

# Legislative Assembly

Friday, the 3rd December, 1971

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

## CHILD WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 2nd December.

**MR. MENSAROS** (Floreat) [11.03 a.m.]: I do not think it is even necessary for me to invoke the customary expression of co-operation in connection with this Bill which has the full support of the Opposition.

For the benefit of members the position, as the Minister explained, is that when the Child Welfare Act was amended in 1968 section 120 was reworded. Amongst other things this section contains the jurisdiction of the court. When it was reworded in 1968 the section read that a court had exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine a complaint of an offence brought against a child.

In the opinion of one of the justices in the Supreme Court this wording apparently means that, because a child is defined in the Act as a boy or girl who is, or appears to be, under the age of 18, a child would have to be under the age of 18 when appearing in court on a charge brought against that child. There is probably not much to quarrel with in the justice's opinion.

On the other hand, before the 1968 amendment—and, indeed, ever since in the practice of the court—because of the intention of the legislation it was acknowledged that every alleged offence committed by a child should come under the jurisdiction of the Children's Court even if the proceedings took place after the child reached the age of 18 years. However, according to the interpretation of the provision in the Act someone over the age of 18 was no longer deemed to be a child, and if the complaint was brought against the child having passed 18, the Children's Court could not handle the case.

As I have said, the magistrates in the Children's Court did not look too closely at the new wording and have upheld the previous usage in that they have dealt with cases where the person is past the age of 18, provided the offence was committed by a child under the age of 18. As a result of one judgment by a Supreme Court judge which, as I have said, is probably correct in law there is a necessity to amend the Act. Consequently the old wording will virtually be returned to the legislation through the proposed amendment.

It means that the court will have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine a complaint of an offence alleged to have been committed by a child.

To make clear the intentions of the legislation to the Child Welfare Department, and anyone else who deals with delinquent children, a further provision in the amending Bill makes it absolutely clear the Children's Court jurisdiction shall apply to a person beyond the age of 18 years so long as the offence was committed and the apprehension made before a child reached the age of 18 years. We have no objection to the measure; in fact we welcome it and I commend it to the House.

**MR. T. D. EVANS** (Kalgoorlie—Attorney-General) [11.07 a.m.]: I thank the member for Floreat for his clear enunciation of the sole principle of this Bill. I also thank him for his support and, with that support, I commend the Bill to the House having already moved that it be read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### In Committee, etc.

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

### Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. T. D. Evans (Attorney-General), and passed.

## ALUMINA REFINERY (MITCHELL PLATEAU) AGREEMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 2nd December.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.10 a.m.]: The Opposition raises no objection to this Bill. I do not even raise the normal bleat about the lateness of the session because I well know the predicaments which can arise from time to time. I would be hypercritical if I made an issue of that.

The Minister explained to the House the technical problem which arose relating to the Mitchell Plateau project. It is identical with the problem which confronted us with the Robe River project. On that occasion had we not taken emergency action with the co-operation of the Opposition towards the end of a session we could have imperilled the project or delayed its commencement. This is a typical case where delay could occur if a machinery agreement is not dealt with quickly. Perhaps even the project could be imperilled.

I would like to make it clear that I have not had a chance to check the detailed changes in the wording of the new agreement. However, the Minister has explained that they are purely machinery alterations, changing dates for the special circumstances in the new agreement.

It is important that the House understands there are forces outside those normally within the control of the State which are able to dictate to us. One problem is the Reserve Bank provision for overseas funds being invested in this country, and in particular the Banking (Foreign Exchange) Regulations.

Having made it clear that we on this side of the House support the Bill and raise no objection to its introduction, may I pay a tribute to the company concerned? I understand the Minister saw the Amax people when he was abroad recently, and no doubt he met Mr. Ian McGregor. I think it is as well for Parliament occasionally to pause and reflect on some of the problems which beset these developers.

This project is of vital importance to the development of the Kimberley region. I believe the overall impact on the development of the Kimberley region will be even more important than the establishment of the alumina refinery. We are fortunate the company involved is headed by a man like Mr. Ian McGregor, who is very anxious to generate a multiplicity of activities so that the people will not be dependent on one company from the start. I do not know the progress the company has made in the study of agricultural pursuits, fishing pursuits, and forestry pursuits. However, the fact that it was prepared to do this work is a credit to it.

Mr. McGregor has shown tremendous persistence and courage in overcoming the difficulties which appeared to beset the project due to the lack of Australian interest. Australians today often complain about the inability to participate in Australian developments. However, when one attempts to put their nose to the grindstone on something more difficult than usual, they back away. The Minister made it quite clear, as did the previous Government, that if Australians did not want to participate in this venture the project should still proceed. The important thing is, the chance to participate was there.

I would like to add that Mr. McGregor is the person who has tried to retain and develop the interest of the consortium to produce steel on a large scale in Western Australia. Having regard for all these things, it is desirable we should make reference to and acknowledge our understanding of his interest in the difficulties the company has faced. I have no further comment to make. I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

*Third Reading*

**MR. GRAHAM** (Balcatta—Minister for Development and Decentralisation) [11.18 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in allowing this Bill to be passed at such short notice. I would further add that I agree wholeheartedly with his remarks regarding the efforts of the company, not only in respect of this project but also of its activities associated with other contemplated major works in this State.

The only other comment I would make is that in comparatively recent times we have seen an awareness on the part of the venturers of the difficulties associated with such undertakings in isolated spots. If employees are to be attracted and retained it is absolutely essential that normal facilities and amenities be provided as far as possible. If such facilities are not provided there will be either no labour available or a rapid turnover, which of course would be anything but satisfactory.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

## **APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)**

*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 2nd December.

**MR. THOMPSON** (Darling Range) [11.20 a.m.]: Today I want to address myself to the circumstances surrounding the controversial aspects of two matters and the blame that has been placed on the Government in relation to them. Firstly I refer to the Yundurup canals project. I do not intend to take up much of the time of the House in dealing with this topic because it was dealt with at length last night, and I take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Floreat on the excellent speech he made on this subject.

It is true that anyone who seeks to develop land in this day and age meets certain problems along the way. After he enters into negotiations he has to apply to the various authorities to obtain permits and so on. He then has to organise his finance and complete his detailed planning to get the project under way.

From the time a project is started until it is completed a great deal of time elapses and many hurdles have to be overcome. Every developer who enters one of these projects knows full well the many problems he is likely to encounter.

Mr. O'Connor: And the risk.

Mr. THOMPSON: Yes, and the risk. Three years ago I purchased a house that had been built for some four or five years at the corner of King William Street and Guildford Road, Bayswater. The house was situated on several acres of land which was swampy and low lying. Obviously in its existing state it was of no value to anybody. So a company was formed with the idea of draining and reclaiming the land for the purpose of building a motel and a number of flats.

Obviously, the house erected on the site had to be removed. I tendered for the house and was successful in my tender, following which I removed the building and rebuilt it on another site. Because I had purchased that house I have had an interest in the land on which it was previously erected. The development of it started but nothing has been done for the last two or three years. In fact, a considerable sum of money was spent by the developers on draining it. They put drag-lines in and commenced to install a sophisticated draining system, but that is as far as they have gone. The developers spent thousands of dollars on that site, but it remains desolate to this day. It is obvious that somewhere along the line some of the negotiations broke down and the developers are unable to proceed.

Mr. O'Connor: Perhaps they can get a guarantee from the Government.

Mr. THOMPSON: Perhaps they could. I would ask the Premier what his attitude would be towards granting assistance for that sort of development. Obviously a Government authority, in some way, has placed a block in the negotiations that were entered into to develop the land.

I relate that incident to what is happening at Yundurup. That was a project conceived by some people who wanted to make some money for themselves—they were not doing it for the good of the community—so they negotiated to obtain finance and then negotiated with the previous Government and agreed to comply with all the requirements and conditions they had to observe to develop the project, and it went ahead.

We were told by the Premier that because of additional conditions imposed on the developers by the previous Government the project became no longer viable, and so the present Government feels it is obliged to guarantee a loan of \$1,750,000 for the project that is not designed to provide one house for the average man.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I heard you say that they were told by the Premier. Will you tell me who was told and when?

Mr. THOMPSON: The fact that the guarantee was given would lead me to believe that someone with at least the Premier's authority had given the guarantee.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: But you said that the people engaged in this project were told by the then Premier that the project was no longer viable.

Mr. THOMPSON: If I said that it was not what I meant to say. The project had been submitted to the various departments and a commencement was made. It appears the developers now say that other conditions and restrictions were imposed upon them. That is probably so, but that happens in many instances. That is why I cited the example of the project at Bayswater as a parallel to the Yundurup project. Developers, in their desire to make money, are prepared to take certain risks and if some of their plans go awry they have to accept that.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That was not the situation in this case. Surely an organisation intending to proceed with a project is entitled to negotiate finance on the basis of the terms of an agreement accepted. If, a considerable time later, additional conditions are imposed, that is a different situation altogether.

Mr. Rushton: That is not the situation now.

Mr. THOMPSON: It has not been demonstrated that additional conditions were imposed.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It will be.

Mr. THOMPSON: I would like to hear what the Premier has to say on this.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You will hear all right!

Mr. THOMPSON: The community at large would like to hear it. I would like to be a fly on the wall at the next meeting of the A.L.P. Executive, because if the executive considers this project to be in the interests of the working man I will go "tiggy." I can hardly see how a highly speculative land deal such as this can be regarded by the rank and file members of the Labor Party as a project for which finance can be guaranteed by the State. That is my concern in this matter.

Mr. Graham: It will be the first time you have been concerned for the worker.

Mr. O'Connor: Your first time has yet to come.

Mr. THOMPSON: I hope the Deputy Premier and I sit long enough in this House so that he will hear me express my deep concern for the working man. I have never had a silver spoon in my mouth, because I have been a working man. I have a deep concern for the man in the street; the man who earns his living with his hands.

Mr. Graham: Your political philosophy somewhat belies that.

Mr. THOMPSON: That may be the opinion of the Deputy Premier, but it is not a fact. I have already said that I applaud the attitude of the member for Floreat towards environmental protection in the area in which this development project is situated. The beauty that existed and attracted people to that place will no longer exist after this enterprise has completed its development. For that reason I would like to see the area remain in its natural state. We have few places of beauty in Western Australia, and the Yundurup area is one of them. I think future generations of Western Australians will be the poorer because of the present development, and because of similar developments that will occur in the future.

Although there is no question that we desire to have and need industry established in this State, I do not think we should desecrate a place such as Yundurup for the sole purpose of providing land on which rich people can build holiday homes; and in this instance it is highly possible that these home sites will be provided at some expense to the State and the ordinary taxpayer.

Mr. Graham: But if it is to be desecrated approval for that desecration was given by the Liberal Government.

Mr. THOMPSON: I said earlier I do not hold with the concept of its being developed at all, and I do not entirely condone the actions of the previous Government. I go along with the member for Floreat. It was interesting last night to hear the Premier on this point. First of all he accused the member for Floreat of being mute and not saying anything about it, but a few minutes later he said it was people like the member for Floreat who were responsible for these added restrictions. Was the member for Floreat doing anything about it, or was he not? I believe he was, and in a very direct way.

Mr. Jamieson: He was doing it quietly and in a very different way from the way he is kicking up a row now.

Mr. Court: Not so quietly.

Mr. THOMPSON: Perhaps if the Minister had been one of the Ministers at that time he would not think that the member for Floreat was not doing something about it. I believe his actions on this project were consistent right through.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: We will see as we go on.

Mr. THOMPSON: I will conclude this segment of my speech by emphasising my deep concern about the fact that the Government has underwritten a highly-speculative land deal which is designed to enable some people to make some money, and in so doing provide sites for holiday homes, not for ordinary people—because

ordinary people cannot pay \$10,000 for a block of land on which to build a holiday home—but for rich people.

Mr. Graham: Under your Government a worker had very little option but to pay almost as much as that for land on which to build his home; not a holiday home.

Mr. THOMPSON: The second topic on which I wish to touch today is one about which members may have heard me speak before; that is, the power lines in the Darling Range.

Mr. Graham: How surprising!

Mr. THOMPSON: It was of interest to me to read the comments expressed by the Premier in yesterday's political notes.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I am flattered to think you read them.

Mr. THOMPSON: I do indeed and I should imagine anyone with any interest in politics would read them. Of course, how many of the average public read them is probably debatable. However, those notes are a means by which the political leaders can express their points of view and they are available to people who wish to read them.

As I was saying, yesterday's notes made very interesting reading and I am pleased the Premier devoted the whole of the space available to him to this topic; but it was strange reading. He tried to pin the blame for the decision on the previous Government.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Not the blame; the responsibility.

Mr. THOMPSON: Did the Premier suggest the previous Government did nothing about this before the 20th February?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: No.

Mr. THOMPSON: Well, it was implied in the political notes.

Mr. Jamieson: What did they do?

Mr. THOMPSON: They implied that the previous Government did not make a decision or do anything about arriving at a decision before the election.

Mr. Jamieson: I am asking you what the previous Government did.

Mr. THOMPSON: I will tell the Minister. The State Electricity Commission had carried out investigations with the shires through whose areas the lines were proposed to go; and it must be remembered that the commission is the Government's arm in this matter. The Shire of Kalamunda and all the other shires accepted that the lines would go east of the escarpment. It was not until the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority was asked by the commission for an opinion that there was any serious suggestion that the lines would pass between the city and the escarpment.

Mr. Jamieson: I think there was.

Mr. THOMPSON: No serious suggestion. Other routes were examined, there was no question about that, but no serious suggestion was made or consideration given it because the shires were quite adamant that the lines should not go between the city and the escarpment. It was considered they would go east of the escarpment. So sure was the commission of this that it constructed a scale model of the project which was available at the commission's office for all to see.

I studied it myself but it came as somewhat of a body blow to the people in the hills when the M.R.P.A. suggested well before the 20th February that, in its opinion, the lines should go across the face of the escarpment.

Mr. Jamieson: The then Minister had a knowledge of that, of course.

Mr. THOMPSON: I did not hear the interjection.

Mr. Jamieson: The then Minister knew of the recommendation of the M.R.P.A.

Mr. THOMPSON: Everyone did. It was published in the Press and that was what put people into orbit.

Mr. Jamieson: The then Minister had knowledge of it.

Mr. THOMPSON: That is right.

Mr. Bickerton: You are in orbit.

Mr. Jamieson: What action did he take?

Mr. THOMPSON: It was implied by the Premier in his political notes yesterday that the previous Government did nothing in connection with the decision on the proposed power lines. Bless my soul, I was the Liberal candidate for Darling Range and I nearly fell over when I realised this was on the drawing board. It was of great concern to me.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What did you do about it?

Mr. THOMPSON: What did I do about it? Ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition, and other members of the previous Cabinet.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: There is no record of your having done anything.

Mr. Court: Here we go again.

Mr. THOMPSON: Does the Premier deny that an undertaking was given by the previous Premier at a meeting in Kalamunda on the 7th January that no decision would be made until—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Until after the election.

Mr. Court: Wait a minute. Let him finish.

Mr. Graham: Until after the election.

Mr. THOMPSON: A clear and unqualified undertaking was given that the project would be submitted to the body to be established under the environmental protection

legislation, and that no decision would be made until after the matter had been aired before that authority.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That doesn't surprise me. That was not the first decision your Government deferred until after the election.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was not deferred until after the election.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Of course it was.

Mr. THOMPSON: The General Manager of the State Electricity Commission said he appreciated the hostility being expressed by the people of the area and that no decision would be made on the routes until—

Mr. Graham: Until after the election.

Mr. THOMPSON: —after the commission had costed both routes and looked at all aspects.

Mr. Graham: Until after the election. Talk about a chicken Government! Every big issue was put under the carpet.

Mr. Court: Twelve years of the greatest prosperity this State ever knew!

Mr. Jamieson: You were lucky you didn't come in behind the Liberal Government. Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMPSON: I would like to hear the interjection of the Minister for Works.

Mr. Jamieson: You are only lucky you didn't come in behind the Liberal Government. You would not have been allowed to do this.

Mr. THOMPSON: If I had, so strongly do I feel about this that if the situation was as it is now, it would come down!

Mr. Jamieson: You would be a good comedian.

Mr. Court: He is being factual.

Mr. Jamieson: You sit in the corner like Jack Horner.

Mr. THOMPSON: I am here to represent the people.

Mr. Graham: You represent 1140 Hay Street.

Mr. THOMPSON: My decision would have to be made on whether I sit quiet and allow something to occur in my electorate which will react very badly against me, or I get up and say what I think and represent the people who have put me in this place for that purpose.

Mr. Bickerton: Why do it in the party room?

Mr. Court: Do not let that type of interjection upset you; this is when you have them very worried. You have hit them right on the quick.

Mr. THOMPSON: They will not upset me.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Darling Range addresses the Chair he will make more progress.

Mr. Bickerton: I think he is power drunk.

Mr. THOMPSON: I appeal to the Minister for Electricity to take into consideration the point of view of the people who live in the hills. I put it to him simply: Originally two routes were surveyed and it was said, quite categorically, that the power lines would either pass along a five-chain reserve across the face of the escarpment, or along a second five-chain path through the valleys. There was never any suggestion that one line would be constructed along each route. The feeling of the people in the area can be imagined now that they have been informed that not only will there be a power line through the foothills, but also another power line along the route through the valleys.

Mr. Jamieson: I would like to judge their opinions two years after the project is finished. They will not know the power lines are there.

Mr. THOMPSON: If I were the ex-Minister for Electricity I would be inclined to soft pedal.

Mr. Jamieson: I have had power lines through my territory but the member for Darling Range has not had any experience with the same situation. That is the difference.

Mr. THOMPSON: I suggest the ex-Minister soft pedals because if anyone made a botch of a project, he did, with the power line proposal.

Mr. Jamieson: Lovely!

Mr. Court: That is why the portfolio was taken away from him!

Mr. THOMPSON: I was not going to say that. However, the ex-Minister's statements of "bad luck for some people," and "these things are majestic" did not help the situation.

Mr. Jamieson: The member for Darling Range should ask the people in Tasmania; they think they are majestic.

Mr. THOMPSON: I must give the ex-Minister for Electricity credit for sticking to his point of view. It is obvious he does not intend to change his mind.

Mr. Jamieson: Mine is a genuine point of view, and has not been influenced by scare and other such activities.

Mr. May: The member for Darling Range used expressions such as, "diabolical plots," "people will be killed," and "bloodshed." This is the member who got up and said the Labor Party was a stirring party, and yet he talks about bloodshed.

Mr. THOMPSON: I will refer to the Minister's interjection concerning bloodshed. I claim the record for petition-presenting in this Parliament in any one year.

Mr. May: I think you will keep it for a while, too.

Mr. Jamieson: I suppose they received as much attention as any other petition.

Mr. THOMPSON: I suppose that is right. When one petition was being circulated in the hills area an Irishwoman was asked to sign.

Mr. Court: From the north or the south?

Mr. Jamieson: From bogside or the other side?

Mr. THOMPSON: The Irishwoman said she would not sign the petition because she did not want to get involved. She had just come from a country where blood had been spilt and she feared that grave trouble would occur as it did in her former country over something similar. That was the statement.

Mr. May: You did not mention "diabolical" and "desecration"?

Mr. THOMPSON: Yes, I used those words.

Mr. Court: Wait until the former Minister refers to them as "symphonies in steel."

Mr. Jamieson: Did I say that? I think I said "majestic."

Mr. THOMPSON: I was not referring to the power lines as being diabolical. I believe the decision taken by the Government is diabolical, in the light of the opinion expressed by Dr. O'Brien.

Mr. Bickerton: We will have to call you "the Darling Ranger."

Mr. Jamieson: I like the "Darling" part!

Mr. May: Do not take that title away from the member for Dale.

Mr. THOMPSON: Dr. O'Brien was obviously consulted in this case. In fact, the decision was delayed long past the point at which it was expected to be made.

Mr. May: We were waiting on the results of the Ascot by-election!

Mr. THOMPSON: That is the point I was to make.

Mr. May: We knew that.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was so obvious that was the reason.

Mr. May: It had a lot of effect on the Ascot by-election!

Mr. THOMPSON: The Government had the Director of Environmental Protection looking into this matter. A verbal report was conveyed to Cabinet, and that is not good enough, in my opinion.

Mr. May: That is your opinion.

Mr. THOMPSON: If we are to have a considered opinion from a person such as Dr. O'Brien that opinion cannot just be conveyed by word of mouth. It has to be a documented report indicating just what aspects were considered.

That is one point on which the Government was remiss. A full report should have been documented and available to be placed on the Table of the House so that all could look at it.

Mr. Bickerton: If the Minister had agreed would that have stopped the petitions?

Mr. THOMPSON: It would have taken a lot of wind out of the argument.

Mr. Bickerton: And out of your sails.

Mr. THOMPSON: It would have.

Mr. May: If both lines were constructed behind the Darling Range escarpment would the member for Darling Range be talking on behalf of the Bickley people? I think it is a case of out of sight out of mind.

Mr. THOMPSON: I still adhere to the point of view I expressed at the public meeting at Kalamunda in January, and to the point of view I expressed in my maiden speech; in the speech I made when I introduced the motion to this House; and the speech I made in reply to the motion. That point of view is that both lines could be constructed on the one row of pylons at the present time.

Mr. May: You are setting yourself up as an authority.

Mr. THOMPSON: No, I am not.

Mr. May: Yes, you are.

Mr. THOMPSON: The opinion I have expressed has been supported. In fact, it was not my opinion, but the opinion of an engineer who has had 16 years' experience in the distribution of power in Great Britain.

Mr. May: That does not make it right.

Mr. Jamieson: That is the reason he is wrong.

Mr. THOMPSON: Now the ex-Minister for Electricity is the expert.

Mr. Jamieson: The engineer to whom you referred got his experience in Great Britain. He did not have to consider bushfires every few years.

Mr. THOMPSON: What bushfire danger will there be in the area if there are no trees?

Mr. Jamieson: The danger is ionisation.

Mr. May: Once a bushfire started it would go right through the forest area.

Mr. Jamieson: A bushfire would ionise the air.

Mr. THOMPSON: That is right, but it would depend on how close the heat was to the powerlines.

Mr. May: That is why we are taking no risks.

Mr. THOMPSON: No risk of fires?

Mr. May: It would be less risky along the foothills route than through the valleys.

Mr. THOMPSON: I think there would be very little difference in it.

Mr. May: I think it is a bit late in the day for you to talk about it now.

Mr. THOMPSON: Two lines are to be constructed along two separate routes but it was only ever considered that both lines would go along route "A" or route "B." The Minister made the point that it was a bit late in the day for me to talk about this matter. I refer to the Minister a statement made by the ex-Minister for Electricity when he spoke to the motion I moved in this House. He said that the member for Darling Range had nothing to grizzle about because no decision had been made. However, now that the decision has been made I do have something to grizzle about because the people of this State have been sold down the drain.

Mr. Jamieson: A few people are worried about it!

Mr. THOMPSON: It was never stated either by the commission, or the Government, that it was possible two lines would be constructed along two different routes. The people in the area are now faced with the prospect of having two power lines. A decision has now been made after a period of six months, and the people will be upset about it.

It has been said by the Government that what it proposes is a compromise. The Government referred to the reduction in the height of the towers as being more acceptable. It was always known the height of the towers would have to be reduced in a certain part of that area.

Mr. Jamieson: You are wrong again.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was said by the representative of the commission at the meeting at Kalamunda on the 7th January—

Mr. Jamieson: You are completely wrong again. If it had been under the fold of the hills they would have been the same height all the way through.

Mr. Rushton: He is quoting what was said at the meeting. I was there.

Mr. May: Were you at the meeting?

Mr. Rushton: Yes, I was.

Mr. May: You evidently do not understand it, either.

Mr. THOMPSON: I show to members a map put out by D.C.A. showing the various clearances. The clearances shown in the drawing are those above the level of the runway at Guildford Airport. This map must be read in association with the contour levels. It appears to be quite clear to me that the height of the pylons would need to be reduced, and it appeared to be

clear to the Minister because in reply to a question I asked in this House he said the reduction in the height of the pylons was outside the jurisdiction of the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. May: In the new route. In the old route it did not make any difference.

Mr. THOMPSON: Tell me the difference between the new foothills route and the old foothills route.

Mr. Jamieson: About half a mile or so.

Mr. THOMPSON: What does that represent in terms of clearances?

Mr. Jamieson: A lot.

Mr. May: It represents about 60 feet.

Mr. Jamieson: Where they would have been, if the aeroplanes went into anything they would have gone into Gooseberry Hill.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was always considered the pylons would have to be reduced in height in part of this area. Whatever is said on the other side, that statement was made at a public meeting in Kalamunda on the 7th January.

Mr. Jamieson: I would like to know in what context that statement was made.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was made and it was confirmed in discussions people had with representatives of the State Electricity Commission during the time of this controversy. In addition to this compromise—this reduction in the height—we are told within 10 years the line must be duplicated across the face of the escarpment, and I can see the reason for it.

Mr. May: It is not going across the face of the escarpment. What are you talking about?

Mr. THOMPSON: Is it not? Originally it was proposed to construct it along about the 200-foot contour level. If the Minister knows the Six-way service station—

Mr. May: Yes.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was to go just east of the Six-way service station, and for some reason—whilst never confirmed by the commission—it was rumoured it was to be moved up to Albina Road to the 270-foot contour level.

Mr. May: The 140-foot pylons will be here and they are half a mile away from where they would have been. Talk to some of your committees out there. They do not go along with what you are saying.

Mr. THOMPSON: Now the line has come back to just west of the Six-way service station, and in terms of distance from the face of the escarpment it is only yards.

Mr. May: Don't be ridiculous! You are stepping out.

Mr. THOMPSON: There will be not only one line across the face of the escarpment—or, let us say, through the foothills—

Mr. May: It is even further down than the foothills. It is on the flats. You had better go and have a look at them.

Mr. THOMPSON: I know where they are. There will not be only one line on the flats; in 10 years' time there will be another one, too.

Mr. Jamieson: Probably you will not have them in your electorate after the redistribution.

Mr. THOMPSON: The Minister might know something more about the redistribution than I do, but as far as I know both of them will be in my electorate.

Mr. O'Connor: That sounds ominous.

Mr. Jamieson: It is because of certain things you put into the Act.

Mr. Court: I respect your judgment on political matters.

Mr. THOMPSON: To try to soften the impact of having two lines across the flats, the Government says within 10 years it will probably be feasible to put the lines underground. What a lot of nonsense! It will be no more feasible in 10 years than it is now, and even if it becomes technically possible at that time, can it be imagined that the Government of the day would find the astronomical sum of money necessary to put the lines underground when one already existed above the ground?

Mr. May: Why didn't you kick up a row when the Muja power line went through? This line is taking the exact route of the Muja power line. What about when the two television towers went up? Have you been along the transmission lines through Coolbellup, Rossmoyne, and Bentley?

Mr. THOMPSON: Yes, I have. Real estate agents in those areas have confirmed that houses along that route are bringing considerably reduced prices.

Mr. May: Have you heard about the latest sales at Rossmoyne?

Mr. THOMPSON: I was speaking about the price—

Mr. May: The Swan Brewery has just built a new hotel right underneath an 80-foot pylon.

Mr. THOMPSON: The Swan Brewery might like to do such things but I wonder whether the Minister would like to buy a block there. Another aspect must be considered. When a power line exists people can make up their minds whether or not they want to have it for a neighbour, but others have chosen to suffer some inconvenience, in many cases, and live in a part of the metropolitan area that is not as well serviced as Floreat Park and City Beach might be. They have chosen to live in those areas because they enjoy the environment and they like the area.



Mr. May: Isn't there desecration of the environment where you are living?

Mr. Rushton: Why didn't the Government get the environment protection authority to check it?

Mr. THOMPSON: The environment protection body did check it and the verbal report that was made to the Government by the director did not favour a line across the flats.

Mr. May: You are wrong. Read it again. He did not say that at all.

Mr. THOMPSON: He said he favoured a line to the east of the escarpment.

Mr. May: He did not say he did not favour another one along the front.

Mr. THOMPSON: The Minister is becoming just about as competent in that sort of argument as the Premier.

Mr. May: I am glad.

Mr. Graham: I do not think the member for Darling Range knows the first thing about this.

Mr. THOMPSON: I will quote from the paper that was tabled in the House at the request of my good friend the member for Dale. It reads—

Following an inspection of the proposed route of the 330KV Transmission Line—Kwinana to Northern Terminal the Director of Environmental Protection submitted his verbal opinion to the Hon. Minister.

The Hon. Minister's submission to the Hon. Premier (in Cabinet) contained the following information:—

Dr. O'Brien is of the opinion that the second route behind the ranges is acceptable and believes that this line should be built initially. At the same time effort should be made to survey a route for the second line in roughly the same path. However, the General Manager of the State Electricity Commission states that both lines must go in simultaneously.

Mr. May: He said it was acceptable.

Mr. THOMPSON: He did not say he was against it but if he had been for it he would have said so.

Mr. May: If it had been a detailed report.

Mr. THOMPSON: That is supposition. The Minister is supposing things and putting a different interpretation on that letter.

Mr. May: I believe that is a clear indication of the opinion and contention of the Director of Environmental Protection.

Mr. THOMPSON: Does the Minister agree with the director's decision in that matter?

Mr. May: Yes. Do you say he was right in allowing it to go through the State forest?

Mr. THOMPSON: I believe it will have to traverse—

Mr. May: Do you say it was a good decision by the Director of Environmental Protection to put it through the State forest?

Mr. THOMPSON: Yes.

Mr. May: Why? Because it will take it away from the front of your place?

Mr. THOMPSON: Whichever way it goes, I will have one within sight of my place.

Mr. May: But you did not want it?

Mr. THOMPSON: I did not want it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Darling Range.

Mr. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I will have to ignore members opposite. I can appreciate that they are a little tender on the point. If ever a hash was made of a proposal or project, one has been made of this.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You do not seem to have much confidence in the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. THOMPSON: I have.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: How could you?

Mr. THOMPSON: If I was an engineer with the State Electricity Commission I would be jumping for joy because the commission has what it wanted. It has that which the engineers wanted right from the word go.

Mr. May: You said a moment ago that another engineer said it was no good.

Mr. THOMPSON: Yes, another engineer has said that.

Mr. May: You say it is desirable on the one hand, and undesirable on the other. You are like a lawyer—"on the one hand this and on the other hand that."

Mr. THOMPSON: I am saying that from its point of view the commission has the best possible arrangement—that is, single lines on separate routes.

Mr. May: I think you have your lines crossed.

Mr. THOMPSON: The commission has complete separation of the lines and it has security in the system, which is what it wanted right from the beginning. That was the opinion expressed to me in private by a senior engineer of the State Electricity Commission. Mr. Gillies made the point that if the commission could have its way and there was no consideration of the impact of the lines on the environment the commission would prefer two separate routes. The Commission now has separate routes. I believe the Government has made a silly decision in the circumstances; it may be able to justify the decision, but in the eyes of many people there is no compromise in it.

Mr. Jamieson: Who made the silly decision?

Mr. THOMPSON: The Government.

Mr. Jamieson: You have to transfer that onto the backs of some very competent people in the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. THOMPSON: It is a Government decision.

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, on the commission's recommendation.

Mr. THOMPSON: Well, I fail to see how the Minister could accept initially that there should be two lines along one route or the other, and then accept a further recommendation that there should be separate routes.

Mr. Jamieson: You would understand it if you saw the built-in frailties in the previous idea.

Mr. THOMPSON: I believe that posterity will judge the decision taken by the Government as being most ridiculous.

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [12.03 p.m.]: Having listened to the speech of the member for Darling Range and the interjections from and the disagreement of those on the Government side, I would like first of all to commend the honourable member for the manner in which he presented his case. I will offer a solution.

Mr. May: Put them in the country!

Mr. Jamieson: I know what you are going to do.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I cannot understand why people should complain about power being supplied; I can name a dozen places in which the people would accept the power tomorrow. They would be prepared to contribute large sums of money to have their properties connected to the mains. If the Minister decides not to put the power lines through the Darling Range area, I would welcome the opportunity to make suggestions as to where they should go. I have a list of names I could supply quickly. Then the whole problem would be solved and the Government would have no more worries.

Mr. Jamieson: Except for financing them.

Mr. McPHARLIN: My proposition would not suit the member for Darling Range and the people in his electorate. I remember that only last year or the year before we had before us a proposal to place power lines across the Swan River. The then Opposition put up some violent objections and similar arguments were produced. However, I have not heard very much said about that matter since the lines have been installed across the river. It does not seem to be causing dissension at the moment.

In contributing to this debate I would point out that it is only about 12 months ago that the previous Government introduced into this House a Budget which was

regarded at the time as a balanced Budget. Now in this Budget we are contemplating a deficit of something like \$3,500,000—that is, after increases in taxation of various kinds to the tune of something like \$12,000,000.

I would remind members that when the Treasurer presented the Budget he said—

Notwithstanding the fact that departments had been instructed to prepare their estimates on the basis of minimum needs, and after further pruning of expenditure proposals by the Treasury, the Government was facing a prospective deficit of \$15,500,000 this year.

Mr. Jamieson: What is your recommendation; cut down rural subsidies?

Mr. McPHARLIN: I will come to that later. To continue with what the Treasurer had to say—

A deficit of this magnitude could not be contemplated and the Government has no alternative but to implement measures designed to raise an additional \$12,000,000 in this financial year.

Mr. Jamieson: The last Budget was balanced only because a thumb was on the scales.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Ever since the present Government has been in power the Premier has cried out that he has not enough finance. He has tried his hardest to lay the blame for the State's financial worries at the feet of the previous Government. He claimed there was inadequate bookkeeping, or words to that effect.

Only recently we had an opportunity to assess public opinion—I think it was about the only real opportunity we have had—owing to the unfortunate demise of the previous Speaker. I refer to the recent by-election at Ascot. I think the results were an indictment against the Administration which has been in power for nine months. I think that indictment resulted from the promises that were made but not kept and the unemployment which is rampant in the State at the present time. Unemployment figures are apparently increasing.

Then we heard the Premier asking for a fair go. I think it is inherent in the character of Australians that they like to give Governments and organisations a fair go. But what can they expect after a period of increased taxes and broken promises? How can the Premier reconcile his complaints about the shortage of funds—at the present time he is demanding millions of dollars from the Federal Government—with the fact that he intends to pay back millions of dollars of receipts duty?

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Are you opposed to the refund of receipts duty?

Mr. McPHARLIN: I would like the Premier to explain how he can claim he is short of money although he still proposes to find millions of dollars to refund receipts duty.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Have you analysed the basis of the payments?

Mr. McPHARLIN: I understand that it is to be \$500,000 a year. That is a large amount of money which could be well used elsewhere. Nobody denies that we are living in difficult times.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I take it you are opposed to the refunds.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I do not think any field has felt the effect of the difficult times more than the primary industries. However, I will return to that point in a few minutes. At the present time I think there is a need for confidence to be injected into our economy. Of course, the Federal Government should enter the field of instilling confidence into our economy. I think it is trying to do just that.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It has not shown any sign of that yet.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Yes it has. I will mention this aspect a little later.

Mr. O'Connor: That silenced them.

Mr. McPHARLIN: We need to get money moving in our economy. The statistics in relation to savings banks indicate that a vast amount of money is being deposited in banks, and it is not being used.

Western Australia, where vast mineral development is taking place, is experiencing financial problems. It should be able to weather the storm better than the other States, but it does not appear to be doing that, because unemployment in the State is running at a fairly high level, and the State is facing severe financial problems—and nobody denies that—yet the Premier has taken action to refund the receipts stamp duty. I understand he is proposing to replace the Fremantle gaol at a cost of millions of dollars. I am not arguing against the need for a new gaol, because I think a new one is required; but I am rather amazed at the wizardry of the Premier. I do not know how he can find the money that is required, in view of the Government's constant plea that there are no funds in the coffers of the Treasury.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Would you not think that a replacement of the Fremantle gaol is essential?

Mr. McPHARLIN: I am not opposed to it.

Mr. T. D. Evans: These things have to be paid for.

Mr. McPHARLIN: When one mentions broken promises members on the Government side are quick to react; and the Premier usually defends himself, which

any Premier would do, when this type of accusation is levelled against him. I would draw the attention of members once again to one broken promise, and this is an important one.

Mr. Jamieson: So should some of the broken promises of the previous Government be drawn to our attention.

Mr. McPHARLIN: This promise relates to electricity charges. I can do no better than to quote from the policy speech of the then Leader of the Opposition, and now the Premier, before the last general election. He said—

The present Government—

He was referring to the Liberal-Country Party coalition Government. To continue—

—has allowed the State Electricity Commission to operate as a taxing machine with the result that costs of connection and supply are higher than they need be, particularly on farmers and other country people.

From its inception in 1945, up to 1966, a period of 21 years, the Commission made an accumulated profit on its metropolitan system of \$11,000,000, an average of a little more than half a million dollars a year. Since then it has had an average yearly profit of \$4,750,000, with a profit of \$6,279,945 last year.

It is clear that uniform charges for electricity can be adopted throughout the Commission's supply system without having to raise charges in the metropolitan area and we propose to have uniform charges adopted.

That is about the only part of the promise that has been kept—uniformity of charges. Furthermore, there is no doubt whatsoever that the impression gained by the people in the country areas was that if a change of Government took place there would be an equalisation of electricity charges, and that they would be brought back to the level of the charges applying to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Jamieson: This is the old balancing exercise: The thumb slipped on the scale!

Mr. McPHARLIN: The Government cannot deny that it has broken its promise in relation to electricity charges. The reaction of the people in general can be gauged by the result of the Ascot by-election, because those people remembered the 20 per cent. increase in electricity charges. In that by-election held on the 13th November, 2,000 of the electors failed to vote. Where were they?

Mr. Jamieson: Always in a by-election many people do not vote, irrespective of where the by-election is held.

Mr. McPHARLIN: On this occasion, 2,000 people failed to vote.

Mr. Court: Just as well for the Government that those electors did not vote.

Mr. Jamieson: The member for Nedlands says it is just as well that they did not vote, but I would point out many of them are workers up north or in other parts of the State, such as Mt. Newman. That was where they were.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Would the Minister concede that those people were unhappy with the Government?

Mr. Jamieson: No, they would have voted if they were unhappy.

Mr. Graham: I will tell the member for Mt. Marshall something: The election is over!

Mr. McPHARLIN: Is that right? I'll bet the Deputy Premier is glad that it is.

Mr. Court: It seems that the Deputy Premier cannot get out of the Chamber quickly enough for fear that he may have something on his hands.

Mr. Nalder: This Government might yet have to face another election.

Mr. May: I bet the Ministers in the previous Governments are not keen to come back to office at this period.

Mr. McPHARLIN: We all know the reason for the prorogation of Parliament. In the hiatus that followed the Government was deprived of some income, as a result of which instead of an estimated deficit in revenue of \$3,500,000 it will be nearer \$4,000,000. If that is the position one wonders what the actual deficit will be by the 30th June next, and what additional taxes the Government proposes to impose in order to balance the Budget.

Mr. Bickerton: You would not mind if they were not imposed on the farmers.

Mr. McPHARLIN: If the Minister analyses the statistics he will find the farming community have contributed large amounts in taxes.

Mr. Bickerton: You would not object if it was not on the farmer.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Of course I would not, but I should point out the farmers have paid their share of taxes and in large lumps.

Mr. Jamieson: But you got back \$27,000,000 from the Government.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The rural industry is facing a rather difficult situation. I think the whole nation is undergoing a change at the present time. It is becoming industrialised, and secondary industry is becoming more important and dominant. It is in the transitional period, in the change from a rural to a secondary economy, that the situation will be most difficult. During this time problems on all sides will be created.

In this period there will be a transition of the work force from one industry to another, and we will have to look for Government assistance, understanding,

patience, and the provision of retraining schemes to fit the workers into alternative occupations. I know the rural reconstruction authority in Western Australia is doing its very best, and I was pleased to see in today's newspaper that the Federal Government has allocated an increased amount of funds for retraining purposes. These are the types of schemes which need to be put into operation; but to make them work efficiently and satisfactorily for all concerned, each of us must endeavour to do his best to handle the position with understanding to make the transitional period flow along as smoothly as possible.

Mr. Nalder: I hope the Government will not waste any time in making the money available.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Yes, the sooner the Government puts these schemes into operation the better. We should not hold the view that primary industry is suddenly or gradually vanishing. We all realise that this industry will probably be geared to a level to be set in the process of time—but perhaps at a level different from the present one.

I cannot imagine anything which will cause more heartburning to a person who has been farming for many years and who has reached the end of the road than to be told that it is time for him to leave the industry. If this change can be eased, it will be of help to people who are engaged in primary industry. It should be borne in mind that primary industry is an integral part of our life; it must remain for it is an industry which affects us all.

This is where the greatest emphasis should be placed and everyone in authority should be doing his very best to improve production and marketing methods in an endeavour to find wider fields of marketing for the products coming forward.

We know that very severe competition exists, particularly in connection with woollen goods. But we should meet that challenge of competition with determined efforts. I know that unemployment does exist in this State and I am thinking particularly of the sharp rise in unemployment in the building industry; though some efforts are being made to help the building labourers out of their difficulties.

The basic economic difficulties, however, are the direct result of the production of wheat and wool and similar major products and finding and sustaining markets for those products. If the markets fail the effect is felt right through the economy.

In the last few years we have seen problems associated with wheat and severe problems have also arisen in connection with the wool industry where there has been tremendous competition from synthetics. In the long run, however, it is, of course, necessary to have food and clothing

and most of these industries must remain great agricultural pursuits and everybody should be prepared to assist to keep them going.

It is not the first time that the farming industry and the people living in rural areas have faced difficult times, and it will certainly not be the last. I have no doubt, however, that the initiative and courage displayed by these people will help them to continue their properties as viable propositions, provided some assistance is made available to them.

Over the last few years—at least up to a couple of years ago—the seasons have been plentiful. But the wheel has turned a full circle and farmers are facing difficult times; some of them have probably never experienced it so tough. I do not think this state of affairs will continue indefinitely; I think the wheel will turn another full circle and the industry will be geared to a different level again.

In the last few years we have experienced the introduction of wheat quotas. This really goes back to gearing production to demand, and this possibly may have to be applied in other areas of primary production in order to enable us to meet production and the markets and at the same time help us retain efficiency so that there may be a just reward for those engaged in the industry.

Here again we must ensure that farmers are not compelled to leave their properties or go to the wall because of the pressure of external forces. We should try to avoid their being cold-bloodedly put out of business by external forces, financial institutions, and the like; we should ensure that they are given time to diversify and reorganise their programmes in order that their farms might again become viable propositions.

Many pressures are being exerted on farmers in the rural areas and this can only result in putting them out of business while leaving a trail of debts. If it is at all possible to avoid such a situation all efforts should be made to do so.

Given time, many of them will replan and again become stabilised; their farms will again become viable. The Federal Treasurer has told us that the country is in the grip of inflationary pressures and he made the point that the interest rates and prices generally were tending to increase faster.

When the present Minister for Education presented the State Budget last September—he was Treasurer at the time—we heard the same story in respect of inflationary pressures. I feel, however, that the cost-price squeeze has not been felt as severely in other spheres as it has in the primary industries.

The bottom has fallen out of prices and we have seen costs continually increasing. But again we must acknowledge that the

people in the agricultural areas are doing their very best and they will continue to do their best. I trust they will be encouraged to continue along these lines.

Recently we saw some assistance being given to the woolgrowers under the deficiency payment scheme. This was designed to support the 1971-72 wool clip and to ensure that growers received an average of 36c a pound.

The Minister for Works said the Federal Government has not done very much but I would remind him that the Federal Government has certainly done something in this direction. There is little doubt that it has given assistance in this case. The Federal Government saw fit to allocate \$60,000,000 as the first amount of money required and recently it was announced that that Government was underwriting the scheme to the tune of another \$30,000,000.

This illustrates without doubt that the Federal Government is indeed conscious of its responsibilities and that it is determined to make a serious effort to do something about it. That sort of money can only come from the Federal Government and it is heartening to see that it is doing something in this direction.

To revert again to the wool industry. I believe that there is need for a new plan to be adopted. We have talked about proposals to form what I would like to call a one-channel marketing scheme or wool marketing scheme; I would prefer it be called that than have it referred to—as it has been referred to—as an acquisition scheme.

We should look at a one-channel marketing scheme for wool. This is the desire of the industry and I believe the Wool Commission is working to this end. The orderly marketing of wool would be very desirable and the entire industry is supporting this move. I hope the State Government will support this type of orderly marketing. I hope there will be no objection expressed by the State Government on this matter.

Mr. Jamieson: When that sort of objection comes from the Government side we will walk out voluntarily. You do not have to worry about that. It is a good socialist principle.

Mr. McPHARLIN: That is very good to hear.

Mr. H. D. Evans: It is part of our platform.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Before I move off the wheat industry, might I take the opportunity to remind the Minister for Agriculture that he appointed a wheat quota review committee to examine wheat quotas. This was done some time ago and not long ago a question was asked by my colleague, the member for Roe, seeking advice as to when the report would come forward. I

notice from the *Northam Advertiser* of the 21st October that the Minister attended a meeting at Northam on the previous Monday night. The *Northam Advertiser* reported the Minister as saying that there would be widespread changes in the quota system.

I am very interested to know—as every wheatgrower is interested to know—what these widespread changes are likely to be. As the Minister is well aware, wheat is virtually the only means of livelihood of many farmers; it is certainly their main means of livelihood. Accordingly they are waiting to hear what is going to happen; what these widespread changes will be, and how the changes will apply to them individually.

I would be glad, therefore, if the Minister could give us some indication of when the report of the committee and the subsequent recommendations will be completed and available.

To revert for a moment to the wool industry; I propose to criticise, to some extent, the actions of the Wool Commission. We know that the commission has its difficulties, and that there are certain problems associated with the tremendous responsibility which rests with the commission; however, I do not believe that the commission is active enough in its promotion of wool either inside or outside Australia.

Mr. Jamieson: I am glad you have noticed that. It is not possible to buy a woollen garment, tariff free, at any of the airport stores. There is not one woollen article to be bought.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I am pleased to hear the Minister make that comment. From the information I have, even in overseas countries the promotion of Australian woollen products does not match the promotion of synthetics. The commission seems to be falling down on its job and I think it has to shoulder the blame.

Many people have written letters to the Editor of *The West Australian* on this matter, and Channel 7 had a programme on it. There is only one store in Perth where it is possible to buy woollen goods. Why is this? The major stores in this State should do something to promote woollen goods. Synthetics seem to be dominant all the time. There is no comparison in qualities, because no-one can deny that wool has a quality which cannot be matched by synthetics. I understand that a full range of woollen articles can be bought in only one store in Perth.

Mr. Fletcher: There is another one in Fremantle where I bought the trousers I am now wearing.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Does that store sell the whole range of woollen goods?

Mr. Fletcher: Yes.

Mr. Williams: Pass the trousers round the Chamber.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I am glad to hear a store in Fremantle carries the full range.

Mr. Bickerton: Why aren't you wearing a woollen tie?

Mr. McPHARLIN: I do not buy my ties; my wife does. However, I have woollen ties at home.

Mr. Court: I hope your wife does not read *Hansard*.

Mr. W. G. Young: I will lend the member for Mt. Marshall my woollen tie.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I would like to examine the ties of other members in this Chamber to see how many are made of wool. Quite a few would not be wearing woollen ties.

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, but you are advocating the promotion of wool.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I turn now to education.

Mr. O'Connor: All the wool on the other side has been pulled over their eyes.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Education is, of course, one of the most important matters not only in country areas but in all areas. However, perhaps the position in country areas is pronounced at the moment owing to the recession. I wish to refer to one important promise the Premier made in connection with living-away-from-home allowances. In the Premier's policy speech he promised he would double what the previous Government was paying in the way of living-away-from-home allowances. The payment in this particular zone to which I am referring was \$120, and he said he would double it. To be exact, the previous Government promised an increase of \$50 a year and the Premier promised an increase of \$100 a year. Consequently the allowance would have almost doubled had it gone from \$120 to the \$220 promised. Yet, the promise was not put into effect after the election and still it has not been put into effect. I believe the allowance will be increased next year by \$90, but this will come 12 months after the promise was made. People in country areas were looking for this kind of assistance at the time, and not 12 months afterwards. They want it now, but it has not been given.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Let us be clear on this so that we know for the future. Are you saying that during a policy speech when undertakings are given it is implied that every one of those will be implemented immediately?

Mr. McPHARLIN: What I am saying—

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Answer "Yes" or "No."

Mr. McPHARLIN: What I am saying is that at the time this was a very important matter to country people.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Maybe.

Mr. McPHARLIN: They heard the Premier say he would double the living-away-from-home allowance.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I do not deny it.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The Premier said he would double it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What about answering the question?

Mr. McPHARLIN: People in country areas expected the Premier to implement it immediately because the previous Government would have done so.

Mr. Jamieson: Like the bridges!

Mr. McPHARLIN: I invite the Government to ask my colleague, the former Minister for Education.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: If it is as simple as that, will you answer the question I posed? Do you believe there is an obligation on a party which makes promises during an election to implement every one of the promises immediately?

Mr. McPHARLIN: I concede that it is not an obligation to implement every one of them immediately, but I maintain with a promise of this kind there was an obligation to implement it immediately.

Mr. Jamieson: The party in Government must be allowed to determine priorities.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I am blaming the Government for not implementing this immediately, because the previous Government would have done so had it been returned to office.

Mr. Bickerton: Why didn't the previous Government do so before it went out of office?

Mr. McPHARLIN: Last year in the Budget there was an increase in the living-away-from-home allowance.

Mr. Bickerton: Why did the previous Government not get it up to the proper standard?

Mr. Williams: Bob Menzies had the answer to that, and he was in office for a long time.

Mr. Bickerton: Where was he for a long time?

Mr. McPHARLIN: It is a broken promise and I charge the Government with that.

Mr. T. D. Evans: It is not a broken promise at all.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I have said that all promises do not have to be fulfilled immediately, but a promise of this nature should have been.

Mr. T. D. Evans: All sorts of assistance is required.

Mr. McPHARLIN: People in country areas are very worried about their children's education and doubtless by now the Minister has been inundated with numbers of letters.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Letters asking for various types of assistance.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The Minister knows what the people are looking for.

Mr. T. D. Evans: This is only one facet and there are many others. It is impossible to answer everything all at once. I repeat: this is only one.

Mr. Jamieson: They will be \$50 better off over the triennium even if it starts a year later.

Mr. McPHARLIN: This is a vital factor when people in country areas make up their minds whether to send their children away to school or to keep them at home. The rural situation has aggravated the position because of the low prices being received for all primary products. It was vital for many people to receive the allowance this year, but they did not receive it.

I admit there are many other problems in education, one of which concerns school buses. I agree it is not an easy matter to make decisions on school bus services but it is an area in which there should be some degree of flexibility. Buses should not be discontinued and would not be if the Government allowed for a greater degree of flexibility. After all, populations change and people come and go from an area. For a few months there may not be sufficient children to keep a bus operating but then one or more couples will come to a district with three or four children and the numbers are sufficient. This happens frequently in country areas. For this reason I advocate flexibility in the administration of school buses in country areas.

I know there are instances where the numbers are almost too low for the bus service to continue. However, when the former Minister handled this portfolio he endeavoured to keep the services operating to the best of his ability and, in many cases, he allowed bus services to be continued for the benefit of the people. I suggest the present Minister should adopt a similar policy as this is desirable.

I know how many problems of education the Government must face, but until the position in country areas settles down I think the Government should give serious consideration to continuing all school bus services, because these are vital to people in country areas.

Before I leave education I wish to refer to one other matter which is of prime importance. I refer to hostels and the establishment, if it is at all possible, of further senior high schools in country districts to provide the educational facilities which people require. I know applications have been made by various centres for an upgrading in the existing educational facilities. I believe the Government should provide the money necessary to give people

in country areas the educational standards which are required these days. Nowadays many people cannot afford to send their children away to receive private school education as many did in the past.

Mr. Brown: Many do not want to send them away, because of the standard of education and the facilities at the hostels.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The member for Merredin-Yilgarn has made a good point. Many people prefer to keep their children at home. In this way parents know they will see their children every evening after the day's schooling. If there is a hostel many take their children to it on a Monday and pick them up on a Friday. They seem to prefer their children to be educated in country areas which the children know and enjoy in the company of their friends. The children are not placed in a strange environment. I should think it would be the aim of the Minister for Education to establish more hostels and high schools.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The Minister will aim for this.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I hope he does. We know the Country High School Hostels Authority is limited to a certain figure.

Mr. T. D. Evans: The sum of \$300,000 in any one year.

Mr. McPHARLIN: This is unrealistic in these times.

Mr. T. D. Evans: This is the maximum amount the Loan Council will allow.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I know, but this commenced in 1962 and values have changed.

Mr. T. D. Evans: At the last Premiers' Conference our Premier submitted the amount should be increased to \$450,000. However, the Commonwealth turned this down.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I am glad the Premier made the approach. If I know the Premier, he will try again.

Mr. T. D. Evans: He argued most forcefully and he had the support of the other Premiers, but the Commonwealth would not budge.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I hope the Premier will do more in this direction. I do not think he asked for enough.

Mr. T. D. Evans: He did not get what he asked for.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The cost of building hostels north of the 26th parallel is so great the \$300,000 quickly disappears.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Last year's allocation went in building one hostel north of the 26th parallel. That was at Port Hedland.

Mr. McPHARLIN: In 1962, \$300,000 meant more than it does at the present time. I believe we would need \$600,000 to get similar value now.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You are speaking to the converted.

Mr. McPHARLIN: It is not much good speaking to the Minister if he believes what I am saying.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I do believe what you are saying.

Mr. McPHARLIN: That is very good. The Minister has assured me the Premier is doing his best in this regard. I only hope he tries for more money for hostels at the next Premiers' Conference. The authority should have increased powers to build hostels where they are thought necessary.

The Education Department continually studies the situation and I believe it does a very good job. I have spoken to the deputy director and the director, and I know the detailed studies the department has made over the years. The department is well aware of what is required and it is doing its best. However, when it comes down to Government policy and the actual spending of money, it has to be a Government decision. If the Government does get the money I sincerely hope the Premier ensures that it is spread to the areas which deserve it. There is one particular town I would put at the top of the list.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has five minutes.

Mr. McPHARLIN: Of course, I would not be the only one asking for this type of building for a certain area. I have only five minutes more and I see it is almost time to stop for lunch.

Mr. T. D. Evans: You should mention the name of the town before you stop.

Mr. McPHARLIN: I would like to see a hostel at Wyalkatchem, in the heart of the wheatbelt. Some of the best wheat in the State comes from that area. I believe the Education Department has recently carried out a survey and a report is being prepared. However, I would like to stress the need for a hostel there and an upgrading of the school to a senior high school.

MR. LEWIS (Moore) [12.44 p.m.]: This Bill gives the Government the opportunity to present to the House its proposals for raising revenue and for the expenditure of money by the various departments for the current financial year. It also affords members an opportunity to make criticisms or comments on any matter lying within the jurisdiction of the Government.

I do not propose to speak at any length or in general terms. I intend to confine my remarks to one or two departments. I wish to refer to education—I hope not in a critical sense, but in a constructive way.

*Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.*

Mr. LEWIS: As I was saying before the luncheon suspension, I do not intend to be overcritical. I am reminded of the fact that since I was elected to this House in September, 1958, I have had very little



occasion to be critical of a Government, unlike the member for Mt. Marshall who preceded me in this debate. Nevertheless, I support some of his criticism.

Perhaps I might commence by referring to the boarding-away-from-home allowance. I notice the Premier reacted rather violently to the suggestion that he did not honour his election promise. I think we must accept this in the circumstances in which the statement was made. Members will recall that when the then Premier delivered his policy speech prior to the elections he promised an increase of \$50 in the boarding-away-from-home allowance, to be retrospective to the 1st January, 1971.

Then, obviously to counter that promise, the present Premier said, "I will make it \$100." One cannot blame people for expecting that they would receive \$100 as against the previous bid of \$50—in both cases to be retrospective to the 1st January, although I do not think the Premier actually said so. Nevertheless, he certainly did not say he would defer the increase until some date to be fixed.

I am very pleased to note that the increase will be granted as from next January. It has always been my belief that a parent, who, as a result of his domicile, is obliged to board his youngsters away should not be required to pay any more than a parent who is domiciled within bus distance of a senior high school or appropriate educational facility. I think that principle has been accepted over the years, although the department and successive Governments have not been able completely to bridge the gap.

However, as far as I can calculate, the increases proposed to be granted by the Minister from the beginning of next year will just about completely bridge the gap. From my calculations I feel that even below the 26th parallel—where the allowance is not as great as is the case north of the parallel—parents who board their youngsters away will be required to pay no more per week or per month than it would cost to maintain the children at home if a senior high school were nearby. So by the beginning of next year we will reach a very satisfactory position.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I thank the member for Moore for a fair assessment of the situation.

Mr. LEWIS: I always try to be fair. Perhaps sometimes I do not succeed, but I always set out with that intention. Nowadays we do not seem to hear so much—and quite rightly so—about the alleged crisis in education.

Mr. T. D. Evans: There is still a crisis.

Mr. LEWIS: One of the most outspoken bodies in this regard has been the Parents & Citizens' Federation. Therefore, I was pleased to read the December, 1971, news-

paper of that federation which contained reference to the conference of the Australian Council of State School Organisations held in Perth this year. One paragraph reads as follows:—

Wednesday, October 20, and already half the week had gone. The morning business session commenced at 8.45 a.m., and continued through to 10 a.m., when Conference adjourned to allow delegates, observers and visitors to board a chartered bus which was to take them on a visit to some of the schools in the Northern Suburbs. Schools visited were Coolbinia, Takari, Warriapendi, Balga Training Centre and Morley High.

Delegates were most impressed with what they saw and heard, and in particular, the Morley High School, still under construction, yet, even they could see its final potential, and all agreed no other State could match such progress.

So the Minister can derive some satisfaction from the fact that at least buildings compare not unfavourably with those anywhere else in Australia.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Which Minister: the present Minister or the former Minister?

Mr. LEWIS: The present Minister. He is now in the saddle, and if the quality of the school was not up to standard it would be cause for a great deal of concern. What I would like to see—and no doubt the Minister would agree with me—is the addition of more assembly halls. Some years ago, when I travelled around New Zealand, I made it my business to visit some of the high schools and, invariably, they had assembly halls as part of the buildings.

Mr. W. A. Manning: What are they?

Mr. LEWIS: They were built of timber.

Mr. W. A. Manning: No, I was wondering what an assembly hall was.

Mr. LEWIS: The member for Narrogin is a little impatient, but before long he may get one for the high school in his electorate. The principals of the high schools in New Zealand told me that the assembly hall was the heart of the school; the whole philosophy of the school revolved around the assembly hall.

I appreciate the loan fund situation at the moment, just as much as the Minister does, but I would like to see the day arrive in the not-too-distant future when we can make finance available to build more assembly halls in the high schools.

Mr. Williams: Would it not be better to have the assembly halls as part of the community?

Mr. LEWIS: If there is an assembly hall in the high school I think it would be used at least two days a week. As happens

now in many schools, perhaps arrangements could be made to allow the school facilities to be used by the community generally.

In regard to the Consolidated Revenue Fund, I am pleased to note that whilst the total amount to be spent by the Government on all departments has increased by 15.1 per cent. on last year's figure, the total amount to be made available this year to the Education Department at all levels has increased by 17 per cent., so at least the Department is holding its own with other departments. This is as it should be, because I have so often remarked—and I think most members would agree with me—education is of paramount importance to the State.

In making an analysis of the figures, it is noted that because of the increases in salaries and wages—and I am not saying that these increases should not have been granted—salaries and wages will represent 81.5 per cent. of the total amount made available to the department, as against 80.7 per cent. last year. This means, of course, that the percentage of expenditure on contingencies will be slightly lower than it was last year. Nevertheless, the sum allocated for contingencies is a little higher, and I urge the Minister to watch this balance and endeavour to have an increase made in the percentage allocation of money for contingencies.

I commend the Minister and his Government for increasing the living-away-from-home allowances. However, I make another appeal to the Minister to look at the proposed assistance for the purchase of textbooks. I know the Premier has already announced the policy of the Government to commence the first stage by granting free textbooks to primary schools. This will be spread over a number of years. I now make a plea that some assistance should be granted to fourth-year secondary students.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Would you repeat that? You are making a plea for whom?

Mr. LEWIS: For fourth-year secondary students. The figures I have here are taken from the statistics collated by the Education Department of Western Australia as its contribution to an Australia-wide survey. Although the figures were taken out in 1969 I think they will compare favourably with last year. For the first-year secondary student the average cost of textbooks to parents was \$20; for the second-year student \$21; for the third-year student \$20; for the fourth-year student \$53; and for the fifth-year student \$29.

It is appreciated that the Government grants a textbooks' subsidy amounting to \$5 for each first, second, and third-year high-school student. That would bring the net cost of textbooks to parents down

to \$15, \$16, and \$15, respectively, for each of the first three years that children attend high school.

Mr. A. R. Tonkin: I suggest that the cost of textbooks to the fourth-year student is now closer to \$80.

Mr. LEWIS: That is why I pointed out that I am quoting the 1969 figures. It is appreciated that they have increased since then. The average cost of textbooks to the fourth-year student in 1969 was \$53. Then a textbook subsidy of \$10 was granted, making the net cost to the parent \$43. In the fifth year, with another \$10 subsidy, the cost of textbooks to the student would be brought down to \$19.

From the last Education Department annual report, dated the 1st August, 1970, which contains the latest figures, I discovered that there were 2,169 fourth-year students in non-Government schools, and 4,087 fourth-year students in Government schools. I am not suggesting that textbooks should be supplied free, because I have always expressed the view in this Chamber that I am not in favour of free textbooks being granted either to primary or secondary-school students. I believe that if a parent is granted a subsidy to assist him with the cost of textbooks, with the parent being conscious that he has to dip into his own pocket to meet the cost, the textbooks will be cared for to a greater degree than if they were handed out free.

However, since the net cost of the textbooks to the parent of a fourth-year student is \$43 according to the 1969 figure—which is nearly three times as much as the amount paid by a parent of a first-year student—and as the fourth year at high school is the vital year, if the Government could grant an increase of \$20 in the subsidy to parents the net cost to the Government for 4,087 students in fourth year would be \$81,740. I appreciate that the figure of 4,087 is for 1970 and that there will be an increase in the number of fourth-year students next year, the year after that and so on. If we add the 2,169 in non-Government schools it would mean another \$43,380, and a total of \$125,120.

This is a very substantial sum, but when we compare it with the total amount spent on education, it is a very small percentage. I urge the Minister to have a close look at this matter in order to ascertain whether further assistance can be given in the fourth year. I believe the need is urgent.

Another matter I would like the Minister to consider is the driving allowance. As country members, at any rate, would know, a driving allowance is given to assist the parents of a child who lives more than five miles from a school or more than four miles from a bus route. The allowance for some time now has been 3½c per mile for one return trip per day.

Many parents drive up to 10 or more miles to the bus stop or to the school, as the case may be, and for this they receive the magnificent sum of 3½c per mile. However, invariably the parents make two return trips because it is necessary to drive the child to the bus in the morning, and then return again in the afternoon to pick the child up. Consequently two return trips are involved, and if we divide the sum of 3½c into two, it means that the allowance is 1½c per mile. This travelling is a hardship and is necessary merely because the family is unfortunate to live in an area without enough youngsters to warrant the bus service being extended.

I know the department will probably reply to the effect that quite a number of parents in the metropolitan area also drive their youngsters to school. So they do as we all know because we see them around the metropolitan schools every day. However, I submit that most of these parents take their children to school from choice rather than necessity as is the case in the country. Sometimes the parents do not like the idea of their youngsters walking along a busy road, or the parents themselves are on their way to employment or to some other place, and so drop the children off on the way.

However, the distances involved in the metropolitan area are by no means as great as those involved in the country and certainly no parents in the metropolitan area must drive a child 10 miles to a school. Other means of transport are available to youngsters in the metropolitan area. I urge the Minister to study this matter.

From what I have gathered from the annual report, the driving allowance cost the State a little over \$30,000 last year and rather less than that the year before.

Mr. O'Connor: Why shouldn't metropolitan children have similar benefits to country children?

Mr. LEWIS: In what way?

Mr. O'Connor: Surely if the children were within four miles of a bus route they would be within four miles of a main road. It is the children mainly in the outer metropolitan area who might require assistance.

Mr. LEWIS: There could be some children in the metropolitan area.

Mr. O'Connor: Not more than four miles from a school.

Mr. LEWIS: If some children are similarly affected in the metropolitan area, then let us apply the allowance to them as well.

Mr. O'Connor: True.

Mr. LEWIS: I am not denying the parents in the metropolitan area the help I am seeking for country parents.

I have already said that the Government is now spending about \$30,000 on driving allowances. Even if this amount were doubled it would not constitute an undue burden on the State, particularly compared with the total sum of money now being spent on departmental education which, this year, is \$82,983,000. If we can spend that sum of money on education—and I am certainly not saying we should not—then let us spend a little more and help those who are really up against it.

The member for Mt. Marshall touched on country hostel accommodation, and I agree with what he said. I appreciate the fact that the Country High School Hostels Authority's statutory borrowing powers are limited to \$300,000. A few years ago an effort was made to increase the number of houses erected for teachers and public servants generally in the country, and for this purpose a statutory body was established called the Government Employees' Housing Authority which was given borrowing powers. During the first year of its operation its funds had to be supplemented from State loan funds, and as the years went by the Government Employees' Housing Authority negotiated with local authorities whereby the local authorities raised loans and erected the necessary accommodation, the loan not being a burden on the local ratepayers, but guaranteed by the Government Employees' Housing Authority which, in turn, was guaranteed by the Education Department.

I suggest the Minister study this aspect. I do not know the situation, but it is quite possible that the local authorities in Northam, Merredin, Narrogin, Katanning, and perhaps Albany may have some borrowing power left to them; in other words they may not have raised the maximum. If this is so those local authorities may be prepared to raise loans for more accommodation. I hasten to add that this would not be a permanent arrangement; it would be necessary only to cater for the present accommodation crisis. As most members know, many temporary buildings have been erected because the hostels' authority does not have the capital funds for the necessary extensions. However, the local authorities might be persuaded to raise sufficient loans to provide the extra dormitory accommodation, and the interest and sinking fund on those loans could be met by the Government.

As I have said, I am not suggesting this would be a permanent arrangement, but only for a couple of years in order to enable the authority to overcome the problems it has had to face in the erection of hostels in the north. This has already been referred to, two years' funds being involved because of the higher cost of building in the north.

Because of the urgency in the north, the situation down here has had to mark time although the pressure is greater than ever before as a result of the rural situation. Farmers are not able to afford to send their children to the metropolitan area and are thus encouraging them to attend the local schools, which is what we want, of course, in our programme of decentralisation. However, these parents are having the utmost difficulty in finding accommodation for their children. This is why it is imperative the Government devise some scheme under which the local authorities could help. I am sure this would overcome the problem in a very short time.

I wish to deal also with agricultural education and the long-awaited report on agricultural education at all levels. As a result of a recommendation in the Jackson report, which was the report compiled by the committee under Mr. Justice Jackson, a committee was established under Professor Stern to investigate agricultural education at all levels. However, as far as I am aware the report has not yet been presented to the Government. If it has been, I would like the Minister to study it as quickly as possible and make a decision on the matter; because at present a lot of uncertainty is apparent in the country as to what sort of education will be available for youngsters who desire to take an agricultural course. They do not know whether the curriculum will be the same as it has been for many years in agricultural schools, or whether extra qualifications will be required. They are absolutely in the dark. This is not the fault of the Government, of course, and it may not even be the fault of the committee.

I would like the Government to do its best to have the committee's report presented and examined as soon as possible with a view to implementing the recommendations if they are considered acceptable. This should be done as quickly as possible and full publicity given to it.

The only other matter I wish to raise while speaking to the debate on the Appropriation Bill (Consolidated Revenue Fund) is that of native welfare. I have noticed in the Estimates of Receipts and Expenditure that the Native Welfare Vote is down considerably on what it was last year. I admit that last year it was down on the previous year's amount, but not as much as this year's is down on last year's amount. The vote for 1970-71 was \$3,618,000. The actual amount of money spent was \$3,327,000. The estimate for 1971-72 is \$3,145,000. There may be a good explanation for this reduction. Perhaps the fact that the Native Welfare Department has been amalgamated with the Department of Community Welfare has been a means of effecting some savings. I hope the reduction in the vote does not

in any way mean that supervision and further education of the natives will be retarded. When I say "education" I do not mean formal education but social education, which includes visits by officers of the department to natives' homes. I certainly hope this will not be diminished because the need exists for it with our Aborigines and part Aborigines.

I have said many times before that at the moment there is a greater awareness of, and sympathy towards, our Aboriginal people than ever before in Western Australia. I think it is in danger of going overboard and of becoming a paternal interest. Many of our Aborigines adopt the attitude that the world owes them a living.

Mr. Ridge: Hear, hear!

Mr. LEWIS: This certainly does not apply to all because there are some very worthy Aborigines who have literally lifted themselves up by their bootlaces and who fulfil responsible jobs in many walks of life.

For some time now I have noticed that when Aborigines make representations they almost always ask for something to make their lives a little more pleasant. We have to instil in them the philosophy that we must work for what we enjoy in life. They must learn that we or our predecessors have done this work and that we do not receive anything for nothing. We must teach them at every possible opportunity that they must get off their backsides and do a little more for themselves. If they do this it will be the quickest and surest way to command the respect of the white community.

Mr. Nalder: Already some of them accept that responsibility.

Mr. LEWIS: Many of them do and I have already said this. Many are teachers, nurses, and public servants. I knew of an Aboriginal matron of a hospital who had white sisters working under her. Aborigines are filling junior and senior positions and doing it very well. This happens not only within Government and semi-Government circles but also in private industry.

On the other hand, there are too many who adopt an attitude of lounging around and saying, "You build it and I will enjoy it. You provide it for me, but I will do nothing for it myself." An illustration of this occurred at Moora recently. Settlers have subscribed to erect a memorial clock to perpetuate the memory of pioneers. There is a lawn at the base of the clock with a few seats upon it. Local natives sit on the seats. That is quite all right, and nobody objects to it. However they brought their cool drinks and sweets there and left rubbish lying on the grass. The local shire council put a rubbish bin on the lawn but the natives did not put their litter in the bin. The council's employee remonstrated with them and asked the

reason, because the bin was only two or three yards away. The answer was, "You are paid to do it, not us." That is the attitude and it is deplorable.

I would say it is this attitude which is keeping Aborigines from advancing. I also say they are not aware of it. We must make them aware of it. I could not agree more with some of the comments made by a certain professor who reminded Aborigines that they have themselves to blame for a great deal of their present situation.

Apart from that little remonstrance, I think we must do more to provide housing for Aborigines. I am sorry there are no means of knowing how many houses will be provided by the State Housing Commission for Aborigines. I understand the commission and not the department will now be responsible for building houses for Aborigines. That is fair enough. I hope, however, that after the houses are built it will still be the responsibility of the Department of Community Welfare to see that the new occupants of the houses have the benefit of home training and frequent visits from officers, because they need this.

They also need more instruction to enable them to command jobs. We must equip them with the skills necessary to obtain employment and so improve their way of life. This is needed in a much bigger way than we have been able to give it up to date. I am fully aware of the problems which the Government faces in this regard. It is a question of cost. Together with the Government, I deeply regret our representations to the Commonwealth have not been more fruitful. We have been trying to establish a training centre at Port Hedland where Aborigines could learn to maintain and handle heavy machinery. There is a great need for this in Port Hedland.

It was our intention to make this a place where single and married Aborigines could learn different skills. We hoped it would be possible to give their wives some domestic education at the same time. Unfortunately, it is only in recent times that the Commonwealth has agreed to make available some of the money that is required for this centre.

On the one hand we have the Federal Minister saying that if the States do not repeal discriminatory legislation the Commonwealth will do something about it. However, the Commonwealth is not so ready to say it will take over the responsibility for the social problems which will arise as a result of the repeal of some of the legislation. I wish the Minister all power in his representations to the Commonwealth for more finance.

I shall raise a number of other matters when the Bill is in Committee. These are concerned merely with asking questions on some points I have noted.

**MR. RIDGE (Kimberley) [2.49 p.m.]**: As the member for Moore has said, we have particular problems in the field of Aboriginal welfare. I would like to refer to some of them.

I agree with the honourable member in that it is time some of the Aboriginal people got off their backsides and started to appreciate the fact that the world does not owe them a living. On the other hand, I think the State has to appreciate that in some instances we owe these people a little more than they are receiving at the moment.

I wish to refer to particular problems, one of which relates to a settlement about 17 miles from Wyndham at the Fork Creek pensioners' camp. In September, 1970, the pensioners' camp came in for a little publicity in the local newspaper inasmuch as the district medical officer went out and condemned the one and only water supply these people had. The water came from a spring in a creek which is known as Fork Creek.

It is to the Native Welfare Department's credit that when the district medical officer condemned this water supply the department provided a 200-gallon tank and engaged the Wyndham-East Shire Council to fill the tank periodically.

On the 16th September, 1970, I asked the then Minister for Native Welfare some questions in relation to the water supply. He informed me there was a 200-gallon water tank there to provide these people with water and it was filled up daily. I asked what arrangements had been made to ensure a continuity of supply to the 30 people at the camp both on a long-term and short-term basis. In reply I was told that the short-term answer was a 200-gallon tank filled daily by the Wyndham-East Shire Council at the expense of the Native Welfare Department. The long-term answer was that if fencing the spring proved impracticable, the feasibility of installing a bore, windmill, and tank would be examined as a matter of urgency.

That was September, 1970—14 months ago. In June this year I visited the Fork Creek camp with the Minister for Community Welfare. I was disappointed to find that the people were still using water delivered to the 200-gallon tank situated on the edge of the Great Northern Highway about 200 yards from the boundary of the native camp. That was nine months after the water supply was condemned.

Last week I drove past the camp and I noticed the tank still there. I was prompted to ask a question of the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare. In reply he informed me that there are now two 200-gallon tanks provided. Delivery days are Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. The Native Welfare Department had spent an amount of \$1,658 on carting water, but other charges may be in transit.

I also asked if it was a matter of urgency to provide a long-term solution to the problem and the answer was, "Yes." I also asked what urgent action had been taken or was proposed and I was told that the Public Works Department had been asked to examine the feasibility of establishing a satisfactory water supply. This is 14 months after the district medical officer had condemned the water supply.

It is not good enough for the 30 old-age pensioners living out there. If these tanks are empty when the water is delivered each day it means the shire is supplying 1,200 gallons of water a week—or 5½ gallons per person per day. It must be borne in mind that this is in century-plus temperature—two galvanised-iron tanks on the edge of a bitumen road 200 yards from the nearest camp. I can imagine that one would not need to boil the water!

These pensioners want to remain at Fork Creek. If they were young people they could be told to get out and get a job. Apparently the area has a tribal significance to them—in other words, they are there to die. But for God's sake let us give them the opportunity to die with a little dignity. All they need to make them happy is some good drinking water and somewhere better to live. The best housing in the area is in the form of tents. The pensioners not lucky enough to live in tents live in tumble-down shanties and bush shacks.

Mr. Hartrey: Mia-mias.

Mr. RIDGE: They are not mia-mias; they are bush shacks made out of old iron and anything they can find.

Mr. O'Connor: That is legal jargon.

Mr. Hartrey: They are much more advanced than the mia-mia.

Mr. RIDGE: I have been critical of this situation for some time past. I was told, "If you are critical of it, how would you solve it?" I can guarantee with just a small amount of money I could solve it in about two weeks and make them the happiest old people in the Kimberley area. I would provide them with accommodation—probably not accommodation acceptable to Aborigines here but acceptable to the people at Fork Creek.

Mr. Brady: Does the shire council agree to anything being erected there?

Mr. RIDGE: The shire council is carting water; obviously it knows what is going on. It is up to the Native Welfare Department to do something for these old people. As I have said, it would be a different matter if they were younger. I suggest perhaps we could build them spinifex huts. Members will know what a spinifex hut is. They have a metal or timber frame covered with wire-netting and spinifex on the top with more netting to hold it down.

Mr. Jamieson: Is spinifex any good to keep the rain off in the wet season?

Mr. RIDGE: That is a strange comment. To keep the rain off, some sisal is put over the wire before the spinifex goes on. These are cool buildings and one could probably be built for \$100. Many people on the native reservations could be put to work picking spinifex, and then build the huts. This would be a great contribution towards the well-being of these old people, and would be a 100 per cent. improvement on their present quarters.

From there I would like to progress to Fitzroy Crossing. Most members are aware that about three years ago the pastoral industry award was brought into effect. Several people said then, "This is the greatest thing to happen to the Aboriginal people. It will give them a big lift up the social ladder". On the other hand, others said, "This is probably the worst thing to happen to the Aborigines and it will cause a great influx of people into the established towns." Of course, time has proved this last comment to be true.

For some reason the Native Welfare Department refused to accept the fact that there would be an influx of people into the towns. The department said it would wait until the award came into effect and see the outcome. The result was that many people who were employed by the pastoralists were put off during the wet season. They were taken into the towns and dumped.

In particular there were several hundred people at Fitzroy Crossing who had nowhere to go. The Native Welfare Department shepherded them to a treeless flat. There was good reason for that because Fitzroy Crossing becomes almost an island in the wet. There were no toilets there; no facilities of any kind. The department provided them with tents and flies, but those who arrived late did not even get these. They finished up living in shanties, bush huts, and various other shelters.

I visited Fitzroy Crossing in the wet on one occasion, and it was soul-destroying to see these people, in the middle of a thunderstorm, attempting to dig a drain around their miserable humpies to stop the rain going through and destroying their few belongings. This camp is three miles from the school and three miles from the townsite.

Fortunately there are nursing sisters at the Australian Inland Mission and it is the duty of one girl to visit this area—it is called a reserve—and see these people. She tries to ensure they do the right thing for their children. Members can imagine her difficulty attempting to persuade people living like this to look after the health and welfare of their children.

Once again, the Native Welfare Department provided a tanker and it was the responsibility of some person to take the tanker to the mission, fill it with water,

and take it back. I called there on at least two occasions and found the tank was empty. Yet the sisters there are endeavouring to get the mothers to see that water for use in babies' bottles, etc. is boiled. The natives did not have any water at all much of the time. They were carting it from the river in billycans.

On the 19th November, 1969—almost 12 months after the pastoral industry award came into effect and these Aborigines started shifting into the town—a press release in the "News of the North" section of *The West Australian* made the following comment under the heading of, "New Settlement at Fitzroy Crossing":—

The Native Welfare Department plans to build three blocks of communal showers, lavatories and laundries, and at least 12 small cottages for Aborigines in Fitzroy Crossing.

A department spokesman said there would be no building till the living area had been resited.

The department was negotiating with the Lands Department for an area which was not on the Aboriginal reserve.

The crazy part about all this is that the department announced its plans to erect those buildings 12 months after the award came into effect but before the department could proceed it had to negotiate with the Lands Department to acquire the land. In the meantime several hundred Aborigines were living there. Obviously they went on camping without facilities. To pay due respect to the department, it did provide a couple of bore-hole toilets and bush showers. However, they were not of much use because there is no water.

I went back to Fitzroy Crossing in July of this year, 2½ years after the coming into existence of the award—and bear in mind that a large number of Aborigines still live in Fitzroy Crossing—and I was amazed to find that work still had not been commenced on the promised buildings. A bore had been sunk, but it had not been equipped with a pump or any sort of reticulation system. So up to July of this year the people were still living in the same old mia-mias and with the same old bore-hole latrines, and so forth.

To my way of thinking this whole farcical exercise was a monumental bungle and the Native Welfare Department deserves no credit whatsoever for taking 2½ years to do nothing. The only losers are the miserable people who are subject to greater poverty purely and simply as a result of the further step they have taken up the social ladder—a step towards so-called equality with the white people. No wonder these Aborigines have chips on their shoulders. I understand that work has now commenced on the buildings and, in fact, they may be fairly close to completion.

I would suggest that these Aborigines should be supplied with more of the spinifex sheds I mentioned earlier. Most of these people have lived on stations all their lives and, quite frankly, some may have lived under much worse conditions. However, they are comparatively clean because they have been brought up on stations. Members will find that it is not uncommon to go to the reserve and see an old lady using a bush broom to sweep clean the area within 30 feet of her hut or mia-mia. These people would really appreciate the provision of spinifex sheds. That is all they want, and the sheds would suit their purpose. They do not need to light fires inside because their cooking is all done in the open. The huts are cool and would give them an opportunity to sleep in the daytime, something they cannot do in the Native Welfare Department tin huts.

Whilst I was at Fitzroy Crossing in June in the company of the Minister for Community Welfare a couple of old Aboriginal people approached us and asked if we would like to look at a small project they had undertaken. The Minister was delighted to accept, so we went along and found three or four old fellows—probably in their 60s, I would say—who had prepared a site about 100 feet from the river. They were building a fence running parallel with the river to close off an area of about three acres. The fence posts were all strainers of about 12 inches across. It would take a Centurion tank to push them over. The Aborigines manhandled these posts into the holes. Their intention was to start a garden to provide their own people with vegetables, and they also intended to sell vegetables in Fitzroy Crossing and to the adjoining stations. All they wanted was a pump and some piping so that they could draw water from the river.

The Commissioner of Native Welfare was with us, and he said he would see what could be done. In the circumstances I would have fallen over in my hurry to obtain a pump and piping for those people. Also, I would have gone to the pastoral research station which is no more than 20 or 30 miles away and made sure that officers of the station would go along to advise and guide the Aborigines. Aborigines do not often show initiative and when they do it is essential to take them by the hand and help them in every way possible.

I would be prepared to bet anything at all that those people still have not received the pump and piping—the one thing they asked for. This is a case of killing what initiative they had. Once again, no marks whatsoever to the Native Welfare Department.

I would like to turn now to Sunday Island, which is at the top of King Sound and about 70 miles from Derby as the crow flies. Until about 10 years ago Sunday Island was inhabited by a tribe of people

known as Bardi. They were very happily ensconced there. However, as a result of financial difficulties the United Aborigines Mission was forced to desert the area. The Bardi people then began to shift to the mainland. Most went to Derby, and a few went to Broome.

In those days—in 1959-60, or thereabouts—settlements existed in the marshes on the fringe of the town. There were several hundred marsh dwellers there. Many of those were Bardi people who had moved there from Sunday Island and built little shanties. The Native Welfare Department did not seem to be particularly interested in them, nor was anyone else for that matter. Eventually the local authority decided that something had to be done and it sent photographs of the shanties to the Minister for the North-West, the Minister for Native Welfare, the Premier, and everyone else it could think of. In the end the department said it would try to help out the people if they left the area. So the council put a bulldozer through the hovels and the Aborigines were given accommodation on the native reserve.

However, they became people without an identity. Traditionally they were blue water seafarers and fishermen and their island existence had divorced them from many of the social problems experienced by mainland natives. They were a proud and happy tribe on Sunday Island, but when they moved to the mainland and were dumped on reserves they were completely out of their element. They were even unable to associate peacefully with the mainland Aborigines. Naturally they were disillusioned with life in the white society and they started drinking and mixing with undesirable whites.

The skills and crafts which they had acquired over centuries started to slip into obscurity. They lost every bit of pride and dignity they ever had and became the greatest mob of drunks and bums one ever laid eyes on. The daughters of some of these fine old fellows became prostitutes and the young men became drunkards spending half their time in gaol.

One or two of the tribal elders could see what was happening and realised what island life meant to the tribe, so they tried to get the people to go back to the island. The only transport available was a couple of aluminium dinghies. It is a 70-mile trip across the sound to Sunday Island, and there is a tidal rise and fall of 30 feet twice a day. Trips to and from the island were made time and again. Recently, one of the boats capsized and one of the occupants was not found, but the other got away with his life.

Over the course of the last three years these people have been drifting back to Sunday Island. Then onto the scene came a man named David Drysdale, of 67 years of age and a totally incapacitated pensioner. He was formerly a missionary and

had been on Sunday Island for some years during the 1930s. He took a short trip to Derby to find out how these people were going. He was so depressed at what he saw that he was prepared to sell his house in Perth, to which he and his wife had retired, and to use the funds to re-establish these people on Sunday Island. He had a motorcar which he swapped for a 22-foot boat to get these people across to Sunday Island. This person had nothing to gain out of the exercise, except the satisfaction to see these Aboriginal people regain their pride and independence. He had nothing to work with, and what is more nobody cared. The Department of Native Welfare has known what he has been trying to do for the past three years.

In response to this question I asked on the 26th November—

In the last three years how many times have officers from the Native Welfare Department visited Sunday Island?

The Minister replied—

None. There is no permanent settlement on the island and Bardi people are in frequent contact with departmental officers at Derby and Broome.

Mr. Jamieson: When were you last on Sunday Island?

Mr. RIDGE: I have not been there.

Mr. Hartrey: Can you speak the Wongi language?

Mr. RIDGE: No, I can only speak the language I am now using. This man, David Drysdale, will die of a broken heart, a broken pocket, and a broken spirit unless somebody can convince someone in authority that the culture, the traditions, and the identity of a complete tribal group are worth retaining.

To me the very fact that 160 people want to return to Sunday Island is justification for giving them some guidance and encouragement. I do not believe that we should set the island up as a holiday resort for people who want to bludge off the old-age pension and the social service payments. I believe we should try to make the settlement a self-supporting community. With 160 people there are many problems, but if we tell them they have to make a go of the place for the sake of the whole Aboriginal race I am sure they will take up the challenge and succeed.

If the Department of Native Welfare does not have the funds or resources to re-establish these people on Sunday Island on some sort of commercial enterprise, then the Government should make approaches to Canberra for funds to salvage the mess which has been created by our own apathy and our own indifference. The black people are equally to blame for the mess they are in, because too many of



them are willing to sit on their backsides and accept the generosity of the white people. They have to learn that if something is worth having and hanging onto, it is worth striving and working for.

Throughout my electorate—perhaps this is more applicable in mine than in other electorates—are established native reserves. Some of them are conspicuous in that they are built on the main roads at the entrance to various towns, while others are obscure and in out-of-the-way places. It is easy to get the impression that those who established them had this in mind: out of sight, out of mind. Some, like the reserve at Fitzroy Crossing and that at Fork Creek, are remote.

Generally they have one thing in common; they are a disgrace. They are a disgrace to the whites for tolerating them in the condition in which they are in, and they are a disgrace to the black people who do not seem to have any desire to lift their sights to more acceptable standards of living. These places are breeding grounds for alcoholism, disease, despair, anger, and crime. I suggest that on the next occasion when we go on a parliamentary tour to the north, we forsake some of the civic receptions, and mix with the Aboriginal people by having a few drinks at the pubs with some of those who seem to be intent on dragging their race down the gutter. Then we should go to their reserves and their homes, but we would have to be careful that we do not stand where they have been defecating. One might ask the reason for this? Why should they go right outside their own home for this purpose? The reason is that we have provided homes for these people, but not toilets in the houses. Even taps have not been installed in the houses. All we have provided are little tin sheds and we call them transitional homes.

I suggest that if we want to encourage and teach the Aboriginal people to accept our way of living, the first and most basic training aid we should provide is a toilet in, or adjacent to each home. The situation is that a multitude of houses are scattered around the reserves, and to each group is allocated a toilet which may be 50 yards or more away. External floodlighting has been installed, but this is switched off at a certain time. If the occupants of a house get a call of nature in the middle of the night, rather than stumble over a boulder-strewn area for 100 yards or more, when the floodlight is switched off, they defecate around their houses.

Under those circumstances, is it any wonder that a high incidence of infant mortality, hookworm, hepatitis, and bowel disorders occur? Is it any wonder that white people become resentful of the black people in view of their standard of living?

Mr. Fletcher: Did you see the report in this morning's newspaper relating to the comments of Mr. Beazley, the Federal member?

Mr. RIDGE: No.

Mr. Fletcher: He made a certain suggestion, but his amendment was defeated in the Federal House by 52 to 45 votes.

Mr. RIDGE: I am not concerned with what Mr. Beazley said; I am concerned with the Kimberley electorate, with the Aboriginal people, and with Western Australia doing something for them. I do not care whether it is an omission of the present, the previous, or any future Government. It is about time we did something for them, just as the Aboriginal people should do something for themselves.

On the question of housing, I suggest it is also about time we updated our policy and gave the Aboriginal people the opportunity to decide where they want to live. At present the policy is to build houses in the town, and to require the Aboriginal people to live there, whether they like it or not. For almost three years I have been trying to get the Department of Native Welfare to build houses at Mowanjumb Mission where 200 or more Aboriginal people want to live. The same situation applies almost everywhere in the Kimberley. There is no point in taking people from Kalumburu and housing them in Wyndham—they would be completely out of their element. The Government should realise it will make these people far happier if it built houses where the people want to live. Admittedly most of these places are church missions; but that makes no difference.

I do not know of any mission authority which is not prepared to have some of its land alienated and set aside as a townsite, so that the department or some other body could build homes for the Aboriginal people, homes which they could eventually own themselves. We must concede that if Aborigines want to live on missions, they will have better places of abode than their existing ones.

Mr. Brady: It is intended to hand over the houses at Mowanjumb to the native people.

Mr. RIDGE: I do not know what the situation is at the moment but the administration has suggested that they are quite prepared to give the Aboriginal people ownership of the land. I think there may be some legal difficulty. We still have to encourage the department to build homes there because at the moment it wants to build homes in the towns and integrate these people.

Mr. Brady: In many cases the department is building for its own officers.

Mr. RIDGE: Surely to goodness they need to have houses! On the other hand, we go from the sublime to the ridiculous.

We go from the tin sheds on the reserves to the \$35,000 houses at Halls Creek. Those houses are equipped with overhead fans, oil heaters, and all other modern comforts. Surely to goodness, rather than spend \$30,000 on one house it would be better to spend \$5,000 or \$6,000 on five or six houses.

We have to stop relying on the churches which are at present providing homes and various other necessities. The Government is not accepting its share of the responsibility in relation to those people. If we are to help the Aboriginal people we really have to start at the top where policies are formulated. We have to encourage a departure from the narrow path which rejects change simply because it has not been proved successful.

We have to realise we are dealing with human beings and if we have the situation which exists at Pork Creek or Fitzroy Crossing we should show we are dinkum by slashing the red tape and getting on with the job. If we do not have the will or the resources to do the job properly then we have to see if we can stir the rational conscience by telling Canberra that unless it is prepared to loosen the purse strings it can have the whole darn mess. If we continue as we have been in the past we will never make any impact on the Aboriginal problem which we have in Western Australia.

Perhaps if the Federal Government had the whole of the responsibility thrust onto it we might get somewhere. If the Aboriginal people want to be accepted in the white communities, and enjoy the same privileges and opportunities, they have to learn to accept responsibility. They will also have to shake the chip off their shoulders and work towards a better life for themselves. That is all I wish to say on the Aboriginal problem.

I would now like to make a quick comment on another matter. When I spoke to the Address-in-Reply in August I commented that a rise in shipping freights appeared imminent. There was good reason for my comment because prior to that it had been reported that the State Shipping Service had suffered a fairly substantial loss. In the course of my Address-in-Reply speech I appealed to the Government to carry the burden of the loss rather than pass it on to the people in the north. The people in the north were already battling to keep up with the high cost of living.

A few days after making that appeal to the Government I was rather surprised and pleased to read a comment in the local newspaper published on the 11th August, 1971. The heading was, "State shipping charges, Cost rises not considered." The article reads as follows:—

A rise in freight charges to northern ports had not been considered by the

Government or the State Shipping Service, the Minister for Transport, Mr. J. Dolan, said last week.

"And make that definite," he said.

He was commenting on a statement by Mr. Alan Ridge (Lib., Kimberley) that everyone in the North wanted to know if the State Shipping Service deficit of \$4 million would mean a rise in freight costs.

The article continues—

Mr. Dolan said: "We even expect the situation to improve as the faster unit-load ships start taking over next month from the present out-moded fleet."

As a result of that statement I think it was fair to expect that people in the north would believe they could expect no further increases in shipping freights, at least in the current year. However, I suppose just to illustrate that ministerial statements are only tools with which to fool people, the Treasurer introduced his Estimates and announced an increase of \$5 a ton in freight to the north.

As if that was not enough, he also said the State Shipping Service would withdraw from the Darwin run, and there would be a cessation of the passenger service. I can appreciate the difficulty confronting the Government. No Government would feel happy about having to carry such a substantial loss on a service which operated outside its territory.

On the other hand, we have an obligation to try to do something to help people from Western Australia who have established industrial enterprises in the Northern Territory. I am not completely satisfied that every avenue was explored before the Government announced its intention to retire from the service. Perhaps the action was taken with a view to jolting the Federal Government into reaching a decision on assistance to the State Shipping Service, so far as the Darwin service was concerned.

If that was the motive—and it is appreciated that it would be involved—it did not have a favourable result. I hope the all-party delegation to the Prime Minister will be more successful. Also, I would like to think that before any other State ship is sold, particularly the *Kangaroo* or the *Koolama*, the Government will investigate the feasibility of operating an express freight service between Fremantle and Darwin. It is possible this could be operated in conjunction with a trade service to Indonesia. I understand the latter is being investigated by the Government.

In suggesting the express service to Darwin I believe it might be successful. I understand the ships operating under the Coastal Shipping Commission lose 60 per cent. of their time in ports, so my suggestion would be worth looking at. I

think the Northern Territory waterside workers should be expected to give some assurance about keeping the service free of industrial strife. That would not be an unreasonable request because when it was announced that the service would be withdrawn a group of Northern Territory businessmen said they would see if they could charter an overseas ship. On that occasion the waterside workers said that if a ship was engaged for that purpose they would almost guarantee that it would not be subject to the same industrial strife which probably caused the State ships to stop going to Darwin.

I was also pleased to note that the State Shipping Service is reassessing the demand for passages to the north-west and as a result we will get another couple of runs.

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable member has another five minutes.

**Mr. RIDGE:** I know it is inevitable that the State Shipping Service will have to cease carrying passengers in the near future, particularly as the unit-load ships take over. Although this will be of no value to the Treasury, I think it is worth noting that the people of the north have a very strong affection for the State Shipping Service, and the passenger service which has been conducted over the years. I think it has been operating for a period of 53 years. It will be a sad day when the service ceases.

**MR. COYNE (Murchison-Eyre)** [3.29 p.m.]: I wish to take this opportunity to bring to the notice of the Government some of the problems affecting a section of the community in my area of Murchison-Eyre. It is my intention to highlight one of the number of difficulties which affect pastoralists in the north-eastern area, the Murchison area, and the goldfields.

The effect of the drought in those areas has already been outlined and publicised but the subject with which I want to deal has not been expressed vigorously enough in the past; that is, the damage sustained by pastoralists because of prospecting and exploration work which is carried on by mining companies.

Since I was elected in February there has been much discussion about the action that will be taken to help these pastoralists to get some form of compensation, but as nothing has happened as yet and the new mining legislation has not been brought down, I thought I would direct my remarks to this subject.

I think the mode of life of pastoralists in this area has been very grievously affected. My close association with the mineral fields in recent years has enabled me to see at close quarters the perpetration of some gross injustices upon station owners and their wives by mining companies. It appears these injustices will be very conveniently forgotten or played

down. This should not be allowed to happen. Every citizen is entitled to redress should he be injured.

At the present time, the fortunes of wool-growers are at a very low ebb, and their importance in the economy of this country has undoubtedly receded in favour of minerals. But the woolgrower will always be a dynamic factor in this country's progress and he is entitled to recognition. His contribution to the wealth of this country has been very well outlined, and we now have an opportunity to repay his efforts by at least undertaking to examine the claims for justice from this section of the community.

I can understand that because of the sudden upsurge of activity in mineral exploration there were bound to be some people who indiscriminately entered these areas, without appreciating the rights of woolgrowers and the difficulties with which they have had to contend in the development of their properties. I do not wish to go into the rights and wrongs of the indignities that have been suffered by these people; they have been well aired by newspapers and in deputations, and so on. But no action has been taken and time is getting short. The injustices still remain and there must be a settling or at least an attempt at settling in order to see that justice is done.

An investigating body should be formed to look into the matter of compensation. I am referring now to permanent damage or damage which prohibits the pursuit of a livelihood—damage to fences, roads, tanks, and so on. Fences must be attended to right away, otherwise sheep will escape or die. These routine operations of a station have been disregarded and interrupted by exploration teams.

Now that the boom has ended and the searches are continuing along more sober lines, the casualties are appearing. While there was a boom in mining there was a bust in wool, and some pastoralists are now running their properties part time, taking jobs either in the towns or on adjacent exploration areas. Some of these people consider themselves very fortunate to be able to take up part-time jobs which enable them to stay on their properties.

The area which I think has been the hardest hit is south of Wiluna and north of Leonora. There has been very active mineral exploration in that area, which includes Mt. Keith, Albion Downs, Yaka-bindie, Leinster Downs, and Sturt Meadows. These stations are on a belt of country through which runs a magnetic anomaly. In most cases the homestead is very close to the mining activity and in nearly all cases the anomaly runs right through the centre of the property, and this causes great hardship in trying to run an effective operation.

In my opinion, Mt. Keith is the hardest hit of all. The magnetic anomaly runs almost right through the centre of the station, and right from the outset of the discovery—which, incidentally, was made by the owner of the station, Mr. Jim Jones—it has been impossible for the station to continue producing wool. The whole area was overrun by survey teams, drilling teams, geologists, and promoters, and the homestead was besieged day and night by callers who wanted to make use of the telephone or make some inquiries. There has been a rumour that this station has now been sold to mining interests, but the situation of the Jones family is unique. Through no fault of their own, members of the family have been denied the right to run their own property without interference.

Imagine the frustration of these people in trying to carry on! I think it is three years since the first mineral discoveries were made at Mt. Keith. The family has been waiting for some action to assist them in making some decisions about their future and to receive some form of compensation.

A similar situation is occurring at the present time at Leinster Downs, where the latest major strike by Selcast is being explored. As this operation develops, the wool production of the station will decline until it is no longer a viable business. The Selcast operation is a very big one and at the present time there are something like 150 to 200 men on the station. The scene of operations is about six miles east of the homestead but the teams that are exploring the station interfere a good deal with its operation.

Only recently a drilling team moved into the area to conduct a drilling programme. In order to reach the area in which they were interested, members of the team had to go down along the fence line, which is normally used only for the servicing of windmills. A large truck with huge equipment on it went down the fence line for 27 miles, and the protrusions on the truck and equipment damaged the fence, necessitating refencing for six miles. It was also necessary to remuster the sheep in those paddocks, which took five men five days to do. The owner worked out the total cost at about \$648. He was one of the fortunate ones because his son suspected who were the villains in the piece and he very quickly went off and got an admission from them that they would accept responsibility. Last week the claim was paid.

There are many instances of the same thing happening but no-one will accept responsibility and the pastoralists themselves have to foot the bill. The foregoing are two instances where consideration should be given to finding ways and means to compensate people for their losses.

There are many others to a lesser degree. For example the Poseidon operation at Mt. Windarra caused hardly any excitement at all in the area, because it was located on the extremities of two properties and, as a result, nobody was really affected.

In the early stages of its operation the company used the water points of the Laverton Downs area and a fairly amicable arrangement was entered into. Most of the big companies seem to work very amicably together with the pastoralists. The major companies have now arrived at a point where everything is relatively peaceful, but in the past this was not always the case. Because of the recession in mining the mining companies are settling down into a straightout operation in which everybody in the area will take part in a much happier way.

In my maiden speech I referred to the question of compensation being given to pastoralists and I suggested that \$10 of the lease rental might be returned to the pastoralist for each claim pegged on his property.

This suggestion could of course be enlarged upon because it would provide that those on whose properties the greatest amount of activity takes place would receive a greater benefit and compensation. Some of the properties have as many as 300 or 400 claims pegged and although many claims have been forfeited this would mean that \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year could be paid to the pastoralist to compensate him for the interference that is taking place to his livelihood. At the moment the pastoralists are going through a difficult period and I would ask the Government to give some consideration to their plight and help them to re-establish themselves. I ask the Government to indicate what action is contemplated to overcome some of the inequalities affecting the areas to which I have referred.

Another problem which affects my area, as it does other areas in a similar position, is that of education. I do not wish to dwell too long on this matter but the two important aspects of the education system in the Murchison area are the living-away-from-home allowance and the supervisor's allowance.

These allowances are much too meagre to permit the people to conduct the necessary education of their children. On several stations I visited recently I was able to see at first-hand a lady trying to teach three children on the School of the Air. I happened to get there at 10.00 a.m. which was I suppose the most critical time because at that time children of various ages have to take their turn on the School of the Air at different sessions. The mother, while trying to cope with the supervision of these children, must also look after the morning tea, prepare

the lunch, and take part in the other activities that are necessary between meals.

The amount of work that must be done by the mother in this regard is too much of a burden for her and it means, of course, that she must catch up with her routine duties at the weekend.

I think it is unjust to expect mothers to accept these burdens indefinitely. The amount of \$200 contributed to such people by way of subsidy and as supervisor's allowance is much too small. I think it could be raised to \$250 per child and this still would not be sufficient, because the pastoral people themselves must contribute to the well-being of the supervisors; they must feed them and provide them with accommodation. Accordingly \$250 per child would not be an unreasonable figure.

The other aspect to which I have referred—that of the living-away-from-home allowance—is one which is being vigorously attacked at the moment. A group has been formed in New South Wales and the activities of that group have now gained support in this State. I think we will hear a lot more about their activities in the near future.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.05 p.m.*

Mr. COYNE: Before the suspension I was saying that the living-away-from-home allowance granted to the parents of children living in remote areas is insufficient. In years past, when the pastoral industry was flourishing, most of the parents in these parts had no hesitation in giving their children the best of education, but these days, because of the reverses that have been met by those in the industry, and as a result of a deterioration in their financial position, they are unable to continue educating their children at the same level. Therefore, some other alternative should be found to enable their children to receive a good education.

The best solution would be to provide regional high school hostels. I know that such a suggestion was investigated previously. I think at one stage the establishment of a hostel at Kalgoorlie was considered, but eventually it was not approved. Now that a third-year school is to be built at Meekatharra I would suggest that a small hostel could be erected there. Meekatharra serves a wide area and the town itself will keep on growing. The junior high school could serve both the Cue and Mt. Magnet areas. I appeal to the Government to think along these lines.

Before concluding, I would point out that the general situation in the Murchison area is very poor. Many of the people in the Mt. Magnet area are supported by the Hill 50 gold mine, but it is extremely doubtful whether that mine will be able to continue, and when families leave the

district their places are taken by single men and the business people in the area are suffering as a result. The Cue district is also on the decline. Now that the mining boom has passed these mining towns have been left in a worse position than they were before. The Hill 50 gold mine cannot survive much longer unless there is a rise in the price of gold. I conclude my remarks on that note.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr. Harman.

*(continued on page 858.)*

## QUESTIONS (14): ON NOTICE

### 1. MIDLAND AND ROBB JETTY

#### ABATTOIRS

#### *Second Shift*

Mr. MOILER, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the possibility of operating a second shift at both Midland abattoirs and Robb Jetty meat works been considered?
- (2) If so, what were the findings of the deliberations?
- (3) What objections or impediments are there to conducting multiple shifts at the abovementioned works?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The operation of a second shift was not considered to be feasible.
- (3) The major impediment in operating a multiple shift system would be the necessity to increase present chilling and by-products facilities to cope with the additional kill. Existing slaughtering and inspection staff would also require to be doubled and additional amenities provided for these men. If a multiple shift system was introduced, significant difficulties in carrying out essential works maintenance would also arise.

### 2.

#### POLICE

#### *Albany: Female Officer*

Mr. COOK, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has any decision been made relating to the appointment of a female police officer for Albany?
- (2) If so, when is she expected to take up her duties?
- (3) If (1) is "No" when is a decision likely to be made?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Within the next fortnight.
- (3) Answered by (1).

### 3. SPECIAL ROAD FUND GRANTS

#### *Shires in Roe Electorate*

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Have any special road fund grants been made to the Shires of Ravensthorpe, Gnowangerup, Lake Grace and Nyabing-Pingrup to repair roads damaged by flood-water in the recent storms?
- (2) If so, what amounts have been allocated to each of the above shires?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No. However, a preliminary assessment has been carried out by officers of the Main Roads Department in liaison with council officers, and consideration is being given to the allocation of funds to assist with repairs to roads damaged by floodwaters. In the meantime the councils are proceeding with urgent repairs.
- (2) Answered by (1).

### 4. EDUCATION

#### *Boarding-away-from-home Allowance*

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Education:

Further to the answer to question 1 of 17th November, 1971, is he able to advise what the living-away-from-home allowances will be for 1972?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

Zone	Up to the end of the 3rd year	Upper school
North of 26th parallel	\$260	\$10
South of 26th parallel	210	250

### 5. GRAIN POOL

#### *Profits*

Mr. STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

In view of the fact that the grain pool surplus transferred to reserve fund increased from \$21,000 in 1969-70 to \$222,000 in 1970-71, would he state the profit on each of the pools, voluntary and compulsory, for the year 1970-71?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

There is no profit made on any pool.

The oats pool is conducted on the basis of recovery of costs.

The barley pool is conducted for 1.1 cents per bushel. (This rate has not changed in 14 years but receipts have increased).

Surpluses are transferred to the reserve and losses met from the reserve.

1970-71 figures are as follows:—

	\$
Surplus from grain pool investments	17,360
Surplus from Australian wheat board agencies	13,188
Surplus from conducting barley pool	206,515
Surplus from conducting oats pool	Nil
	237,063
Less—	\$
Loss on management of linseed pool	4,211
Loss on management of small seeds pool	8,441
Loss on management of rapeseed pool	1,917
	14,569
Transferred to reserve	\$222,494

### 6.

#### POLICE

#### *Incapacity: Compensation*

Mr. HARTREY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

What entitlement has an ex-member of the police force to payment for—

- (a) loss of earnings;
- (b) cost of medical treatment; and
- (c) costs of hospitalisation, resulting from recurrence of incapacity for work due to personal injury by accident sustained in the course of his former employment as a policeman?

Mr. BICKERTON replied:

The medical benefits referred to which are available to serving police officers do not continue when a member retires or resigns.

### 7.

#### ABATTOIRS

#### *Financial Assistance for Establishment*

Mr. BLAICKIE, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) How many inquiries have been received by the Department of Development and Decentralisation for assistance to establish abattoirs and the upgrading of existing abattoir facilities, and from which shire area?
- (2) Has the department agreed to any form of assistance to those mentioned in (1), and, if so, would details be given as to what extent?
- (3) Does the Government intend to—
  - (a) assist;
  - (b) establish,
 abattoirs in the metropolitan area or country areas and, if so, where, and at what stage are the developments to date?

- (4) If "Yes" to (3) what is the expected capacity of each, and when can commencement of operation be anticipated?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Forty-two inquiries have been received by the department during the past two years.

Towns and shires concerned are—Albany (2); Boyup Brook (2); Broome (2); Bunbury; Carnarvon (2); Exmouth; Esperance (3); Gingin; Geraldton; Katanning (2); Kulin; Kojonup (2); Koorda; Murray; Margaret River (3); Manjimup; Merredin (2); Narrogin; Port Hedland; Plantagenet; Rockingham; Roebourne; Swan Guildford; Toodyay; Wanneroo; Wickiepin; Wagin; Wyalkatchem; Wyndham (2); and the metropolitan area.

- (2) Yes.

Katanning—Southern Meat Packers Ltd. Government guarantee—\$800,000.

Wyndham meatworks—Government guarantee—\$660,000.

Gibson's Abattoirs (Carnarvon—Government guarantee—\$25,000.

- (3) (a) A decision on assistance to some of the projects mentioned in the answer to question (1) is dependent on a number of factors, including the completion of feasibility studies and investigation by departmental officers on economic viability.

- (b) Considerable funds are required to establish abattoirs and at this stage no new Government-owned works are proposed.

However, extensions and up-grading are currently being undertaken at Midland and W.A. Meat Exports.

- (4) Midland 12,500 sheep and lambs a day, W.A. Meat Exports 6,000 sheep and lambs a day by 30th June, 1972.

In addition the overall position will be improved by the throughput of Katanning, which will be 1,250,000 sheep and lambs per annum from mid-1972 onwards.

8.

## EDUCATION

### Roleystone School

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many students attend the Roleystone school now and how many are anticipated to commence at the beginning of the 1972 school year?

- (2) What building programme is planned for that school during 1972?

- (3) Has the Roleystone parents and citizens' association made application for assistance to create a school oval and ground improvement?

- (4) If so, what is the—

- (a) date of application;
- (b) nature of request;
- (c) cost involved?

- (5) When is it expected—

- (a) to approve the plan;
- (b) to approve the subsidy?

- (6) Has any additional site or sites been selected for a further primary school or schools in the Roleystone area?

- (7) If (6) is "No" will this precaution for the future provision of schools and grounds for the area be taken now?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) 206 enrolled at 1st August, 1971. 220 pupils estimated to be enrolled at the beginning of the 1972 school year.

- (2) No permanent buildings but a demountable will be provided during the year if required.

- (3) A landscape development plan was forwarded to the school. There is no record at the Education Department of any further application for assistance.

- (4) and (5) Not applicable.

- (6) Yes.

- (7) Not applicable.

9.

## SCIENTOLOGY

### Repeal of Act

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In view of the statement by the Deputy Premier during Parliamentary debate that when a Labor government is elected, high on the list of priorities will be the repeal of the Scientology Act 1968, will the Government honour the promise contained in this statement to repeal the Act?

- (2) Has he or the Government asked for and/or obtained a report and recommendation from the Director of Mental Health in this subject of possible repeal of the Act?

- (3) If so, what is the substance of the report or recommendation?

- (4) If (2) is "No" will the Government ask for such report and recommendation, if it has the intention to repeal the Act?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. Davies) replied:

- (1) The matter will receive the consideration of Cabinet in due course.
- (2) No.
- (3) Answered by (2).
- (4) Yes.

## 10. YUNDURUP CANALS DEVELOPMENT

### *Government Guarantee*

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Premier:

Does the \$1,750,000 loan and guarantee to the Yundurup canals project cover only the cost of dredging, earthwork and necessary works for getting the building blocks, canals and roads to a stage where the various conditions are fulfilled and consequently the blocks can be sold, or does it cover the cost of previously projected additional projects such as golf links, hotel building, etc.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

The guaranteed loan does not cover the additional projects listed.

## 11. STAMP DUTY ON RECEIPTS

### *Refund*

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Referring to applications for refund of receipts duty, are all types of primary production included under "new goods produced or manufactured"?
- (2) Are there any goods whatever on which a refund will not be made?
- (3) If so, what are these?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes, provided the goods are produced in Australia.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Second-hand and imported goods.

## 12.

### MEAT

#### *Export of Lamb*

Mr. STEPHENS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is the Australian Meat Board guaranteed minimum of 18½ cents F.A.S. for September, October, November, designed to assist in setting a minimum price to the export fat lamb producer?
- (2) If so, will he indicate whether the scheme this year has been successful in achieving its aims as far as the producer is concerned?

- (3) If "No" to (2) will he request the Australian Meat Board to revise the scheme to ensure that the export lamb producer receives the financial benefit?

Mr. JAMIESON (for Mr. H. D. Evans) replied:

- (1) Yes.
  - (2) and (3) Yes, in regard to lambs forwarded directly from producers for sale on consignment to the United Kingdom.
- The Australian Meat Board is, however, re-examining the scheme in relation to lambs not forwarded directly by producers.

## 13.

### WATER SUPPLIES

#### *Exploration on Pastoral Properties*

Mr. COYNE, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What protection is offered pastoralists from private hydrological survey teams who invade properties and conduct their operation without consulting the owners or leaseholders of these properties?
- (2) What action can a pastoralist take to prevent the use and transport of large quantities of water from his water points to nearby camps and drilling sites?
- (3) What compensation rights does an owner have if existing water supply points are reduced to a level where livestock and homesteads suffer because of the increase in salinity due to exploratory deeper drilling operation in adjacent localities?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

These questions seek expressions of law which I consider I am not competent to answer.

14. *This question was postponed.*

## APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [4.18 p.m.]: I rise mainly to make some fairly brief comment on the Yundurup scandal and the possibility of misappropriation of public funds by way of guarantee.

I have spoken to many people in the metropolitan area in recent days regarding this matter and not one of them has not expressed extreme concern about the unsavoury precedent set by the Government. Quite frankly I sincerely believe that none of the Brand Government's negotiations could possibly have rendered the present Government responsible for any mortgage



of funds whatever. In guaranteeing this project the Government is hanging its hat on a very thin peg.

This project chased funds not only throughout Australia, but throughout the rest of the world and was unable to persuade anyone to provide finance. No finance company was prepared to finance the project, mainly for two reasons. The first was because of the value of the land; and the second was because the cash flow-back would not support the project. Consequently it is difficult to understand why the Government would support a project such as this.

The Government and the taxpayer stand to gain nothing at all if a multi-million gain is made on the project, but if the project makes a loss the Government will lose every cent it has guaranteed.

Mr. Jamieson: We would not get anything?

Mr. O'CONNOR: We would get a bill.

Mr. Jamieson: If it is a success we will not get anything?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Only our money back.

Mr. Jamieson: I think we might get a little land tax and a few other items like that.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That may be so, but the Government would get the land tax in any case, without this guarantee. This situation is scandalous and represents a very unsavoury precedent.

Mr. Jamieson: The whole Yundurup picture was scandalous.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Not until the change of Government.

Mr. Jamieson: Not only that part, but the delta, too. It will be straightened out though.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am speaking specifically about the guarantee. The Government has endeavoured to pull the wool over the eyes of every member here, and the public. I want to say quite emphatically that the Brand Government did nothing to warrant this Government's action in guaranteeing a mortgage of this kind.

Mr. Jamieson: What about all the holes that would have been left?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Every land project has problems and many are held up for longer periods than was the case with this project.

Mr. Jamieson: When did you last see it?

Mr. O'CONNOR: A certain party pulled the wool over the Government's eyes.

Mr. Jamieson: Not at all. I was not going to be faced with the filling in of those canals.

Mr. O'CONNOR: No. The Minister was only concerned with paying out the taxpayers' funds.

Mr. Jamieson: At least we have a chance of not having to expend any more.

Mr. O'CONNOR: This is a shocking scandal and I certainly would never have agreed to it had I been a member of Cabinet.

Mr. Jamieson: The member for Floreat—

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am speaking and I would appreciate it if the Minister would allow me to do so. If he wishes he can make a speech later. I hope he will.

Mr. Jamieson: I have never been beyond doing that. You know that.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am expressing my views and I am expressing them strongly.

Mr. Jamieson: Why didn't you express them as strongly in Cabinet in the first place?

Mr. O'CONNOR: We never spoke of a guarantee.

Mr. Jamieson: Why not object to the principle of the thing?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am objecting now to the fact that the Government has given the guarantee. I think this is shocking and I wish to say so. I commenced by saying I desired to be brief, but if the Government wants to keep me on my feet a bit longer, I will be quite happy to oblige.

We stand to gain nothing from this project, but to lose everything. Of the \$1,750,000 a sum of \$640,000 has been paid out for work already done, and the balance is to be spent on future works. For what? When we contemplate the situation we realise it is to be spent on land apparently purchased initially some five years ago for \$2,000. Some 300 lots have been advertised at something like \$10,000 a block. This represents a tremendous profit and here the Government is condoning it by supporting the project by giving a guarantee. The amount guaranteed represents 875 times the value of the land purchased five years ago.

Mr. Jamieson: And we will not pay a cent of it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister says the Government will not have to pay anything. How does he know?

Mr. Jamieson: You say we will. My opinion is as good as yours.

Mr. Rushton: Why doesn't the Government give the facts?

Mr. Graham: We are cleaning up the mess you made.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Government should not support extreme speculators, as these people are. Let me say that this is not the only project in which they have been involved, and the Government should

not support them. They are in the project to make a profit on high-priced blocks. The average individual will certainly not be able to afford one. The only way the average person will be affected is by having to pay out through the Government.

It is hard to understand how the Government could assist large speculators to develop a property which cost them \$2,000, but which the Government is guaranteeing for such a large amount. I have been asked why I believe the project was doomed. If it was not, why would not any finance company or organisation support it? Finance companies are looking for profit all over the place and if a profit is to be made they will be in it. But no-one would take this project on. They were not foolish enough, but the Government was because it has stepped in and taken over. This is very unfortunate.

When the Premier replied to a question that was asked, I said "Rubbish." However his replies certainly leave some room for doubt and when we consider the U.F.G.A. we realise it has been established and organised by members of the A.L.P. and T.L.C. It is all very well for the Minister for Works to laugh. He knows this is the case.

Mr. Jamieson: If it had not been for them we would have won four more seats at the last election.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister will not deny that members of the A.L.P. supported it.

Mr. Jamieson: Supported it? Go on! I have heard everything now.

Mr. O'CONNOR: One of the individuals sent to start it was a Mr. Latter whom the Minister knows very well.

Mr. Jamieson: I know him.

Mr. O'CONNOR: My word the Minister does.

Mr. Jamieson: I know you too. This is one of those things in life. We get to know people.

Mr. Rushton: You backed the wrong horse.

Mr. Jamieson: We never supported them.

Mr. Nalder: They had a deal with you.

Mr. Court: The pay-off is coming now in the abattoirs project.

Mr. O'CONNOR: We all know of the incident at Yundurup, and we all know of the pay-off on the abattoirs. We also all know that a couple of transport people will not have any warrants issued against them. This is also undesirable, and I could name these people.

Mr. Jamieson: Well, name them.

Mr. O'CONNOR: One is a man by the name of Ladd. The Minister's Government has issued instructions that no

warrant is to be issued against him. The other is Trainor from Armadale who was a candidate at the last election and who gave the Government his preferences.

Mr. Graham: What party did he stand for?

Mr. O'CONNOR: He was helping the A.L.P.

Mr. Graham: That is no crime, surely.

Mr. O'CONNOR: He had talks with the Premier. I do not know whether he is the Government's adviser on transport. I think he might be because he has also gone bankrupt.

Under this Government a tremendous increase in unemployment has occurred in this State.

Mr. Graham: Right throughout Australia.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It is worse in this State, and if the Minister looks at the latest statistics he will crawl under the table and apologise.

Mr. Jamieson: It is no worse than it was in February.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Just wait until next February! If it is worse next February than last February, will the Minister resign?

Mr. Jamieson: No. Don't be so stupid.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Of course not, because the Minister knows that in February a large influx of school children comes onto the employment market. This influx will occur again next February and the unemployment situation will be worse than it has been for many years. I venture to suggest it will be in excess of 2 per cent.

Mr. Jamieson: One of the best knockers in the business, you are.

Mr. O'CONNOR: We were getting jobs for these people. They did not have the troubles they have now. What has happened to their take-home pay? It is less because there is less overtime and quite a few of them do not get any at all because there is less employment. I blame the Government for this because it has knocked everyone. The Government blames the Commonwealth and yet this Government has had great handouts—better than any other Government.

Mr. O'Neill: It has \$5,000,000 of housing money still unallocated. We allocated it in July every year.

Several speakers interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. O'CONNOR: A fairly desperate position exists in this State in the building industry which is at a fairly low ebb. The Government should do something about that.

Mr. Jamieson: Try to get yourself a tradesman tomorrow morning and see how you get on.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would have no problem.

Mr. Jamieson: You try.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If I tried to get employment for one of them, then it would be a different position altogether.

Two groups in Western Australia are facing problems at the moment; one is the building trades' employees and the other is pensioners. The Government is not giving either of these groups any care or consideration. They are certainly not receiving much consideration from this Government.

Mr. T. D. Evans: They are receiving more consideration than they received from your Government.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I believe we should do something in both these fields.

Mr. T. D. Evans: What did you do for pensioners?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I ask the Minister to wait a moment and to speak later if he wishes. The Minister has that opportunity and I hope he will allow me the opportunity to speak now. As I have said, we should try to help both the building industry and pensioners.

Instead of guaranteeing an organisation out to make profit, why does not the Government guarantee \$1,750,000 to build flats for pensioners? The greatest need would probably be for single pensioner accommodation. In this way we would not only have accommodation for pensioners but also employment for the building industry.

I ask the Government to give serious consideration to this request, because help in both directions is desperately needed. Surely the Government cannot say it is short of funds if it is putting this kind of money into a speculative venture.

Mr. Graham: We are not putting any money out.

Mr. Court: You will.

Mr. Jamieson: When we do the Opposition can harp but until then it should remain silent.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Minister has said he is not putting money out. I am not asking him to put it out, but to guarantee accommodation units for pensioners and work for the building industry in the same way as the Government has guaranteed a project to be undertaken by a speculative organisation.

Mr. Jamieson: Put up a proposition. It should be "money up" or "shut up."

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Minister is prepared to accept this proposition I will bring the people to him. Will he give a Government guarantee? I approached the Premier a few months ago with a proposition from people who wished to buy Can-

terbury Court. The Premier replied that the Government was not interested because the price was not right at that time. He did not even want to know what the price was. The people concerned, however, were prepared to pay a good price.

Mr. Jamieson: What has this to do with single-unit quarters?

Mr. O'Neill: It has to do with propositions.

Mr. O'CONNOR: During the 12 years we were in Government everything went smoothly and people were much happier than they are today. This fact was surely indicated by the Ascot by-election. When this matter was mentioned previously the Minister asked whether the Liberals gained an increase in their vote. Of course, he was looking at the figures upside down.

Mr. Jamieson: So were you. You were listening to a bank clerk who was giving figures.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Does the Minister refute that the Liberals gained an increased vote?

Mr. Jamieson: There was not a great percentage increase over what was previously received.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Was it 10 per cent?

Mr. Jamieson: Nowhere near it.

Mr. Court: Had it been a general election, it would not have been possible to fit all the Liberal members in on the other side.

Mr. Jamieson: Rubbish and nonsense.

Mr. Graham: Hoping, hoping, hoping.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Did the A.L.P. gain an increase in their vote at the Ascot by-election?

Mr. Jamieson: Of course it did not. It always receives a lesser vote when the overall total vote is down.

Mr. O'CONNOR: This Government will go down in history as the "putty Government." Push it one way and it goes somewhere else!

Mr. May: Always on the move.

Mr. Jamieson: That is more than your Government could say.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The present Government has been called, "a-blue-a-day Government." Of course, if the "blues" are of the order of \$1,750,000, such as the Yundurup canals proposition, it will not be long before the Government is in tremendous trouble.

Mr. Jamieson: You have been listening to the member for Floreat too much, but forgetting that he has a vested interest in the area in question.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I have expressed my objections to the unsatisfactory situation which exists in respect of both pensioners and the building industry. I have done

this not only on my own behalf but on behalf of the many people who have spoken to me.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.34 p.m.]: As we are drawing near the end of the general debate on the Estimates—

**Mr. Bickerton**: Is that a tip?

**Mr. COURT**: —I thought I would like to say a few words.

**Mr. Jamieson**: Not about Hancock and Wright, I hope.

**Mr. COURT**: If I may do something which is unusual in this session, I should like to talk for a little while about the Budget. In spite of the calamity howling on the part of the Government and all its efforts to blame everyone but itself, it so happens the Government has available a record Budget.

**Mr. O'Neil**: That is right.

**Mr. COURT**: In fact, the Treasurer boasted of this. I do not think we have talked enough about the Budget, and it will not do any harm to do so.

**Mr. T. D. Evans**: It is a change to hear somebody discuss the Budget.

**Mr. COURT**: If we were to listen to members of the Government from the Premier down the assumption would be that the State is impoverished and has less money than it has had for years when, in point of fact, it has a record Budget. This is partly due to the great generosity on the part of the Commonwealth Government. To its credit, it gave money to the present Government which it would not give to our Government. Further, this changed attitude came within a matter of a few weeks. If this is not evidence of a Federal Government which wants to be fair I do not know what is. Look at the assistance the Commonwealth Government has given to South Australia, where there is another Labor Government. This indicates the Commonwealth Government is fair in its approach to all the States and does not consider allocations in a party-political atmosphere.

**Mr. Bickerton**: It is a change for you to be on the side of the Commonwealth.

**Mr. COURT**: I believe it would be worthwhile, particularly for the newer members of this House who have no experience of State Budgets, to study some of the comments made by the Auditor-General, particularly the preliminary remarks in his report. As we know, the situation of the Auditor-General is quite different from other Government officials. He is, in fact, an officer of this Parliament and his report is therefore tabled by the Speaker and not by the Premier.

We have learnt to place a great deal of importance on the independence of the Auditor-General. I invite members—par-

ticularly newer members, as I have said—to read at least the first few pages of his report, even if they do not read the rest. They should do this to establish in their minds the sobering fact that, so far as the Government is concerned, and in spite of what it has said to the contrary, it inherited a very sound financial position. The whole tenor of the Auditor-General's remarks and all of the facts set out in the figures substantiate the statement that the Government inherited a very strong and sound financial position.

This is what my leader said to the people when he was Premier. It is what he has said since he has been Leader of the Opposition. However, for some extraordinary reason the Government has been getting away with murder by indicating to the people that it inherited tremendous financial problems and a bankrupt Treasury. No Government in the history of Western Australia came into power with such a good financial position as the Tonkin Government.

**Mr. T. D. Evans**: Do you deny the effect of the national wage decision?

**Mr. COURT**: No-one would deny that. We tried to tell the Premier this fact before the election and before he made his policy speech.

**Mr. T. D. Evans**: How can you say it was a healthy situation?

**Mr. COURT**: We were not to blame, because we told the present Government. The simple fact remains that in the light of the circumstances at the time the previous Budget was balanced when it was brought down. Also, in the light of the assistance that has been given by the Commonwealth Government, when it acknowledged the changed circumstances so far as wages were concerned, the present Government will finish with a deficit which is much less worrying than the one expected. It has been able to go ahead this year with a much lower deficit.

**Mr. T. D. Evans**: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition concedes the change in circumstances.

**Mr. COURT**: The present Government was in much the same situation as the Federal Treasurer. Before the Federal Treasurer introduced his Budget—some two months before, in fact—he told the people of Australia of inflationary problems. No-one disputed that statement. He also said that the Commonwealth Government would have to take tough measures. Everyone took his statements seriously.

**Mr. J. T. Tonkin**: You overlook one vital difference; he had a surplus and we had a deficit.

**Mr. COURT**: The Premier has come in without hearing what I said previously. The Federal Treasurer indicated that the Budget would be tough and that the Federal Government would have to tighten

up. The people believed these statements which became the theme throughout Australia. Everyone was saying, "It will be a tough Budget."

This is a dangerous tactic whether it is used by Federal or State Treasurers, and it is outmoded. If they preach this sort of thing, it is only natural and proper, I suppose, for the people to take them seriously. People repeat the message over and over again and the tightening-up processes begin. When the Federal Budget came down it was nowhere near as tight as people were led to believe it would be.

We had a similar situation in Western Australia because the Premier was saying that the Government was faced with serious problems; things would be tough; there would be huge cuts; and there would be a deficit of \$30,000,000. No-one in his right mind would admit that Western Australia could tolerate a deficit of \$30,000,000, because since Western Australia is not a claimant State the money would have to come out of something we could ill-afford to lose; namely, loan funds. Whether it were funded immediately or on a delayed basis, sooner or later someone would have to pick up the chit. Unless the Government were to have a lucky break in the subsequent year, the money would have to come out of loan funds.

People in Western Australia started to re-echo the Premier on the budgetary position. We know what the answer was. As a result of the assistance the Premier received when he went to the Federal Government with other Premiers he did not have to bring down a Budget anything like that foreshadowed.

I come back to my point: I believe too little work is done by members of Parliament on the Auditor-General's report which is a most comprehensive document. I am not suggesting every word, phrase, and figure should be studied, but it helps considerably if members who are interested in particular departments study in detail the report of the Auditor-General on those departments.

The comments the Auditor-General makes on the opening pages are, I believe, testimony to the stability of the financial position that was handed over to the present Government by the Brand Administration.

I wish to say a few words on the economy, because the Budget debate is an appropriate time to do so. We have all realised a shakeout has occurred in the world financial situation. We knew it was only a matter of time before the Americans would have to say to the world, "We have to put our own house in order. We have carried too many people for too long and, therefore, we must have a conference." There is no round table-type conference practicable in this sort of atmosphere. An

Administration, such as the Nixon Administration, had to make a fairly bold and rugged decision to pull everyone up with a jerk. We all know the action the Nixon Administration took in respect of the freezing of wages and prices, imports, and currency generally. Reaction throughout the world was as we expected it would be: everyone squealed blue murder.

Ironically the two countries which were annihilated during the war finished up with the strongest currencies. There is a good reason for this. First of all, they were given tremendous assistance after the war by the bold, humanitarian, and generous gestures on the part of the Americans. On top of that the nations were dedicated and disciplined; they set about their task of rehabilitation in a way which was creditable to them. We do not deny the merit of the performance in West Germany and Japan.

Mr. Graham: The same thing happened after World War I when Germany was defeated. Subsequently it moved to a position of tremendous economic strength.

Mr. COURT: That is so, but at that time it was not given anything like the assistance, technically or monetarily, that it was given after the last World War.

Mr. Graham: Apparently to be defeated on the battlefield is a stimulant.

Mr. COURT: South Africa is a case in point. When the world was harshest upon South Africa, it did its very best. The South Africans had their backs against the wall.

In Australia we have not been in this situation since the depression. When economic circumstances were quite devastating many of the finer attributes came to the fore. We pulled ourselves up as a nation and, through tremendous self-help and denial in a way which must surely be written up as an epic feat for a poor nation with a handful of people, grew from strength to strength. We did this without the assistance of other nations.

Mr. Graham: The position was comparable in so far as suffering was concerned.

Mr. COURT: I hope it will never happen again. It is in difficult times of privation that we see the finest characteristics of a nation develop. We have not been defeated on the battlefield in the true sense of the word. Heaven forbid that we should go through that trial to bring out the best in Australia as a nation. We have been fortunate in that we have done our warring in other people's backyards. It has not been a bad policy of defending the nation.

Mr. Graham: Don't get me going on Vietnam, for heaven's sake.

Mr. COURT: It is too late when the war is in our country. This is the basic difference between the belief of the Liberal Party and members on the other side of the House.

Mr. Graham: As long as the United States gets out of Vietnam.

Mr. COURT: The Deputy Premier would not be sleeping well at night had Sukarno remained in Indonesia.

Mr. Graham: We did not send troops to Indonesia.

Mr. COURT: Mr. Speaker, if I am side-tracked onto this, I will have some quite strong comments to make. I say quite categorically that if the British, Australians, and others had not gone into Malaysia against the terrorists—

Mr. Graham: You are moving around a little, aren't you?

Mr. COURT:—and if the Americans, Australians, and others had not gone into South Korea and then South Vietnam, we would not be enjoying the comfort we enjoy today.

Mr. Graham: Events have proved you were 100 per cent. wrong over Vietnam.

Mr. COURT: The Deputy Premier would not be sleeping as easy as he is now but for our actions then.

Mr. Graham: The whole of the world is against America and Australia on this issue.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COURT: I am very interested to hear that the Deputy Premier is on the side of the Viet Cong.

Mr. Graham: You put our troops in an unenviable position.

Mr. COURT: It is very interesting to hear that the Deputy Premier is on the side of the Viet Cong—the communists. It is interesting to have it recorded. We can sleep easily at night because of the Federal Government's action.

Mr. Graham: Don't you think they are sleeping easily in Germany, France, and the rest of the world? They did not go into Vietnam.

Mr. COURT: The problem is not in their backyard. The basic philosophy is to keep the war out of this country. The Labor Party's idea is to worry about it when it comes to our country. It is then too late.

Mr. Graham: The great thing is that they are getting out now. Even your Federal leader goes along with this.

Mr. COURT: If I might return to the question of the economy.

Mr. Graham: Yes, keep off Vietnam.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COURT: If the Deputy Premier wants to discuss Vietnam we can do it at any time. On this side we know where we are going.

Mr. Graham: The Federal Government entered this war when it did not know where it was going. It has pulled out for the same reason.

Mr. COURT: Why don't you wave your Viet Cong flag?

Mr. Graham: Blood at any price.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COURT: On this side of the House we know where we stand.

Mr. O'Connor: At least we did not support the Viet Cong.

Mr. COURT: The Deputy Premier overlooks the fact that his Federal leader has committed himself to military assistance to Indonesia if it is attacked. We were discussing the economy and I want to get back to it because it is pertinent to the debate.

I do not think anyone in his right mind would deny that America had to make a decision. Indeed, some of us wondered why it was not made seven years earlier. However, when the decision was made it was the duty of the rest of the world to attempt to resolve the problem. I was rather surprised that nations which had benefited greatly by American expertise, finance, and other assistance, were the most reluctant to co-operate. They could not be expected to revalue their currency at the drop of a hat, but I feel they could have attended the conference table earlier, and in a more generous way.

The Japanese have broken the ice and I feel the proposition they have put forward to revalue the yen is on the way to finding a solution. I would not be surprised if the problem is substantially resolved by March. It has to be resolved quickly, despite the talk to the contrary, as the whole stability and prosperity of the world is involved. Now everyone is involved we should obtain a quicker decision than when only one or two countries were suffering. People are selfish and it is difficult to find someone altruistic enough to make a sacrifice to aid one or two. However, when everyone is involved there is a personal and vested interest to obtain a quicker settlement.

We recently had a visit by a Japanese banker. This gentleman, Mr. Sumio Hara, the president of the Bank of Tokyo, was reported in the Press on the 22nd November, 1971, under the heading "The worst is to come." He made certain observations regarding the President Nixon decision and made suggestions to solve the problem. I believe that after this sorting-out takes place and the ground rules are laid down we will find a much quicker revival in world economic affairs than is predicted by most people.

There is good reason for this view. During the period of uncertainty many people have been living on accumulated stocks

rather than buying. Many firms have been holding back on expansion programmes and generally there is an air of gloom and indecision. Anything we, as a State Parliament, can do to help will restore confidence and unleash some of the tremendous resources of spending money latent in Australia, and particularly in this State of ours.

The query in everyone's mind was whether the Japanese economy would take off again at the rate at which it was moving prior to the cut-back scare. This so-called recession in Japan is not a recession by our standards—it is a slowing down of the growth rate. Japan still has a 6 per cent. growth rate—about double our own. It wants to get back to an optimum of 10 per cent. A little while ago Japan's growth rate was 14.4 per cent., which worried the economists. They attempted to bring it back to 7 per cent. but were caught up in the middle of this President Nixon decision to slow things down on a world basis until the American crisis was sorted out.

I want to emphasise that, as soon as the ground rules are worked out—and I do not care how tough they are—some of the big industrial and trading countries like Japan and West Germany will be able to adapt themselves to the new rules. This would be difficult if it were to be done in isolation, but it is to be done in a total world context. For this reason I have tremendous faith in the outcome once the decision has been made. The sooner it is made the better. Perhaps I could express it this way: if the economic hurdle measured 4ft. 6in. in the past and the Japanese and West Germans were jumping that cleanly, and it is put up to six feet, they will soon adapt to jumping this cleanly also. These countries may not return to the excessive growth rate which existed before the cut-back but it will be strong.

I believe these countries will achieve sensible growth rates and, what is more important, with any luck the rest of the world will go along with them. It will be our fault if we do not participate in the increased prosperity which will occur.

I want to move from that point to another point; that is, the question of population. I will make it quite clear where I stand on the question of the population of Australia. I am alarmed at some of the co-called experts coming to this country and talking in terms of population programme cut-backs, and particularly when they talk of cut-backs in our rate of growth. If any country in the world needs people it is Australia, and we must increase our population by natural increase and a migration programme. I am appalled at the way people talk about cutting back in those areas. The best citizens are the ones we produce ourselves.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Hear; hear!

Mr. COURT: Our growth rate in Australia is not prodigious. I would be better pleased if it were higher. It would cause us a little concern to meet the educational and hospital requirements, but I believe this is a small price to pay.

Mr. Rushton: Are you still helping?

Mr. COURT: I did my bit; I made my tally.

Mr. T. D. Evans: This is the first time I have seen the Deputy Leader of the Opposition speechless.

Mr. COURT: I did reasonably well for the nation with the number I produced.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Perhaps the wheel of the wheelbarrow is still not broken.

Mr. COURT: We will not attempt to prove it.

In a more serious vein, I believe some people who are talking about cutting back the natural increase in Australia are doing this nation a tremendous disservice. It is one thing to talk about a population explosion—and I know there is diabolical suffering in some parts of Africa, India, Pakistan, and some of the Asian countries—but we cannot generalise on matters such as this. Unfortunately, the people who understand the jargon some experts are using today are the people in the better-educated countries like our own—the very places where we do not need this doctrine. People in this country have enough good sense to realise the extent to which the population growth can be raised within the nation's economic and physical capacity. I hope there will soon be an end to much of the nonsense being talked about this matter.

Efforts are being made at the moment in many circles to cut back on migration. I feel we are creating unemployment by cutting back on migration.

Mr. Lapham: We scraped the barrel on a lot of occasions.

Mr. COURT: I go along with the fact we want quality rather than quantity. There is something wrong with the system if we are doing, as the honourable member suggests, scraping the barrel. If the number of migrants is reduced because we are more selective, I would not quarrel with that. I believe seven good men are better than 10 men for the sake of numbers; that is, in the final productive performance, the harmony engendered by them, and the overall economic cost to the nation.

Instead of talking this nonsense about over-population, we should be looking at ways and means of creating a better migration programme. We should try to obtain better migrants and learn how to absorb them into our community. The pressure from some economists to cut

back in our migration programme is mis-applied. This morning we read that the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths' Society of Australia is campaigning about migration. This union has done more to bring about some of our economic problems in the State than most other people. If we have more migrants coming here we need more housing, food, clothing, and material. Apart from their needs, migrants make a contribution to our economy.

An economist told us that the migration scheme cost \$1,400,000,000 a year, and for some extraordinary reason this had a magical effect. One of our leading economists from the University of Western Australia gave the lie to this on television in the clearest terms. He is a professional economist of international and local standing. However, his arguments did not get to first base because somebody had made this erroneous statement. When the position is analysed it is clear that migrants have assisted our economy.

I suggest we look at this in a serious way and not become alarmed by the state of the economy and the unemployment situation. When we look at it constructively we discover that we need more people of the right type to develop our industry and our country. This would place a demand on the building industry.

I am amazed that the leader of the band in this particular movement to cut down our migration programme is substantially the labour union movement. If somebody in a union leadership position stopped to think for a while he would reverse this policy. The building industry would seem the one with most to gain from migrants. I hope that wiser counsel will prevail.

Before I conclude I wish to deal very briefly with the question of the Ord River. I hope the Government is able to proceed with the plans which are currently under consideration. I believe it will be necessary for us to rewrite the Land Act to some extent in regard to pastoral leases in the Kimberley region. A lot of the woolly thinking in Australia seems to be against overseas interests and investment in this country. If we are able to change some of the conditions under which people have access to pastoral properties in conjunction with irrigable land, we will have a dramatic change in the development of the Ord. The main dam is almost immediately coming into operation and it looks like a good wet season. We should not listen to the few sceptics—we should approach this in an aggressive way. I have never lost my faith in the scheme. I hope we do not shirk this venture because it is not as profitable or as quick as mineral development. The fruits of this scheme will be there for a very long time and probably its greatest potential will be reached when most of us are no longer on

this earth. It is a responsibility we must face up to; we must use some of the money we are getting from the development of minerals on this scheme.

Mr. H. D. Evans: We put a fair bit into the Ord.

Mr. COURT: I know, but the Minister should look at the land leases and the conditions under which land can be developed. Restrictive thinking should be stopped. For too long we have been frightened to disturb the limit on acreage of the leases in the hands of one owner. My main concern is: what has the person done with the land he has? I do not worry about how much land he has, but what use he makes of it. He should develop the land in accordance with an agreement. No-one can take his land with him. It cannot be taken from one State to another, or from one country to another. It is a development for us!

My final comments will be on a rather contentious subject. I wish to broach it now because I believe we do not talk about it enough. I refer to the question of the future of South Africa. Too few people have been there. I believe that if more Australians visited South Africa and Rhodesia they would obtain a better understanding of what the future holds for those countries, and for us. Those of us who have been there several times know the peculiarities and the similarities in their climate, soils, development problems, and ambitions. If we could forget the black and white situation for a while we could obtain an entirely different concept of where South Africa is heading and what it means to us.

We are one of three great continents in the southern hemisphere—the South Americas, Australia, and the Africas. These continents all have the same things in common. Each has a vast quantity of raw materials. The South Americas and the Africas are densely populated, although we are not; but in other respects we have many common aspirations. I think Western Australians in particular would learn a great deal by visiting South Africa, forgetting their prejudice for a moment and also leaving aside the black-white issue. The nature of the terrain in that country is similar to ours; so also is the climate and the geographic situation. Both countries are dependent on exports. This gives us many things in common, whether we are talking in terms of agriculture, mining, fishing, secondary industries, tertiary industries, or technical research. South Africa has another factor from which we could learn; that is the way in which coloureds and Bantu people are handled. By world standards the trouble we get into in trying to handle our own few natives is just too ridiculous. One appreciates this when one understands the great problems with which South Africa has to deal. In that country there



is a great ratio of black people against the white people as far as numbers are concerned.

It would do some of us good to study what South Africa has done with its Bantu and coloureds. It is necessary for us to forget about the separate development philosophy for a while and to look at what that country has done in matters of education, health, and social conditions. I want to make an appeal to some people in Australia first of all to look at this problem objectively and fairly, and to acknowledge that somewhere along the line South Africa one day might have a tremendous value to us; there will be a tremendous interrelationship of interests. The fact is that from the point of view of defence and shipping South Africa is vital to our own future.

Just imagine what would have happened had South Africa not adopted a sensible attitude when the Suez Canal was closed. Imagine what could have happened had South Africa said, "Take your ships somewhere else." I think many Australians do not realise the progress that has been made in South Africa in endeavouring to work sensibly towards a breaking down of the problems of that country.

I believe history will record Mr. Vorster as a man who has made more progress in a sensible way in an effort to break down this very serious problem than any man who has ever lived. I believe he deserves encouragement in his work instead of being kicked to death every time he does something. He is in a terribly difficult situation. Let us put ourselves in Mr. Gilligan's place. His people live in an atmosphere which has a preponderance of black people, and he must preserve the security of the white people as well as the black people.

Mr. Jamieson: Why?

Mr. COURT: Because they happen to be there and they have a right to be there. They were there before the Bantu people.

Mr. Jamieson: They were not there before a lot of the other people.

Mr. COURT: They were there before everybody apart from the Hottentots and a few others on the Cape side. However, people generally do not realise this. The whole philosophy of the South African Government is to provide places where the Bantu can live as they want to. They are being given self-government, and the Transkei is a particular example.

Mr. Jamieson: They took you on a very rosy tour.

Mr. COURT: It is to our discredit that we do not acknowledge the progress which is being made in South Africa. The Minister for Works has one of the most astute political minds in this Parliament, and he knows there are some political realities which cannot be excluded. He knows that

if Mr. Vorster moves too quickly he will not remain the Prime Minister for very long because he belongs to a party which is just as tough as that to which the Minister belongs.

Mr. Jamieson: Do you think General Smuts' policy was quite wrong? What was wrong with it?

Mr. COURT: I do not know when the Minister was last in South Africa, but if he visited it now he would be surprised.

Mr. Jamieson: What about General Smuts' policy? Was it unrealistic?

Mr. COURT: If the Minister wishes to express his ideas on South Africa let him stand up and do so later. I have limited time at my disposal. Mr. Vorster has made more progress than people realise. I happened to be in Cape Town when Chief Jonathan came down from Lesotho. I was quite surprised to see him; he is as black as black. When the people of Lesotho were granted independence they had the good sense to realise that they could not survive without help because their country was poor. Chief Jonathan sent an S.O.S. to Mr. Vorster asking for help, and Mr. Vorster agreed to talks. So history was made when Chief Jonathan came to Cape Town and was received with full honours.

I happened to be staying in the hotel at which Chief Jonathan was received and I found it to be a moving experience. He was certainly the blackest man I have ever seen; one could almost swear that he was polished with nugget. I was there when he was brought in by the Prime Minister, and he was treated with a proper, dignified air. Chief Jonathan asked not for gifts, but for help to develop his country, and Mr. Vorster gave him his best adviser to return to Lesotho with him in order to help his country. This was not done on a hand-out basis, because Chief Jonathan is a big enough man not to want that.

I met Chief Jonathan—as did Sir David—on his way to Singapore and we discussed this question with him. He said publicly that his country would not embrace the policies of South Africa. He said in fact that he detested them. However, he said, "But we still have to live in this country, and we can help them and they can help us."

What has happened since? We now have these so-called black countries—I feel that is a shocking way to describe them; I detest the word black in that context—of Malawi, Lesotho, Botswana, and Malagasy which are all independent countries and they have established strong trading ties. They all detest the South African policy, but they have enough sense to realise that all countries detest certain things in other countries. In fact, a Bantu is safer in South Africa than in one of the other countries; what

impresses one most in South Africa is the peaceful nature of the people. One does not get an impression of oppression or suppression, and I sometimes wonder just where our country is going in respect of its attitude to South Africa.

I would like to invite the attention of members to the publications which come from South Africa, to give point to what I am saying. We have had an historical occasion inasmuch as the Malawi are now represented by an ambassador in South Africa. A black man was sent from Malawi to South Africa as an ambassador, and he was received with full honour. He does everything in a full diplomatic manner. Surely this is a breakthrough.

Recently an international fair was held in South Africa, and what did we find? The stand which won the prize for the best exhibit was not from Germany, Austria, Japan, or Britain; it was from Malawi. That country prepared a magnificent pavilion. This is reported in the June 1971 issue of *South African Panorama* which is available to members in the Parliament House library. A further sign of progress is reported in the same issue under a large picture of a joint session of the South African Parliament on the historic occasion of the amendment of the South African Constitution in respect of languages. Under the original Constitution only two languages were allowed—Afrikaans and English. Those languages had parity; they had equal legal standing, and that, of course, accounts for the fact that the majority of South Africans are for all practical purposes bilingual in their own country.

This raised a problem in respect of the independent State of Transkei because the Bantu people speak their own languages and under the Constitution this was not an official language in which business could be undertaken in the normal, official way. So we had an historic occasion when both Houses of Parliament met and amended the Constitution. It required a two-thirds majority to alter the Constitution, but it was done and Bantu languages are now legal in these areas. All these events have taken place within the last five or six years and to my mind they are tremendous pointers to the things which could happen in the future.

It is very interesting to follow through the relationship between Basotho, Botswana, Lesotho, Malagasy, the Transkei, and other countries. I think there are six black—and once again I detest that word—countries which enjoy virtually normal relations with South Africa.

I think the historic event next in importance to the visit of Chief Jonathan to Cape Town in January, 1967, was the recent visit to South Africa of the President of Malawi, Dr. Banda. To my mind the pictorial and other reports of his visit

are most moving. I believe the comments he made when he was in South Africa have a message for all of us.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The honourable member has five more minutes.

Mr. COURT: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker. He said, "I came to build bridges between people." Some of the other comments he made in the course of his remarks are even more pertinent. Perhaps I can fit in a few in the few minutes I have left. I quote now the comments of Dr. Banda, President of Malawi, when he visited South Africa, so do not let members suggest that this report has been doctored. When speaking at the Stellenbosch University, he said—

I reject the idea of force. I reject the idea of isolation.

He went on to say that—

In the days of his grandfather, the gulf between Africans and Arabs had seemed to be unbridgeable. Yet within his own lifetime reconciliation had been achieved to such an extent that the late President Nasser, of Egypt, had embraced him as a brother. He hated to think what his grandfather would have thought of such an action.

He went on to explain the significance of his visit to South Africa. He was making the point that there was once greater conflict between his country and the Arabs than there was between his country and South Africa. He was endeavouring to bridge the gap when he said, "I came to build bridges between people." When proposing a toast, he also said—

The principle of dialogue—in its special African context—has become very much an issue of late. As we have often declared, South Africa is willing to talk to any state on an equal footing.

He went on to say—

Recently the leaders of a number of African states have publicly advocated dialogue with the Republic as a better method of resolving differences than the use of violence or boycotts. We are glad of this new development and shall be happy to respond to it.

I will quote yet another comment made by Dr. Banda which is pertinent to the earlier interjection of the Minister for Works. He said—

White people have a right to be in Africa and to call themselves Africans.

He also said—

Many South Africans who had fled their country could be regarded as "professional refugees." Many had been away from the Republic for 10 to 15 years, and knew nothing of present

conditions, yet persisted in telling lies in order to get funds from the African "Liberation Movement."

Those comments did not come from a South African; they came from the black President of the Malawi Republic.

In view of the tremendous similarity between our topography, climate, ambitions, agriculture, secondary industry, fishing, forestry, and all of these things which are so pertinent in research and in the care of the Bantu and the coloureds, we in Western Australia in particular should encourage people to see those things in that country. We need not embrace their philosophy, but we can look at what they are doing.

Might I say finally that people are able to see things in South Africa which have been achieved in a decade, but which would not have been achieved for 50 years had that country not been challenged by the world. They were threatened with isolation and they had to face up to a number of issues in industry and on the technical side for their self-preservation and independence. What has happened in industry and commerce in that country is a revelation.

I hope that at the appropriate time both the Premier and the Minister for Development will take the opportunity to visit South Africa, and particularly inspect the magnificent development organisation that has been built through sheer necessity when the South Africans had their backs to the wall.

Mr. T. D. Evans: Can you indicate whether these tendencies were also manifest in Rhodesia in recent years?

Mr. COURT: The tragedy that befell Rhodesia was that it had a break with Britain, when it really needed to be under the care of Britain. One will find that in Rhodesia this challenge has achieved wonders.

It is true the economy of that country is not as buoyant as it would have been had Rhodesia remained in the British Commonwealth of Nations and under the wing of Britain; but the fact is it has survived when I do not think one out of 10 diplomats at the United Nations would have given it a chance of survival with the world against this tiny country which has a handful of some 250,000 white people.

The short answer to the question of the Minister for Education is that Rhodesia has attempted and achieved things, because of its isolation and the fact that it had its back to the wall. Rhodesia has one advantage; it has two friendly neighbours in South Africa and Mozambique. That is why Rhodesia has survived. Without those two friendly neighbours there is a doubt that it would have survived.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. A. R. Tonkin): The honourable member's time has expired.

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Minister for Education) [5.17 p.m.]: This is a copy of the financial statement which I had the honour to present to this House on the 16th September last. A great deal of time has, in fact, expired since the Budget was introduced. It is now my privilege to reply to the debate. I have to admit that paying full deference to all speakers who have contributed to the debate, and having full regard for all the contents of the debate as it affected the Budget, I can with complete justification deliver my reply to the debate in about five minutes.

The Budget, when introduced, was the subject of a censure motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition very shortly after its introduction. Some weeks have passed, and if all the dire things that were then said about the Budget had come to pass or had been put into operation, so that the effects would now be manifest, I would expect this debate to be still continuing; whereas we have had some very interesting contributions which reminded me of the passage from Lewis Carroll's book: The time has come, the walrus said, to speak of many things. Those things range from shoes and ships. However, little was said about the Budget itself.

I was glad to hear the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in respect of the Ord River. At great length, with some passion and feeling, and no doubt with some understanding, he commented on the South African question and I was interested to hear those comments.

I was also interested in the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Country Party who spoke with some feeling and some understanding on the subject of education; and of the member for Moore also spoke on this topic with a great degree of sympathy, as he normally displays on any debate on education.

Apart from a few fleeting comments made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mt. Lawley, very little was said about the Budget itself. A budget is defined as being a series of statistics, facts, and figures, introduced for the purpose of looking for an argument; but in this case very little argument was adduced.

I feel I would be failing in my reply if I did not reiterate very briefly the philosophy that underlines the foundation and the presentation of this Budget. It has been said—and this is correct—the plain fact was that this year there has been a substantial lift in both revenue and expenditure. Expenditure proposals for 1971-72 show that there is an increased expenditure of \$56,300,000.

Paradoxically, as I said on the 16th September, it is a year when the Government has had to be most selective in providing for improved standards of services. This large increase in expenditure is necessary merely to prevent any deterioration in the general standard of Government services, to provide for some advance in the field of education, and to assist others who are in an even more difficult position than ourselves.

Let us look at some of the items which went to make up for this increased expenditure. The full year cost in 1971-72 of wage and salary increases granted during last financial year will add a further \$15,600,000 to expenditure in 1971-72.

Mr. McPharlin: Does that include the increase in the teachers' salaries.

Mr. T. D. EVANS: In addition, award increases granted since the 30th June up to the time when the Budget was introduced on the 16th September added an extra \$2,600,000 to the wages and salaries bill.

In this particular year there is an extra pay period, and this will result in a further \$2,600,000 being required to meet this situation. Because of the impact of the Federal Budget—which augmented allowances payable to deserted wives—the State was required to maintain its standard of service which was complementary to the Commonwealth assistance granted. We had to find an extra \$1,700,000 this year for this purpose. Last, but certainly not the least of any of consequence, our servicing of debt amounted to an increase of \$6,800,000 on interest and sinking fund contributions.

The Budget has been criticised as being discriminatory, but I cannot recall anyone suggesting on which alternative section of the community the burden should be placed. I think it must be recognised that the Government was faced with a situation where it had to raise extra revenue, because of the situation I have outlined, or condone a diminution in Government services. I do not think any member in this House would approve of any diminution. No-one has been able to indicate an alternative section of the community on which added burdens could be placed.

Mr. McPharlin: The pay-roll tax has been given to you. What amount will this bring in?

Mr. T. D. EVANS: The amount was indicated when the pay-roll tax legislation was before the House, and the answer to the question will be found in *Hansard*. I shall not weary the House any longer. I thank members who have contributed to the debate.

Before concluding I would like to show briefly that from a forecast made it may well be said the economic sky of Western Australia is still generally clear. There are some black clouds, but they have a

habit of rolling away. I feel the Commonwealth Government has seen the error of its ways. The Budget it introduced in August was clearly ill-conceived, and it was made on a wrong diagnosis. This Budget, based on a wrong diagnosis, was presented to cure an inflationary process which was said to exist. Since then the Commonwealth has seen the error of its ways.

Mr. Court: Be fair!

Mr. T. D. EVANS: By restoring confidence, and by unlocking large sums of money which are now deposited in savings banks, at the Christmas period we hope to be able to inject some of that money into the community, and so restore confidence and roll the dark clouds away.

I have had the honour of being a member of a team which introduced this Budget and I had the privilege of delivering it. I enjoyed the opportunity to defend it, but there was really no great need for defence. I also share the responsibility of giving effect to it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee*

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Bateman) in the Chair; Mr. T. D. Evans (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: I will now move to the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. For the benefit of new members I refer them to the brochure which has been distributed to members. This relates to the financial procedure applying to Appropriation Bills. If members have any difficulties they will easily resolve them by referring to the brochure.

### **Part I: Parliament—**

#### *Progress*

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Harman.

*House adjourned at 5.31 p.m.*

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## **Legislative Council**

Tuesday, the 7th December, 1971

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

### **BILLS (4): ASSENT**

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

1. Companies Act Amendment Bill.
2. Bills of Sale Act Amendment Bill.
3. Traffic Act Amendment Bill.
4. Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).