the populations of the various towns in the north-west which are growing like mushrooms, one can realise that the demand for vegetables by the people in those towns will increase tremendously.

It may be of interest to members to know that in 1966-67 Western Australia imported from interstate and overseas—mainly interstate—\$3,733,000 worth of fresh and preserved vegetables. The vegetable growing industry at Carnarvon is based on family units. It is not based on companies with great financial resources. The producers are people who are building up their assets, and who are serving the district and also the State. They are raising families there. They are permanent residents and part of the district, and they deserve some consideration.

As they continue to make progress in vegetable production, these vegetable producers, and the majority of their sons, wish to carry on and expand vegetable growing and the production of bananas, but due to water restrictions this is not practicable, and some of these young men have been forced to seek employment elsewhere. One-third of the land held in Carnarvon is freehold, so probably another 300 to 400 acres would be available for immediate production if water were made available; and, if it were made available, Carnarvon could continue to meet the ever-increasing demands for vegetables, not only by the State, but also by markets overseas and interstate.

Members will be surprised to learn what the State has lost over the last few years on the export market. As I have said, Carnarvon, over the years, has exported quite a quantity of beans. In fact, it has averaged 24,080 centals a year on the interstate market each year, which is a large quantity of vegetables to be exported from one small district. If we study the tomato growing industry—and this is quite interesting—Geraldton, as members will realise, is more or less phasing out the production of tomatoes, not because the district cannot grow them, but because no-one is entering the industry when the old-established producers cease to follow their calling.

Young men now seek work in the town in the crayfishing industry and they are not keen to take up tomato growing. However it is interesting to note how the Geraldton tomato growing industry has slipped back over the past 10 years. In 1959, in and around Geraldton, including the Chapman Valley, there were 388 acres under tomatoes. This area produced 385,864 half bushel cases of tomatoes in that year. Over the past 10 years the acreage under tomatoes has been progressively reduced by an average of 26 acres a year, until, in 1968, the total acreage under tomatoes at Geraldton was 128 acres, which produced 169,402 half bushel cases of tomatoes.

So it can be seen that the acreage used for the production of tomatoes has dropped from 388 acres to 128 acres in 10 years. The production of tomatoes has dropped from 385,864 half bushel cases to 169,402 half bushel cases in that time. In the same period, the acreage under tomatoes at Carnarvon has increased from 53 acres in 1959 to 124 acres in 1968, and I think that figure will be exceeded this year. In 1959, the production of tomatoes in Carnarvon was 54,201 half bushel cases, and in 1968 the production was 212,000 half bushel cases, a considerable step up in production.

It is quite interesting to note that as Geraldton has been falling behind with its tomato production, the production of tomatoes at Carnarvon has gradually been increasing. However, the increase in tomato production at Carnarvon is reflected in the reduction of beans produced, and probably other commodities as well. I have the figures for the production of beans, but not for the production of capsicums, cucumbers, watermelons, and so on. From these figures it is noticeable that whenever there is an increase in the acreage cultivated for the production of tomatoes there is a reduction in the acreage used for the production of beans.

Another interesting point is that the average production of tomatoes per acre for 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968, for the Geraldton area, was 1,337½ half bushel cases, whereas, in Carnarvon, over the same period, the average production of tomatoes per acre was 1,643 half bushel cases, or an increase in average production of 305½ half bushel cases per acre on the Geraldton figures. Therefore it can be seen that Carnarvon can produce tomatoes and other vegetables just as economically as Geraldton, despite the fact that the produce has to be transported over a greater distance. Carnarvon can produce these commodities if it can get water in the district.

It is also rather interesting to look at the export of tomatoes over the same period as that to which I have already referred. In 1958-59, Singapore took

12,856 cases of fresh tomatoes from Western Australia, and the Eastern States imported 190,424 cases, making a total export of 203,280 half bushel cases; and the combined production of tomatoes in Geraldton and Carnarvon in that year was 440,065 half bushel cases.

With the exception of 1964-65 and 1966-67, there has been a general decline in the export of tomatoes from Geraldton. In 1964-65 there was a large export of tomatoes to Singapore, and in this year Singapore included the Federation of Malaya, Sabah, and Sarawak. It appeared then that Geraldton must have been testing the possibility of wider markets, because in that year 96,668 half bushel cases of tomatoes were exported to Singapore, and only 79,968 half bushel cases were exported to the Eastern States.

In 1967-68, the export of tomatoes to Singapore had dropped to 3,880 half bushel cases which, in a period of 10 years, is a decline of 75 per cent. In the same year the Eastern States took only 32,172 half bushel cases, and if members will take their minds back 10 years they will recall that 190,424 half bushel cases were exported to the Eastern States. On these figures it can be realised that the export market for tomatoes has definitely dwindled with the reduction of tomato growing in the Geraldton area. Carnarvon is only just entering into the production of tomatoes and has not yet picked up the loss in production from the Geraldton area.

Although fruit fly is a factor to be considered in the export of produce to the Eastern States, I am led to believe that fruit fly does not attack tomatoes to any great extent. If we look at the loss in value of our exports and keep in mind that our dollar was worth considerably more a few years ago than it is today, we will find that the export value of tomatoes, to both the Eastern States and overseas in 1958-59, was \$303,942. In 1967-68 the figure had dropped to \$57,786. Surely something can be done to assist Carnarvon to pick up the leeway in exports and so take advantage of these export markets which are offering, and which our State badly needs to develop.

This year the Carnarvon Research Station exported a trial consignment of grapefruit to Singapore. These were shipped in the normal wooden bushel cases, and arrived in excellent order. The merchants in Singapore were more than satisfied with the condition in which they arrived, and they were very intrigued by the flavour and the colour of the flesh. At the present time I understand that Singapore is being supplied with grapefruit from West Africa and South Australia.

I should point out that grapefruit grown at Carnarvon can hold its own with, and is even superior to, that grown anywhere else in the Commonwealth—whether it be the pink flesh variety or the white flesh

variety. The Carnarvon grapefruit has become so popular with the tourists that it is very difficult at times for the locals to obtain supplies. This grapefruit is much sought after by the tourists, because it can be eaten in the same way as oranges are eaten.

I believe that the Carnarvon grapefruit can compete very favourably on the Singapore market, particularly with South Australian grapefruit. The Carnarvon grapefruit is a better product, and we have the advantage of lower freight charges. We should therefore, be able to compete with the South Australian product on the Singapore market.

In addition, Carnarvon produces a mandarin which is unsurpassed by that grown anywhere else in Australia; and I have been to quite a number of citrus growing districts in South Australia and Victoria. Whilst our oranges might not look as attractive, because of their colour, their flavour and juice are very acceptable to those who can recognise them. There again, we can supply a much needed export; but what worries me is that Western Australia cannot supply its own citrus needs. If one were to go to the markets at the present time one would see hundreds of cases of oranges imported from the Eastern States. Yesterday these cases sold at \$4.50 each.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has five more minutes.

Mr. NORTON: I feel that we can compete with others in the sale of these products. In the few minutes left to me I would like to pass a few comments on the research station being developed at Rocky Pool. I am afraid I cannot follow the line of thinking behind the establishment of this research station, when it is only to experiment with the growing of crops such as bananas, beans, tomatoes, and capsicums. Each of these crops is highly susceptible to frost. Everybodys knows that the further we get away from the coast the greater is the incidence and severity of frost. We should realise that within 10 miles of the coast both north and south of Carnarvon there are thousands of acres of land just as suitable, as regards quality, as land which is cropped at the present time.

All the experiments which need to be conducted into the growing of tomatoes, beans, capsicums, and bananas have already been carried out at Carnarvon. If the research station at Rocky Pool is to be successfully run as a research station then research should be undertaken into the growing of citrus fruit, dates, avocado pears, mangoes, and similar crops which are not highly affected by frost; and also of trees which bear fruit that is in short supply in Western Australia.

In my view the \$10,000 which has been allocated to this particular project would be better spent in trying to cultivate some

of the other crops, such as citrus. The citrus trees will grow admirably in that area, because they do not mind the frost. In fact, the incidence of frost improves those trees, and it brings out the sugar and the colour in the orange. The orange is far more attractive when it is grown in an area which is susceptible to frost. Further, when citrus trees are grown under the dry farming method they will require watering only once in six weeks. As long as I am in Parliament, and as long as there is no damming of the Gascoyne River, I will endeavour to press for the building of a dam.

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren) [8.20 p.m.]: There are several matters touching the electorate of Warren to which I would draw the attention of members during this opportunity which the debate on the Address-in-Reply affords me. The first is a matter to which I can adopt no other than a severely critical attitude. I refer to the report on the mutton and lamb industry in Western Australia which was submitted to the Minister on the 11th March last, and subsequently tabled in this House.

It is, I suppose, a report of distinction. It has the distinction of being one of the most innocuous and inconsequential documents which has appeared in this House during the entire history of this Parliament. The member for Collie has already expressed the reaction to the report in his area; and that reaction is rather general. It is certainly the reaction in my own electorate. Individual farmers, branches of the Farmers' Union, other farmer groups, as well as general Press comment, have all been adverse in the extreme.

I have received a number of letters from individual farmers, and all of them were condemnatory. Every farmer to whom I have spoken—and there were many—has been loud in his condemnation. Not one has mentioned a word in favour of the report. Three branches of the Farmers' Union in my district have written to me expressing their concern about the matter; and two of them have passed motions of no-confidence in the report. The first motion is simply an expression of utter disappointment with the substance of the report; and the second motion, passed at a branch meeting, expresses no confidence in the committee which inquired into the lamb and mutton prices.

We have seen many examples of that kind. For instance, the *Farmers' Weekly*, which must be regarded as the official organ of the mutton and lamb producers, contained a report of a letter to the Minister for Agriculture pointing out that the findings of the committee of inquiry were unacceptable. Subsequent reports in that newspaper showed that the Farmers' Union was embarking on its own research, with the intention of presenting its own plan for the marketing of lamb and mutton in this State.

The reasons for the failure of this report are not hard to find. I think the first reason that can be given is that there was no examination of beef prices concurrently with the examination of mutton and lamb prices. The committee makes reference to this fact on page 23 of its report. It went on to point out that retailers' costs had been allocated on the unit basis of one pound of fresh meat sold.

This section develops the theme that the handling of beef is probably more costly than the handling of lamb and mutton; and that beef being a more valuable commodity could perhaps justifiably carry a larger markup. If this principle is recognised, the retailers' costs of 11.5c per pound—as averaged out by the committee—seem to be excessive; that is, when viewed in this way: that the initial cost of the products of mutton and lamb being far cheaper, and entailing less overhead and less effort on the part of the retailer, can hardly justify the commanding of the same margin. If growers are prepared to accept the existing line of reasoning they will be at variance with the findings of this committee.

The second point contributing to the failure would be the lack of powers. Indeed, the committee showed it was hampered by this lack of powers, because on page 23 of the report it points out that the committee experienced difficulty in ascertaining the proper margin obtained by retailers and wholesalers separately. Surely this was the whole crux of the matter. It was the direction in which the inquiry was turned. The committee was stifled by the lack of powers to conduct a proper investigation, and the whole inquiry was abortive in this area.

The next point is the inconclusiveness of the report. Again this is attributed to the lack of powers on the part of the committee. This inconclusiveness is revealed in section 7 of the report—the conclusions. The first conclusion is—

The Committee's investigations confirm that the prices received by farmers for sheep and lambs in the calendar year 1968 were considerably lower than those for the previous year.

It established the point that the prices were definitely lower than those in the previous year. In the second conclusion this appears—

Not all of the lower prices paid to farmers has been passed on to consumers.

It makes this point very clear. The reason that there is no precision or exactitude is that the committee lacked the powers to pursue its inquiry effectively. The reason for this inconclusiveness is the lack of powers in the terms of the appointment of the committee.

I should point out that this aspect was foreseen, and indeed it was mentioned to the Minister immediately after he announced the terms of reference. I refer to page 1620 of the 1968 *Hansard* where, after the Minister had made his announcement, I pointed out—

However, the most important aspect of any committee, and particularly of this one, is the power it possesses. A committee of this kind would need to have substantial powers to enable it to operate effectively.

I concluded on this note—

Unless the proposed committee is given specific powers to overcome the difficulties that will be encountered in the various sections of the meat trade, I hesitate to say what its effectiveness will be.

The results, as they were presented in the report, were very much as we had expected.

The terms of reference did not specify the disparity in the prices paid by the consumer, as compared with the prices received by the farmer. The motion set out six points; but the terms of reference laid down by the Minister specified a number of isolated points, but not as had been requested by the Opposition—an investigation into the actual disparity. I ask: Where did the discrepancy arise? because the discrepancy is there as the committee has shown. But in the report the disparity as such was not commented upon in any detail. Surely the fault lies in the setting out of the terms of reference, in not making provision for an inquiry into that aspect.

I would at this stage hasten to reassure the House that there is no criticism of the members of the committee of inquiry. We feel they were competent, loyal, and effective servants, but they were placed in an embarrassing position. They were given a job to do, but were not given the powers and opportunity to carry it out correctly. They should not have been placed in that position of embarrassment.

I would like now to draw the attention of the House to a problem which has been manifest in the indigenous jarrah forests of the State for some time. This is the *phytophthora* root rot which is caused by a soil fungus called *phytophthora cinnamomi*. The *phytophthora cinnamomi* represents a species of fungus and was first isolated in the cinnamon trees of America, hence the terminology.

In indicating the nature of the disease and its attendant problems, I would like to get the disease in its correct perspective because there has been some distortion by newspapers and others in the past. Considerable gloom was occasioned when the disease was first isolated and the initial reports made general. Forecasts of a dire nature concerning our forests were made,

but subsequent knowledge and research has shown many of those misgivings to be unnecessary. However, at the same time, the importance of the disease cannot be minimised.

Dieback, as it is sometimes called, is a serious problem, sufficiently serious to have merited firm steps being taken by the Forests Department. These steps have been particularly effective in limiting the spread of the causative fungus, and so it is not as catastrophic as initially believed. Some of the remarks I can call to mind of a rather emotive nature are, "In a generation there will not be a jarrah tree left"; "Running rampant through the forest"; and "There is little the layman can do." But this gives a complete distortion. There is a lot which has been done and there is a lot that can be done, and done by lay people as well.

It is important at the outset to be able to identify the areas of infection, and these have to be distinguished from fire damage and other causes; but it can be done fairly readily. There is a general pattern of symptom which runs fairly truly throughout the forests where infection is encountered.

The first indication of infection is a yellowing of the understorey species such as the banksias, persoonia, zamia palms, dryandra, and the like. It is usually associated with moist conditions with gullies and a highwater table type of site. It is rather a comfort to know that almost invariably these sites are not consistent with the prime jarrah forests, but rather with forests of a secondary nature.

After a period of time the small tip leaves of the tree die and the jarrah crown commences to deteriorate. It is at this stage that the tree takes on a characteristic staggy look and epicormic shoots form around the bole itself. These points themselves are fairly indicative, but once infection does occur the disease can be fatal in a very short time. There is no doubt about it; it is a killer of the first order.

These symptoms, as stated generally, have to be qualified in a number of ways and it should be stated that the disease does not occur uniformly in either space or time. For example it travels faster downhill than it does uphill, and there are seasonal variations in the spread of the disease. There is no uniformity that we can regard as a useful yardstick or measure.

The long-term effect of the disease in the jarrah forests is to destroy the existing jarrah and to leave the area one of marri under which the understorey species have been denuded and only grasses remain. It is found in all circumstances and all sites, but there is more disease proportionately in the damper gully topographical situations.

The disease can kill over 50 native species in this State, and that does not exhaust the whole potentiality of the fungus. There are at the same time a number of resistant species and among those are the karri, marri, pinus pinaster, and a number of Eastern States eucalypts. It is only the jarrah which gives us immediate concern in this State.

The disease itself—the fungus—is not indigenous. It was introduced into Western Australia in the Karragullen area in 1923. It was felt it was introduced in the citrus stock. This, of course, is only conjecture, but it was not until 1964, after six years of constant research, that the fungus was isolated and identified as *phytophthora cinnamomi*. I think I have made it clear that the disease is destructive. One species attacks citrus trees, while another is the potato blight which was so devastating in Ireland.

The actual fungus itself can be identified only by the particular growth spores as revealed in agar jelly. The problem is to find the spores and isolate them before the damage is irretrievable. When they are found, removal measures can be taken. *Phytophthora cinnamomi* lives in the hair roots of the plant and it is these which are destroyed, bringing about the resultant mortality of the tree.

A tree's capacity to survive is proportionate to the regeneration of hair roots. These normally are expendable. They do not last very long, but when attacked by a fungus of this kind there is a race between the tree on the one hand to replace the hair roots, and the fungus on the other to destroy them. This is virtually the tension we have in the diseased tree. It is found only at underground level except with banksia and some susceptible types. The fungus is a pathogen of world importance inasmuch as it has caused extensive damage in a number of countries in the world, and especially in New Zealand, Queensland, Hawaii, California, and the south-east portion of America.

It can kill over 200 species of trees, shrubs, and agricultural crops, but jarrah has been found to be among the most highly susceptible trees in the world.

The life cycle of the fungus, for our purpose, can be briefly divided into two separate parts. If conditions favour the optimum development of the fungus, it can reproduce sporangia in 24 hours although I emphasise this is under the most optimum conditions. It generally takes longer than this.

In the second cycle, when the fungus develops, the resistant zoospores which are contained in a hard shell can remain dormant for a period of up to six years; but, again, conditions must favour this length of time. Soil moisture and temperature must be suitable for survival. In dry conditions several months would be the maximum.

For maximum infection, the soil temperature and moisture conditions must be within certain well defined limits and these occur only during several months of the year. This is an important consideration when formulating control measures.

The distribution of the disease requires some qualification and there are several points which must be grasped before the full significance is appreciated. The fungus has been introduced into the State and therefore it is not lying idle in the ground waiting for favourable conditions before bursting into epidemic form. It has been spread largely by man and this spread takes the pattern of scattered outbreaks throughout the entire range of the jarrah forests. As I have said, it has been found in all topographical and soil types.

There has been a considerable amount of mapping possible, largely from aerial photographs, and the disease has been found to extend from Waipole in the south to Margaret River in the west, and Wanneroo and Mundaring in the north. So the coverage is extensive over almost the entire jarrah forest, but it is in isolated spots throughout that entire area.

The highest incidence occurs in the northern forest division, which is to the north of the Brunswick River and along the edge of the Darling scarp.

The reason for this can be attributed to several causes. Firstly this is the area where the greatest and longest logging activities have occurred. It is also an area of extensive roadmaking operations. In addition, it is close to the initial sources of infection. However, even in these parts there is still a considerable area of green forest—using the term "green" rather loosely—which is larger than the affected forest. Therefore, even under the worst conditions, the affected areas are at a minimum. To make the suggestion of graveyard areas of course is to completely distort the overall picture.

In most cases the prime jarrah in the centre strip of the forest is largely unscathed except for scattered outbreaks. It would be an oversimplification to say that of the 4,500,000 acres of jarrah forest, approximately 200,000 acres at this moment are infected and this rate is increasing at a given percentage per year. This is a complete oversimplification which does not remotely give anything like the true picture. There is no solid block of infection as a generalisation of that kind would suggest.

There must be a recognition of the manner in which this disease spreads before control measures can be applied. Virtually anything which carries soil can spread the fungus. The proportion of risk increases with the amount of soil spread. Therefore someone wearing a particular type of boot and moving a small amount of soil would not be comparable with a Main Roads Department truck dumping 10 tons of gravel each load during the course of the day.

So the more soil which is spread, the greater the risk of infection. Obviously, logging operations, loading operations, and the activities of such instrumentalities as the P.M.G. Department and the S.E.C., and of contractors engaged in fencing and mining activities, present the greatest dangers in the spread of infection.

Once the infection has been transferred from point A to point B it then spreads by movement in the roots of the plants themselves by passive spread in the water, and it also spreads by the active motile zoospores which can undertake movement of their own volition.

Spread uphill is very slow and over a defined period would probably be somewhere in the vicinity of about two feet per year. In reverse, downhill spread is much quicker. So it is obvious that control measures must be aimed at the prevention of large quantities of affected earth being moved from a low position to a higher position, where natural spread is far greater.

Control, of course, is to a large extent dependent upon the research that has been made prior to the compilation of such research measures. It was not until 1964 that the disease was isolated, and the first major breakthrough occurred.

At the present time the Forests Department has the equivalent of six professional officers engaged full time on this work. In addition, the Forest Research Institute, which is a Commonwealth body, has two professional officers engaged in a full time capacity. At the University of Western Australia a postgraduate fellowship has been sponsored by the Forests Department. One Ph.D. scholarship has been sponsored by the sawmillers' and timber merchants' associations and is awaiting final determination. One post doctoral fellowship at the National University of Australia has been awarded by the Western Australian Forests Department.

Earlier, two plant pathologists of world standing were invited to the State and as a consequence of their work research in this field was able to progress at the rate at which it did. An ancillary effect of this research work is that one set of research stimulates another, and the greater number of officers employed tends to generate enthusiasm. As a consequence, great progress has been forthcoming.

The actual control measures themselves are of prime importance to the laymen. It might seem that a fungicide might be the surest and quickest answer. Well, it is true that a fungicide is quite effective on avocado. Indeed, it is used on the avocado orchards in California, but there is a difference. An avocado tree is worth something like \$80 a year and the cost of treating a tree is something like \$20 a year. So there is an economic margin which enables the fungicide to be used in that situation.

However, the jarrah forests of Western Australia are a different proposition. To have to expend that amount annually would, of course, render the forests economics absolutely hopeless.

Mr. Fletcher: Could aerial spraying be used?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: The fungicide was used through irrigation in the avocado orchards, but the cost was prohibitive, so I doubt if aerial spraying is the solution. There are effective measures of control but they must be extended. To minimise the spread of the disease, forest sanitation is foremost.

There must be a reduction of the artificial spread of the disease by proper forest hygiene. This, of course, involves areas where logging units have been operating. The units should be washed thoroughly before moving to some other part of the forest. The washing of trucks and tractors, and the like, need not necessarily be harmful, because once the fungus finds its way into running streams it is rendered veritably harmless. This implies quarantine in affected areas while operations are in progress and this, I am happy to say, has received the co-operation of the sawmillers fairly generally.

Obviously, the control of roadmaking material would find a high priority in any control programme. The source areas of gravel, sand, and other roadmaking materials need very careful and stringent control. It can be seen fairly readily in some places where the run-off from a newly gravelled road has set a pattern of infection down an adjacent gully.

The replanting of diseased areas with disease-resistant plants is the subject of experiment. *Pinus pinaster* seems most suited at the moment but that is only one of the many species which has proved to be immune to this particular fungus. There is, too, the possibility of an antibiotic type of resistance when the disease-resistant species is planted around a small infected area, containing the disease within the confines of that area.

There has been some experimentation with ditching. This method involves running a ditch completely around an affected area. This, of course, would only be possible where a small acreage was involved, and probably where prime jarrah was involved, otherwise it could become well and truly uneconomic.

So the need for education becomes obvious when it is realised that we are dealing with a prime national asset. If that asset is to be preserved it becomes the responsibility of the entire community and it is only with community awareness that full effectiveness of the controls which are introduced will be achieved. The danger of the disease must be brought home to the public as must the fact

that the layman can be of assistance, and that each individual can contribute some small part in this programme.

I think it is not a bad idea to start by drawing the attention of members of this House to the problem which has beset the jarrah forests of our State. The education campaign must be aimed, primarily, at those actively engaged in the forests in logging, roadmaking, or mining, or in the activities of some department which involves the removal of fairly large quantities of earth from one point to another.

I would like to comment briefly on the work undertaken by the Forests Department in this matter. That department has shown itself to be, to say the least, dedicated and sustained in its efforts in this regard. The work has been prolonged, and as each successive year goes by a little more is achieved towards the ultimate aim of full control. So, if I have brought some awareness of this question to members of this House I am more than satisfied.

MR. LAPHAM (Karrinyup) [8.55 p.m.]: During the last session of Parliament I spoke on the question of land and I indicated to members that in my opinion the land cost spiral had been brought about by interference with the law of supply and demand.

It is rather surprising to note how many people have got around to that way of thinking in the 12-month period since I last spoke. Even in tonight's *Daily News* a supporter of the Government—the member for Murray—indicated that the making of more land available was the best solution to the problem. He said the problem was governed by supply and demand and the making available of more land was the obvious way to beat spiralling costs.

The member for South Perth also indicated, in similar terms, that it was necessary to put more land on the market for the land-hungry people. As a matter of fact, in October, 1967, the Premier himself, in a Press statement, said that young people who want a block of land are the State's greatest assets and must be protected. Those were very fine words, but what has happened since the Premier made that statement in 1967? The price of land has gone up and up and up until today the average price is \$7,000 for a building block.

It is simply fantastic to think that any person should be asked, in this day and age, to pay \$7,000 for just a little piece of sand. That is all it is. However, not only does a purchase involve \$7,000, it is the question of the financing of the \$7,000. Quite a lot has been said with regard to speculation in land and, candidly, I do not like speculation; nor do I think that many people do like speculation.

However, speculation has not been the real problem. The price of land has been allowed to spiral and spiral until it has got beyond the capacity of the ordinary individual to pay cash for it. As a consequence, he has to go to a financier and is then up against the equivalent of a speculator because he has to pay plenty for the use of the money which he borrows. He pays at least 12 per cent. reducible interest for the use of the other person's finance.

Quite recently a friend of mine who sells land indicated that he is selling blocks worth \$7,000 on the basis of 10 per cent. cash and the balance over a seven-year period. The rate of interest is 12 per cent., or 1 per cent. per month on the outstanding balance. If we work out the amount which must be paid by the purchaser of the land, we will find that the interest charge alone over the seven-year period is \$3,087. So on top of the \$7,000 he has to pay an additional \$3,087. However, the cost does not finish there. The purchaser has to pay an amount of \$1.25 for every \$100 involved in the purchase price of the block. This is a stamp duty charge. So, there is an additional 70 times \$1.25; and this is merely because he is trying to buy a piece of land for the same purpose as any normal youngster has done over the years—to erect a home on it. Firstly, a young man has the expense of \$87.50 in stamp duty, then mortgage fees amounting to about \$35, and of course, when the seven years has passed he has to pay another \$25 for settlement costs. Further, during the seven-year period he has to pay shire rates, water rates, land tax, and all the attendant costs, and so from the time the purchase of a block of land commences to the time the purchaser eventually owns it, he has paid out \$10,500 of his hard earned money.

Mr. Bateman: No wonder young couples cannot get married!

Mr. LAPHAM: It is too costly to get married. Only recently, in my home, I had a young couple asking my advice on what to do and, candidly, I could not tell them. I said, "At this time, with the Government being so inactive, I do not know the answer, but if we had control it would not be difficult to find one."

Mr. Fletcher: No more has the Premier.

Mr. LAPHAM: The Premier talks and talks about everything, but he does not get any further.

Mr. Court: He does pretty well.

Mr. LAPHAM: Well, does he? He has been talking about finding a solution for some time now, but where are we? We are worse off now than we ever were. In fact, I am rather pleased the Minister for Industrial Development has entered into this discussion, because I would point out

to him that his Government has set up the people of this State as an Aunt Sally and has allowed them to be shot down.

Mr. Brady: He has taken the Minister's breath away.

Mr. LAPHAM: For a start, what has the Minister's Government done? The Government does not even realise that when it introduced the new scheme of making available serviced blocks on which everything must be provided—roads must be constructed, kerbing must be in place, electricity and water must be laid on, and, in some cases sewerage must be provided—all these costs are added to the cost of the block of land before the Government allows the land to be made available for sale.

This was not the position when the Minister built a home, or when I built a home. We could buy a block of land completely unserviced. I bought one 100 yards off Scarborough Beach Road for £100. Admittedly at that time there were no roads and no water supply, but on the other hand there were no extra costs added to the price of the block for making those services available, and that is why I was able to buy the land. That is the reason that, over the years, a block of land was easy to purchase by any young person who wished to buy a block on which to erect a home. In past years we purchased a block of land and went for a while without electricity and water, and a few of the other facilities that are provided on these serviced blocks today.

Mr. Court: What you say is ever so true, but the present-day community will not accept those conditions.

Mr. LAPHAM: It will accept them; the Minister's Government will not give it the opportunity. The Government has made available only serviced blocks and nothing else. No-one can buy anything but a serviced block of land and this is the problem with which we are now faced. The Government has removed from the land market the supply of unserviced blocks. There is not sufficient land available for the people who want a block.

Mr. Court: If we did not provide those services, you would be complaining tonight that the blocks did not have any sewerage, did not have any roads, and did not have any water supply.

Mr. LAPHAM: The Minister knows full well that if I wished to make a plea about the lack of sewerage in Western Australia I could soon do so because, in regard to sewerage, this State is worse off than any other State in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Court: Now you are complaining about wanting the blocks sewered.

Mr. LAPHAM: I am not complaining about the lack of sewerage; I am complaining that people have an insufficient number

of blocks made available to them. The Government has tightened the screws as hard as it can in order that it may control the amount of land that can be dribbled onto the market, and as a consequence the Government has created the position that land is in short supply.

Mr. Fletcher: Return to your original theme and show the ultimate cost of a \$7,000 block of land.

Mr. LAPHAM: A block of land originally bought for \$7,000 will eventually cost \$10,000, apart from the shire rates, the land tax, the water rates, and the little bits and pieces that are tacked on. There is something else the Government should have done. I do not object to serviced blocks being made available, but before the Government changed from one system to another it should have ensured there was a stockpile of serviced lots so that blocks could be put on the market at a moment's notice and the Government could say, "There is an adequate supply of land and you can buy a block in such and such a suburb"; but that was not so.

Almost overnight the Government abandoned one system and introduced a new one, and this is what has caused the trouble. Hopeful young couples have started off with the idea of buying a block of land, but they do not remain hopeful for too long. They are frustrated. They are paying fantastic rentals whilst they are waiting to buy a block.

The problem relating to land prices has been the centre of the economic trouble we are now experiencing. We are not only in trouble with high land prices, but we are in trouble with high rents. The fact is that those whose wages are pegged either by an industrial arbitration commission or any other tribunal are paying fantastic prices for a commodity that is unlimited as to price, and paying extremely high rentals as a consequence of this Government's inaction.

Even the rental for a room has reached fantastic proportions. The other day I met a woman who is an invalid pensioner. Her total income is a pension of \$14 and she is paying \$10 a week for a room. When I asked her how she lived she replied that she got by somehow or other with the help of a few friends, and so on. She was a very proud woman and although I would have been only too happy to augment her income I was not game even to suggest it, because she was such a fine type. This is another problem with which we are faced, and this and other problems will continue unless the Government takes some action. The Government is always talking but it does nothing.

It is the responsibility of members on the back benches on the Government side of the House to say to their Ministers, "This is not good enough." I know that

recently conferences have been held by Liberal Party members and Country Party members at which those present were critical of the situation relating to land prices, but nothing subsequently happened. Ministers are merely concerned with their own departments. The high price of land is a problem they are putting into the "too hard basket" and they are shrugging their shoulders over the problem, but this shrugging of the shoulders should stop.

I do not intend to advocate that we should return to the old method of land selling, but I feel there must be a middle course which the Government can follow. Instead of the Government requiring the servicing of all blocks of land it could lessen the restrictions that are now applied to the subdivision of land. Even the member for South Perth, in his speech on the question of land prices, drew attention to the fact that land would be available in the foothills for \$1,700 a block if the owners were given an opportunity to subdivide it and make it available to people desiring to build there. Why should not such land be available to the people? The Government should loosen the bonds of the restrictive conditions it has imposed and so let us get on with the job of providing land and houses for the people.

We will never get the job done if we do not have some action. On this side of the House we can only draw attention to the problem. It is up to the members on the back benches on the Government side to use their influence upon the Minister. The Opposition has no power, and anything it may say is futile unless it has a very good Press, and that is something we have never had. Therefore if the members on the back benches on the Government side are interested in solving this problem they should get behind their leaders and give them a shove so that they will take some interest in the matter.

Mr. Court: Our back-benchers do not mince matters; they let us know what they are thinking.

Mr. LAPHAM: In all the Minister's big deals, and in all the negotiations he has made around conference tables to develop this and that, the little people of this State seem to have been completely forgotten. In fact, since the Minister's Government has been in control and we have been in Opposition, the general standards of the community have deteriorated.

Mr. Court: Less unemployment!

Mr. LAPHAM: I admit that the rich have got richer.

Mr. Court: Have a look at the pay packet!

Mr. LAPHAM: I admit that almost overnight we find that one individual, as reported in tonight's newspaper, can afford \$100,000 for a yacht.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. LAPHAM: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I must admit that it riles me when I see in the Press a report of an individual who, only a few years ago was without substantial funds, is now a millionaire and can afford to pay \$100,000 for a yacht. Yet the poor unfortunate people of Western Australia cannot afford to buy a block of land.

Mr. Court: Never forget that you had the highest rate of unemployment and the lowest take-home pay.

Mr. LAPHAM: That is because we had in office a Liberal Commonwealth Government which applied the credit squeeze.

Mr. Graham: And there was a member, at that time sitting on this side of the House, who ran around the world sabotaging his own State.

Mr. Court: It was your Minister who sabotaged his own State.

Mr. LAPHAM: Generally, people cannot buy a block of land at a reasonable price. This is the predicament in which young people are placed today. If a person cannot find about \$7,000, he cannot buy a block of land. One can, of course, go to a financier, who will provide the money at high interest rates.

Today, the planning authority delineates insufficient urban land for the needs of the people. Also it delineates deferred urban land, and consequently the owners of such land know full well that as soon as the small amount of urban land is sold, it is their turn next. This system has been operating as a sort of punter's guide for some years, because the owners of deferred urban land, or intending speculators, know when their turn to sell will arrive, and the financier merely smiles, knowing full well that the higher the price, the more he is needed, and the greater will be his return.

Young couples start out hopefully thinking that those in authority will protect them a little, but there is no protection for them today. As a consequence they are faced with high rentals and it appears that they must continue to pay them. They find that they must rent a flat for which they pay \$20 to \$25 a week. As a result, they cannot afford to save to buy a block of land on which to erect a home. The young couple who visited my home the other evening are both responsible people and occupy good positions. They are earning good money, but they said to me, "As much as we save we cannot keep up with the inflation in the cost of land, the price of which continues to rise each month. Our savings do not reach the increases." That is true; they just cannot keep up with it.

Of course, we all know that young people get themselves involved with hire-purchase debts. But this is not very difficult to do.

We must remember that unlike the Minister for Industrial Development and myself, who possibly do not look upon such things in a favourable light, the youngsters of today, as a result of radio and television, have been conditioned to the fact that they must have things on hire purchase and, like most young people, they get their fingers burned before they realise what they have done and the extent to which they are involved.

I know of a number of cases of young people who have become involved in debts incurred as a result of hire-purchase transactions. I have told them they could not afford the articles which they had purchased; that they were not getting sufficient income to meet the cost, and that they should send the items back to the firm concerned. Even though they sent the articles back, however, they still had to pay for them.

The Hire-Purchase Act makes provision for a different arrangement when the article is returned voluntarily by the purchaser, but the hire-purchase companies have overcome that difficulty by writing into their agreement that that section does not apply, or words to that effect.

Mr. W. A. Manning: So your advice to send the articles back was not too good.

Mr. LAPHAM: The advice was reasonable because I was able to use some little influence and the firms concerned met the young people half way.

Mr. Bertram: The legislation was not too good.

Mr. LAPHAM: The legal profession of Australia got together and produced this legislation. The little people who purchase articles on hire purchase have no hope whatever of contesting any action that might be brought by the big firms and the hire-purchase companies. It is far too costly for the little people to contest such court action apart from which they feel they have no chance of winning.

I would now like to say that I am not completely alone in my thinking that there has been a wrong approach to the problems of housing, of land prices, and of rents. In December of last year an advertisement in a newspaper indicated that there were 60 splendid blocks available for auction at Karrinyup. I might emphasise they were available for auction, not for sale. Somebody in tonight's issue of the *Daily News* suggested we should fix a price for land. I have the paper here and I see it was the member for South Perth who said that the Government should release more land and should peg the price of land.

I think that would have been a good idea. In December, 1968, the Government decided it wanted to sell some of the land it had given to the Rural and Industries Bank to dispose of on behalf of the State

Housing Commission. There were 60 residential blocks for sale at Hamersley No. 1 Estate.

These blocks were part of the normal 750 acre subdivision near North Beach previously owned by the State Housing Commission. The auction was the first step in the development of the housing complex in the Hamersley area, and the land was being released through the R. & I. Bank.

The decision to auction the land did not meet with everybody's approval; it certainly did not meet with the approval of the President of the Housing Industry Association. He took strong exception to the fact that the land was to be auctioned, especially as it was Government land that was being sold by the R. & I. Bank as agent for the State Housing Commission.

Mr. Pietersen criticised the bank's policy, acting as agent, of auctioning this land and he wrote to the bank indicating that the only way to stabilise land prices was to allot blocks to interested buyers at a predetermined price of less than \$3,000.

In arriving at this cost of \$3,000, Mr. Pietersen said that the land, including the subdivisional cost, would be worth only \$1,500, but he said he would allow 100 per cent. increase, which meant that the land should be sold for not more than \$3,000. He considered that a price of \$3,000 was most adequate. He said that selling this land to predetermined buyers would be one way to combat the increasing land cost spiral. His argument was that if the land was put on the auction market when land was in such short supply its price must continue to rise because everybody would be bidding for it.

Mr. Pietersen suggested that the land should be made available at a fixed price of \$3,000. When this was featured in the newspapers and the bank was asked about it, the bank said that the profits from the sale of the land would be put back into housing and it attempted to justify, on these grounds, the auction policy it had adopted. The bank also said that the conditions of sale of the Hamersley land would preclude sales to speculators.

It stated quite sincerely that it wanted the land to go to genuine home seekers and home builders at a reasonable price but apparently the criticism of the President of the Housing Industry Association had some bearing on the subsequent action of the Commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank. They probably felt that this individual was justified in complaining about the dribbling of 60 blocks onto the market, so they increased the number by one-third, bringing it up to 80 blocks—big-hearted!

As this received a fair amount of publicity, the Premier came into the field to protect his flock and warned buyers not to bid too high for this land. He said that buyers would be well advised to be

cautious about the prices they were prepared to pay for the land. In the same article we find that one of the Premier's Ministers did not caution people not to pay too much for the land. The Minister for Town Planning indicated that all of that 5,080 acres of rural land between Hamersley and Beechboro had no prospect of early rezoning. So the confused land hungry people were told on the one hand not to bid too high, while on the other hand they were told that certain land was not going to be rezoned and put on the market. A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse, and this is what happened: the land averaged \$4,784 per block. The President of the Housing Industry Association said that 100 per cent. on the cost price would be \$3,000 per block, but they averaged \$1,784 in excess of what he considered to be a fair price.

If we take into consideration the thinking of the Commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank that anything in excess of the cost of the land should be used for the purpose of providing housing by the State Housing Commission, then we must read into this some undisclosed tax. So the difference between \$4,784 paid for the land and the \$1,500, which the President of the Housing Industry Association said it was worth, is the amount those people who purchased the land paid as a tax to the State Housing Commission to finance its housing requirements.

If the Commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank and the Government were so concerned as to introduce a condition which would preclude the sale of the Hamersley blocks to speculators, why was it not realised that the higher the price a person had to pay for land, the more likely it would be that he would require accommodation for finance and be heavily burdened as a consequence, not because of a speculator, but because of having to borrow from a bank or some other lending institution? The profit the Government would be taking for the land would impose on the purchaser an amount far in excess of what was the true or fair value of the land, but the State Housing Commission wanted its share of the rake-off, the same as everybody else.

As far as the State Housing Commission land which is sold by the Rural and Industries Bank is concerned, I feel some consideration should be given to those people who are on small incomes. I refer to people who cannot pay cash and who cannot take on a heavy financial commitment. I am of the opinion that a proportion of those people who have applied for purchase homes should be given the opportunity of buying a block of land at a reasonable price. They should be allowed to pay a deposit and then be given the opportunity of paying off the balance free of interest because, after all is said and done, the Government obtained the land for almost nothing.

There is not the slightest doubt that the high price of land and the shortage of housing constitutes a real problem not only for people born in this State, but also for those unfortunates who have been brought to the country after being told all sorts of stories about being able to obtain a house when they arrived here and how they would be on the road to glorious Paradise if they came to Western Australia.

The Commonwealth Immigration Minister (Mr. Snedden) said recently that he had twice the number of applicants for Western Australia that he could accommodate in hostels. As a consequence, he could not continue bringing migrants to this State. He said that people were staying longer in migrant hostels because of the housing problems in this State. If we want migrants to come here, let us house them. The easy way is to enable them to buy land at reasonable prices; and this can be done if we are sincere.

In December, 1967, the Premier announced a Government scheme for the Hamersley area. If members do not know where Hamersley is, I will inform them it is on the other side of Scarborough. It extends a little beyond Karrinyup and right out to Sorrento. It is glorious land. Better land could not be found anywhere in Western Australia. Land at Mullaloo or faraway Armadale just cannot compare.

Mr. Rushton: What was that?

Mr. LAPHAM: This is some of the finest land in the State and should have been placed on the market a long time ago. It raises no problems, but very little has been done in regard to it. Way back in 1967 the Premier announced a Government scheme for the area. He said that 1,000 acres would be released in six to nine months as a first step towards establishing a community of 50,000 people in Hamersley. The Premier's announcement received quite a deal of publicity. It was meant to do so.

Mr. Fletcher: Just before an election!

Mr. LAPHAM: Yes. The Premier said he hoped Hamersley would set the pattern for future Government decisions on subdivisions. It sounded very nice, and made good reading, especially when people wanted land. It sounded really "beaut."

The chief town planner said of Hamersley that from virgin bush it could become the best community-developed project in Australia. He said it could be better than Elizabeth in South Australia. I do not know whether members have ever been to Elizabeth, but I certainly hope they will not compare that town with Hamersley at present.

The chief town planner said that the area had some of the most attractive urban land in the metropolitan area, and that approximately 45 per cent. of it was Government owned.

Mr. Norton: Is this in your electorate?

Mr. LAPHAM: Yes. It is glorious land and should today be filled with people and houses.

Mr. Graham: Some of it is in my electorate.

Mr. LAPHAM: I will give the Deputy Leader of the Opposition a little of it—very little.

Mr. Graham: More than that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Mitchell): The honourable member has five minutes more.

Mr. LAPHAM: This land was to have 5,000 homes built on it in the following few years; but here it is, August 1969, and very little land has been thrown open. Periodically a little of it has dribbled onto the market, and many acres were provided for a golf course. However, most of the land is still virgin bush, and arguments are still ensuing in connection with it. As a matter of fact there was quite an argument between the Town Planning Department and the local shire as to what should happen in regard to the land. The shire wanted the power lines underground; others said that would be too costly. The Perth Shire also said that a charge of \$9 a block should be made for fire breaks and playing areas, but the Town Planning Department would not allow it. The Perth Shire said in effect that the Government could keep its scheme and that the shire would not have anything to do with it. Despite this, Town Planning Minister Logan said that the scheme was not dependent upon the Perth Shire and therefore it would be proceeded with. The Perth Shire came into the matter again a few months later, but still very little activity has taken place in the area.

I just cannot understand this inactivity. As I said earlier, the area contains some of the finest land in Western Australia. It has all the necessary attributes. If any member desires to do so, he could wander around with me and I would show it to him. Any member here would be pleased to own a block of it. No better land could be found anywhere.

Despite this, nothing has eventuated in regard to it. However, areas far beyond it are being opened up, and I often wonder whether these inferior areas being opened up are the reason that Hamersley has not been developed. Hamersley is so good that it will sell itself. There will be no problem, but those concerned are finding it very hard to sell some of the land which has been opened up.

Let us face up to the fact that the price of land is rising despite all the anti-speculative measures taken. The price is rising because too little land is available for sale. Last March 27 blocks were sold at an average price of \$7,350. At a recent

sale in Karrinyup, under conditions to exclude speculators, one corner block brought \$9,200, while others brought a little less. These prices are far in excess of those paid at a similar sale in the same area last March.

We have to face the fact that things are completely out of hand. Almost chaotic conditions exist today in connection with land prices, homes, and rent charges. I thought that this session the Government might have introduced rent control. We do not want hard dictatorial rules, but we do need a little control. I thought the back-benchers would have stirred up their Ministers in this regard.

Mr. Fletcher: They call that socialism.

Mr. LAPHAM: I do not care what they call it, it is needed, as everyone knows. Recently the Perth Shire auctioned some land. It should have asked the Housing Commission how many people were badly in need of homes, and let those people have the land at a reasonable price, even on terms if they could not afford cash. But, oh no! The shire put the land on the market for sale under the hammer, because more is obtained for it that way.

The 13 blocks fetched an average of \$5,892. The prices ranged from \$5,200 to \$6,700. Quite a number of conditions were imposed, one being that the land could not be sold to anyone under 21 years of age. Of course the auctioneer at the sale was critical. He wanted to know where all the young buyers were. Quite a number of young folk under 21 would like a home, but the conditions of the sale excluded them.

In February of this year the Perth City Council had an auction of 44 blocks which fetched an average of \$13,432. The prices paid ranged from \$9,000 to \$19,000. I lived in that area many years ago, and how anyone could live there, let alone pay those prices for the land, certainly is beyond my comprehension. I could not get out of the area quickly enough. It is like the Sahara Desert. Of the blocks 13 were in Floreat Park and 30 in City Beach, the area in which I lived.

Recently the State Housing Commission sold some blocks. It stated that land in Dianella was averaging \$7,000 and in Mt. Yokine about \$8,000. This was sold by the State Housing Commission itself at prices ranging from \$5,510 to \$6,670.

Of course those were the blocks the commission decided would be sold by ballot. Those who were allotted a block were quite fortunate, except of course that they were robbed. There is not the slightest doubt about that, despite the fact that the Housing Commission said that they were \$1,400 below the current market value. That does not make the prices paid for the blocks of land fair. To my way of thinking the blocks were not low priced, and young people could certainly not afford

to buy one because to do so they would have to obtain finance through some finance company. The situation would have been different had the blocks been allotted to selected purchasers on free-of-interest terms.

Even building companies today are criticising the spiralling cost of homes. A number of companies are complaining about the fact that homes are hard to sell because the companies have had to increase the amount of the deposit due to the fact that they are finding it hard to get land and are paying more for the land that is available. As a consequence, the companies are charging more for the homes, and as a result the amount asked for a deposit must be greater.

One suggestion was made by an officer of one of these building companies which I thought had some merit. It was that a developer should take an option over rural land and assess the development costs. The developer would then submit his proposal to the Town Planning Board indicating the charge per block at which the land was to be sold to the public. He would then seek a rezoning of the area.

In effect, what would happen is that he would take the rural land, estimate the cost of the services, and then approach the Town Planning Board to see if the land could be rezoned from rural to urban if it were sold at a certain price.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Mitchell): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Mensaros.

SUPPLY BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 9.41 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 13th August, 1969

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

QUESTIONS (11): ON NOTICE

1. *This question was postponed.*

2. ARCHITECTS BOARD

Complaints

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) With regard to the Minister's reply to part (2) (a) of my question on Tuesday the 5th August,

1969, concerning complaints to the Architects Board, would he please advise—

- (a) what was the date that each of the complaints still being investigated by the board was received by the registrar; and
 - (b) what was the date in each case that the complaints were submitted to the board?
- (2) Of the six complaints submitted to the board since the 1st July, 1964, has the same architect been involved in more than one of the cases?
- (3) Even though none of the complaints dealt with have been found to be justified by the board, has any directive whatever been issued to any of the architects involved?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) (a) Complaint 1 received by the registrar the 29th May, 1969. Complaint 2 received by the registrar the 3rd June, 1969.
- (b) Complaint 1 submitted to the board the 3rd June, 1969. Complaint 2 submitted to the board the 1st July, 1969.
- (2) The same architect has been involved in two of the complaints received.
- (3) In accordance with the Act, in one case the architect was found not guilty of the alleged breach of the Act, but was directed to pay his own costs of and incidental to the enquiry.

3.

WATER SUPPLIES

Rock Catchment Areas

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

In reference to the rock catchments at the Hyden, King, Dingo and Holt rocks—

- (a) what was the construction programme for each place;
- (b) to which stage has work at each place been completed;
- (c) when is it anticipated that the work will be completed in each place;
- (d) are these rock catchments to have concrete reservoirs;
- (e) what will be the capacity of each catchment; and
- (f) what quantity of water is impounded in each catchment at present?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) Original construction programme was completed many years ago.
- (b) Answered by (a).
- (c) Answered by (a).