

session of Parliament. But it did not happen in the case to which I have referred. That Bill was gone on with.

It was not a Bill to give the bank officers a five-day banking week, although there was ample opportunity to have it presented; it was merely a Bill to rectify a small anomaly that was found in the Bank Holidays Act. That was all. The opportunity was there. I am not the slightest bit interested in listening to all this play-acting because we have a gallery tonight.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What about the minority of the Labor Party in this House?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not in the slightest bit interested in all this play-acting because there happens to be a lot of people here who are interested in this legislation. Nor am I interested in the fact that it is a suitable time to turn this to political effect. I would give the people who are to receive the benefit of this Act sufficient credit and sufficient intelligence to see through this.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You know that for 60 years there has not been a Labor majority in this House.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have pleasure in moving the second reading of this Bill, and in doing so I hope it will pass.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: That is the first time you have said that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I feel sure it will. That sentiment is expressed in quite a contrary manner to the fears that some people may have. I think it was Mr. Garrigan who said in furtive terms that he hoped it would pass. We think it will pass.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: You are certain of that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member should be quiet, because she might be terribly interested in the last few words I am about to utter. I move the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.38 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 11th October, 1961

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

## BILLS (9): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.
2. Health Education Council Act Amendment Bill.
3. Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill.
4. Fruit Cases Act Amendment Bill.
5. Coogee-Kwinana (Deviation) Railway Bill.
6. Unauthorised Documents Bill.
7. Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust Act Amendment Bill.
8. Companies Act Amendment Bill.
9. Country High School Hostels Authority Act Amendment Bill.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## WHEAT BIN AT NORTH KALANNIE

*Deliveries from 1960-61 Harvest*

1. Mr. LEWIS asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What was the total amount of subsidy paid in respect of wheat delivered to North Kalannie wheat bin from the 1960-61 harvest?
- (2) What was the total bushelage so delivered?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) and (2)—

	£	s.	d.
Wheat ..	1,487	14	2 for 180,197 bushels
Barley ..	84	14	10 for 10,849 bushels
Oats ..	72	4	10 for 11,560 bushels
Total ..	£1,644	13	10

## MT. HENRY WOMEN'S HOME

*Hotel in Vicinity*

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware that an application for a publican's license and the erection of an hotel on a site in the vicinity of Mt. Henry Women's Home is listed for hearing before the Licensing Court next week?
- (2) Does he consider this a desirable development if the application succeeds?
- (3) Has consideration been given to the effects on sick and elderly inmates of amplified compering, dance bands, singing, etc., from out-door entertainment up to 10 p.m., and the departure of numerous motor vehicles thereafter?
- (4) Is it intended to submit to the court a departmental view on the project?
- (5) If so, what will be the nature of such submission?
- (6) If not, why not?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) No strong views are held either way on this proposal, although it may well be that occasional inconvenience might be caused.
- (4) No.
- (5) Answered by No. (4).
- (6) Answered by Nos. (2) and (3).

## CARNARVON FLOOD-WATERS

*Levee Bank: Damage to Property, and Compensation*

3. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has he received any objections to the levee bank which is being constructed at Carnarvon?
- (2) Is this bank likely to raise the flood levels on the land between the bank and the river; if so, will those landholders who are affected receive compensation for any damage which may be caused in subsequent flooding of the river?
- (3) Is he aware that there are some homes in that area which have not had flood-waters through them in the past; if so, how many?

*Levee Bank Plans: Notification to Carnarvon Council, and Tenders*

- (4) On what date was the Carnarvon Municipal Council supplied with full details and plans of the levee bank?
- (5) On what date were tenders called for the work?

*Deviation of Flood-waters*

- (6) Has any plan been investigated to deviate the flood-waters to the south of the Gascoyne River at Rocky Pool, and down an old river bed which crosses the North-West Coastal Highway 12 miles south of Carnarvon?
- (7) Has any consideration been given to constructing a large flood drain from Nichol Bay Flats south to the old river-bed mentioned in No. (6)?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. Should any claims for compensation be received, they will be dealt with on their merits at the time.
- (3) Yes. The number is not known.
- (4) The 29th September, 1961.
- (5) Hire of plant was advertised in *The West Australian* of the 9th September, 1961.
- (6) Some consideration has been given to deviating the flood-waters to south of the Gascoyne River at Rocky Pool, but there are no proposals for such action.
- (7) This matter is listed for investigation in the near future.

**KENT STREET HIGH SCHOOL**

*Tennis Courts for Students*

4. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:
  - (1) Is he aware that students at Kent Street High School desiring to play tennis during sport periods have to travel considerable distances at their own expense to use private and municipal courts?
  - (2) Who meets the cost of hiring such tennis courts?
  - (3) What action is proposed by the department to provide tennis courts at the Kent Street High School?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) Yes. This is the practice at most high schools for sport.
- (2) The students share the cost.
- (3) Tennis courts are to be laid out when funds permit.

5. *This question was postponed.*

**TUNA SURVEY**

*Inclusion of North-West*

6. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

In reply to a question of mine on the 13th September regarding the present tuna survey and its extension to north-west waters, he

stated that the Minister for Primary Industry had not replied to his personal and written representations. Has he now received a reply and, if so, what was the text of it?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

I have not yet received a reply from the Minister for Primary Industry.

7. *This question was postponed.*

**RAILWAY BARRACKS AT ALBANY**

*Provision for Female Employees*

8. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Railways:
  - (1) Are barrack facilities available for female railway employees at Albany?
  - (2) If not, what arrangements are made to accommodate female railway employees, both bus and rail, when off duty at Albany?
  - (3) Further, is it the intention of the Government to provide necessary accommodation at Albany; and, if so, when?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Hostesses on buses who stop overnight at Albany are accommodated in the Alcona Residential. Buffet attendants are provided with sleeping berths on the *Albany Progress* en route and are allowed to stay in the coach during the day whilst in Albany.
- (3) No. The above arrangements are considered satisfactory.

**INFANTS' SCHOOL AT ALBANY**

*Provision of New Accommodation*

9. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Education:
  - (1) Is it the intention of the Government to build a new infants' school at Albany; and, if so, when?
  - (2) If not, is it intended to build further classrooms to the existing infants' school at Albany; and, if so, when?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No, not at present.

**POLICE FORCE AT ALBANY**

*Personnel and Accommodation*

10. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:
  - (1) What was the number of the Albany Police Force personnel, including inspectors, detectives, and sergeants, for the years 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961?

- (2) Has there been any alteration, in respect of police station accommodation since 1955, at Albany?
- (3) What office accommodation has the Police Force at Albany, in which to carry out its duties?
- (4) Is there an amenities room provided for the Police Force at Albany?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) 1955—12  
1956—12  
1957—12  
1958—12  
1959—17  
1960—17  
1961—20
- (2) No.
- (3) There are six offices—two upstairs and four downstairs. Those upstairs are used by the district inspector, his clerk and typist. The four downstairs comprise public office with counter, detective office, sergeants' office for five sergeants, and reporting office for constables.
- (4) No.

### EMPLOYMENT

#### *Absorption of Work Force by Industrial Development*

11. Mr. HEAL asked the Premier:

As the Government has announced there will be 5,000 new industrial jobs available, can he indicate approximately when these new industrial jobs will commence to absorb the work force required?

Mr. BRAND replied:

Projects negotiated by the Government will create additional jobs totalling about 1,000 by early in the new year; 2,000 by about the middle of next year; and 3,000 by about the end of next year. The rate of engagement will depend on construction programmes, some of which are not yet finalised.

In total, new employment opportunities will eventually exceed the figure of 5,000 referred to.

### BETTING TAXES

#### *Deductions and Payments to Racing Bodies*

12. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

- (1) Was the amount of £44,261 which is shown in division No. 20 of the Estimates under item 114 as being proportion of off-course betting taxes paid to racing bodies additional to the sum of £85,599 which was deducted from betting taxes and paid to racing bodies?

- (2) Under which section of the Betting Control Act was £56,699 of the amount received from Investment Tax and £11,292 of the amount received from turnover tax deducted and paid to racing bodies?

- (3) Under which section of the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act was £17,608 of the amount received for totalisator duty deducted and paid to racing bodies?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Investment Tax—section 16B and 16C.  
Turnover Tax—section 16 (3b).
- (3) This amount was paid to the Totalisator Agency Board in accordance with section 27 of the Act.

### WATER SUPPLY AT KOONGAMIA

#### *Adequacy for Fire Emergency*

13. Mr. BRADY asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is he aware of low water pressure in the Koongamia area?
- (2) Is the Fire Brigades Board satisfied that water pressure is sufficient to deal with any fire emergency in the Koongamia area?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes.

### RAILWAY PROPERTY AT GUILDFORD

#### *Stacking of Timber*

14. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What term of lease has expired for the timber company to stack timber on railway property at Guildford?
- (2) Has any limit been laid down in the lease for height of timber to be stacked?
- (3) Must timber be stacked at any set distance from railway line?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) The existing leases held by Douglas Jones Pty. Ltd. at Guildford and East Guildford are as follows:—

Guildford—Lease commenced the 1st September, 1955 and expires the 31st August, 1962.  
East Guildford—Lease commenced the 1st April, 1961 and expires the 31st March, 1971.

- (2) No.
- (3) Twenty feet from centre of nearest railway line.

# METROPOLITAN REGION PLANNING SCHEME

## Open Space Area

15. Mr. CROMMELIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

(1) Will he advise the area of the existing open space under the Metropolitan Region Planning Scheme included in—

(a) Nedlands-Claremont Planning district;

(b) Claremont-Cottesloe Planning district;

together with the description, location, and area of each individual parcel of land comprised therein for each district?

## Areas for Schools, Institutions, Reserves, and Crown Land

(2) What area of land is held in each of the—

(a) City of Nedlands;

(b) Town of Claremont;

(c) Town of Cottesloe;

(d) Shire of Peppermint Grove;

(e) Shire of Mosman Park;

respectively, for—

(i) Government schools;

(ii) private schools;

(iii) public and private institutions and other bodies;

(iv) "A" and "B" class reserves;

(v) Commonwealth or State areas, giving in each case description and individual areas and locations?

## Rights Under Interim Development Order

(3) Under the interim development order has a local authority the same rights as a private individual in regard to land held in fee simple by such local authority?

(4) If not, will he indicate—

(a) why, quoting authority therefor;

(b) what redress, if any, has the local authority for deprivation of its proprietary rights?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

(1) (a) 260 acres made up of District Open Space—

	Acres.
Claremont Park—Bay View Terrace and Stirling Highway—park and playing fields	12
College Park, Bay Road—playing fields	24
Jutland Avenue, Beatrice and Wattle—playing fields	21
Melville, Bruce, and Gailoy—park and playing fields	7
Swan River and Esplanade, Nedlands—playing fields	25
Lake Claremont—playing fields and park	70
	159

## and Regional Open Space—

Swan River and Jutland Parade—foreshore	27
Pelican Point—foreshore	35
Swan River and Birdwood Parade—foreshore	39
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(b) 221 acres made up of District Open Space—

Hensman Street and Marine Parade—playing fields	45
Manners Park, Keane Street	27
Memorial Park, Bay View Terrace, Mosman Park—park and playing fields	20
Pt. Chidley Reserve—playing fields	10
Corner Wellington and Owston Streets, Mosman Park—playing fields	10
Stirling Street, Mt. Claremont—playing fields	25
Victoria Street - Solomon Street, Mosman Park—playing fields	13
Napier Street and Marine Parade, Cottesloe—playing fields	11
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## and Regional Open Space—

- Ocean foreshore (approx.) ... 60
- (2) Item (iii) involves details not readily available to the Town Planning Department. It is suggested that the honourable member confer with the Town Planning Commissioner in respect of this question.
- (3) Yes, although the procedures vary slightly.
- (4) Answered by No. (3). Relevant are paras. 8 and 9 of interim development order No. 1 dated the 7th September, 1956.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### MT. GOLDSWORTHY IRON ORE

#### Tenders

1. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier: Is he yet in a position to inform the House the result of the tenders called for Mt. Goldsworthy iron ore?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I would like to point out to the honourable member that in tenders of this nature a colossal amount of research is necessary because, in fact, included in the tenders are offers of cash and kind; and it will be some time before a decision can be made as to the successful tender.

### MATRON MATTINSON

#### Resignation from King Edward Hospital

2. Mr. GRAHAM: Yesterday afternoon the member for Eyre asked certain questions of the Premier, and understandably he was not able to give the full particulars sought.

I am wondering whether the Minister for Health is now able to inform us as to the reasons prompting the dismissal of the matron of King Edward Memorial Hospital.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I would imagine the reason underlying the board's statement that it desired a change in the nursing administration meant that it was not satisfied with the nursing administration as it was. Whether that reason is satisfactory to the honourable member I do not know. However, in view of the publicity that has been given to this matter, I have conferred with the chairman of the board and have requested that the board consider making a statement to me clarifying the situation surrounding Miss Mattinson's resignation as matron of the hospital.

3. **Mr. GRAHAM:** When the Minister makes reference to the fact that there was a desire for change of administration, does he mean that the system of administration is considered faulty or that the services of the matron are regarded as unsatisfactory?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I think that the member for East Perth would be well advised to secure the advice of the member for Eyre who knows that boards are appointed by various Ministers to control and manage the affairs of the respective hospitals. It is their responsibility to manage the affairs; and it was felt by the board, as it has explained to the Press and to Miss Mattinson, that it desired to make a change in the nursing administration. However, I do not desire to say any more at this juncture, because I have already told the honourable member that I have requested the chairman of the board to make a statement to me which I will make available to the House at the earliest opportunity.

#### *Tabling of File*

4. **Mr. NULSEN:** I asked the Premier yesterday whether he would lay on the Table of the House the file appertaining to Miss Mattinson. Would the Minister for Health advise me whether this is possible?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I am reluctant at this juncture to say I will lay the file on the Table of the House. I will have a look at it, and certainly while I am considering my decision I will allow

the member for Eyre to study the file. However, whether or not it will be appropriate for me as Minister to table the file I am not able to ascertain until I have studied it. I will make a decision on this matter and notify the honourable member; but in the meantime the file is readily available to him.

**Mr. Hawke:** On a confidential basis?

**Mr. Brand:** Of course.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** Until I make a decision. It is possible, as has been proved in New South Wales, that the tabling of a personal file can do grave injustice to a person. I am at this particular time unable to determine whether that would be so in this case. I have nothing personal to hide. I am thinking of other people.

### **ENTERTAINMENTS TAX AND ASSESSMENT ACTS REPEAL BILL**

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Premier), and read a first time.

### **COAL MINERS' WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Chief Secretary), and passed.

### **PUBLIC MONEYS INVESTMENT BILL**

#### *Third Reading*

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.49 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I would like to explain to the Leader of the Opposition and to the House certain points raised by the Leader of the Opposition on this Bill. He referred to the reason for certain investments by the Treasurer requiring Executive Council approval and the short-term investment not requiring that approval. The Bill authorises the Treasurer to make those investments.

I have made inquiries; and, briefly, it is the nature of the short-term money market where time is the essence of the contract. There may be a call for certain short-term moneys at a particular rate of interest, which may be a good rate of interest; and there may be no time for the Treasurer to obtain the Governor's approval, which is often only given at Executive Council meetings fortnight by fortnight. It is necessary, therefore, to

have the authority because of the two conditions under which investments are made.

**Question put and passed.**

**Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.**

## **BILLS (2): THIRD READING**

### **1. Stamp Act Amendment Bill.**

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

### **2. Fisheries Act Amendment Bill.**

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Fisheries), and transmitted to the Council.

## **WELFARE AND ASSISTANCE BILL**

### *Report*

Report of Committee adopted.

### **1871 PENSIONERS: INCREASED PAYMENTS**

#### *Motion*

**MR. HEAL (West Perth) [4.53 p.m.]:**  
I move—

In the opinion of this House, the Government should introduce legislation during the present session, to improve substantially the financial position of the 1871 and other State pensioners who receive little or no assistance from the 1960 legislation.

I move the motion for many reasons, and I sincerely hope the House, in its wisdom, will carry it. As members realise, the motion, if it is carried, will not be binding on the Treasurer or the Government, but will merely be an expression of opinion of this House. On the 31st August the Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier—

As approximately 90 of the more than 200 pensioners under the 1871 Act received no increases under the legislation passed through Parliament last year, and as some others received only very small increases, does the Government intend to introduce legislation this year to assist the pensioners concerned to meet in some degree the increase in the cost of living which has taken place?

The Premier replied—

No. In this respect it should not be overlooked that additional income could be obtained by pensioners on the lower rates on application for social service benefits, which will be increased shortly.

Members know what the increase is that the pensioners are about to get in the near future. There have also been many requests from the Pensioners' Association—in the main the 1871 Pensioners' Association, which is composed of approximately 200

members—and many letters have been written to me, and I am sure to other members of the House, in respect of the pensioners' claims. The pensioners had a deputation to the Leader of the Opposition; hence the question which I have quoted; and now it is my lot to move the present motion.

Let us look at the purport of the Superannuation Act; and, in particular, let us look at the position of the 1871 pensioners. I believe that, generally, the people concerned under the Act of this Parliament are entitled to some increase. You know, Sir, as well as I do that for the past 12 months, and from year to year, the cost of living, unfortunately, has risen in this State and throughout Australia, and that has meant an added burden to these people on fixed incomes.

When superannuation is granted to retired public servants, or to any other people, in my belief it is a pension to allow them to live in a fair and reasonable manner during their retirement. The people who were retired many years ago have had to shoulder the burden of the vast increases in the cost of living and in the costs of certain commodities. I feel that in the main, the superannuation drawers or pensioners should be entitled at least to the basic wage increases from year to year, because the idea of the pension is that the amount they receive on retirement is a reasonable amount for them to live on.

Some of the 1871 pensioners who were unfortunate enough not to receive any increase as a result of the amendment moved by the Treasurer last year have been drawing pensions for periods up to 20 years, and they are finding it most difficult to exist in a fair and decent manner.

I have had many letters—as no doubt other members have—from individuals in my electorate, and from outside it, in connection with this matter. One that was written to me on the 11th April states—

As a civil service pensioner under the 1871 Act, I spent more than forty years in the service of the Education Department of this State. May I have half an hour of your valuable time to point out recent rather ludicrous developments resulting from the 1960 amendments of the Act?

I am, as you see from the above address, one of your Parliamentary constituents.

That is the tone of most of the letters. Another I would like to quote is a letter that was written to me on the 23rd April, as follows:—

As a member of your constituency I wish to discuss with you matters concerning the well-being of pensioners under the 1871 Act and would consider it a favour if you would grant me a short interview for this purpose.

As an 1871-er who gave 47 years of service to the State under the Education Department rising from pupil teacher to inspectress and organiser of Home Science I am qualified to speak on these matters and hope to bring to your notice facts overlooked in the recent readjustment of pensions.

Last year when the Premier was introducing amendments to the Act, he stated that in the main the purpose of the legislation was to bring the two funds more or less into line with each other; that is, to place them on a certain unit value; and that unit value was increased to the value of 17s. 6d., I think. The Leader of the Opposition, in his remarks, pointed out to the Treasurer that the measure was rather complicated and very hard to follow. He also said that there would be quite a few pensioners drawing superannuation who would receive no increase at all.

In fact, had the Bill been carried out in the correct manner, many pensioners would have received a decrease in their pension. But the Treasurer—and rightly so—included in the Bill a clause to the effect that no pensioner was to receive a reduction. The Leader of the Opposition when speaking to the Bill, said at page 2302 of *Hansard* for 1960—

Clearly, therefore, the person who is receiving the least number of units of pension, by way of total pensions, will receive by far the least benefit under these amendments now before us, if they are agreed to. The pensioners receiving the highest number of units of pension under the present Act will obtain the greatest financial benefit should Parliament agree to these amendments.

The proposal in regard to this particular part of the Bill is that the pensioners concerned—that is, those who, prior to the 1st January, 1958, were receiving pension units in excess of eight in number—will, in the event of this Bill becoming law, have their present unit value raised from 15s. to 17s. 6d. and the present supplementation of £1 a week, which applies to all of them, is to be abolished.

Further down the page, he is reported as saying—

Nevertheless, the increases which some persons under this part of the Bill will receive will be next to nothing. The only persons who receive worthwhile increases will be those in receipt of the largest number of units of pension.

That is the main complaint of the association and the majority of these pensioners. The Treasurer well knows that, because he has received many letters from this association and also from individual pensioners themselves. I have copies of some of these letters which I will quote to the House later.

The following is an extract from the Treasurer's speech which he made in reply to the second reading debate on the Acts Amendment (Superannuation and Pensions) Bill on the 1st November, 1960, and it appears at page 2307 of *Hansard* for that day:—

As the Leader of the Opposition would know, the 1871 Act has been the subject of appeals and deputations over a number of years. As a new broom always sweeps clean, I had a deluge of approaches, and letters, and deputations on this matter and a number of other matters which were associated with the alleged anomalies under the 1938 Act. Accordingly, I asked the officers whether they could give me the full story, as a result of which they made a very thorough investigation over a number of months and the legislation we have before us is the outcome.

It does not aim to increase the pensions; it aims to iron out certain anomalies which have crept in as a result of amendments made to the Act over a number of years.

I cannot understand the Treasurer's latter statement which I have quoted; because, in the main, most of the persons receiving pensions received some increase; but I am appealing to the Treasurer and the members of this House to support the motion so as to give some relief to those who are badly off. Some of them, with what they receive as a pension, and with what they receive by way of social service benefits are living in a reasonable manner. Further, those who have been fortunate enough to be able to save some money over the years and invest it wisely are not badly placed.

But there are many other individuals in receipt of the 1871 pension who, unfortunately, have to pay rent for a home or are renting lodgings in and around the metropolitan area. Therefore, after they have paid their rental they find it extremely difficult to live a reasonable life. It is for those persons principally that I appeal to the Treasurer to have another look at the answer he gave to the Leader of the Opposition when he stated he did not intend to give any increase in pensions to these people.

I hope to prove later that if increases were granted to these pensioners no great burden would be placed on the superannuation fund. Year by year the amount in that fund is increasing by many hundreds of thousands of pounds, and, further, the advances which the Government has made to the fund have also been increased. Perhaps the Treasurer has some logic in his argument when he states that the burden which is placed on the Treasury from year to year is in excess of what was originally intended. Nevertheless, the answer to this problem is in his hands or in the hands of the Treasury officials. By



giving some further review to the matter the Treasurer may relieve the Treasury of some of its burden and transfer it to the fund itself.

Later on, when I read to the House some figures the Treasurer gave to me in answer to a question, members will realise that the amount in the fund is well over £6,000,000; and, as I have said, it is increasing by many hundreds of thousands of pounds year by year. For the life of me I cannot see the logic in the policy that is followed in regard to the fund. No doubt the money is invested and is returning a substantial profit by way of interest, but I fail to see the logic of increasing the amount in the fund year after year when there are so many people in the metropolitan area who are in dire need of an increase in their pensions.

I realise that a similar policy is adopted with practically all superannuation funds. For example, our own parliamentary superannuation fund is, I venture to say, increasing by many hundreds of pounds year by year. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the amount of money that is paid into it is well in excess of what is paid out. I cannot understand why the trustees who are appointed to keep an eye on the state of the fund have to be so cautious and so anxious to build up the fund to a colossal sum to the detriment of the pensioners who benefit from it.

The history of the pensions payable under the 1871 Act dates back many years, and it is surprising to know that there are still over 200 people in receipt of pensions under the provisions of that Act. Of course, as each year passes the amount paid out in pensions naturally decreases because of the deaths of beneficiaries; and therefore, as the years go by, the Treasury is relieved of a great deal of its burden.

The association itself has presented me with many reasons to support its argument, and has supplied me with the history of the Act. To support my argument that the Treasury should grant some increase to these pensioners I will now read that history for the information of the House. It is as follows:—

This Act was a legal agreement between the Government and members of the Public Service.

By legislative enactment it ceased to apply to all Public Servants who joined the Service subsequent to April, 1905. The last public servant under this Act retired on 14/2/1956.

It is interesting to note that from 1871 to 1905, when this Act was in operation, to the best of my knowledge there was no superannuation fund provided to take its place until the 1938 Superannuation Act was proclaimed.

However, I believe the officers in charge of the department advised, and more or less insisted, that the public servants of

the day should take out some form of insurance to safeguard themselves in their latter years. Under the 1871 Act, of course, the public servants who benefited under it paid no contributions to the fund in order to supplement it later on. The pension under that Act was more or less paid to the recipients for the service they had rendered to the State over many years.

On some occasions, I believe, public servants were entitled to contribute some money to provide a pension for their widows when the contributors passed away. One case that comes to my mind—this was a contributor who outlived his wife—concerns a public servant who contributed approximately £700 into the fund, but received no benefit from it. Naturally, of course, his widow would have benefited if he had predeceased her. The history of the 1871 Act continues—

The 1938 Act (contributory) now makes Superannuation available to all Public Servants.

Those two Acts are quite distinct from each other.

Under the 1871 Act, Public Servants, for long and meritorious service, were guaranteed, in addition to their annual salaries, a pension at retirement. The pension was calculated thus:—for 40 or more years of service 40/60th of the average salary over the last three years of the pensioner's service. For less than 40 years—the number of years of service over 60—thus 25 years of service would earn a pension of 25/60th of the pensioner's average salary for his last three years of service.

These pensions were in the nature of deferred pay. They were part of the emoluments of office; they were a part of an honourable agreement between the Government and its Public Servants—they were guaranteed by legislative enactment.

By this 1871 Act, Public Servants, by meritorious service, were encouraged to work for promotion and thus be assured of a pension that would guarantee a self-created standard of living.

Mr. Brand: What proof have they got that they would thus be assured of a pension? There was no undertaking given in those early days that pensions would be paid to them. It is not right for them to say, "and thus be assured of a pension" for working diligently.

Mr. HEAL: When the 1871 Act passed through Parliament, the Government of the day gave some assurance that, upon their retirement and after having given satisfactory service for a number of years in the civil service, those entitled to a pension would be granted 40/60th of the salaries they had been receiving in the

last few years of their service. That Act is still on the statute book unless some amendment was made to it last year when the 1871 Act and the Superannuation Act were more or less amalgamated. I feel certain that that was the intent behind the legislation of the day, and I am sure that that was the intention that was conveyed to the public servants in the early days of the public service.

Mr. Brand: They are in receipt of their pensions, of course.

Mr. HEAL: They certainly are; and, at the time, they were quite satisfied with them. But now, due to the rise in the cost of living and upward basic wage adjustments, they are of the opinion that as the cost of living increases from year to year, or the basic wage is increased, they are entitled to some automatic adjustment in their pensions.

Mr. Graham: The Treasurer gave the judges a lift, so why can't he do the same for the public servants?

Mr. HEAL: I will continue to quote the history of this 1871 Act—

Is not every Government morally bound to see that this earned and legally guaranteed standard of living is assured to these pensioners?

Since inflation (1947 to the present time) if the letter of the Act were adhered to, those public servants retiring prior to 1947, even though they held high and important positions, would now be drawing pensions equivalent to a mere pittance. Yet those pensions, at the time of the recipient's retirement were, in many cases, more than twice the basic wage.

Thus does "inflation" defeat the spirit and obvious intention of the 1871 Act.

That is the main point to which the House should give some thought when a final vote is taken on the motion. As I said before, it is not binding on the Treasurer—as he is no doubt well aware—to make any increases in these pensions; but I am sure, if the House agrees to the motion, that both he and his Treasury officers will give this matter more serious thought than they have done up to date.

Sir Ross McLarty: The only satisfactory solution is to tie the pensions to the basic wage adjustment.

Mr. HEAL: That is a good suggestion; but I think the Treasurer pointed out to them in a letter recently that if that were done, Western Australia would be the first State to follow that course; and, as a claimant State, we might be penalised by the Grants Commission. However, I think too much emphasis is placed on the fact that we are a claimant State and that if we follow a certain action we will be penalised.

Mr. Brand: We must have the money to do these things.

Mr. Tonkin: You gave the racing clubs £100,000.

Mr. Brand: What did you give them as a Government?

Mr. Tonkin: Nothing.

Mr. Brand: That is not right. The House will recall that the Labor Party gave them plenty.

Mr. HEAL: I hope to be able to prove to members that the state of the fund at the moment is very healthy and has a great deal of money to enable it to stand these increases, and I think the Treasurer's attitude of paying so much regard to what the increases would cost, has a great deal to do with the large balance remaining in the fund.

Mr. Brand: Only because you are not the Treasurer.

Mr. HEAL: I have not much chance of becoming the Treasurer at the present time; but, as I have said, I do not think the fund is in such a precarious state that some increases could not be granted to these people.

Mr. Brand: What fund?

Mr. HEAL: The fund out of which the money is paid. To continue—

All Governments, practically since 1947, have recognised and admitted this defeat and have tried, unsuccessfully we claim, to make the necessary adjustments and amendments.

First supplementations with their limitations were tried.

Then a Commission of Three was suggested to study the question and make recommendations. The 1871ers Committee, suggested that the Commission consist of a representative of the Government, a representative of the 1871ers and say a retired judge as chairman.

Mr. Hawke appointed Mr. Nicholas, a beneficiary under the 1938 Superannuation Act as sole commissioner. Result—"The Nicholas Formula." By this the 1871ers had to pay for the equivalent of 14 units of Superannuation. This formula, in its application was a failure. (The Superannuation Act 1871-1958).

The present Government has produced the 1871-1960 Superannuation Act.

There are 218 pensioners who will come under this Act—of this number 130 will get increases ranging from £3 per annum to £221 per annum.

88 pensioners get no increases but would suffer a severe reduction if the formula adopted under this Act were applied equally to all, but no reductions are to be made.

I said that before. There was a provision in the Act which stated that no reductions would take place, and we are thankful for that. To continue—

These reductions would principally affect pensioners who retired in the 1930's and 1940's.

Under this Act some most glaring injustices occur, e.g.—

- (1) A pensioner retired from a certain position in 1939 and gets £620 while another who retired in 1956 from a position one grade lower gets £1,183.
- (2) The head of a most important department who retired in 1938 gets £886, a rise of £5 per annum while the head of the same department who retired in 1951 gets £1,183, a rise of £141 per annum.

These are only two comparisons of the many that could be made, but they are sufficient to show how inequitably the formula adopted by the present Government operates in its application.

We are given to understand that the formula was conceived by officers of a certain Government department who again applied a system of measurement as used by the 1938 Superannuation Act.

The 1871ers ask for basic wage adjustments (rises and falls) to be added to or subtracted from the pension earned at the date of retirement of each 1871er. This would, to the most equitable degree, help to pay for the increased cost of living due largely to basic wage increases and thus implement the true spirit and intention of the 1871 Act under which the guarantee of an earned standard of living was given.

Let us have a look, from answers to questions which I asked the Treasurer, at just what amount of money has been in the fund over the last four years, and what has been paid into it year by year.

Mr. Guthrie: To what fund are you referring? There is no fund for those under the 1871 Act.

Mr. HEAL: To the best of my belief the fund for the 1871 Act is paid out of the 1938 Act or from the Treasury.

Mr. Guthrie: Straight from Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. HEAL: Let me mention the amount under the 1871 Act about which I asked questions. I feel that these pensioners are entitled to cost of living adjustments year by year. We find that in 1958 the amount standing in the fund was £4,735,699; in 1959, it was £5,336,227—an increase of about £600,000. In 1960, there was £6,028,520 in the fund; and in 1961 the

fund contained £6,860,460. As members will see, the amount has increased year by year.

Mr. Guthrie: That applies entirely to people who contributed under the 1938 Act. The Government cannot legally devote that amount to the 1871 Act pensioners.

Mr. HEAL: I will agree with the member for Subiaco. So far as payments out of the fund go, I believe that only two-sevenths of the money is paid out of this fund and the remainder is found from Consolidated Revenue. The annual commitments for 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961 were £98,871, £105,671, £119,549, and £144,686 respectively. The amount paid by the Government to these pensioners has increased from year to year. I think that is the main concern of the Treasurer and his department: they are concerned as to what it will cost them. The Government's commitments to the fund for 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961 were £669,748, £807,955, £838,038, and £913,749 respectively.

It can be seen from those figures that at the end of another 12 months the Treasury will have to meet the substantial amount of over £1,000,000 in connection with this fund. If the department is worried about the matter I think perhaps it would bear some investigation with a view to altering the percentages of payments out of Consolidated Revenue, and also out of the superannuation fund; because the fund is increasing so much that in another 10 or 20 years it will be out of all proportion.

If for some unknown reason something happens to adversely affect the fund, then I am sure that, as is the case with other Acts of Parliament, the Government will guarantee to meet the amount of money concerned. But I cannot see this happening in the next decade; because our Government departments are increasing from year to year. Whether this is right or not is not for me to say; but with the contributions of public servants, and of the Government, I cannot see how the fund can deteriorate.

I have many letters that have been written to the Treasurer, but I will not weary the House with them; because, in the main, as I have already said, it is a case of an association writing to the Premier's Department, and the department writing back giving reasons why it cannot at the present time agree to any increase.

But I would like to read a letter dated the 10th July, 1961, from the Premier to the secretary of an association. Under the heading of "Pensions under the 1871 Act" it states among other things—

Another important factor is the entitlement of your members who are on the lower pension rates, to Commonwealth Age Pensions if they have

no other substantial income or property. I do not know if all your members are aware of the benefits available through the Commonwealth Social Services Department but a perusal of the list of those who did not receive increases as the result of the 1960 Act reveals that many of them could increase their income through the agency of the Commonwealth Age pensions to a total of £884 per annum.

That could have some bearing on the matter; but this is more or less a general privilege granted to all those who draw pensions throughout Australia. It does not affect only those drawing pensions under the 1871 Act. Any person who has to rely on £884 per annum to live these days would find it very hard going, particularly if he has to make rental payments and meet other increasing costs.

Although the Commonwealth budget has not yet been passed I believe that Mr. Holt has seen fit to grant an increase to retired Commonwealth public servants. We find in *The West Australian* of the 16th August, 1961, the following:—

There will be undisclosed increases in superannuation for Commonwealth civil servants who retired many years ago.

In recent times the Government in its wisdom has granted certain increases to public servants in Western Australia. Among others the teachers and members of the Education Department had their salaries reclassified. I have no argument with that, because I think they are entitled to the increases they received. But that must be a burden on the Treasury to the extent of some £700,000.

Members will also recall that a recent Bill which passed through this Chamber, and which is now in another place, proposes to grant an increase in salary to judges. I have no doubt that they also deserve this increase, because of the time and effort they put into their work. Apart from that, these increases are necessary because of the increased cost of living.

But I would like the Treasurer to have another look at this matter—and, which he refuses to do—to grant a small increase to these people on pensions, even if he cannot give a general increase, particularly to those who unfortunately received no increase under the last Act.

Mr. Brand: Anomalies again.

Mr. HEAL: At the present time there are only about 200 odd of these pensioners in existence. Those in the £300 and £399 bracket total 19; and they received no increase last year. The others who received no increase were the three pensioners in the lowest bracket of £200 to £299. We find, however, that those in group A—shall we call it—on pensions, of £1,000 to £1,183 received the largest

increase. No doubt they are also entitled to this increase; but it is alarming to those pensioners in the lower brackets, who unfortunately received no increase at all.

The member for Murray was Treasurer of this State for six years, and during that time he saw fit to grant these pensioners an average rise of 25 per cent. I feel sure that the present Treasurer is as sympathetic as was the member for Murray when he was Treasurer.

Mr. Brand: Were they satisfied with that increase?

Mr. HEAL: At the time, yes. But they are not satisfied with the 1960 Act from what they have told me; nor do they show they are satisfied in letters they have written to the Treasurer. When the Treasurer replied, he said that in the main the intention of the amendment was not to give increases.

Mr. Brand: It was to iron out anomalies created previously.

Mr. HEAL: As far as I know it may have ironed out all the anomalies, but it is a most complicated piece of legislation and very difficult to understand.

Mr. Brand: Are they satisfied with what the previous Treasurer did?

Mr. HEAL: When he gave them a supplementary increase it amounted to £1 or 10s. Naturally they were happy about it; but, like all pensioners, they would have been grateful for more. They would have been more satisfied had there been a general increase of 10s. or £1.

Mr. Brand: Did that create anomalies among them as to length of service, and so on?

Mr. HEAL: It could have done; but no matter what was given to them, it would not have been possible to satisfy all of them. As I have said, my main concern is for those in the lower brackets; because even though they may not have held important positions as did those receiving larger pensions, they still played their part in the Public Service; and some of these people in their 70's and 80's are still hale and hearty and are finding it difficult to live in the circumstances to which they have been subjected. They feel it is not quite fair.

Mr. Brand: Do you think it is fair that those who did not contribute anything to these pensions should get the same treatment as those who did?

Mr. HEAL: Yes, I think it is fair because we must take into consideration the factors in existence at the time they were working, and the Act under which they came. Whether we feel it was right or wrong in the early 1900's that the Government should introduce an Act and virtually guarantee certain people a pension for any service they might have given to the State, I do think that we must abide

by these Acts which Parliament passes. I can agree to a certain extent with the Treasurer. It is no doubt somewhat ludicrous that in these times, when other people have paid so much of their own moneys into the superannuation fund, we have to supplement these other people.

Mr. Brand: They are almost forced to do so.

Mr. HEAL: The same as we are, more or less, forced to do so in relation to our Act. I point out again to the Treasurer that the number of these people will not increase; it will decrease from time to time. In a matter of another ten years, I doubt whether there will be any 1871 pensioners drawing pensions; and unless they paid some special amount of money into the Treasury during their earlier years of work, their widows, if living, will not receive any pension either.

I think they have quite a good argument. Therefore, on their behalf I place their views before the House—and especially before the Treasurer—in the sincere hope that before the end of this session the Treasurer will see fit to give these persons some increase in their pensions.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brand (Premier).

## BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Betting Control Act Amendment Bill.
2. Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

## TRAFFIC ACT: DISALLOWANCE OF AMENDMENT TO REGULATION No. 353(1)

### Motion

Debate resumed, from the 6th September, on the following motion moved by Mr. Graham:—

That the amendment of subregulation (1) of regulation 353 of the Traffic Act, 1919-1960, published in the *Government Gazette* on the 24th May, 1961, and laid on the Table of the House on the 8th August, 1961, be and is hereby disallowed.

MR. PERKINS (Roc—Minister for Transport) [5.33 p.m.]: Since the member for East Perth moved the motion for the disallowance of this particular regulation, I have discussed the matter in a good deal of detail with the traffic engineering division of the Main Roads Department; and have also consulted the Police Department and obtained other advice available to me. I also recollect the advice I received prior to the old regulation being amended. As the member for East Perth

indicated to the House, the original provision, when he was Minister for Transport and in control of traffic, was for two-way traffic in James Street outside of Canterbury Court.

On checking the debates and other files available to me, it seems that he was then concerned about the patronage of Canterbury Court as well as the free flow of traffic in that immediate neighbourhood. I understand from the traffic engineers that the Main Roads Department was not entirely happy with the arrangements made at that time; but as all of us know, with all of these traffic regulations it is difficult to forecast accurately just exactly how they will work. Therefore, some sort of arrangement was made with the then Minister for Transport that the scheme would be given a trial; but the traffic engineers now inform me that they did have some misgivings right from the beginning. Because of this, some proposal is indicated on the files that the position would be reviewed at a later date. I think the honourable member made that clear in his speech supporting disallowance of the regulation.

Some time later—I think just after I became Minister for Transport—the police complained about traffic congestion in that portion of James Street. I doubt if the complaint was a very serious one. Naturally, unless the traffic congestion gets very severe, an issue is not made of it; and I must admit I cannot recollect the exact details of what was said at the time when the police brought it to my notice. But the member for East Perth did mention that he had observed the situation over in that section of James Street and that area generally; and he mentioned the hour of 5 p.m.

On discussing this matter with the traffic police, and also checking back the advice I have received since then, it is clear that the police are more concerned about traffic congestion developing at a later hour, particularly when entertainments are held at Canterbury Court. That gives some background as to how this regulation came to be framed in its original form, and the general negotiations that took place about that time.

According to the traffic engineering section of the Main Roads Department, which keeps details of accidents and the general pattern they follow, during 1959 there were 18 accidents at the James Street-Beaufort Street intersection; and in the opinion of the appropriate officers of the Main Roads Department, ten of these accidents would have been avoidable if there had been one-way traffic in that section of James Street. In 1960 there were 26 accidents; and 11 of these, in the opinion of the Main Roads Department engineers, would not have occurred if there had been one-way traffic in that section of James Street.

In December, 1960, the management of Canterbury Court waited on me by way of deputation, and also gave me a written submission, as far as I can recollect, asking for the alterations to be made, and for one-way traffic to be provided in this lower section of James Street. I remember the discussions that took place at that time when the representatives from the Canterbury Court parking building told me they thought that the two-way traffic would have suited them better in the early stages; but on observing the traffic pattern carefully, they asked for the alteration to be made. In those circumstances, I thought it was appropriate to accept the advice which seemed to be the considered opinion of both the Canterbury Court people, who were vitally concerned in a matter such as this, and—

Mr. Rowberry: That made you prejudiced against the wrong interests.

Mr. PERKINS: I say they were vitally concerned in a matter such as this. I also accepted advice from the traffic police, who were quite impartial in their approach, being concerned with the safe flow of traffic; and also from the traffic engineers of the Main Roads Department.

The Chief Traffic Engineer has submitted to me a report in connection with the speech made by the member for East Perth favouring disallowance of the regulation. It is not my intention to read the whole of this report, as it is fairly lengthy; but the relevant portions relating particularly to the disallowance of this regulation are as follows:—

It is my considered view that the disallowance of this new regulation should be resisted.

Further on he states—I want to make it clear that what I am quoting is in direct relation to the honourable member's speech—as follows:—

(i) That there is a blockage of traffic across Wellington Street due to traffic conflicts set up in the section between Bridge Street and Roe Street. I have personally observed this situation on three consecutive evenings at peak and can see no evidence of this situation. The operation of the traffic lights at the intersection of Wellington Street and Barrack Street with its separate pedestrian phase ensures that there are appreciable gaps in traffic proceeding north across the bridge. Thus traffic approaching along Bridge Street takes advantage of these gaps. It is not seriously held up, and has adequate storage.

(ii) That when a driver arrives at Beaufort Street proceeding easterly along James Street, he is unable to cross Beaufort Street at peak periods because of the heavy-north-bound traffic in Beaufort Street which is coming from his right. Here too, Mr.

Graham's statement is incorrect. The effect of the operation of the traffic lights at Barrack Street-Wellington Street is still felt at this intersection. Vehicles arrive in platoons and there are appreciable gaps and thus no serious delay to traffic proceeding easterly along James Street.

Mr. Graham: That's a phoney one! One would think the Main Roads Department had never heard of the traffic turning to the left in Wellington Street; and it is very, very heavy.

Mr. PERKINS: There would be some. I think the traffic engineer is concerned with seeing there is not such a constant flow at the intersection as to cause the kind of congestion referred to by the honourable member. The traffic engineer further comments—

The new regulation 353 has only been in effect from the 25th May, 1961, and the period of time which has since elapsed is too short to investigate its beneficial effect on accidents. I propose to examine the accident pattern at this intersection when about another five months have elapsed when we should be able to derive a useful accident comparison over a period of nine months. I shall be surprised if there is not an improvement in the accident situation; but if there is not, I shall report accordingly.

Mr. Graham: If they stopped traffic altogether they would cut out accidents completely, would they not? That is a negative approach to things, surely!

Mr. PERKINS: Where there is very serious dislocation resulting from this particular regulation, perhaps there might be some urgency to take action along the lines suggested by the member for East Perth. On the other hand, when we have the management of Canterbury Court—which has a vital stake in this matter—and when we have the traffic police and the traffic engineers reporting that the present regulation should be carried on for a further period I think that, as a House of Parliament, we would be very irresponsible indeed in moving at this stage to disallow a regulation which those bodies consider beneficial. In those circumstances I cannot agree that the regulation should be disallowed.

The traffic engineers have commented to me that in their opinion the two-way traffic in that section of James Street has resulted in 21 unnecessary accidents. Whether that is entirely true, I am not prepared to say. No-one can say for certain whether any particular accident might or might not have happened; but I would emphasise that the problem of traffic in a rapidly developing city such as Perth is a very complex one, and I do not think any one of us can be dogmatic about what is the right course to take.

On the other hand, as I have emphasised before, if we employ traffic engineers and specialist officers in the Police Department to deal with traffic regulation, it seems to be stupid to ignore their advice unless we have a very clear indication that it is wrong. If the advice is wrong on too many occasions, it makes a case for doing something fairly drastic to alter the particular department from which the advice is emanating. However, I have examined the position carefully and I emphasise once again that in my opinion this regulation should not be interfered with, for the present at least; and I ask that the House do not support the motion moved by the member for East Perth.

**MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.50 p.m.]**: As a person who has probably had more experience of this aspect of traffic than most other members, I would like to say a few words in support of the disallowance of this regulation. It is true, as the Minister said, that we have experts to guide us in these matters. But very often they are found to be wrong in some of their ideas. I think it was pointed out by the member for East Perth, when he dealt with this matter originally, that the traffic engineers proposed the median strip that wanders down the Stirling Highway.

**Mr. Rowberry**: What is wrong with that?

**Mr. JAMIESON**: There might not be anything wrong with it if the Traffic Department was prepared to uphold the requirements in that particular section.

**Mr. Perkins**: We have altered that.

**Mr. JAMIESON**: Traffic has to move constantly from lane to lane, and it does not follow the white lines. In an area such as this, where traffic has no option but to obey the one-way street rule, the traffic engineers have had some degree of success with their ideas.

However, the greatest failing with this method is the fact that it stops the through-flowing traffic—and this is ever-increasing—from Moore Street crossing, which I use practically every business day of the year. Indeed, it became such a hazard in Moore Street that it was necessary to widen that street. The traffic winds from Moore Street via Pier Street, up James Street, and it is then required to go further south to get to the heavy commercial area from Roe Street to the James Street section of West Perth. The traffic meanders around towards the city and back through streets that are not exactly suitable.

**Mr. Perkins**: Why can't the traffic go one street further out?

**Mr. JAMIESON**: That is a gigantic block. Once we go that far we are involved in a considerable amount of complication with traffic lights before we get back to where we want to go. Traffic

would have to go up to Newcastle Street, which would take drivers about another mile out of their way.

**Mr. Perkins**: Not that much.

**Mr. JAMIESON**: The Minister should go in his car and measure the distance. I am telling him it is another mile, if he is headed towards the vicinity of commercial establishments in and around the corner of Melbourne Road and Roe Street, where there is quite a lot of activity involving heavy trucks. If traffic has to travel via Newcastle Street it will involve the best part of another mile; and by the time it got there—and time is all-important in commerce—traffic should be allowed to flow through.

It has been said of Perth in the past that of all Australian cities it had the advantage—until the advent of the Narrows Bridge, which has brought more traffic through the city—of having a small percentage of flow-through traffic in the commercial centre. In diverting this traffic we will find that nine out of ten vehicles will travel via the Stirling Street part of the city and will make a horseshoe turn via Bridge Street; and when the traffic does that, the situation becomes more involved than the traffic engineers would have the Minister believe.

I have been involved in the problems which have occurred in connection with the pedestrian refuge on the corner of Bridge Street. We have the situation where traffic comes around the refuge and tries to get back into the main flow of traffic and turn down James Street. Other drivers want to go through, straight up Beaufort Street; and we have other drivers who want to go across and down Roe Street.

There is a constant flow of traffic in this vicinity, and the traffic lights are not as effective as they could be. A good deal of traffic comes through on a left-hand turn from Wellington Street—almost a constant stream. It is nothing to have a considerable backlog of traffic flowing by the accounts section of the Railways Department, and this traffic is held up at that point at busy times.

It would have been reasonably justified at that area to ban all parking in James Street between Beaufort and Stirling Streets. There would then have been plenty of room to allow for the flow of traffic. It was difficult when parking was allowed. This should have been tried as an experiment before any of this weaving and winding business was thought about. But the more simple process had to be ignored, as it was ignored on the Stirling Highway, for a more complex system.

It is now said that the present system has not been in operation long enough for us to know whether or not it is desirable. I would say to the Minister that we have seen what it has done over a period of five months. Let us now rearrange the

traffic to produce a two-way flow down that section of James Street, and forbid any parking in that section. I think that would iron out all our difficulties.

James Street is a more desirable street in which to have traffic flowing. It is wider. It has not the complications that are involved in traffic going down Roe Street. If the Minister has driven along that section he will be aware of the constant backing and filling from the parcels department and other departments of the railways in Roe Street; and Roe Street is very narrow and cannot be widened as it is situated at present. Also, the Horseshoe Bridge intersection is not an easy area to negotiate, particularly in respect of heavy commercial vehicles.

I suggest the Minister should give serious thought to this matter to see whether it would not be justified, as an experiment, to reintroduce through-flowing traffic. For a couple of weeks it was necessary to have a policeman stationed at the junction of Stirling Street and James Street to stop traffic coming from the Moore Street area and proceeding straight along James Street. Despite that fact, and the experience gained over the past month, traffic not infrequently proceeds straight across.

The main reason for that is that Stirling Street is rather a busy street; and when traffic is approaching the intersection from an easterly direction, drivers are more concerned with looking to traffic coming from the right—so that they can start off again after they have stopped at a "Stop" sign—than with looking at signs on the other side of the road which say "No Entry". If the present situation is maintained, then some form of obstacle would have to be set up, similar to that in Beaufort Street to stop vehicles proceeding from Beaufort Street and going over the Barrack Street Bridge.

The problem is not as easy as the traffic engineers make out. It complicates the area considerably, and much more than is necessary. I feel that some action should be taken by the Minister to see whether it would not be more desirable to have through-flowing traffic that could pass in and out of the city by the most easy route.

The proposal to bridge the Swan River elsewhere in the direction of East Perth would, of course, divert more traffic into that area; and that would also be undesirable.

Mr. Perkins: By that time it might have to be a ring road.

Mr. JAMIESON: That could be so. At the present time we have practically deserted the section of Stirling Street where there is one-way traffic; and other streets have become overcrowded and difficult to negotiate. I suggest it is not all that it is cracked up to be, and it deserves more than just a casual look-see on the part of the Minister. In the circumstances, I support the disallowance of the regulation.

MR. HEAL (West Perth) (6.0 p.m.): I wish to speak only briefly, but I think the House should agree to the disallowance of this regulation. Although the street in question is just outside my area, I travel through that part of the city quite frequently. From the Minister's opening remarks, when he replied to the speech of the member for East Perth, I gathered that the Main Roads Department had some misgivings when initially it made this part of James Street a one-way street.

Mr. Perkins: No; a two-way street.

Mr. HEAL: I see. The Minister went on further to say it was being given a trial period only. If it were a narrow street one could see the reason for making it one-way—it would be unwise to do anything else. But James Street, in that particular area, is just as wide as Beaufort Street, and as far as I can remember there have been very few accidents in that part of James Street; it has certainly never been a death trap. But it is natural that if a street is made a one-way thoroughfare the accident rate will decrease. For instance, quite a number of accidents occur at the corner of Colin Street and Hay Street, West Perth; and I am sure that if traffic lights were installed, or Hay Street were made a one-way street, the accident rate at that corner would drop to a certain extent.

Mr. Perkins: But surely it is rather significant that Canterbury Court asked for it to be made a one-way street.

Mr. HEAL: Yes; it is significant. But I believe that Canterbury Court asked for it to be made a one-way street for a particular reason. Canterbury Court provides entertainment. I have been there on many occasions, but the entertainment is mainly at night time. When people leave there it is usually about 11 or 12 o'clock at night, and there is very little passing traffic. Sometimes a taxi will pull in and there is some slight congestion. But that happens everywhere. It happens at football matches.

Look what happened at Subiaco Oval last Saturday when the football grand final was being played! It is difficult on those occasions to get away from the football ground; but it is only on occasions; and the difficulty in this instance is always at night, and there is not much congestion anyhow. In the main the congestion that is caused there at night is caused by the people who have been attending Canterbury Court.

The decision to make that part of James Street a one-way street must have caused some confusion for a motorist who wanted to travel down James Street from Pier Street and then across Stirling Street, Beaufort Street and down to William Street. Both Stirling Street and Pier Streets are two-way streets; the section of James Street between Stirling and Beaufort Streets is now one-way; and then



from Beaufort Street to William Street it reverts to two-way traffic. Consequently, people who do not continually use that area sometimes find themselves going the wrong way in that part of James Street which has been made into a one-way street.

To my mind, whatever happens unfortunately there will always be accidents at both the James Street and Beaufort Street and James Street and Stirling Street corners. But the regulation now in force only makes the position more confusing; whereas if it reverted to a two-way street people would be able to continue from Pier Street right through.

I do not think lights at either of the corners I mentioned would be a great advantage because they have a tendency to stop the flow of the traffic; and in the particular instance of Beaufort Street and James Street lights would slow down the flow of outward traffic. Our main objective should always be to get the traffic out of the city as quickly as possible.

The use of electric booms at the Lord Street and Moore Street crossings has meant a sizeable portion of the traffic being taken away from crossing the Beaufort Street bridge; because people find that by going down Wellington Street and turning into Lord Street they can get out of town much more quickly.

Mr. Perkins: This is only interim; because we have to recognise that the Stephenson Plan provides for a ring road on the north side of the city.

Mr. HEAL: That is so.

Mr. Graham: But when?

Mr. HEAL: Had this part of James Street been narrow, like Pier Street, there might have been some justification for the regulation; but even Pier Street, portion of which was once a one-way street, has reverted to a two-way street, as has that part of Roe Street between the Beaufort Street Bridge and the Horseshoe Bridge. Apparently the Main Roads Department experts feel that this alteration to a one-way street could be given a further trial. However, as one who uses that part of the city continually, I believe that no damage would be done by reverting to a two-way street, and I ask the House to agree to the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

## TRAFFIC ACT: DISALLOWANCE OF REGULATION No. 170

### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 6th September, on the following motion by Mr. J. Hegney:—

That new regulation 170 made under the Traffic Act, 1919, and published in the *Government Gazette* on the 24th May, 1961, and laid on the Table of the House on the 8th August, 1961, be and is hereby disallowed.

MR. PERKINS (Roe—Minister for Police) [6.6 p.m.]: The member for Middle Swan made it clear, when he moved to disallow this regulation, that it was the result of protests from the Belmont Park local authority regarding the nuisance and noise caused by heavy trucks in that area. Apparently it had been assumed—

Mr. J. Hegney: No. The complaint was the damage they did to the roads. It was caused by the excessive loading and the speed at which they travelled.

Mr. PERKINS: Actually the speed had less to do with it, I think, because the speed limits on these very heavy trucks is still fairly low. I think what the honourable member said was that the speeds at which they were able to travel were far in excess of the regulation speed.

Mr. J. Hegney: Yes.

Mr. PERKINS: But I do not think that has anything to do with the disallowance of this regulation. It relates to a request from that particular local authority that the speed of these vehicles should be more adequately policed, and that aspect is one that is always something of a difficulty in the metropolitan area.

The heavy transport operators complain rather bitterly that the police are a bit too attentive towards them; and, on the other hand, we get complaints from private motorists and other people about excessive speed causing a hazard. In this particular instance it is suggested that it may be causing damage to the roads, while other complaints I have seen recently relate to the noise caused by these trucks.

The only point we are concerned with, so far as this regulation is concerned, is in relation to the alteration of the load. This, too, was recommended to me by the Main Roads Department and the traffic police. The regulation is in accord with world practices; and, as I say, was approved by the Main Roads Department, the Road Board Association, and local authorities generally. The opinion of the Main Roads Department's engineers is that the disallowance of the amendment to the regulation would not appreciably affect the issue, as most of these vehicles that have been referred to are already under permit to cover tandem axle loading in excess of the 29,000 lb.

The maximum that is allowed on a tandem axle with two axles each carrying 8 tons is 16 tons; so actually when one relates the 29,000 lb., which is the amount that such tandem axle trucks are permitted to carry on the tandem, to the amount under which they are operating under permit up to 35,840 lb., I think members will realise that the regulation has very little relationship to the particular aspects that the honourable member stressed.

These overweight permits are actually recommended to the Minister by the Police Department, but they are always very carefully examined and approved by the Main

Roads Department. That department is vitally interested because any excess load on any particular axle is liable to result in damage to culverts and bridges, and to the road surface itself, if there is any weakness in the road.

One difficulty that arises when overload permits are issued is that it is not usually possible to police the roads on which such loads are carried. In the case of country roads it is very often specified that such overweight permits can be used only on a particular road; because members can realise that in many country areas the roads are quite light and the bridges and culverts could be very easily damaged if heavy loads were carried over those sections.

Mr. Rowberry: It is not only the bridges but the surfaces of the roads themselves.

Mr. PERKINS: I have just said that. If the honourable member had been listening he would have heard me say that damage can be caused where the surface of the road is light.

Mr. Rowberry: You said that certain roads were debarred because of culverts and bridges.

Mr. PERKINS: I am afraid the honourable member was not listening very carefully.

Mr. Rowberry: I am listening all right.

Mr. PERKINS: The position and practice is that the Main Roads Department works in close co-operation with the local authorities; and I think all country members of this House—and probably most metropolitan members, too—have a knowledge of the kind of discussions that take place between the various road authorities. Roads—whether they are main roads constructed with Main Roads Department money, or roads that are constructed with ratepayers' money—are probably the biggest single asset that the nation has; and with the great development taking place in the community and the need for new roads to be constructed, the Minister for Works and I have had a great many requests for rapid expansion in this direction both in country districts and in the metropolitan area. I do not think there is any need to stress the necessity to protect our existing asset.

In the case of substandard roads, or the more lightly constructed roads in country districts, it is possible for the local authorities concerned to protect such roads by suitable by-laws. I have not checked the matter, but I think the honourable member will find that the Belmont Park local authority has some of its roads protected by such by-laws. If it has not examined that aspect, obviously it is something which its technical officers should examine closely; and I can assure that local authority it will receive the utmost co-operation from the Main Roads Department in taking whatever legal steps are necessary in order to define the roads which are capable of

carrying heavy traffic, and the other roads which should have very much lighter limits placed upon them.

Mr. J. Hegney: One of the main points is that they cannot get compensation for damage done to the roads because, allegedly, the police cannot catch them. If it was anything else the police could provide what was wanted; but in this instance they do not seem to be about when the damage is being done to the roads.

Mr. PERKINS: The heavy transport operators who see me from time to time say the boot is on the other foot; and the complaints that I get are to the effect that the police are a bit too vigilant. It is recognised that usually a 5-miles an hour tolerance is allowed over the limit fixed in the regulations, and when someone is another mile an hour over he gets prosecuted and is charged with being six miles an hour over the limit. That is as it should be, because; obviously, when we allow a tolerance we cannot be expected to allow a tolerance on a tolerance.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. PERKINS: As the honourable member said when he moved this motion to disallow the regulation, he was given the opportunity to ventilate a matter which he apparently considers to be serious.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is what Parliament is for.

Mr. PERKINS: I am not disagreeing with the honourable member. If by any chance the motion is agreed to there will be many protests from members opposite.

Mr. J. Hegney: This is a non-party issue.

Mr. PERKINS: If members opposite support the mover of the motion and it is passed, serious complications will arise in some of their electorates. I can imagine the member for Gascoyne calling on me hastily to apply for special weight permits for transport vehicles serving his area. The same step will be taken by other members representing outer districts.

In the electorate of Merredin-Yilgarn there are many transport vehicles which, were it not for the special loading provision, would not be able to carry as much, and therefore the transport costs would be increased to such an extent that they would seriously embarrass the people using the service.

I do not blame the honourable member for using this opportunity to bring this matter before the notice of the House, but I am somewhat at a loss to understand why the local authority in question has not worked through the association to iron out this kind of problem. In dealing with matters affecting local authorities—whether they be city or country local authorities—it is much more satisfactory to take steps to overcome any problem through

the association representing either the metropolitan local authorities, or that representing the country shire councils.

It is much more satisfactory to deal with an association which is representative of all the local authorities, because where unilateral action is taken many complications can arise. I am sure the mover of the motion recognises that it is not practicable to deal with the problems he raised in this way. I reiterate that he is not serious in moving for the disallowance of the regulation.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do not accuse me of that!

Mr. PERKINS: If by any chance this motion is carried there will be strong representations for the exercise of ministerial discretion to allow loading at a higher weight than the 29,000 lb. he mentioned.

The question of speeding and overloading is always a matter of dissension in the trucking field. Many operators feel that the police are too vigilant; but on the other hand we all recognise it is to the interest of all to protect the roads, and to ensure that reasonable standards are observed.

Members will agree with me when I say that the traffic police in Western Australia do a very good job. Of course, the country local authorities have their own traffic inspectors, although the police special squad operates anywhere within the State because it has the special equipment for testing overweight on vehicles.

The honourable member made special reference to the difficulties which have arisen in the Belmont area in the carting of materials for the aerodrome. I would suggest that the Belmont local authority confer with the Main Roads Department, and that the Main Roads Department keep in very close touch with the Police Department. By using that avenue the difficulty he referred to can be dealt with more suitably.

The question of speeding will always be with us. I have made various public statements to the effect that heavy trucks in respect of which overweight permits have been issued will have to observe the conditions of the permits; otherwise a renewal of such permits cannot be expected. As a matter of fact cancellation of these permits can be expected. In Western Australia where long distances have to be covered, and where large areas are being developed at the present time, in which there is no transport facility available, it is very important to provide the settlers with as cheap a transport service as possible.

In certain instances where special permits have been issued to heavy transport, in order to ensure that the speed restrictions are observed I have insisted that tachographs be fitted to such vehicles.

Both the Police and the Main Roads Departments have reported to me that these devices are very satisfactory. They also have some advantages from the viewpoint of the transport operators, because they can observe whether the speed restrictions have been complied with. It is not possible to use these devices in all circumstances, and I am only mentioning this aspect in passing.

I say in conclusion that I very strongly oppose the disallowance of the regulation and hope the House will not agree to the motion.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [7.40 p.m.]: I feel I should say a few words on this motion, and indicate that it is not my intention to support it. It is rather surprising to learn from the mover that his shire council has experienced trouble with the Police Department in checking the speed and weight of the transport vehicles he referred to.

From my experience the reverse seems to apply; because the hauliers in my district complain that they are always harassed by the heavy haulage squad, who are always checking on their speed and loading. It is hard to understand why in the Belmont district these vehicles are able to get away with speeding and overloading so easily.

It appears to me that the main complaint of the member for Middle Swan is the increase in tandem loading. That regulation which has brought about the increase has been most favourably received in country districts in allowing 9,000 lb. to a tandem.

If we consider the various types of vehicles and analyse the weights which are carried on the tyres, and the area of tyre which is in contact with the road, we will have a good idea of which is the worst type of vehicle to have on the road. From what the member for Middle Swan has said, I take it his shire council was objecting mostly to the dual tyre tandem axle truck; that is the type of truck which carries 10 tyres and comes under section G of the tenth schedule.

I want to analyse what is known as vehicle A in that schedule; that is, the ordinary two-axle truck, with single tyres. For many years this type of truck has had a permissible gross weight, including loading, of nine tons. That loading has not been altered. It means that each of the tyres on this vehicle carries 5,040 lb., or actually 40 lb. over the permissible maximum load under the tenth schedule. I do not know whether the Minister realises that.

If we study the tyre chart, it is interesting to note that the 11 x 20 tyre is a dual purpose tyre for practically all types of trucks in the schedule. It is sufficiently strong to carry all the permitted weights on every vehicle.

The class A vehicle is, with the exception of one other vehicle, the only one that has over 5,000 lb. per tyre. The other vehicle which carries over 5,000 lb. is the class F vehicle, which has three axles and single tyres all round. The tyre loading generally decreases as we go up to the multi-axle and dual tyre vehicles. The class G vehicle, which is the dual tyre truck, has a comparatively light loading on each tyre. The maximum gross loading on this vehicle, irrespective of axle spacing is 17 tons and the tyre loading on this, on the new schedule, has been increased from 3,460 lb. to 3,808 lb., which is not a great increase.

Another interesting point in regard to these axle loadings and tyre sections is the actual area of tyre which has contact with the road surface at any one time. On the type A vehicle, which has a 5,040 lb. tyre loading, the total area on the ground of its four tyres is 2.2 sq. ft.; whereas the bigger vehicle, which has 10 tyres, has a 5.5 sq. ft. road contact to carry its 17 tons or 3,808 lb. per tyre. The four-tyre vehicle carries 9 tons.

Therefore it will be seen that the general loading or pressure on the road surface is considerably less than it is on the lighter vehicle. Not only that, but the G-type vehicle is practically a pneumatic roller rolling over the road surface, compacting it. There are two sets of tyres rolling 44 inches of road at a time in the tandem axle.

When the North-West Coastal Highway was being constructed between Carnarvon and Geraldton the Main Roads Department, as far as was possible, kept all the heavy haulage trucks on the road, whether the road was wet or dry. It particularly liked the dry weather because the dry soil was much easier to compact. In fact, the last section of the North-West Coastal Highway was completed in the dry weather and the soil was compacted by the new type of vibrating roller which set the soil down very hard.

Therefore I think it will be found that the damage caused to the roads is not in any way due to the increase in the tandem loading but is in all probability a result of speeding and probably swerving along the roads with the heavier loads. It might be that those large type of tip-trucks, which have quite a high loading of the heavy material have a certain amount of sway which is causing the road surface to break. I am positive it is not the actual loading on the area of the tyre that is doing the damage; but, as I said before, I am practically certain that it is the high load level on the tip-trucks with a heavy load, plus a certain amount of speed, which is responsible.

I cannot understand why a local governing authority cannot take steps to in some way control the speed over roads, particularly on the second-class roads to which

the honourable member has referred. Speeding through towns is very easily controlled by signs. These signs are before the public all the time and there is no excuse for a driver not knowing what a speed limit is, because it is shown clearly on a disc and must be adhered to. This, as I have said, is very easy to police; but if we are going to test vehicles for overweight and overloading, we have to have a special type of scales which are used by the heavy haulage squads for weighing vehicles.

I might say here that those scales which are used by the heavy haulage squads are very accurate. I have checked when complaints have been brought to me and have asked those concerned to bring their manifest for the vehicles. As luck would have it, on those vehicles we checked, the load was cement, and that type of material was a known weight. Therefore it could easily be computed from the weigh bills. When these weigh bills were studied we could not find one which proved that the squads' scales were inaccurate.

Therefore on that score alone nothing can be put over the haulage squads; but apparently it is difficult to get them to operate within the city area. I would suggest that the road boards concerned could impose speed limits which could be checked very easily by the police motorcyclists or traffic inspectors so that prosecutions may be made.

However, as I have said, it might pay to study the height of loading of vehicles to ascertain whether that is causing damage. With those remarks I oppose the motion moved by the member for Middle Swan.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Sewell.

## NORTH-WEST: COMMONWEALTH AID FOR DEVELOPMENT

### *Motion*

Debate resumed from the 13th September on the following motion by Mr. Bickerton:—

That, in view of the satisfactory result obtained from the case presented by the all-party committee to Canberra in 1955 (as a result of a motion moved in this Parliament in July, 1954), and the works completed and in progress in the Kimberley area of the State, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Government, this House is of the opinion that a further all-party committee should be appointed to present as soon as possible to the Commonwealth Government a case for the development of the area lying between the 20th and 26th parallels of south latitude.

It further requests—

- (a) that a programme for development of this portion of the State be drawn up by a committee consisting of the Premier, Deputy Premier, and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly; the Minister in charge of the Legislative Council, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council;
- (b) that this committee submit such programme at an interview with the Right Hon. the Prime Minister, and the Federal Treasurer;
- (c) that a special Federal grant of an amount considered necessary for this work for a period of ten years be requested in order to stimulate and carry out this vital development.

This House also desires that the Legislative Council be acquainted accordingly, and asks for its concurrence.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) [7.53 p.m.]: I listened very attentively to the member for Pilbara when he introduced this motion and I was not very impressed with what he had to say or what he submitted. However, now the Minister for the North-West is here he may deal with the matter.

**Mr. Bickerton**: You would have been better to have said nothing!

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands—Minister for the North-West) [7.54 p.m.]: My apologies for my temporary absence.

**Mr. J. Hegney**: I hope your opinion is not the same as that of the Premier.

**Mr. COURT**: This motion moved by the member for Pilbara seeks in a restricted form what the 1954 motion sought to do; namely, to call for an all-party committee to make representations to the Commonwealth for special help in the north. In this case special help is to be confined to the area that we know as the north-west—the area between the 20th and 26th parallels, which excludes the Kimberleys. The mover sought in the presentation of his motion to have a case prepared and obtain an answer from the Commonwealth Government before the Federal elections. Of course this is just impossible and impracticable for reasons which I will give in my comments on this motion.

**Mr. Bickerton**: What made you think I meant before the Federal elections?

**Mr. COURT**: The honourable member's comments, because he was very specific in his comments and made particular reference to the fact that now was a good time to pressurise the Commonwealth Government while it had an election on its hands.

**Mr. J. Hegney**: That is only logical.

**Mr. Brand**: He said he didn't say it.

**Mr. COURT**: He did not want this to be party-political but wanted the motion to be used as pressure on the Commonwealth Government before December. Of course, that is completely impossible and that was found to be the case by the previous committee set up in 1954. The timing of that committee is rather interesting.

If my information is correct, from what appears on the files the committee did not meet until about the 4th May, 1955, and presented its case to the Prime Minister some weeks after that. Therefore it is quite obvious that the then Government found it necessary to take several months to prepare sufficient information to call the committee together and then marshal its facts and present its case to the Commonwealth.

The 1954 motion achieved its purpose, and in my opinion it is far too soon to revive this type of approach to this problem. Also it is very evident to me that the approach in this case—namely, to restrict the submission to the area between the 20th and 26th parallels—is doomed to failure, even if such a committee were set up immediately and presented a case.

We have to accept the fact that any approach today would have to be on the greater concept of northern Australian development, and any attempt to make an approach directed at a particular area—particularly an approach by an all-party committee from a State Parliament—would be doomed to failure because of the restricted nature of its outlook and restricted nature of the submission that it would make. Let me hasten to say that the Government is very conscious of the need for north-west, as distinct from Kimberley, development; and we as a Government have attempted and achieved much during the two and a half years we have been in office.

We know that it is not an easy area between the 20th and 26th parallels. The projects in that area are not as obvious as those in the Kimberley area, which has certain geographic advantages; and above all, of course, it has very substantial supplies of water which lend themselves to harnessing and irrigation.

The climatic difficulties in the lower part—that is, the area between the 20th and 26th parallel—do not help; but through persistent and patient effort on the part of this Government we can report that a degree of co-operation never previously achieved has been arranged between the pastoralists and Government departments concerned. I refer particularly to the vermin proposals, because in this area vermin are probably a more important problem than in any other part of the State.

It is very interesting to note that in respect of what the honourable member said the pastoralists in this particular area have expressed as recently as August of this year their appreciation of and satisfaction with what the Government has done in its latest proposals for dealing with the vermin problem.

Members will recall that shortly after this Government came into office a committee was quickly convened because of the very disturbing state of affairs in that area; and that committee, at the request of the Government, made its findings very quickly, and in some respects had to make its first report without having adequate time to do detailed research. However, it approached its task very conscientiously and produced a report which has been quite valuable. The members of that committee were Messrs. Lukis, Johnson, and Suijden-dorp.

Unfortunately when their report was produced we found ourselves with a tremendous divergence of local opinion in respect of it. Those members who are closely connected with the area will remember the arguments that were waged between the local people regarding the recommendation for a major fence proposal. In spite of the best efforts of the Government and its advisors to reach some understanding in the matter, it became apparent that we could never reconcile the local views in respect of the Lukis-Suijden-dorp-Johnson fence proposal.

Subsequently, Mr. G. K. Baron Hay, a former director of Agriculture, was appointed as a consultant in respect of matters relating to the north-west, and he produced a report which was based on a considerable amount of research and consultation with the local people. I think the great success that attended Mr. Baron Hay's efforts in respect of this report was due to the fact that he actively sought the co-operation of the local people.

The Government is committed to an expenditure of at least £50,000 a year for five years. But the money is not the important thing; the most important thing that has been achieved is the degree of co-operation that we now expect from the local pastoralists, not only amongst themselves, but with the Government officers concerned. On the 29th August, 1961, the secretary of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of Western Australia wrote as follows:—

The third annual conference of district committees of the Pilbara area was recently held at Boodarie Station, Port Hedland.

Members of the association present discussed the vermin plan evolved and accepted by your Government, and expressed the unanimous desire that a letter of appreciation be sent to you from the conference.

The conference strongly supported the plan and thanks you and the Government for the action taken.

That is indicative of the progress that has been made in achieving local co-operation not only between the pastoralists themselves, but also between the pastoralists and the Government. It is also indicative of the difficulty of arriving at a solution of the problems of this area between the 20th and 26th parallels.

We are currently giving consideration to a proposition whereby we will give some support to pastoralists when they have rehabilitated their properties in the Pilbara area; and, for that matter, in any area between the 20th and 26th parallels. It is expected that transport assistance will be given on the same basis as that on which we gave drought relief. This will have the effect of helping those pastoralists who are most in need of assistance to restock their properties when they are satisfied and the local committee is satisfied that those properties are ready for restocking. Naturally it would be foolish to restock properties regardless. One of the great essentials of the proposal before the Government is that a local committee will have to agree that a particular property is ready for restocking.

We also expect that in the near future, when the new State ship will come on the run, we will be able to give an assurance to the pastoralists in the Pilbara area that by 1963 we will be able to transport from that area an agreed number—a guaranteed number—of store cattle. These cattle will be transported at the right season. In the past it has not been possible for the State ships to meet the demands of the Kimberley area and the demands of the Pilbara area. There are many advantages in encouraging the export of store cattle from the Pilbara area so that those cattle can come down to the south for fattening.

Most members will know that it is not permissible to bring cattle out of the Kimberleys to the southern areas for fattening; those cattle have to be brought straight down to Robb Jetty to be slaughtered. But there is no reason why store cattle cannot be brought out of the Pilbara area consistently, and fattened in the south.

By 1963 it will be possible, on the present programme, to provide a proportion of the total cattle space on the State ships for the use of the Pilbara area at the right time; and this can mean a lot towards assisting in the rehabilitation of the properties in that area.

It is important, of course, that once we declare a date and the number of head of cattle that can be brought out of the area the State ships will be able to meet the commitment. Steps are being taken to convert one of the State ships in order

to increase the cattle-carrying capacity on the coast; and the advent of the new ship next year will further increase our cattle-carrying capacity.

If we come a little south from Pilbara to the Gascoyne area, it cannot be said that the Government has been idle. We have been active in the Gascoyne River area. Water control, although extremely difficult, and in many cases unpopular, has been attempted by this Government in a very positive way. As the member for Gascoyne knows, this is one of those things in respect of which, although every one accepts the principle that there should be some control of the use of water from the Gascoyne, the moment we impose some form of control there is local argument and divergence of opinion as to how it should be done.

This is rather like town planning: everyone supports the principle, but if we try to implement it the people concerned want the authorities to dodge their properties and take the other man's block. That is rather the principle that has been adopted in regard to the Gascoyne River. But the Government has stuck to the plan laid down to ensure that it controls the water from the river.

In fact, we have gone further; and using the Furphy report as a basis, we are working on long-term projects which will eventually enable the Gascoyne River problems to be reduced, although at this stage I would not like to say that they can be completely eliminated. However, it is our ambition to reduce these problems gradually and to give greater security to the Gascoyne people, and to the people of Carnarvon, in particular, where we have a well-established banana and vegetable-growing industry.

On this particular point in regard to action already taken in the north, I think it is reasonable and fair that I should state what this Government has done. If the Government had done nothing in the north, or had been lazy in respect of the north, there would have been some justification for the motion. But, on the contrary, the Government has been extremely active in the north. Some figures relating to the north are rather impressive, and I think it is only fair that on this occasion they should be stated.

Mr. Graham: This motion is not a criticism of the Government; it is merely asking for more Commonwealth assistance.

Mr. COURT: Of course, if one were so naive as to accept that proposition, then of course one could say that there is no criticism in the motion. But the member concerned did not see fit at any stage during the course of moving his motion to say that the Government had even attempted to do a decent job. It was just as though nothing whatsoever had been done, and that the dead hand had been

on the north instead of there having been the greatest activity in its history in the last two and a half years.

Mr. Graham: Following the representations made when we were the Government.

Mr. Bickerton: The road boards would not have passed the motion if they had thought so.

Mr. COURT: Therefore it is only fair that I should state what this Government has done. Take housing, which is very important in the north. I find from the records that in 1957-58 the State Housing Commission buildings in the north and Kimberleys were 29. I will leave out the value figures because they fluctuate considerably with rising costs, and the increased values might distort the position. The number of houses constructed is the important thing. In 1958-59 there were 49 houses; in 1959-60, there were 75; in 1960-61 there were 69; and it is estimated that in 1961-62, there will be 102.

Mr. Graham: Most of them at Kununurra, I suppose.

Mr. COURT: No; there would not be that big an increase in the number of houses at Kununurra.

Mr. Bickerton: That is an even rate of progress over the last six or seven years.

Mr. COURT: We have become used to the present members for the north-west paying no tribute or giving no credit whatsoever to the people who have attempted to do something for the north.

Mr. Bickerton: That is not correct.

Mr. COURT: This Government has no political representative of that area either in the Assembly or in the Council, but we have not allowed that fact to influence our judgment in any way.

Mr. Graham: Neither you should.

Mr. COURT: We have given our attention in an unprecedented manner to the problems of the north because we think it is the right thing to do. But we do not hear from the present members representing the north-west anything by way of appreciation for what has been conscientiously attempted to be done.

Mr. Bickerton: I do not see you praising up the members for the district.

Mr. COURT: We can look at the Consolidated Revenue Fund to see what has been spent in the north by the Government; and the figure is very impressive. If we go back to 1957-58 we find that the total was £1,790,333; the next year it was £2,191,071; the next year it was £2,322,443; last year it was £2,655,558; and this year it is estimated to be £3,005,195. If members follow those figures right through the different headings of expenditure they will see there has been a steady increase in the contribution from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the northern part of the

State; and the loan fund figures are equally impressive. In 1957-58 the total loan fund for the north totalled £1,238,086; in 1958-59 they totalled £831,140; in 1959-60 they totalled £947,720; in 1960-61 they totalled £1,661,094; and for this year they are estimated to total £2,101,169.

Again we see that the money has been spent on a wide front, because the Government acknowledges the needs of the area and the importance of all of us doing our best to give it a chance to get a foothold in this programme of development that we are pursuing in Western Australia.

If we go to the road programme, which is one of the keys to the development of the north, we find that in 1955-56 the allocation to northern roads was £612,000; in 1956-57 it was £758,000; in 1957-58 it was £807,000; in 1958-59 it was £900,000; in 1959-60 it was £1.3 million; in 1960-61 it was £1.6 million; and in 1961-62 it was £2.02 million.

The percentages of the total of the State's road moneys is even more impressive because for 1955-56 it was 11.2; for next year it was 12.4; in 1957-58 it was 12; in 1958-59 it was 12.4 and for the first full year of this Government it was 17.1; last year it was 19.8; and this year it is 22.9—near enough to 23 per cent.; and that does not include the £500,000 special grant that has been given by the Commonwealth Government for roads in the Kimberley area.

Mr. Graham: That is ancilliary to the £5,000,000 that has been received from the Commonwealth.

Mr. COURT: I do not know what the honourable member is implying. He is not implying, I hope, that this has anything to do with the £5,000,000. This is from our road funds.

Mr. Graham: But certain works have been undertaken because of that £5,000,000, and they have resulted in an urgent need for further roads.

Mr. COURT: The honourable member is not begrudging the north the money, I hope.

Mr. Graham: No.

Mr. COURT: The fact remains that this Government has been prepared to allocate for the north 23 per cent. of its total funds; but when the honourable member's Government went out of office it apparently thought 12.4 per cent. was plenty, because for three consecutive years the figures were 12.4 per cent., 12 per cent., and 12.4 per cent.

Mr. Graham: I know.

Mr. COURT: It must have been the policy of that Government to allocate 12 per cent. of its total funds.

Mr. Graham: I think you are a bit hopeless yourself; you are not trying to understand.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. COURT: The honourable member got away from the fact that from the total of the funds allocated in the State, this Government has increased the percentage of the total of expenditure in the north. Surely somebody is prepared to give credit for a conscientious effort made to try to improve the position, because roads are vital to the development of this State.

Mr. Tonkin: Which districts have been allocated less?

Mr. COURT: The total allocation of expenditure on roads throughout the State is increasing and these northern areas have been allocated a bigger percentage of the total. It therefore follows that the roads south of the 26th parallel have been allocated a smaller percentage, but more money, as the honourable member knows.

Mr. Tonkin: If the cake is bigger, of course, proportionately, the percentage is bigger.

Mr. COURT: I do not know what one has to do to be saved in this House; but the fact remains that during this Government's term of office—whether members on the other side of the House like it or not—more money has been allocated for roads in the north; and not only more money—in case members opposite think it is only an inflationary trend that more money has been expended—but also a bigger percentage of the total expenditure; and surely that is the best test!

Mr. Rhatigan: You have allocated money for Kununurra and the V.I.P. house, etc.

Mr. COURT: I take it that the member for Kimberley is supporting the motion moved by the member for Pilbara and leaving Kimberley out of it. I would be very interested to know whether he is or not, because I cannot imagine his having a restricted motion for a developmental programme for the Gascoyne and Pilbara, leaving out the Kimberley and other northern parts of the State.

Mr. Bickerton: I gave you the purpose of that; namely, to keep pace with the Kimberley and not to rob it in any way.

Mr. COURT: Our objective is to produce a comprehensive programme for this part of the State, and we want to submit such a programme to the Commonwealth with the co-operation of its advisers. An all-party committee cannot get to grips with the details of this type of comprehensive programme for the north of the State. They are not the same obvious projects as those in the Kimberley, which are clear-cut engineering projects designed to harness the natural resources of that area for agricultural development.

The Commonwealth has rejected the idea of a northern developmental authority—or whatever name one cares to call it.



However, it is agreed that the Commonwealth will make available to this State its technical advisers for specific tasks. It should be realised that any assistance the Commonwealth gives for anywhere in the north is assistance to the whole of the State, because it is helping the Government of the day to spend its money over a wider front. Obviously, if the Commonwealth Government gives us some help to develop the northern part of the State—and when I say the northern part, I mean the Kimberleys—it means that the State Government has extra funds to allocate to other parts of the State.

Assistance given by the Commonwealth for roads in one part of the State helps us with road development in other parts of the State. For example, we are finding that, as a result of the half a million pounds special grant by the Commonwealth for East Kimberley beef roads this financial year, we have been enabled to concentrate our efforts in certain places in the West Kimberley where it was not possible under the grant for roads in the north before the Commonwealth agreed to this half a million pounds special grant to this State in this financial year.

In considering this situation, it is also important to bear in mind that so far as the Pilbara area in particular is concerned, the Mt. Goldsworthy iron ore tenders, at present under detailed analysis, could be very significant in the future development of this area; and this alone warrants delay in implementation of a motion of this kind. The ultimate result of the Mt. Goldsworthy tenders could bring about an impact which could have quite a dramatic effect in respect of ports, roads, rail, industry, and the people themselves living in this area. In fact, the outcome of these tenders, when they are finally determined, could have an overriding effect on our developmental programme for the north-west and the Pilbara district.

Mr. Tonkin: Have you made up your mind about that deep-water port yet?

Mr. Brand: We will make it up as quickly as you did.

Mr. Tonkin: You have had a lot more time.

Mr. Brand: Not a bit!

Mr. COURT: The question of the Mt. Goldsworthy tenders is one of the biggest decisions ever to be made in respect of the north-west and the Kimberleys because it is an extremely valuable deposit and it could be the key to developing amenities and facilities in the area which would otherwise be impossible. That has, of course, always been the history of minerals because nothing develops an area so quickly and brings people and industry to an area so quickly as mineral development. When the decision is ultimately made in respect of these tenders it could

have quite a dramatic effect on the future development of the Pilbara area in particular; and that, in turn, would have a direct effect on related areas, and on such matters as ports, railways, roads, and the type of industry or people attracted to the area.

At this stage the Government cannot afford to be rushed into making the decision on the Mt. Goldsworthy tenders by a motion of this kind. As the Premier has explained, those tenders are very involved and will take a tremendous amount of analysis before they can be fully appreciated. When large companies are tendering for a deposit of this magnitude, they have their own particular methods of compiling the data for the tenders, and one has to make certain that one checks completely through the whole of the data that has been submitted to make sure, in the final decision made and the tenders accepted, what is best for the district and, what is even more important, what is best for the State.

I am afraid that in moving this motion the honourable member did not give us anything very tangible to go upon. I have read his speech two or three times to try to get to grips with his ideas for a programme, but he was quite prepared to throw this into the lap of the all-party committee and hope for the best. I can assure him it is a much more difficult job to develop these projects in the north now than it was in 1954, when comparatively little was done, and when very obvious projects had been held up because of the war, and when materials and manpower were short immediately following the war. Today, however, having defined most of those obvious projects, it becomes a much more difficult job to select projects of a nature suitable for national assistance in these lower areas.

The member for Pilbara referred to matters which are essentially the concern of State Governments: matters such as mining, roads, water supplies, housing, and education, all of which are receiving active attention at present. He made the broad statement that he thought finance of £10,000,000 a year for ten years should be allocated.

However, one cannot just make these statements without relating them to some ideas. Anyone who moves a motion of this kind should be specific to some degree and at least be able to put his head out and say, "This is what I would do if I had this responsibility," because the man who is the member for the district surely has a pretty fair idea of what he would like to see done in the northern part of the State.

Mr. Graham: Then you get embarrassment on the idea instead of the principle.

Mr. COURT: Of course, it could finish up in that position because all sorts of pressures are raised on ideas for political reasons, quite apart from anything else; but there is an obligation to be specific.

Mr. Bickerton: If you knew about all those things specifically, you would not need to say it.

Mr. COURT: The projects that will be suitable for the Gascoyne and Pilbara areas are entirely different from the projects that will be suitable for the Kimberleys. Those projects are not so obvious, and the decisions on them would never be arrived at by an all-party committee. Those decisions will only be arrived at by the best technical brains working on plans for that particular area; that is, the area between the 20th and 26th parallels. We have attempted to do that with the facilities at our disposal.

I repeat, however, that the honourable member made no suggestion as to how £10,000,000 a year for 10 years was going to be spent, because the matters he touched on—such as mining, roads, water supplies, housing, and education—are being vigorously attacked at the present time by the Government, and he would not admit that the previous Government did not attack them with vigour.

Mr. Bickerton: Don't be silly! You know the previous Government did a lot of good work and really got on the move.

Mr. COURT: If the previous Government got on the move in the north, we must have got really sizzling.

Mr. Tonkin: What plans have you made?

Mr. Brand: What plan would you like?

Mr. Tonkin: The plan for the Ord River scheme.

Mr. Brand: It was well under way before you got into office.

Mr. COURT: It was conceived before the honourable member ever went into office in 1953.

Mr. Tonkin: It was submitted by the Hawke Government to the Commonwealth Government before the Hawke Government went out of office.

Mr. COURT: I am telling the honourable member that the idea was conceived during the McLarty-Watts Government.

Mr. Tonkin: But never put up.

Mr. COURT: I do not know what the honourable member means when he says it was never put up, but it was publicly made known during the term of the McLarty-Watts Government.

Mr. Tonkin: The plan was drawn up by the Hawke Government and submitted by it to the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. COURT: What I have told the House tonight seems to have touched the Opposition members on the raw. Forget about the Ord River project altogether and assume that it came from a fairy godmother. We still have a very commendable performance by the Government on moneys made available from loan funds and Consolidated Revenue. It seems to irk the members of the Opposition that we have spent more money out of Consolidated Revenue and loan funds on education, hospitals, agriculture, roads, and houses than they did when they were in office. That, of course, is not money obtained from the Commonwealth. That is our own money obtained from our own Consolidated Revenue Fund and our own Loan Fund.

Mr. Brand: I know the member for Pilbara excluded the Kimberley.

Mr. Bickerton: You could not drive a wedge that easily.

Mr. COURT: It does not need a wedge; it is wide open for everyone to see.

Sir Ross McLarty: However, they are full of praise for the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. COURT: The honourable member submitted this motion for the appointment of an all-party committee on the basis of its being non-party-political and he was going along this line quite well until he made these remarks, which appear on page 905 of *Hansard* No. 7 for this session—

If this House saw fit to agree to the motion and the proposed committee got under way, with the forthcoming Federal elections this State would no doubt receive additional finance for the development of the North-West.

Mr. Graham: That represents good tactics.

Mr. COURT: The member for Pilbara went on to make a further reference to the Federal elections and the need for conveying this motion to the Commonwealth before the Federal elections—the one objective, of course, being better to embarrass the Commonwealth Government before the elections are held in December.

Mr. Bickerton: That is how you got your last £5,000,000.

Mr. COURT: However, I am sure the honourable member does not think we are so naive as to accept that he put this up as a pious motion without giving any thought to political propaganda.

Mr. Bickerton: I do not expect you to believe it.

Mr. COURT: I am merely quoting the honourable member's own words, of course.

Mr. Bickerton: There is nothing wrong with that; it refers to the Commonwealth.

Mr. COURT: One of the difficulties we are faced with in the north—particularly with this part of it—is the amount of

damning that is done by faint praise. I think the member for Pilbara was present in the Pilbara district when I made this point to some of the local pastoralists, who were always featuring in the Press that the Pilbara area was one of droughts, floods, fires, or disaster. Publicity such as that, of course, does not do any area any good.

We know the Pilbara area has its difficulties, but one does not highlight them when one is attempting to sell the area. One has to be able to see the opportunities that are offering. Never before in the Eastern States has the northern part of this State had better publicity and a better understanding inculcated in the minds of those in the Eastern States than it is receiving at the present time. In fact, in our own State, there is a better appreciation now than ever before of the significance of the northern part of the State.

Mr. Graham: That is principally through Commonwealth action.

Mr. COURT: I do not expect the member for East Perth to give me particularly, or the Government generally, any credit. We do not expect it, so we are not disappointed. But I do want to say that when we took over we set out on a deliberate campaign to try to get the message over in the Eastern States regarding the northern part of the State, because we knew that until we got an understanding of the problem in the national Parliament; until we got an understanding of the importance of the north by the people in the Eastern States, we would not have a chance of getting to first base in regard to assistance for the north.

Mr. Tonkin: The decision to make £5,000,000 available was made before you went into office.

Mr. COURT: That is not the be-all and end-all of the north. Heaven forbid that it should end there! That is only a commencement. There are bigger things planned than merely an expenditure of £5,000,000. As I said, that was a start.

Mr. Tonkin: You said we would not get to first base; surely that is at least first base.

Mr. COURT: Let me make the position clear. That amount of £5,000,000, which came in two separate sums from the Commonwealth, was only a start. If we had rested at that point and said, "We have gone a long way along the road", instead of acknowledging we were only starting, the thing would have died.

As a deliberate act the Government set out to attract the attention of the people of the Eastern States to the north; and there is no doubt that they command a tremendous influence in the Commonwealth Parliament. That action has been successful, because during that period we have had tremendous support from the Press, the radio, and the TV.

But the important thing is that there have been several visits to the north by important people. Most of those visits have not been by accident; they have been arranged by the Government through various sources, in an endeavour to get those people from the Eastern States to see for themselves the great opportunities that exist in the north; to get them talking about the north. In that way we have been able to get the message across in the Eastern States and in the national Parliament.

Mr. Graham: Iron ore exports.

Mr. COURT: I am firmly of the opinion that the public conscience has been stirred in the national Parliament and in the Eastern States. It has been accepted in the minds of most people of Australia today that the development of northern Australia, whether it be in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, or northern Queensland, is in fact a national responsibility and not merely the responsibility of the respective States. The foundation has now been well laid for seeking increased Commonwealth help in the north.

But I want to make this point: If we are going to get help for the north we must make certain that we go forward with soundly-based projects. It was the hope of the Government that we would be able to get a national authority such as the Northern Development Authority or a commission with Commonwealth and State representation on it, so that the projects would be examined at that level, and when they were submitted to Commonwealth and State Governments there would not be argument about the technical and economic merit of the particular projects.

But we have had to accept the fact that the national Government does not think that is a good idea; and I find there is quite a strong body of opinion in the other States which does not favour this type of approach; because there is always the fear that it might intrude on the autonomy of those States. We still feel that the best long-term result would be achieved if there were such a commission, whether it was representative of Western Australia and the Commonwealth only or of Western Australia, the Northern Territory, or northern Queensland and the Commonwealth. But we must accept the fact that generalities will not get us anywhere in our submissions to the Commonwealth Government, because there is tremendous pressure on that Government in the shape of innumerable other projects which are being submitted to it.

We have tried to produce a programme for the north-west and the Kimberleys; and that was one of the objects behind the appointment of Mr. G. K. Baron Hay as a consultant. He has made considerable progress in his examination of the position; and he has

the confidence of many people in the north because he has spent a lot of his time, at the Government's request, in contacting the people who know the problems from practical experience; and in trying to get them to collaborate in the formulation of what would be a sound programme for the north.

One of the problems is the administration of the north. To date it has not been possible to arrive at a scheme to administer the area for the north on a more satisfactory basis. But we still hope to find the solution. One of the features in the last two and a half years is the fact that there has been tremendous interest by all Ministers of this Government in the north, and the job of the Minister for the North-West has been made comparatively easy because of this tremendous personal interest by members of the Cabinet. Not only have they shown a great personal interest, but they have also demonstrated an interest in matters related to their particular departments as they directly affect the north.

It is obviously a job that cannot be done by one Minister. It would not be possible to put the Departments of Education and Agriculture and the other departments in the north into watertight compartments, or have one little section. They must have the overall wisdom and strength of the departments throughout the State. And it is because of this intense interest by all members of the Government that the work of the Minister for the North-West has been made easier by comparison over the last two and a half years. The advice and active participation of those Ministers have been freely given.

It has been much more effective by having the whole of the Cabinet moving in the north rather than by having just one Minister trying to cover the entire area. In this manner we have been able to get a more effective and a more informed type of administration. From the Premier down there has been a tremendous amount of time spent in the north by all Ministers of the Government.

If Parliament wants a committee, the Government has no strong feelings on it, frankly. We are pledged to a programme of maximum aid to the north through State funds, and we do this with the object of demonstrating our sincerity and faith in the area; and of demonstrating our belief that the northern development should be undertaken to the maximum by the State from within its own resources. We feel that only then would we have the right to look the nation in the face and say that we have done our part and that we expect it to do its part.

For that reason, if not for many others, we have endeavoured to spend as much of our funds and our efforts as we could possibly afford—in some cases this has gone beyond what we could really afford—in the north.

I propose to move some amendments to this motion, and I will circulate where necessary. I have taken the opportunity not only to set out the amendments, but also to recast the motion as it would read with the amendments in it.

Mr. Graham: I think we should say what the Minister for Transport said: that you should put them on the notice paper.

Mr. COURT: This is private members' day. There is plenty of time, and we are all good company. The object of these amendments is, firstly, to make the appointment of the committee contingent on the degree of Commonwealth co-operation between now and the 31st March, 1962. I think that is not an unreasonable time. I find that the Government of the day apparently called together the previous committee concerned about the 4th May, following the 1954 parliamentary session, and it eventually made its submission to the Commonwealth about June.

I also find that the projects submitted by the committee are, of course, rather concentrated in the Kimberleys; and it is very interesting to note that in submitting its propositions at that time, that all-party committee apparently found it difficult to get away from the obvious projects of the Kimberley part of the north.

There were some that had a direct bearing on the other part—for instance, assistance for the asbestos industry at Wittenoom; the Roebourne-Wittenoom road; and income tax concessions. There was also the northern road from Geraldton to Carnarvon. Most of those things are *faits accomplis*. The asbestos industry at Wittenoom is more established and prospering; the road to Carnarvon is completely sealed; and there has been a general development of the road system throughout the north. We know, of course, that the income tax concession has not been agreed to, because there has been great difficulty in convincing any Commonwealth Government about the proposed income tax concession for the north.

The projects as I find them in the notes submitted to me are as follows:—

The Ord.

The extensions to Wyndham jetty.

Commonwealth subsidy to the State on capital cost of ships—

(a) being built in Australia;

(b) on order from Denny & Bros.

Surfacing with bitumen the Great Northern Highway from Ajana to Carnarvon.

Deep-water port at Black Rocks.

Income tax concessions.

Assistance for the blue asbestos industry at Wittenoom.

The Roebourne-Wittenoom Road.

If we take out the ones I have already mentioned, and which are no longer requiring attention, it will be found that this

committee virtually came down in favour of projects for the Kimberleys; that is, the all-party committee. I think that is pertinent, because it shows that even that committee found it difficult to go beyond the projects of an engineering and agricultural nature for the Kimberley area.

The second point in these amendments is to include the Minister for the North-West on the committee. I am assuming that the member concerned left him out by accident and not deliberately, because of the change of personnel that has taken place, and the change of location. The Minister for the North-West in the previous Government was in another place and would be automatically incorporated by the then wording of the motion.

The third point is to broaden the committee's approach so that it does examine the whole of the northern problem. But I have still left it on the basis that it will direct its attention to projects within the area falling between the 20th and 26th parallels.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! The Minister has five minutes more.

Mr. COURT: I will not need an extension of time, Mr. Speaker. That partly summarises the three main headings of the amendment I have put forward. I daresay it will be necessary for me to move my amendments separately.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Yes.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Mr. COURT: Very well. I move an amendment—

Line 10—Insert after the word "that" the words "if the Commonwealth by the 31st March, 1962, has not agreed to the appointment of a joint Commonwealth-State committee to examine and recommend development projects for the north of this State, or alternatively agreed to assist the State in further substantial development projects to accelerate progress in the north."

#### *Point of Order*

Mr. BICKERTON: It is difficult to get a full appreciation of these amendments, Mr. Speaker, and I seek your guidance. If these amendments are to be moved individually and subsequently carried will I then have a chance to speak on the motion as amended?

The SPEAKER: Yes; once the final amendment is concluded the honourable member can speak to the motion as amended. He will not be restricted to these amendments.

*Debate Resumed on Amendment to Motion*

**Amendment put and passed.**

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

Line 12—Insert after the word "possible" the words "after the 31st of March, 1962".

**Amendment put and passed.**

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

Lines 13 and 14—Delete the words "a case for the development of the area" with a view to substituting the words "a further case for the development of the north generally and with specific projects within the area."

MR. TONKIN (Melville) [8.47 p.m.]: There is one point upon which I would seek clarification. If the words "a further case for the development of the north generally" are used it presupposes there is already a case submitted for the development of the north generally. I am not aware that is actually so. A case was submitted for the development of part of the north—a very good case, which ultimately brought the commencement of certain work in the north.

However, I think it would be wrong to say that already a case has been submitted to the Commonwealth for the development of the north generally, and for specific projects within the area. If that be so—and I think it is—it is quite wrong to use the word "further". I suggest that in those circumstances the appropriate wording should be as follows:—

A case for the development of the north generally and with specific projects within the area.

I would like to hear the Minister in connection with that point.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) [8.48 p.m.]: I, too, would like that matter clarified now that it has been brought forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I must admit I was caught a bit off-guard about this from the word go.

The motion which I moved was one which, contrary to the thoughts of the Minister, was put forward as a non-party matter, and was designed to assist a portion of the north-west which, at that stage, was not being assisted to the same extent as the far north. I can assure the Minister that any suspicions he has are in his own mind. I certainly had no intention of doing that purposely.

Concerning the reference I made to the Commonwealth, I do not think there was anything wrong with that. It was not made with the object of turning this motion into one of a party-political nature. The motion, as I said when I introduced it, was designed to further the north in every way possible; and indeed it was not only my idea, but was the result of a motion

moved by the road boards in my electorate. That, Mr. Speaker, in itself proves the point, that these objects are non-political. What the Minister had to say in connection with that was something he imagined, or, something he read into my remarks—something that was never intended.

I have no doubt that the Minister has discussed these amendments as a party matter; and from his remarks it would appear to me that the only option available to me is to accept the amendments and the motion as amended or have it thrown out, as the Government has a majority. I do not wish to kill it altogether. I cannot see a great deal of harm in the amendments; but if they are passed my motion will not achieve the object which was intended.

My motion distinctly stated that there was great progress in the north—or in the far north—of this State. I mentioned that. I also said that the projects that were going ahead in that area should continue to go ahead, but I felt that we were leaving behind a portion of the north-west. I therefore considered that in view of the success of the original committee, a similar committee should be formed to assist the area that was lagging behind the Kimberleys.

It was only natural that the first committee, in looking for specific projects for the development of this area, would lean towards the Kimberley which in itself was perhaps a much easier area to develop and would lend itself much more to large projects, particularly on the irrigation side. But what we do not want to do is have a prosperous far north, a prosperous south, and a dead area in the middle.

All the references made by the Minister that we are trying to confine this motion to a specific area are correct. The purpose was that the far north and the south should not progress and leave a dead area of country in the centre. So I can assure this House that originally there was no intention on my part to make this motion in any shape or form a political one. My intention was to form a committee consisting of members of the Government, members of the Opposition, and members of another place to put a case before the Commonwealth similar to that which was put forward previously. The Minister criticised me for not putting forward specific projects.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! I think the honourable member can have a general discussion on the Minister's speech after we have finished dealing with the amendments. Strictly, there is an amendment to strike out the words, "a case for the development of the area," and the specific point raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is that he would like to see the word "further" struck out

of the words proposed to be inserted. Strictly, at the moment, we are dealing with an amendment to strike out certain words.

Mr. BICKERTON: I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on that point, and I would like some clarification from the Minister.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [8.55 p.m.]: With the other two speakers I would like some clarification of the point raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The previous motion did not deal with the north as a whole; it dealt with six or seven specific steps. I have here the case which was submitted to the Federal Parliament; and so that members may have a clear idea of what was put forward, I will read the headings from the files. They are as follows:—

1. Proposal for Commonwealth Government to assist financially in the purchase of new vessels.
2. Proposal for the granting of certain taxation concessions to that part of Western Australia lying north of the 26th parallel of south latitude.
3. Main Roads Department: Proposal to complete construction and bituminous surfacing of north-west coastal highway from Geraldton to Carnarvon. Suggested financial contribution on a 50-50 basis (State-Commonwealth) for completion of the work over a period of five years.
4. Proposal for the assistance of the blue asbestos industry at Wittenoom Gorge.
5. Main Roads Department: Proposed deviation of Pt. Samson-Roebourne-Wittenoom Road connecting blue asbestos mine at Wittenoom Gorge with the port of Roebourne at Pt. Samson.
6. Proposal for deep water port at Black Rocks (Derby area in West Kimberleys).
7. Ord River irrigation project and Wyndham jetty improvements. (Engineering aspects only.)

That was the case as submitted. In the amendment just proposed by the Minister, he has suggested that the word "north" be inserted. What does "north" mean exactly?

When he was speaking previously the Minister was rather critical in regard to a restricted area. I think it was a restricted area in the previous motion which was before the House. It was that area north of the 26th parallel of south latitude which had an area of 409,382 square miles. All this motion has done is remove an area of 139,060 square miles from that total area. That area has received very little assistance.

I would like the Minister to clarify these points so that we can be sure the motion will cover the area which it is required to cover, and will achieve that which it was intended to achieve.

#### *Point of Order*

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I would like to draw the attention of the House to a certain point that has been raised in connection with Standing Orders. This is a motion and not a Committee debate; and the procedure should be as for motions. The Minister has spoken to the motion and then carried on to move certain amendments; and he cannot speak twice to the question. The only way he can speak the second time is in explanation of certain points. With the indulgence of the House, and in view of the fact that certain explanations have been called for, I am prepared to permit the Minister to explain the point raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

#### *Ministerial Explanation*

Mr. COURT: Two points have been raised for clarification. One is the suggested inclusion of the word "further" if I am successful in the deletion of the words "a case for the development of the area." The Deputy Leader of the Opposition objects to the word "further" in the words proposed to be inserted, which are as follows:—

a further case for the development of the north generally and with specific projects within the area.

Personally, I do not have any strong views as to whether the word "further" remains or whether it does not; but when this amendment was drafted, that word was included simply because it was in the original motion for an all-party committee. In framing this, I was working on the assumption that we would be submitting a further case, because the 1954 committee submitted a general case for the north. It was not confined to any particular part of the north—either Gascoyne, Ashburton, Fortescue, or Kimberley.

Mr. Tonkin: Did you consider the committee submitted a case for the north generally?

Mr. COURT: The committee was told to submit a case for the north. That was the directive. The committee prepared a case to cover the various headings, some of which applied to the north generally, and some of which were specific to the Kimberleys. The ultimate grant was made specifically to the area north of the 20th parallel. The committee's directive was to submit a case for the north and not for a particular area.

However, I repeat that when the word "further" was put in it was due to the reference earlier in the mover's motion to a "further all-party committee"; and it was used as a figure of speech, that a further case was to be submitted to the

Commonwealth in view of the fact that a case had already been submitted—as a result of the 1954 motion—in 1955.

As to whether the word "further" remains, I am not the least bit concerned, as the motion reads equally well in my opinion either way. It was not meant to imply that a case is before the Commonwealth, but that another case, additional to the one presented in 1955, was to be presented.

So far as the reference to the "north" is concerned—that was the other word on which explanation was sought—it is used to mean the area north of the 26th parallel. At least, that is my intention; because the phrase "the north" in this Parliament is used to mean the particular area starting with the Gascoyne in the south and going north through the Ashburton, Fortescue, Pilbara, and Kimberley areas. It is my intention that this will refer to the north generally, roughly commencing at the 26th parallel. The original motion in 1954 said—

That this House expresses its opinion that that portion of the State which lies north of the 26th parallel of latitude is incapable of being fully developed if wholly dependent upon such finance as is only obtainable from State resources.

It therefore requests—

(a) that a programme for the development of this portion of the State be drawn up

and so on. The directive given to that committee was to prepare a case for the north. In that instance it was defined as being north of the 26th parallel. I think that covers the two points raised, I hope to the satisfaction of the members concerned.

#### *Debate resumed on Amendment to Motion*

**Amendment (to strike out words) put and passed.**

Mr. COURT: I propose to move as follows—

Substitute the following for the words deleted:—"a further case for the development of the north generally and with specific projects within the area."

Apparently, it would be preferred if I left out the word "further". Am I permitted to do that, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): It has already been decided to strike words out. The Minister is now going to put them in again, with the exception of one word.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

Substitute the following for the words deleted:—"a case for the development of the north generally and with specific projects within the area."

**Amendment put and passed.**

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—  
Paragraph (a), line 1—Insert after the word "that" the words "if an all-party committee has to be appointed under the foregoing proposal".

I think it is self-evident, in reading the motion in its complete form, that those words have to be inserted because there may be circumstances under which the all-party committee does not have to function. Those words have to be added to make sense of the motion, and I move accordingly.

**Amendment put and passed.**

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

Paragraph (a), line 5 Insert after the words "Deputy Premier" the words "Minister for the North-West".

As I mentioned during my remarks on the motion, I have assumed this was left out inadvertently because the Minister for the North-West sat in another House when the 1954 motion was framed. It was the opinion of members on this side that such a committee would be restrictive if it did not have the responsible Minister for the North-West functioning on the committee.

**Amendment put and passed.**

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—  
Paragraph (c), lines 3 and 4—Delete the words "for a period of ten years."

Part (c) would then read—

(c) that a special Federal grant of an amount considered necessary for this work be requested in order to stimulate and carry out this vital development.

It was felt that to nominate a particular period was being restrictive so far as the committee was concerned, and it was better to let it read in a general way so that the committee could apply for whatever special grant and for whatever period it considered was desirable or necessary rather than have a ten-year period defined.

**Amendment put and passed.**

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): There is a paragraph at the end of the motion which reads—

This House also desires that the Legislative Council be acquainted accordingly and asked for its concurrence.

Although the Minister did not mention this paragraph in his final reworded motion, I take it he intended this to be included?

Mr. Court: Yes.

**Motion, as Amended**

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [9.8 p.m.]: While I would have preferred to see the original motion passed, I think this amended motion will achieve the same objectives.

I was surprised at the Minister criticising the motion moved by the member for Pilbara as being of a restrictive nature so far as the area is concerned. So is this one, and so was the previous one. The objective of this particular motion was to bring to the notice of the Commonwealth Government, by an all-party committee projects which were worthy of assistance in the area which had been omitted from the previous grants.

The earlier motion, moved by the former member for Moore (the late Mr. Ackland), covered the whole area to the 26th parallel; and it brought a very good response from the Commonwealth Government, particularly with regard to that area north of the 20th parallel. It has helped to highlight the potential of the north to the Commonwealth, and it has brought development to the north. It has brought increased population, and will eventually bring wealth to the north. As the Minister well knows, the north is an area which is beyond the limitations of development by the State. With the State's limited resources it cannot hope to carry out that development in the area which is so vitally necessary.

The Minister criticised the member for Pilbara for not pointing out any specific industries that could be investigated. It was my intention and it still is, so far as the Gascoyne is concerned, to mention some very worth-while industries. One naturally, is development of the Gascoyne River area for intensive agriculture purposes. Another is the fishing industry. I think I will be able to show that we have two very important industries ready to be developed to the benefit of our State and probably the Commonwealth.

As a result of the earlier motion certain projects were put forward, but the only one relating to the Gascoyne concerned the bituminising of the north-south road. It is quite easy to understand why it was more or less shelved at the time as the Carnarvon vegetable and banana-growing industry was showing a return of only £350,000 a year. Today it is showing a return of over £800,000 each year, and that is getting close to £1,000,000.

The area I represent has quite a mineral potential; and it has a good agriculture potential, and a good fishing potential. The Commonwealth Government regards the Snowy River project as a developmental and defence project. The development of the north-west could be looked at from a similar viewpoint. The Commonwealth Government regards the Snowy River project as of such importance that



it is now applying to the International Bank for assistance to enable it to be completed.

In connection with the north-west I would like to see this State apply to the Commonwealth Government for assistance, as the Commonwealth Government is our financing authority. That is the purpose of this motion. If we are going to retain the north, we must develop its resources. The job is not easy, and will cost money. It has been proved what can be done in the area. We have demonstrated that water is available for irrigation purposes. It now requires a plan to be prepared in order that development can be set in motion.

The Minister mentioned that roads were the concern of the State Government, as is education, the provision of hospitals, and so on. I quite agree. To a large extent, roads are the concern of the State; but when we realise that in the north-west we have one-eighth of the total road mileage of the State, to develop those roads is a very big undertaking. It is a very big undertaking to develop those outback places and those remote areas with such road mileages. It is far beyond the capabilities of any of the local authorities which operate in those areas. I quote one of the authorities in my electorate which has in its district 1,561 miles of road; and there are over 62 river and creek crossings which, if they were all put together, would make a distance of over five miles.

Those are matters which are far beyond the capacities of the local authorities concerned, and probably would be beyond the State's capacity in the long run. It is no use having good roads if the creeks and river crossings are not in good order; if they are in bad condition then it is no use having good roads. So I believe the Commonwealth should help to some extent in the development of the north by assisting with the provision of better roads. The quick movement of stock and perishables is essential if we are to get our produce to market in the requisite time.

But the main essential in this area is water conservation, and the rainfall is most uncertain. Carnarvon has an average rainfall of 9.8 inches; but when one realises that this average is obtained from a minimum of 272 points in one year to 2,536 points in the wettest year one can see the inconsistency of the rainfall. The rain comes through in strips and falls over quite large catchment areas. It can flow rivers, when the greatest part of the area gets no rain at all. It is when those rivers flow that we must conserve our water.

It has been estimated that when the Gascoyne river floods it could fill the Mundaring and Canning Weirs from empty in a period of two hours. In the last flood it was practically impossible to assess exactly the quantity of water that was flowing down the river because so much spilled over and went out on the north

and south sides before it reached Carnarvon, and the gauging of the total flow was not practicable.

We have recently had before us a report by Messrs. Scott and Furphy in regard to the Gascoyne River, and their report makes interesting reading. It does not go much beyond what we had known, but as they were asked to report on the matter, and have submitted their report, we can take it as something that can be quoted. In that report they deal comprehensively with the various industries, productivity of the Gascoyne River, and so on. Mr. Furphy also points out the area of land which is available for further development in the district. I quote from page 4 of the report in which, under the heading of "Productivity", he said—

Because of the fertility of the soil and the climatic conditions, the potential productivity of the Gascoyne delta is enormous. The crops grown on the limited area now under cultivation are bananas, runner beans and tomatoes, with smaller acreages of pumpkins, cucumbers and rock melons. Experimental production of other crops, including onions, citrus fruits, grapes and strawberries is being carried out with encouraging results. The fact that the climate is warm and almost perpetually dry should enable many crops to be grown out of season, or with almost complete disregard for the seasons, with consequent enhancement of their value.

The area at present under cultivation is no more than 640 acres.

The planters and vegetable growers on the river hold over 4,000 acres of freehold land. His report continues—

But the annual value of crops produced is of the order of £750,000.

I would interpolate here to say that that was produced off 640 acres, and is equal in value to the wool produced in the Gascoyne-Minilya Shire Council area. Mr. Furphy's report continues—

The actual extent of the area which would be capable of development on this scale, if water were available, is not known; but it seems probable that the coastal belt, extending inland for perhaps 10 miles along a 40-mile coastline, could be similarly cultivated. Further inland, the occurrence of very occasional frosts would prevent the cultivation of some crops; but there is little doubt that, despite this limitation, highly profitable production could be maintained over an additional area of equal or greater extent.

It is suggested that an area 40 miles by 10 miles would provide just over 250,000 acres; and it is further suggested that another 250,000 acres could be used which would provide a high rate of production. But I am not foolish enough to think that the present rate of production, on

the land that is now being used would be maintained if the area were extended further, particularly by using the same crops as are being grown now. But there are many other crops that could be taken into consideration as I will mention later on.

A little further on in his report Mr. Furphy mentions the most likely places for the damming of the Gascoyne River. Those who have not read the report may be surprised at the quantity of water which can be held or trapped if a dam were placed in the Kennedy Range some 100 miles east of Carnarvon. So that it will be recorded, I will read another extract from page 24 of the Furphy report. It is headed, "Kennedy Range," and reads—

Kennedy Range is a chain of hills rising in height to 200 ft. above the surrounding area, and situated approximately 100 miles east of Carnarvon. The river passes through the southern end of this range leaving a gap of about two miles. The proposed dam site is at the southern end of this gap. A dam 50 ft. high would have a crest length of 8,600 ft. Water behind such a dam would bank up for about 13 miles forming a lake covering approximately 70 square miles.

I shall not read any further extracts from the report, but I would point out that the catchment area for this dam would be 27,500 square miles; so it can be readily seen that not much rain would be required to replenish the dam, and the dam itself would conserve a tremendous quantity of water. The report also points out that stones, clay, and other necessary materials required for the building of the dam are readily available on the spot. It can be assumed that there would not be any great cost involved other than the cost of labour.

I would now like to point out to the Minister the potential of that area so far as beans and other vegetables and produce are concerned. In a year this State consumes approximately £500,000 worth of bananas. Up to date, owing to water restrictions and other climatic conditions, Carnarvon has been able to produce only £300,000 worth, and so the State has had to import the balance this year. However, I would like to draw to the Minister's notice the fact that Carnarvon, in spite of adverse conditions, has gradually built up its export of beans over the past five or six years.

In the year 1956-57 Carnarvon exported to Adelaide 483 tons; in 1957-58 the tonnage rose to 664 tons; in 1958-59 it rose again to 718 tons; in 1959-60 it rose to 834 tons; and taking the last statistical report, which was for the nine months ended March, 1961, the export to South Australia was 1,191 tons. If we can assume that the price received was 1s. 6d. per lb. that would be over £200,000 worth of beans.

This year the Adelaide market has been over-supplied and growers have started to develop a market in Melbourne. There is no doubt that this market can be developed in the same way as the Adelaide market was developed over past years. If we study the figures we will see that on only one square mile, or 640 acres, over, £750,000 worth of produce was grown and sold in one year. The net production per acre was in the vicinity of £1,300. How many other areas, whether along the Ord River, or anywhere else, could show a return of that value per acre?

I would now like to show how this industry has developed over the past few years. The production of bananas has fluctuated greatly because of cyclones and so on, and naturally the production figures have varied considerably. Because of this, I shall confine my remarks at this stage to vegetable production. In 1956-57, 317 acres of runner beans were sown; the next year, 1957-58, the acreage dropped to 300 acres; in 1958-59 it rose to 334; in 1959-60 it went to 422; and for 1960-61 it rose to 511 acres. As a consequence, there was an increase in production over those years, and, for the same years, the production in cwts. was 23,831 for 1956-57; 24,878 for 1957-58; 35,373 for 1958-59; 41,692 for 1959-60; and for 1960-61, it was 46,884.

The production of other vegetables has developed in the same way. Regarding capsicums, since the one acre grown in 1956-57, today eight acres are under cultivation. The acreage of cucumbers increased from 15 in 1957 to 29 in 1960-61. Egg-fruit production is just coming on the market, and one acre is being grown. The production of pumpkins has increased from 10 acres in 1956-57, to 63 acres at the present time. The acreage of rock melons has increased from four to 25. The production of tomatoes has increased from six acres to 38 acres.

The most important and interesting feature is to compare the production of various vegetables per acre with the production in the rest of the State. Taking the year 1960-61 as a comparison, Carnarvon produced 91.7 cwt. of beans per acre, as against an average of 72 cwt. for the rest of the State. In the production of tomatoes, Carnarvon yielded 1,392 half-bushels per acre, as against 975 half-bushels for the rest of the State. In respect of cucumbers, the yield in Carnarvon was 1,711 dozen per acre, as against 1,535 dozen for the rest of the State. In the production of pumpkins, which is one of the outstanding examples of the tremendous increase in Carnarvon, the yield there was 172 cwt. per acre, as against 73.5 cwt. for the rest of the State.

There will shortly be an intensive interstate demand for pumpkins. Quite a number of buyers in the Perth market are experimenting with consignments to Adelaide. They are able to offer £70 to £80 per ton on the Perth market, and yet export

pumpkins to Adelaide at a profit. It will not be long before the growers at Carnarvon are able to export that commodity to the other States.

It will be readily seen that the vegetables I have mentioned may soon be over-produced. There is no doubt that if water is available a number of other crops can be cultivated. Citrus is one such crop. The citrus fruit grown in the Carnarvon district reaches maturity six weeks ahead of the Perth crop. Some years ago grape-fruit grown in Carnarvon commanded a high priority in the Singapore market and was eagerly sought after. If citrus were to come back to popularity we could consign to the Singapore market grape-fruit, mandarins, and oranges grown in the Carnarvon area. These are crops which do not take a great deal of water.

Dates are another crop in respect of which considerable experimentation is conducted at the Carnarvon research station. This crop can be profitably grown on every plantation and property in the district. It can be grown around the boundaries as a windbreak. Other crops such as avocado pears, custard apples, mangoes, and pawpaws are hardly known in the district. They are grown only in small quantities. With the exception of pawpaws, they are not forwarded to the Perth market.

There could be a ready export from Carnarvon of many types of vegetables to Singapore and the surrounding countries. We would not be confined to the markets in Australia. Strawberries are being grown successfully at the research station; and it will not be long before onions will be coming into their own and marketed during the off-season in Perth, thus doing away with the need to import onions at that period from the Eastern States and from overseas.

Another crop which grows very prolifically around Carnarvon is lucerne. A considerable amount of experimentation has been carried out at the research station on this fodder. Tests have proved that lucerne yields 18 tons of hay per acre. At £25 per ton, which is the price readily obtained, the return per acre is £450. Over the last few years Brickhouse Station has been growing lucerne with the use of artesian bore water containing a minimum salinity of 170 grains. Production of 10 tons per acre has been achieved.

I suggest that the area mentioned in the report of Mr. Furphy could be turned into a grazing area by using artesian water controlled under a system of irrigation. The bores in this area flow at the rate of 1,000,000 gallons a day. There is no reason why this source of water could not be tapped and turned to advantage in growing lucerne, thus converting an area of coastal country into a very fertile strip of land. Over the past few years the Gascoyne research station has proved that it is possible to run 20 head of sheep per acre on

the lucerne pastures. With the availability of artesian water supplies lucerne can be grown in this area. I do not think it will be long before it is converted into a very intensive sheep-raising proposition.

If such a proposal were put into effect we would have a good chance of establishing a freezing works in Carnarvon. Sheep raised in this area under this method would be the main standby for the freezing works; but, in addition, the pastoralists would be given the opportunity to get rid of their surplus stock in the good years, and to reduce their stock in drought periods. They could thus sell their sheep easily at reasonable prices; this they are unable to do at the present time. These freezing works could also handle quite a large quantity of the vegetables which are grown on the Gascoyne, and which today, as a result of over-maturity, are wasted.

These freezing works could also be established to cater for the fishing industry. I read an article in the *Fisheries Newsletter* of June, 1959, relating to tuna fishing by the Japanese off the Western Australian coast. When I read this article I was absolutely astounded at the wealth that was being harvested by the Japanese fleet. This article is worthy of being recorded. It is as follows:—

Strong recovery of Indian Ocean tuna productivity was one of the stimulating influences in the Japanese fishing industry early in 1959.

This area—highly productive in 1954 and 1955—passed into a period of declining yield, which levelled-off early in 1958. Then, late in 1958, and continuing strongly this year, vessels fishing the Indian Ocean have experienced excellent fishing over a wide area and involving several species of tuna.

Partly responsible for the upturn was the discovery of a new ground for Bluefin of the type known by the Japanese as "Bluefin Indo." Whether this is a sub-species or a type has not yet been decided by scientists.

This productive area was discovered in October, 1958, by Kainan Maru, the research vessel of Kochi Prefecture, which encountered very favourable fishing along Latitude 25° South, running westerly from Australia.

This sector has been yielding heavily since to a growing fleet of clippers of the 180 to 350-ton sizes. The catch per boat is said to run from 10 to 18 tons daily, with most of the fish going to the markets at Yaizu, Shimzu and Misaki.

The Bluefin Indo from this particular area are said to be of superior quality, far ahead of Bluefin from other sectors of the Indian Ocean, and they command fancy prices in the Japanese market. The Bluefin Indo are not being used for freezing or canning, but are taken avidly by the

domestic market for sashimi; that is, raw tuna, which is greatly relished by the Japanese.

This Bluefin Indo has been selling in the markets as high as Y500 per kilo. This is a fantastic price when it is considered that the best Yellowfin for sashimi commands about Y200 per kilo.

If we have a look at the value of the catch there it is rather fantastic. Today I got from the banks the exchange rate of a yen in comparison with Australian currency. A yen today goes 806.76 to the £1 Australian. That means to say that with 500 yen per kilo, the Japanese are getting 12s. 4½d. per kilo, or 5s. 7½d. per lb. When one starts to step that up with the catch which they are making—and the smallest recorded is 10 tons per boat per day—one finds that the return per boat per day is approximately £6,000.

If we go down to a rate of 2s. 6d. per lb., then each boat is earning in the vicinity of £2,800 per day. It appears to me we are missing a very valuable industry in this tuna fishing. This could be combined with the development of the sheep industry grazing on lucerne; and to the tuna industry could be added a prawning industry. I would suggest to the Minister for the North-West that this should be one of the type of projects to be suggested to the Commonwealth; that it could be started on the same principle as the whaling station at Carnarvon—that is, by the Commonwealth. Once it is proved it could be passed over to private enterprise for it to continue. However, an industry such as this would be different from the whaling station.

So far as my district is concerned, the whaling industry is a 90 days' wonder. In other words, the season lasts for three months. Once the rush is over, the majority of men employed on the station leave and the place closes down. However, with the freezing works and the canning works, which could be developed in conjunction with the grazing and the fishing, as well as vegetable growing, a sizeable industry could be started at Carnarvon which would run the full year around.

That should be done, together with the development of a dam for conservation of water in the Gascoyne River. In spite of the lean years sufficient water would be coming down the Gascoyne, the Lyons and the various other tributaries to keep that dam well supplied; and an industry could grow there to a great extent. If we could only develop to the full extent the 4,000 acres of land held now in freehold, we would have a tremendously wealthy industry. But if with that we could develop, along the lines I have suggested, that extra quarter of a million acres for grazing by using artesian water, in conjunction with a fishing industry, we would go a long way towards developing the Gascoyne.

**MR. BICKERTON** (Pilbara) [9.47 p.m.]: I was hoping that the Minister would allow this motion to go through as it was moved. However, he saw fit to amend it, and I do not intend to oppose the amendment because I feel the Minister has the numbers to carry his amendment and so defeat my motion entirely. So, rather than lose the whole of the motion, I prefer to accept the amendment put forward by the Minister.

However, I cannot agree with many of the remarks he made in connection with this committee. I feel there is nothing wrong with the committee being set up at the present time. I think there is much it could be doing to investigate suitable projects for the area I have mentioned.

One of the Minister's chief points of criticism was the fact that I confined the area to that which lies between the 20th and 26th parallels of south latitude. When speaking to the original motion, I explained that the reason was that the councils in my area moved a motion at a ward conference which was responsible for the motion which I placed before the House. The Minister preferred to make it appear that this was something political put up by the Opposition; but it was nothing of the sort.

Indeed, I would say the political colour of the councils in my electorate could be anything; and perhaps many of them would be supporters of the Minister. For that reason, I cannot see how he could think that this was a political matter. One of the points stressed at that council ward meeting was that they wanted this motion to be above politics, because they felt that the north had been kicked around like a political football; and the only way to submit this matter was on a non-party basis—and that was the way it was put before this House for its consideration.

I have often wondered just how the mind of the Minister ticks. I know many seem to believe he thinks in a queer way. I have not myself had that idea so very much; but after his remarks tonight on my motion I cannot help but think he must judge speakers on this side of the House by the experience he had himself when he was over here and the motives he himself had when moving motions as a private member. For the Minister's information, there was nothing, as far as I was concerned, of a political nature in this motion. If he chooses to think otherwise he has my permission to do so; but he is quite wrong.

He criticised me for not including specific matters in my motion. If members refer to the one submitted in 1954, which was accepted by this House, and for which the Minister himself voted, they will find that it contained nothing specific. The request was made for an all-party committee to be set up to investigate projects which could be commenced in the north with the assistance of Commonwealth

money. That was the situation in regard to the present motion prior to its having been amended.

I assure the Minister that if I had thought specific matters were the order of the day, something would have been done about them, but an all-party committee cannot be restricted to specific matters. It is merely set up in order to investigate ways and means of assisting that area.

The Minister maintained that the pastoralists in the area were quite happy about their present set-up. He must have spoken to different pastoralists from the ones I spoke to, because those with whom I have come in contact are not very happy at all. Indeed, I would remind the Minister that the members of the council which passed the motion which was the basis of my motion were, in the majority, pastoralists. In fact, I think there were only one or two members who were not pastoralists. Therefore the Minister's criticism in that regard is wrong. I suggest to him that if this committee eventually gets under way, we will find that the pastoralists have many things with which they are not happy.

The member for Gascoyne mentioned many matters which an all-party committee could have commenced investigating immediately if the Minister had allowed the original motion to stand. I cannot see any reason at all why he should have opposed it. However, we now have before us the amended motion, and I can see nothing really wrong with it.

There is one thing that I thought the Minister might have been courteous enough to do, and that was to give me some notice of his amendments. On studying the 1954 motion which was passed, I found that the then Premier amended it. However, in *Hansard* it will be found that he gave notice of his intention in this House, and members consequently had an opportunity to study the matter. I do think that the Minister might have given me some indication beforehand that he intended to move his amendments and some idea of what they were.

However, as I say, we finish up with an amended motion which apparently suits the Minister. I do not say for one moment that it has achieved the object I started out to achieve. Nevertheless, it does in itself suggest ways and means by which this area can be assisted a little more, and for that reason I have no intention whatever of opposing it. But the Minister has, by his action, delayed the establishment of a committee to investigate matters, on the ground of what could happen in certain instances such as in regard to the Mt. Goldsworthy iron ore deposits which the Government is considering at present. I do not see that a committee investigating other projects in the area would interfere in any way with the Government's consideration of the iron ore deposits.

His amendment concerning the inclusion of the Minister for the North-West on the committee is, I think, a good one. I will admit that to have a committee investigating the area, without the Minister for the North-West present, would not be so good. Therefore I had no objection to that amendment.

I am afraid that with the scope of this amended motion, once again this committee will be inclined to concentrate on the easy areas; and that was the very situation I was trying to avoid. I believe—and it is true—that the Kimberley does lend itself much more easily to development than does the area properly known as the north-west—that area between the 20th and the 26th parallels.

I fear that the investigations carried out are going once again to tend to increase the activity in the far north and leave that dead tract of land through the central north-west. That is one thing we must try to avoid, because our southern area is going ahead and the far north appears to be going ahead, and I think that in the next 20 to 30 years it will be very much advanced.

Sir Ross McLarty: The report of the Grants Commission which was tabled today in the Federal Parliament suggests that something must be done about shipping freights to avoid the substantial losses.

Mr. BICKERTON: That sounds to me to be a typical Federal attitude as far as much of the under-developed parts of the State are concerned.

Sir Ross McLarty: The Grants Commission I am talking about.

Mr. Court: That is not the Federal Government; that has nothing to do with it. It is quite independent.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Grants Commission? I am sorry. I did not hear the honourable member correctly. I think that if the shipping rates were increased so far as the north is concerned nothing but damage would result in that area. I would not like to see that, because the cost of operating any sort of business organisation is quite high enough without shipping freights being increased.

However, to return to the amended motion, I intend to support it; and I sincerely hope that when the all-party committee does get going, even though it will be delayed a little now, everything will not be concentrated upon the far north, and the Pilbara and Gascoyne areas left out of it, because we cannot afford to have that area in the State remain as it is for very much longer. I would like to see the whole of the area gradually advancing at the one time.

I must admit that I agree with the Minister on the point that projects of a nature that will greatly assist the area and can

be got going in a short time are not easy to find, particularly in the Pilbara area. It would mainly be the mining aspect that would give a sudden lift to the area and thus bring in quick money for the improvement of roads and harbours, and enable more suitable projects to follow.

But there again, there is no reason—and I do not think the motion could have been considered in any way out of order, the way it stood—why that committee should not investigate the needs of that restricted area, as the Minister called it, because I consider it is an area that needs the most investigation, particularly at this stage. The other area seems to me to be fairly straight ahead. What is holding it up, if anything, is lack of finance.

The Kimberley is planned for a long time to come. The Ord River project, if it goes on to its ultimate conclusion, will continue for a very, very long time. The only thing that can arrest the project is lack of finance. But concerning the other area to which I have referred, investigations are necessary to find suitable projects to give it the impetus it needs.

That is the reason why the motion was restrictive. I cannot see why the Minister made such an issue of that point. I fully explained the reason for the restriction when I moved my motion. That area needs much more investigation than does the Kimberley. All the Kimberley needs is finance, and plenty of it; and it must, of course, go ahead.

However, I will not indulge in tedious repetition. I propose to support the amendment as moved by the Minister, but I wish he had seen fit to let the original motion go through.

**MR. TONKIN** (Melville) [10.2 p.m.]: There are a few words I would like to say in connection with this matter.

#### *Point of Order*

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): Order! The member for Pilbara has closed the debate.

**Mr. TONKIN**: But it is not the member for Pilbara's motion. It is no longer his motion.

**Mr. Bickerton**: I was speaking on the amendment.

**Mr. TONKIN**: The member for Pilbara had the right to speak on the amendment as well as on the motion; and I assumed that he was speaking on the amendment.

**Mr. Court**: He spoke on the amendment.

**Mr. TONKIN**: When did he speak on the amendment?

**Mr. Court**: He asked me questions. I had to reply to him as well as to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. TONKIN**: That was only half the amendment. The member for Pilbara spoke half-way through the amendment

which the Minister for the North-West was moving; and he did not speak again until he spoke a moment ago.

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): He spoke on the question: "That the motion, as amended, be agreed to." That was the question that was put.

**Mr. TONKIN**: Is that the question now before the House?

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): Yes, "That the motion, as amended, be agreed to."

**Mr. TONKIN**: At what stage did members have an opportunity to speak on the amendment?

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): When the Minister moved it.

**Mr. TONKIN**: But the Minister moved several amendments.

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): That is true; and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke on one of them.

**Mr. TONKIN**: The amendments moved by the Minister were designed to alter the motion substantially; and in drawing attention to one aspect of one amendment he proposed to move I cannot see how you, Sir, can regard that as my speaking to the amendment, as the amendment was not then before the House—only a portion of it. The Minister having completed his various submissions, and having moved his amendments, I take it that at that stage, with all the amendments moved, it was competent for any member to discuss the motion as it then stood?

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): Yes; that was the question to be discussed.

**Mr. TONKIN**: How does that close the debate?

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): Because this is the last division to be taken. There cannot be any division after this one. Once we agree or disagree with this division, that is the end of the matter.

**Mr. TONKIN**: I can appreciate the situation that has arisen; and I believe, Sir, you are right. But this is the way it has developed: The amendments being moved piecemeal did not leave it open for anybody to speak until the final half of the amendment was subsequently moved.

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): Any member then had an opportunity to speak, and that was when the member for Gascoyne spoke. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should have followed the member for Gascoyne.

**Mr. TONKIN**: I agree that I probably should have done so. It was the way in which the debate proceeded which has thrown me out in connection with it.

**The SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): I cannot allow the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to speak unless I have the indulgence of the House.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not going to seek that indulgence at this stage. You departed from the required procedure, Sir, in permitting the Minister, in the middle of the debate, to reply to a matter which I then submitted.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think I was pretty generous in my interpretation of it.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not cavil at that. I agree that you are right, Sir, on reflection. The debate has been closed, and therefore there is no opportunity for me to say what I wished to say.

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

## TOBACCO INDUSTRY: INQUIRY BY SELECT COMMITTEE

### *Motion*

Debate resumed from the 13th September on the following motion by Mr. Owen:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon—

- (1) the factors which have contributed to the present position of the tobacco-growing industry in this State;
- (2) ways and means which might be adopted to place the industry on a better footing;
- (3) whether it is practicable to endeavour to expand the production of cigarettes and tobacco in this State.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [10.7 p.m.]: I view this motion with mixed feelings. I think it savours of a dose of procrastination. A motion of this kind would not have been out of place on the notice paper if the Government had accepted its responsibility very much earlier in the year.

We have known for many months that this industry was in a very precarious position. As time went on we came to realise that the industry was more or less left out on a limb because of the indecisive approach to the difficulties involved. This crisis in which the tobacco industry finds itself did not develop overnight. Ample warning was apparent, as far back as seven months ago, that if the industry was to survive it must have some specialised treatment.

To my mind, no effective action has been taken during that period other than the appointment of several committees; and each of those committees has functioned, of course, in its own State, although there was one committee in an all-States capacity. None of those committees has arrived at any conclusions that have been of any benefit to the industry.

If this motion were agreed to it would not do any real harm. By the same token, I do not think the committee would be

likely to produce any outstanding recommendations; because the industry, during its entire existence, has had the benefit of a good deal of Government attention. It has had the use of much scientific knowledge gained as an industry through the years; and all the factors that contributed to the expansion of this industry were, and are, of course, well known to the Agricultural Department and to very many growers.

I do not think that any of the industry's difficulties stem from an entirely individual sense, nor from a State point of view; although I think the State should have been far more active in endeavouring to combat the difficulties that the industry has had to face. It appears to me that the industry has two outstanding ills—if I might use that term—and if these could be overcome the entire situation could be one that could lead the industry back on to a sound basis. In my view production and marketing cover the two problems that the industry faces today; and I shall have more to say in both connections at a later stage of my remarks.

However, I do not think that the select committee would have the power of solving either of those problems, because they are, to a large extent, beyond the State's capabilities, except that there should be a set policy in regard to tobacco marketing. Personally I believe that the industry needs a lift of some kind, or a shot in the arm to tide it over its present difficult period. In my view early financial aid is the only thing that can assist the industry to climb back to the position that it has held in past years. To do this risks must be taken, and they must be taken now. There should be no further delay; action has to be taken immediately.

In past years planting has taken place during the latter portion of October and the early part of November; but there is a feeling in Commonwealth circles, and in Queensland particularly, that the industry can achieve better results if an earlier planting is undertaken. I understand that with that idea in mind many growers in this State prepared for an earlier planting this year; but the disastrous market conditions during the selling season altered the position. In my view the Government should dispense with all forms of ceremony in regard to the industry and sufficient capital should be advanced to the industry as a whole, and not in part, to enable it to carry on and successfully grow tobacco during the current season.

Assistance should be given to all growers and not just a selected few. Any discrimination in approaching this problem would be entirely wrong and assistance should be given to all those who are prepared to grow tobacco in this very crucial year. Finance should be made available to cover current requirements—that is, requirements brought about by the shortcomings of last season owing to the fact

that a great deal of leaf was left unsold. Also sufficient capital should be made available to enable growers to carry out either their normal planting or planting on a slightly restricted basis for the 1961-62 season. Only by providing sufficient finance can faith in the industry be restored; because undoubtedly it is now at the crossroads.

Another matter to which attention must be given is the fact that in this industry continuity of production is of paramount importance. It is imperative now and it will become even more so as time goes on. A Select Committee would take some time to reach a decision; and even when it did, no matter how all-embracing its recommendations might be, or how useful they might be, it would be the Government's prerogative either to delay implementing those recommendations or to pigeon-hole the report. But time is marching on and this industry is getting into a worse position; and, I repeat: adequate finance must be found. That is of paramount importance and it is urgent that it be done now.

Once that has been attended to, the defining of policy and marketing becomes an urgent matter. I think it is the clear duty of the State Government, but more particularly of the Commonwealth Government, to reach a decision on these matters at an early stage so that the future of the industry can be safeguarded. If the tobacco industry is to survive the Commonwealth Government must take a firm stand. It cannot any longer afford to allow manufacturers to determine policy, which is what has happened in the past. That is why the industry is in such an invidious position, and has been during the growing season and during the marketing period. The industry has gone from something really worth while to a tottering industry because buyers refused to buy the leaf that had been produced.

In my view the Commonwealth Government and the manufacturers must get together to hammer out a policy for the future of tobacco growing in Australia generally. The Government must demand a rigid determination from manufacturers regarding their requirements. That is the angle upon which the industry has floundered during the past season and, to some limited extent, in previous years.

This determination must be gauged on such factors as grade, type, and quality. Whilst on the subject of quality I will quote portion of an article which appeared in *The Australian Tobacco Journal*, July issue, which article points to the crux of the whole situation. Until we get the industry on a sound basis it is going to continue to be in difficulty. I stress upon the Minister the dire necessity to follow up what this article suggests because undoubtedly it would supply an answer to the industry's difficulty if we could have the suggestions implemented.

I remarked a moment ago that one of the factors to be used in gauging the determination to be made is quality, and it is in regard to this aspect that the following article was written:—

Enough has been said already to make it clear that quality tobacco is required. But what is 'Quality'? Growers find quality to be a rather elusive characteristic and have suggested at times that as understood by manufacturers, it is as difficult to track down as a chameleon. We have been at some pains to try and obtain a definition of quality as understood by the manufacturers so that the grower would know what he should be producing even if he found it difficult to produce it. Many others have been engaged in the same kind of investigation, and scarcely a meeting of interested parties takes place without an appeal by the growers to be told what the buyers want.

Furthermore, the major proposal put forward by manufacturers at the Central Tobacco Advisory Committee Conference this year in relation to the expansion of the industry, was that it should proceed on "sound quality lines". This sounds an admirable proposition but in view of the marked inability of manufacturer either individually or collectively to give a very clearcut picture of quality it would appear to be a rather flimsy base on which to build a well-constructed primary industry.

In continuing with the factors which consider must form the basis on which to establish this industry on sound lines the Commonwealth Government should be acquainted—in order to discuss this matter with the manufacturers—with such other factors as grain, lustre, elasticity, maturity, colour-characteristics, the chlorine percentage allowable, and the nicotine content required.

These factors should and could be determined, and the manufacturers' requirements clearly defined. Having reached that point, it would be necessary for the Government also to include a period in which these features would be required by the manufacturers. Only by these means would tobacco containing the elements suitable to the buyers' demands be capable of determination. So long as we are not prepared to face up to that aspect so long as we continue to allow the manufacturers to determine the percentage of leaf they require; and so long as the manufacturers are permitted to leave the tobacco on the floor of the auction room before making their determination, so long will the industry remain in difficulties.

It must be the aim of the Government to press the Commonwealth Government to review the difficulties of the industry on this basis, because only by these means can we guarantee the salvation of



the industry. If the growers of tobacco, whether they be in Western Australia or Queensland, know what is required, a sincere and earnest attempt can be made by them to fulfil the requirements of the market. Quality can be developed and maintained. If further research is necessary, then, as long as we know what to produce, science can play its part in assisting to produce what the market requires.

Nevertheless, when the desired results are achieved, we must have a guarantee that, having satisfied the buyers' requirements, they are compelled to buy the product the industry can produce. It is only on this basis that we can expect the industry to get on to a firm footing. All the deliberations of the Select Committee will have no bearing on the standard the buyers are prepared to accept.

That is a crucial point; and only when we overcome all the obstacles the manufacturers care to set up against the progress of the industry—as they are doing and as they have done during the past tobacco season—and know what we are doing, only at that stage can we be satisfied that the tobacco industry will be safely placed in the category where it is entitled to be placed as a worth-while industry in the Australian economy.

In reference to the tobacco growers, and the appointing of a Select Committee to examine the pros and cons of their industry, recently I had the opportunity of reading a report in a Manjimup paper which outlined the assistance the Government is offering to some of the growers in this industry. I disagree that only one section of the growers should be singled out to be granted some assistance, and the rest left to fend for themselves, or be faced with the alternative of going out of production. That is the wrong approach. Assistance should have been granted by the Government on a more generous scale. I know that the Manjimup growers regard the assistance that is being offered as miserly; they regard it as being of only minute assistance to the industry as a whole.

Those who are successful applicants will, under Government survey, be entitled to grow some tobacco. However, we should view the position from the angle that the Government's assistance covers only a little less than 25 per cent. of the growers in this industry of which we have been so proud for so many years. It does no more than tide perhaps 25 per cent. of the growers, at the most, over this difficult period. The balance of them can go out of the industry; they can attempt to grow alternative crops; or they can leave the district altogether and seek employment elsewhere.

That is what is facing these people; and it is very sad to realise that so many are being thrown to the wolves. The

extent of the Government assistance, as I understand it, is that the Government makes a declaration in the first instance that it will assist to the maximum of 300 acres. To enable the grower to get the portion that will be allocated to him under crop the Government is prepared to advance, I think, £40; and it has arranged with the Rural and Industries Bank for an extension of a loan of £60 per acre to cover the balance of the producers' requirements.

It is rather singular that the Government should have decided on such a figure, because I have several tables here which show that the cost of planting an acre of tobacco, in an individual sense, is over £300. So the grant of £40, together with a further £60 by way of assistance, still leaves the grower in the position of having to find £200 immediately to put into this season's planting requirements before he can get his crop in. Of course, that is a hopeless position for any producer to have to face.

I am at a loss to know on what basis the Government determined the amount of assistance it was going to give to this industry on that limited basis. The Government certainly does not appear to have considered the matter very carefully, because it is impossible for these men who are to be given assistance to work on the basis of being given £100 and having to find £200 per acre. I understand that at the present moment many of them are entirely without finance, and for them to be given only £100 out of the £300 which it will cost per acre will not help them very much at all.

It seems to have taken a long time for the Government to arrive at this offer of assistance which, as I have already said, has been described as miserly. But even though the Government has taken so long to decide on the amount of assistance it will give, it will be entirely futile unless further help is granted to these people to enable them to finally get their crop in on a payable basis. It is possible, of course, that a man may get sanction and assistance to cover 40 acres; and instead of planting 40 acres with the amount of money available to him, he could perhaps plant 13 or 14 acres. But that is all he could do. It might be possible in this way for many of them to overcome their difficulties; they may be able to do so by limiting their acreage and planting less than the acreage for which they have been granted assistance.

I am very disappointed that the Government has seen fit to make this terribly small allocation of finance to the industry, because it will do nothing to tide the industry over this difficult period; nor will it help towards re-establishing it. As I said earlier, it is only a small percentage of the people concerned who can take advantage of the assistance offered—less than 25 per cent. of them are in that position.

# Legislative Council

Thursday, the 12th October, 1961

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Bank Holidays Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.
2. Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Bill.  
Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

## CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [2.35 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill to amend the Criminal Code, comes to us from another place, and is a very important measure. Two of its three main parts deal with penalties for the crimes of murder and wilful murder. The definition of murder in the Criminal Code may be broadly explained as killings done in the course of some wrong-doing where no intention to kill can be proved.

Under existing law, it is mandatory for judges, upon a person being convicted either of wilful murder or murder, to impose the death penalty. The proposed amendment to section 282 of the Code, which is to be repealed and re-enacted, as set out in clause 3 of the Bill, will alter this position.

I can imagine what would have happened if it were the wheatgrowing industry, or the barley or some other grain-growing industry which was placed in this position. I can imagine what would have happened if the vegetable growers or other large industries were thus affected. I am sure they would not be taking the Government's attitude as placidly as the growers in Manjimup apparently have done. They would have been up in arms immediately, and there would have been a hue and cry against the Government, and their voice would have been heard because their numbers would have been far greater.

Let us consider the position. The motion we are now considering appeared on the notice paper on the 29th August so there does not appear to be a great deal of anxiety on the part of the Government to give effect to it. Apparently the Government has not a great deal of confidence that a motion of this kind will relieve the industry in any way, or it would have persisted with it long ago; it would have got it through the House in an endeavour to effect its purpose.

Members will see that it is many weeks since the motion was placed before the Chamber; and it would probably be many more weeks and perhaps many more months before the deliberations of the committee—if it were appointed—could be put into operation; and members of this Chamber who know the fate of the recommendations of previous Select Committees will appreciate that the outlook of assistance for this industry is not very encouraging.

However, as I have already said, I do not think a Select Committee can do any harm. It may unearth something that could be worth while; but the odds against its doing so would be very high. But if it could achieve anything at all; if it could bring in a strong recommendation that the Government take some action immediately—after it had had a few sittings—perhaps something could be achieved. I do not think there is a great deal of scope for such a Select Committee to operate, because most of the factors in this industry are already known to the Government departments. Their difficulty is finance; and their paramount difficulty, in a Federal sense, is to obtain a determination as to what the buyers and manufacturers require in the way of a standard leaf. I have no objection to the appointment of a Select Committee.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. I. W. Manning.

## DEATH PENALTY ABOLITION BILL

### Discharge of Order

Bill discharged from the notice paper, on motion by Mr. Graham.

House adjourned at 10.38 p.m.